

CARL OLSON

Second, ~~Third~~ and  
~~Fourth~~ Interviews

Interviewed by:

Sam Schrager

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

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# I. Index

## CARL OLSON

Dry Ridge, Troy; b. 1895

Thresherman, miner, sawmill worker, car dealer.

2.5 hours

minute page

## Side A

01 1 Nils Nilson, the foolish miner from Park.

02 2 Olson threshing operation. Threshing for 101 farmers on the ridges one wet fall, because they had mudhooks on the engine while the other operations didn't. The secret of pulling the engine out of deep holes with a plank and chain. Small farmers stacked grain instead of shocking. A bad job of stacking got the grain wet; Carl teases the farmer. Pleasures of threshing life. Going out of their way to thresh tiny amount of grain for farmers. Reasonable charge for threshing. Small size of most cleared farms on Little Bear and surrounding ridges.

20 10 Jobs on threshing crew of twelve. Most local jobs short term. Smut fire in the threshing machinery. Work of engineer and separator tender. Setting up the machine quickly to show people on Big Bear how fast it could be done.

## Side B

00 15 Albert Olson could level the threshing machine while it was running; his gift for fixing machines. Deciding when the crop was ready to cut and thresh; effect of rain. Lateness of planting and harvesting. Old and new wheat varieties. A record day, 1142 sacks in nine hours; the picture was published in the Case Company's magazine, American Thrasher. Wearing down teeth on the chain. Number of grates used depended on difficulty of threshing the particular grain.

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16 23 Knowing the people in the country by threshing. Getting by on small farms. A rooster "cans" a man. A hook-nosed family said to be great cherry pickers.

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27 28 Getting work in a sawmill near the coast. All workers had only two names: "Do more, see less," or "See more, do less."

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20	38	Depression and inflation at the same time. Importance of every person; country should guarantee a good living income. Over-time is a shuck. Advantage of manufacturing tax over income tax. Labor and taxes are what must run the country.
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09	59	America in trouble with concentration of homesteads into huge farms, high food prices. Problem grew from lack of regulation. Too many products.
14	62	Mother disagreed with father over marriage in the Bible, and was surprised to find he was right. They taught children to treat people right, though they weren't religious. Whenever you swear, you get a black spot on your heart. Too many people came to America just to get rich. If Carl got rich he was going to help people.
19	64	He didn't learn much in school, and left at fourteen. Working at his uncle's store in Helmer, where a man sold near-beer instead of beer. Warning him about revenuers; fixing his wooden leg. Pulling out stakes for the railroad survey through his uncle's meadow at age of nine.

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Side E (continued)

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Per Johanneson burnt up his sawmill in Sweden and smuggled the insurance money to America. He paid his partner back in Sweden with confederate money.

(27min.)

with Sam Schrager  
February 21, 1975

## II. Transcript



SAM SCHRAGER: He stayed at your place, <sup>Nils</sup> Nilson?

CARL OLSON: Well, he was on the way to the Boulder Creek and <sup>it quite a</sup> ~~was/hike~~.  
He couldn't make it, I guess, so he stayed over night. That's when  
I got to know him most.

SAM: What was he like when you saw him there? Was he <sup>a</sup> friendly guy?

C O: Oh, yea, yea. There was nothin mean about him I don't think, but he  
had funny ideas, y'know. Y'see he had a prospect hole there y' know and  
was lookin for mineral. And a feller asked him, "Why do you mine there?"  
"Well <sup>there</sup> was a tree standing bent  
over, doing this," (points his arm down) he said, "and that was the place  
to dig."

SAM: It was pointing?

C O: So he did, and then he took some of that ore and <sup>went to</sup> Moscow  
University with it. and <sup>they</sup> said, "that's no good--throw it away." But he  
wouldn't throw it away. He put it in his packsack and took it back. (Laughs)

Then he come over to <sup>one</sup> place. He had a gun--45-70--<sup>y'know</sup> it was a pretty  
big gun. And he looked at his .22 and said, "You've got a small 45-70,  
haven't you?"

Yea, he was quite a character, all right. Nils in Boulder Creek. They  
all talked about him, y'know.

SAM: Y'know Carl, I wanted to ask you about the thrashing because you never  
really told me about the operation that you had on the ridge, the harvest  
operation. You never really have told me how you got goin at it and  
what it was like.

C O: Well, I got a job f <sup>rom</sup> Hawk <sup>inson</sup>, y'know I worked for him for three or

four years. He said, "I want you to come out and fire my engine for me and follow the harvest, and I'll give you two dollars a day." So I thought that was great, y'know, to make two dollars a day--I was only about fifteen years old then. And I went with him and when the harvest was over and he said, "You had steam every morning <sup>did</sup> n't ya?" "Yes," I said. "Well," he said, "I'll give you two and a half like the pitchers get." And he hired me again and again, y'know. I worked for him for about three or four years. And then he wanted to sell the rig to my brother. So we bought him out. And then we run that for about ten years. We thrashed all of Little Bear and up on Dry Creek and Nora country and clean up to Deary. We thrashed for a hundred and one farmers one year, y'know that's something. Now you only thrash for one. (laughs) The farms are so big, y'know.

SAM: How could you do a hundred and one farmers in one season?

C O: One season--we <sup>was out</sup> fifty-four days. And then we had the beans left, so we had to go back and thrash them, and that took us eleven days, so we had sixty-five days in . And it was the first of November when we got through. It was a rainy fall, see. And there was other thrash rigs around too, y'know. We got such a long run because we had mud hooks on our engines. Mud hooks look like this and about six inches long and they were about that far apart y'know, so you could go, and that's how we got around and got all that thrashing. And we thrashed between the showers. In those days, y'know in Little Bear we had to thrash most of it in shocks. We took it right from the field and thrashed it. And then the small <sup>or</sup> farmers stacked all their grain, see, so they were in stacks. And that's why we'd keep agoing. If there'd been any <sup>wheat</sup> out there, it would have <sup>all</sup> rotten, y'know because

it rained off and on, off and on, off and on, see. So then we kept a-goin' that way. I didn't think we'd ever thrash the beans, but it happened to get a nice day on the first of November, and it lasted about two weeks and we finished up on the eleventh. And goin' home it started snowing.

SAM: What year about would that have been?

C O: About 1920, I think. I'm pretty sure I'm right on that; it could be '21 or '20, but it was either one of them days because I was in the army in 1919, <sup>see,</sup> so I missed that harvest. And then I come back and we thrashed one year, and the next year, it could have been '21 that was so wet, But the first year I come out from the army, we made a lot of money that year. Maybe that was the big year, I guess so. And it could have been 1921. . .

SAM: Weren't there other thrashing crews around at the same time?

C O: Yea, but they couldn't move the machinery because they didn't have no mud hooks. And there's <sup>where</sup> I told you about that big plank we had. I'll show you how it works about. And I figured that out <sup>when</sup> I was workin' on the road, y'know, pullin' the grader, and we got stuck. Here's the engine now, we stuck a three by twelve under the wheel here, and it was sixteen foot long, see, and then we wrapped the chain around here, <sup>and around here,</sup> and then we stiff-locked it, they call it, it was a differential gear in it, y'know just like a car has.

SAM: Yea.

C O: ~~But~~ you put that lock in it pulls. Well then the engine <sup>would</sup> climb up that thing. It'd climb up the plank. And then we were out.

SAM: I see.

C O: And that's the way we got out, y'know in the fields once in a while. Fields was so damn soft <sup>there</sup>, you'd sink right down. Over here on this side of Deary

we got on a flat field and doggone <sup>if</sup> we didn't stick that plank under it, and we went down four feet before it stopped. But then it hit solid ground there and then come right out. I thought, "Here we are now--we're stuck for good!" Come right out.

SAM: Now what did you put the plank underneath? You put it underneath the engine. .

C O: Under the bull wheel.

SAM: And under the wheel.

C O: See, the big bull wheel, here. SAM: Yea. C O: And this is the spokes, and then we put the plank under here, we dug a little bit, and the planks stood like this, Then we tied the chain here, and the chain come down, and we tied it around the bull wheel. So it wrapped around the bull wheel the same as a drum, y'know. It had to come out, y'know.

SAM: I see, so the chain pulled it right up.

C O: Yea. And that was over on the Grandlund <sup>here</sup> place where it went down so deep. But the way I found it out, y'know, <sup>we hadn't</sup> had that rig <sup>then</sup> more than about a year, and we was grading the road, and we was following pretty close to the edge, y'know, and we come to a place where they'd blowed out a stump, and they filled that in with loose dirt, y'know. And it looked like the road and it was wet then too, y'know, and oh when we got there <sup>old</sup>, the bull wheel just dropped down in that hole and there we sat with the road grade behind it. So the boss said, the road boss-- he had the same name I had too--Carl Olson. "I'll go home," he said, "and get my team. And we'll get out of here <sup>There was no way that wheel</sup> someway." <sup>was just spinning,</sup> y'know, in there. But there happened <sup>to be a</sup> telephone pole there, and I thought to myself, "By god, I'll try this." I took the telephone pole and rammed it under the wheel, tied the chain on and stiff-locked and up it <sup>there</sup> went, just like that. <sup>I was</sup> sitting, waiting--he was gone about an hour, y'know. He couldn't figure

out how I got out of that hole, y'know. He just couldn't figure it.

So I showed him how I <sup>got</sup> out there afterwards. And that's how I happened to get wise to that thing, y'know. And that come out pretty handy in the harvest.

SAM: Well, this year, when did it start raining that fall?

C O: Oh, it started about the last of August.

SAM: How much thrashing did you get in before that?

C O: Oh, about twenty days, fifteen, twenty days is all. We got through on Little Bear and we got up to Arnott's place ( and I forgot who lives on it now, it's that old dam on it, it's about half-way down the ridge. and I said to the crew, "By go<sup>11</sup>, it's goin to rain!" There were some clouds comin up. And we were on the last shocking, open field, he had a hundred acres of oats or somethin there. . . So I said, "We got to finish this now. It's goin to get rain and this is the last shocks we got." And you know when it rain<sup>ed</sup> on the shocks you had to wait three or four days or maybe more before it dried out. . . But it was stacks the rest of <sup>it.</sup> We finished up but we had to run an hour over time to get it through. And then all the other thrashing was stacked after that. So Arneberg's place was stacked and Kelly's place and the place you're <sup>(the old Pearson place)</sup> on--all of them, see. And we went straight ahead to Nora and took all of Nora and then over to Dry Creek. And then from Dry Creek up to Deary. That's how we got <sup>in</sup> such a long run. It was fifty-four days of grain and eleven days of beans--a hundred and <sup>see</sup> one farmers we thrashed for.

SAM: Why did some farmers stack it instead of shockin it?

C O: Well, they had so little it didn't pay to bring it together. They had to have eight bundle teams, y'know, to keep the machine goin, and they had to go out in the field and haul it to the machine. But when they stacked

you pulled your machine in between there, and I had the pitcher with me, four of them or five, and they pitched it in, and then we moved to another setting. So long as it didn't rain we could thrash because the heads were dry. And the outside ones a little wet, if they were too wet sometimes we had to wait a day for that even, to let em dry off a little bit. We got to one place where they stacked the grain so poor, y'know, they had to know how to stack grain--that was an art then too. The bundles had to lean out this way so when the rain hit em it would run off. Instead of that, he got his bundles this way and the rain would run into the stack for him. "The kids stacked it," he said. He had kids to stack it, see? And we couldn't knock that grain out and he run around there like he was crazy, that farmer. I said, "We can't thrash or nothin--we can't do nothin with it." It was Little Club too, and that was the hardest wheat to knock out there ever was.

SAM: What? Little Club wheat?

C O: Yea. His son lives on the ridge there, Nelson--he isn't far from where you live--Bill Nelson. His dad, y'know, and he was runnin around there, and "Oh," I said, "all right if you don't want em to thrash we'll quit." I threwed the belt off. "No", he said, "you can't quit." And we finished him up too, y'know. And then when we come back that fall to thrash beans, why, we thrashed all around him, y'know, I just done that to tease him.

We was goin to thrash it for him, I would <sup>n't</sup> leave nobody no matter if I liked him or not. He called up when we was at Riersons. "When you goin to thrash my beans?" "Well, I don't know," I said, "I don't do any better job on beans than I do on wheat!" "Oh," he said, "you gotta come and thrash em, now." I figured on thrashin em all the time, but I just left him to the last guy.

SAM: How did you decide what order you were going to thrash the farms in?

How did you decide who was goin to get it first?

C O: Oh, it come out pretty good so we didn't have much problem there. The lower end of Little Bear ripened up .. faster than the woods did, y'see. And we generally <sup>ed</sup> start down there somewheres, the ones that was readiest, see, there <sup>was</sup> so many kinds of grain. They had fall wheat, and the fall wheat come in two, three weeks ahead of the spring grain. So we thrashed the fall wheat and <sup>then</sup> sometimes we had to go back and thrash the oats for 'em afterwards <sup>if</sup> it wasn't ready. And that's the way we worked it, y'know.

And then we boarded with the farmers--we didn't have no cook wagon or nothing. But I was so used to thrashing I could hardly ever miss. We'd be at your place for dinner, and so on, and I'd tell <sup>'em</sup> in . . . time so they could have the food ready. But it happened when we thrashed beans once-- it was hard to judge that. I told that next farmer that we'll be at your place for dinner, and by golly before I knew we was through with that guy, And I took my car and run down there and told him that we couldn't be there for dinner. . . . And then the old lady got so excited she jumped in the bed and squealed and hollered. And the old man said, "Don't pay any attention to that. She does those things quite often," he said. (Laughs) It was old Bo Mancamp. He lived way down the end of the ridge.

SAM: What, she expected you for dinner and you weren't going to be there.

You were ready to move.

C O: Yea, because he didn't have the dinner ready. But I hardly ever missed on that. I was so used to it you know. I knew how much field everybody had, and I knew the braggers--y'know some of <sup>them</sup> brag they've got so much and all that, so you couldn't fool me there.

SAM: You mean they said they had more to thrash than they had.

C O: Yea.

SAM: The yield was so good, huh? What was the food like in the farms? Did they cook real good for you?

C O: It was just like going to a picnic every day. One fella asked me once, he said, "What would you do if you had a chance to do something?" "Well, I'd be a thrasher if I could," I said, "that's the best job I ever had. It didn't last too long, so you didn't get tired of it, and the good eats we got all the time, y'know and everything. And we slept in the straw sack, and we were all together all the time, and we had a good time and everything." And on Saturday night we'd all be in the trap wagon--they called that a wagon that was used to carry<sup>id</sup> the forks and other stuff and the beds and everything--and we all <sup>drove</sup> home in that on Saturday nights. And then they'd come back on Sunday--Sunday evening." No it was pretty good; I liked it because you got to know people and everything else y'know. And we wasn't out to make money only, y'know. And that's one thing--we were well liked, y'know, they wanted us if they could get us, because just think of it--I pulled one, pretty near whole mile to thrash nine sacks of wheat. <sup>We lost money on that.</sup> I didn't charge him any extra either. And the smallest bean thrashing--that was three sacks. (laughs) I didn't like that very good, we were <sup>all</sup> ready to quit, y'know, we was through. And he come over, he only lived about a mile from us, and he wanted his beans thrashed. Gol, y'know we had to fill up the boiler with water and steam up and pull over there and everything so I didn't like it. <sup>Oh</sup> he kept on, oh <sup>anyway-- our</sup> I thought I'd better go he's neighbor. And when we got up to his barn up there, it was a bunch of boards about that high from the ground <sup>laying</sup> over, and he <sup>run</sup> and <sup>showed</sup> me where to go.



"Where in the hell is the bean stack <sup>at?</sup> " I couldn't figure it out. So

I got off and I looked and I seen the beans <sup>under there, (laughs)</sup> and he got three sacks.

That <sup>out there</sup> was the place right next to the cemetery where it happened. We lived  
down there where Emil lives, you can see his place from the cemetery.  
(his brother)

SAM: How did you work out the charge, how much it would cost them to thrash?

C O: Well, we had so much a bushel, so much a sack. We got eight cents a sack for oats and ten cents for wheat, ten cents a sack. Y'see they sacked all the grain and <sup>you had to have</sup> sack sewers with you to sew 'em up and <sup>pile 'em up, y'know</sup> but that was pretty reasonable. Most of them had two cents more than we did all the time too. And then when they went down to Genesee country, then they had the cook wagons with em. Then they got about twenty cents a sack, I guess. But up in the woods here, there was so many small jobs that <sup>you</sup> couldn't afford it. And then another thing, y'know that book you give me. <sup>(This was wheat farming): I wondered</sup> you could see there, y'if those fellas were on a small farm there wouldn't be anything to thrash--the horses would eat up everything. They even worried about that a lot of places a long time ago up here y'know, <sup>come in there</sup> If they had too many horses, they'd eat up all the damn grain. Well a man got a hundred sacks of wheat, that was a big job in those days. And <sup>they had</sup> oats too, y'know. But that's the way it was--it was small fields, fifty and sixty acres <sup>they</sup> had cleared up in the woods up here, y'see. It was timber all over y'know, and they had to get their fields wherever they could, And it was quite a job to clear off the land, y'know. If it wasn't big timber on it, it was small black pine, they called it. It'd get about this big, just as thick as it could grow.

SAM: It was like sticks.

C O: Yea. So they didn't have very big fields, y'know. Now Little Bear was pretty good because that was a ridge, and they claimed the Indians set grass fires on those ridges, and they kept the small stuff down, but it was

yellow pines here and the~~s~~ all right, but they can can fields pretty quick that way, between the trees even.

SAM: Was Dry Ridge like that too, where you grew up?

C O: Yea, there was nothin but timber tere. And my dad didn't have sixty acres of field I don't think for a long, long, long time. So he had nothin to sell. All we got was enough feed for the horses and the cows. What we sold didn't amount to anything for a long time. Maybe sell for a hundred dollars a year--a big sale that would be in those days, y'see. The wheat was only worth about sixty cents a bushel. You'd get a dollar and twenty cents for a sack then. It's different now, y'know.

SAM: So in 1920, when you were thrashing, each farmer would only maybe fifty, sixty acres. . .

C O: Yea, lots of them, they didn't have any more, a lot of them. Some of them had only ten, fifteen acres. There was a feller up on this end of Little Bear, let me see, what the hell was his name? He lived on the forty there y'know--we didn't charge him anything, we just thrashed it for him free--all the time. he was so hard up. He only had about ten acres of field. So we never did charge him anything for his job. We donated that <sup>to him</sup> at all.

SAM: Will you tell me who was on the crew? How big was your crew, and what did the different men do?

C O: About twelve people, you can figure out--we had six bundle pitchers and two sack <sup>sewers,</sup> sometimes we had three, that'd be nine, and then we had a man to haul water, that's ten, and then engineer is eleven and the separator man is twelve--about a twelve man crew is all we had. But my brother, he took care of the separator, and I took care of the engine, so we took the big jobs that they paid more for. Engineer, he'd get four or five dollars a day; and the separator tender, he got about the same as the

engineer did. So we held those two jobs ourselves, and that's why we could make it fairly good, y'know, nothing big.

SAM: Would that be how much you'd make when you were done dividing up the. . .

C O: Yea.

SAM: Money. You'd have four or five dollars a day for yourself?

C O: No we never figured that--we figured what was left and then we cut it in two--so we took half and half, my brother. Except in 19. . ., well that big year we had, I told you, we made money then. We made seven thousand dollars that year. We got thirty-five hundred a piece. But that was more than we made in three or four seasons before. But the war had been on and thing were up, y'know. We paid seven dollars a day for pitchers too then, see, and seven dollars a day for sack sewers.

SAM: What did you pay before that?

C O: Two and a half for pitchers, and the sack sewers got three and a half, I believe. Two of them, that'd be seven dollars a day there.

SAM: So there was a real shortage of labor after the war then?

C O: No, it was no shortage of labor. Well, it never was any big jobs you had, y' know. Just when I was young I'd <sup>go out and</sup> work in a sawmill--get in thirty days, maybe. And then you go out in the haying--I never went out in the haying that was too hard work for me. Then they got in maybe ten days. And then when the harvest come <sup>they'd get in</sup> thirty days about. And that was all the work there was, see. <sup>The</sup> sawmills, they were all over the country, but they were small, and there only way they could get any logs in was in the winter. You couldn't log in the summer--you couldn't haul them on the wagons, you couldn't get no load on, y'know. So they ha a good winter, they'd get more logs. In a poor winter they wouldn't have a big run. So it would hardly last over thirty days on the sawmills,

then you were through there. So an all around job was something we didn't know anything about hardly. And the harvest was the best pay and it was the easiest to get people there, y'know. And as it said in that book, they come from way back in Kansas, here. Because the crop was earlier there, so they got another thirty days in, and they made pretty good that way, in those days.

SAM: Were your crew, were they local men?

C O: Yea, they were all local, yea. There was quite a few people here then because a hundred and sixty acres is what they owned--most of them was all homesteaders, y'see, <sup>and</sup> that's all you could take. You could take 320 if you paid so much an acre, but very few people had any money to do that. And they called that the pre-emption. Now like Flodin 's place, he took pre-emption and homestead both, so he was the big farmer up there--he had 320 acres, but they didn't have too awfully much field anyway because there was timber all over, y'see. In order to get ahold of \$150 <sup>about</sup> then, that's just as hard to get as a thousand now, or easier. It's easier to get a thousand now then it was 150 then--that's what it took on a pre-emption I believe, so much an acre anyway. So my dad, he filed pre-emption to start with, y'know. And then you could live so long and then you had to pay up or lose it. So he shifted over to homestead then, instead. That's the way he got on it--he didn't have that much money. There was no pre-emption to take around there anyway, then they'd took up practically all the land.

SAM: Was this on his original homeplace? Was it a pre-emption to start with?

C O: Yea. I got the paper here yet on that. I showed you the pre-emption and the deed.

SAM: Yea. Well, did you have trouble with the machinery, the thrashing machinery? Did it break down at all?

C O: No, we didn't have much trouble other than we had the fire the first year. We burnt out the first year, and that was tough for us, y'know. A smut fire burnt everything inside the separator and the blower fell off. We was out on Hupp's place, that was the last place on Little Bear way down. So we thought <sup>we was in a hell of a</sup> ~~fix,~~ but we were going in two days after that. We called up the Case people in Spokane and they shipped it down on the <sup>We had a train that</sup> night train. I come here at eleven o'clock at night. And then we had to put in all that stuff, y'see. So in two days, we was goin again. And they thought that the I.W. W. set fire on it, y'know.

SAM: Oh yea, you told me about that--it wasn't them at all--they didn't do it.

C O: No, it was nothin. <sup>but smut,</sup> We had the explosion the day before, y'know, and it was awful smutty grain, too. But it was the black smut. So we didn't think about the guarding ourselves <sup>at all</sup> down on this place, because <sup>you didn't</sup> see the big head here and there in the bundle. It was that brown smut and that was just right, the right mixture, y'know. And what started it was electricity. You could go around the machines certain days and stick your finger up <sup>to</sup> the belt, and you could see the sparks fly, y'know. And that's what set it off there--electricity. And then something went through the cylinders, what made the spark, y'know and that <sup>'d</sup> set it off too--a rock or something, or a piece of iron happened to go through the machine. And it <sup>was</sup> poof, fire all over it at once. No, I liked that job, thrashing, I thought that was pretty good.

SAM: As the engineer what did you do? What did you do to take care of the engine as the engineer? What was your job?

and

C O: My job was to run the engine keep steam in the boiler, pokin wood in it all the time. The farmers furnished the wood, y'know--they hauled out wood for you, and you'd steam her up with that, y'know. Then get up in the morning about four, so you'd have steam by seven. See, you always had to start over in the morning again. So we put in long days all right. The engineer, he put in the longest day, from four to about eight, y'know.

SAM: What about the separator tender? What did he do?

C O: Well, he took care of the machine. It was always somethin to fix--not all the time, but y'know, somethin shaked loose,<sup>or</sup> belt break and had to lace it, and have all that ready and check up your<sup>r</sup> stuff, y'know. So he worked overtime quite a bit.<sup>do</sup> So that's what count, y'know, if you had the machinery in <sup>good</sup> shape so you could run steady without having any breakdowns. And how to set your machine, I told you about that too. One of the Nelson boys, I don't know if it was Bill or not, but one of them boys, he went over on Big Bear, y'know, and worked. And the fellow named Fairfield <sup>that</sup> run the machine there, and he smoke a pipe, and somethin happened to the machine, "oh gol darnit," he'd feel for <sup>his tobacco and</sup> fill his pipe up, and then went down and <sup>ed</sup> fix it afterwards. And it took them so long to set the machine, y'know, So Nelson said to <sup>em</sup> him, "Now them Olson boys <sup>over</sup> on Little Bear it takes them five minutes to set the machine <sup>up only.</sup>" They laughed and <sup>ed</sup> "You're a real braggart." <sup>They</sup> made fun of him, y'know. And he told me this. So we happened to quit Little Bear because the small machines start comin in, y'know, and combines. So we thought we'd try Big Bear for awhile, so we got the job down there. And I knew all about it so I told the crew, we had a nice level spot down on the flat there and the farmer said, "You can set down there on the flat, <sup>on</sup> that level <sup>there."</sup> So I told them, "Be ready now, we're going to show those people on Big Bear how long it takes to set a machine!" It was level so we didn't have to dig for nothin, y'know, <sup>you</sup> see had to dig for

the wheels to get the machine level, y'know. And the same with the engine. if it was rough ground, but it was level as the floor. So I told 'em, The ones that pull the belt out, "get it goin when you pull it out, run out with it." And you know how long it took us? Three minutes! And here the bundle wagons was sittin up above, about five-hundred feet away from the machine, lookin at us when we were settin, y'know. I never stopped the engine-- I just unhooked it, turn<sup>ed</sup> it around and lined it up, and they were there and threwed the belt on; I backed up and threwed off the clutch and I never stopped it. And the fell<sup>ers</sup> sat there till I had to wave at 'em to come on down, come on down. Yea.

SAM: That's funny.

C O: That oldest brother Albert, y'know, he was a real mechanic. He worked with us the first two years and helped us out, y'know. Of course, he'd had a job like that before, y'know. He was fast too.

(End of Side A)

C O: Settin was just a little bit off, y'know. See it had to be level so the wheat wouldn't flow to one side and this and that. Well Albert put a jack under there, and told them, "Go ahead and pitch in." And they used to talk about my brother. They'd say, "Well, I've never seen a fellow like that. He can fix a machine with a pliers when the others are lookin for the tools." And that was the truth all right-- fast, y'know. And then he seemed to know everything about the machine. He could sit on the sack pile and first thing you see him jump off and start running down there to fix somethin. How did he know? I didn't know there was anything wrong, but the sound of the machine didn't sound right to him-- A was chokin something

up or somethin, so he'd be right there. So they don't have to shut her down even. See the blower would choke up sometimes, <sup>the</sup> straw in there, y'know, and all that. If you're there in time you can poke in there a little bit-- it won't get <sup>your</sup> whole machine choked up, y'know. If the blower should choke up, there'd be straw all the way through, y'know. And that's the way he was--he thought us all that stuff. That's why we had good luck.

SAM: So you learned it from Albert.

C O: Yea.

SAM: Y'know I've heard it said that they used to say about you and your crew there that if anybody could thrash it, you guys could do it--if it could be thrashed, you'd be the ones to do it.

C O: Yup. Well that's the way it should be, everything, but if they run the country like we run the thrashing machine there wouldn't be no depression.

SAM: (laughs) Carl, how could you tell when you could thrash it? When it was just dry enough or. . .

C O: Well, we'd go out and test it, y'know. We'd walk out in the field and then we'd stick a hand into the bundle, <sup>in the middle of the bundle,</sup> and pull out a head and see if it was tough or not, y'see. If it wasn't tough, why it was ready to thrash. And with rain, that'd be a little different, but that'd be the outside heads only that got wet, y'see, then we'd just test them, see. If it got <sup>a little</sup> damp you couldn't knock the chaff off the wheat y'know, and then it'd go out in the straw pile. So you had to know that too. It didn't take much rain. y'know in shocking, when you thrashed shocks. Just a good shower would lay you off half a day. A real rain'd lay you off a whole week even.

SAM: Did that happen to you very often?

C O: No, not often because, y'see, we done most of that thrashing in August <sup>too</sup> and very little rain come in August. <sup>After that</sup> They was all stacked, y'see, and they were all ripe then, see, so we didn't lose much time--once in a while



though we had to lay off. I think it was only one harvest that we put in that we didn't have to lay off for rain, or else you have to lay off two or three days <sup>maybe</sup> or so on if it was a kind of a rainy weather. Especially when it was shocks, But ~~if~~ it was stacked then you didn't have to wait too much, if it was a good rain, then you had to wait a couple of days, maybe.

SAM: For what they were growing then, was it mostly wheat that you thrashed?

C O: Wheat and oats, practically all of it. Hardly any barley at all. They didn't raise any barley up here--hardly at all. And y'see they didn't have the machinery to farm like they do now, y'know. We got some awful late grain in y'know. If you'd get a spring that was wet, y'know, they only had horses to plow with, and they couldn't get it in in time, and it'd be late, awful late. One place on Little Bear, a fella named Harris was farming, and we come up there and we were about through on the ridge, too. And you know what he was doin? He was cuttin the grain and we was thrashing it, yea, it was so late. He was an awful poor farmer anyway.

SAM: How long did the grain usually <sup>sit</sup> after it was cut between then and when it was thrashed? How long did it take for it to get aged and be ready?

C O: When it was wet, you mean?

SAM: No, when they cut? How long would it take after they cut it to season?

C O: Oh, <sup>tha</sup> t'd take about a week sometimes before it was good enough, see.

They cut it when it was pretty tough--you couldn't wait till it was ripe because then the binder would knock the grain out for you. You couldn't cut grain, it had to be tough yet--it took about a week out in the shocks. And sometimes they even had to turn the shocks, y'know, to get the inside dry, set the bundles this way if it was kind of a damp fall. But they had a wheat here they called the forty-fold <sup>then that</sup> we thrashed quite a bit of.

That was so damn ripe, if you wait till that got real ripe before you cut it, you wouldn't have more than half of it. You know that kicker in

in the binder, you just kept kickin that straw all the time, we just thrashed it right there.

SAM: What was the name of this wheat?

CO: Forty-fold.

SAM: Forty-fold?

CO: Yep. It had some damn long straw in it, it had stuff was that tall. but it was good wheat and ripened early. That's why they put it in so much, y'know. It ripened a whole lot earlier than the Club wheat did.

SAM: Was most of the wheat fall wheat, or was most of the wheat winter wheat or spring planted wheat?

CO: Well, you could pretty near seed any wheat for fall if you want to. See, they didn't have no special wheat for that. The reason they planted in the fall was that it'd ripe early, y'know. If you was to put in all spring wheat it would never ripen up hardly in some years--it would be standing green, y'know, especially that Club wheat. That was pretty late, all that Club wheat. And I think the Forty-fold had to be seeded in the fall--it was a real fall wheat, it was a bred<sup>a</sup> wheat, y'know. The reason they called it Forty-fold was because it created forty times as much as the seed. But they don't raise that anymore at all. Hell, so much straw. The wheat they got now, I'd like to thrash that, jesus. We could thrash a thousand to fifteen hundred sacks every day. About this tall, and heads that long on it, no straw, y'know. I was out to Emil's one time and looked at his wheat. "Jesus, do you expect to get any crop from this?" "Yes, I'll get about forty bushels." It looked like ten to me according to the old wheat, see. It was that thin when we'd get about ten bushels to the acre.

SAM: What was the yield in those days when you were thrashing?

C O: Oh, if you thrashed a field and made forty bushels, they'd talk about it all the time. Twenty bushels was good; <sup>wheat</sup> now they get as high as a hundred. So you see the difference on the wheat too.

SAM: What was the most you ever did in a day, do you know? Did you ever have any big record days?

C O: Well, that's the one, the big picture that we had there, that we had 1,142 sacks in nine hours time--that's the biggest record we had. You never had any big job anytime, you had to move so much, y'know, You lost so much time movin from one field to the other one, and <sup>there</sup> was no big job. But this fella had a hundred acres of oats. And I knew that the thrashing would soon <sup>finish</sup> so I told them to set the machine in the center of the field. "We're going to thrash it all in one pile," I said, " and then I'll go on down to get the photographer." And I went down and got him, and we finished it in nine hours all right. It was 1,142 sacks, and that was about four-thousand bushels in that setting. That was on Big Bear. And Case got ahold of that picture--we had a Case machine, y'know--and they sure wanted that picture.

SAM: What did they do with it?

C O: They took it back East, and they had a magazine out, what in the hell was the name? Thrasher, they called it Thrasher, so the picture got in that. I got a few letters from back East, <sup>too</sup> they had read it y'know. One fella wrote- I told <sup>them</sup> how many ~~teeth~~ <sup>were</sup> out in one season--and I got a letter from one guy, he said, "How can that be? <sup>You wear out</sup> teeth like that?" He couldn't understand. So he wasn't no thrasher, I know that. Teeth was the main thing in the thrash<sup>ing</sup> machine. If the teeth got too dull, it would chop the straw too, y'know, the bundle wouldn't go in fast enough, so it'd break it up and you'd get alot of chaff, y'know in

the sacks, you couldn't blow it all off--if you did you'd blow wheat too. So they had them made, and they had a little curl on the end like that--well, if that wore off, then it wouldn't take it, y'see. And the bundles won't go into the cylinder and they could raise hell with your feeder, break the chain or somethin because they wouldn't go in fast enough, see.

SAM: Could you sharpen it, sharpen em up?  
of them would

C O: No, some turn em around, but then the hook was the other way and they jerked the tooth so fast so it didn't knock it out. And that's what I wrote and told this guy. But I said, "There's one way you can use them for longer without taking them out and that is to bend them forward." So we had a rig like that, the bar about that long, we had to put it over teeth and then bend the teeth forward, and you'd get the right curve, but if it wore so much then you had to throw em away, y'see, and you couldn't turn em around because then the straw went in too fast.

SAM: How long did one of the chains last, the teeth?

C O: Oh, that depends on the grain a lot. If it was easy thrashing, why it'd last you the whole season pretty near. You'd put in a new set and thrash for thirty days, something like that, it'd last you all season. But <sup>we</sup> had that bar with us all the time so if they wore down too fast we'd bend them forward a little bit, y'see, we didn't have to take em out, and get the curl right.

SAM: Could you bend them quite a few times with. . .

C O: Well, about one time would be about enough, then they'd get down so narrow--you had to have it wide this way too, because the teeth in the grates, there were teeth there and these went between like this, see.

SAM: Yea, they went in between each other, yea.

C O: And then if they wear off on the sides, then the heads would go through, so you couldn't run the teeth on the grates, they wore on the sides all the time. They got thin as a knife pretty near. And you had to put in new teeth there, and there was six rows if you had a bad thrashing. There was two rows in each grate, see? And good thrashing like Forty-fold we used one grate only, and you get into a little Club, you had to have em all in--six rows to knock it out. And then it took a lot of power--steam too, y'know, because it pulled hard. But <sup>Forty-fold</sup> that wheat pretty near fall out itself. So it was easy to thrash, but then it had some damn long straw, y'know.

SAM: What about the oats and beans? Were they very different from the wheat to thrash?

C O: Oh, oats was no different at all. Oats was easy to thrash- you had no shell there, y'see, they just hung on, knock em off is all. But beans, you had to be an expert to thrash, <sup>then</sup> you'd crack em all to pieces else. You got to have a slow motion on your cylinders, and it was double cylinder in machine--one back of the other one. So it went through two cylinders, see? But they thrashed it once later on, but they cut the speed down, but then they didn't knock em all out. Then you had to thrash dirt. It wore the machine out so damn fast, y'know, because you got dirt on the roots. And it was just dust around the machine, and you just wore out everything. It didn't last no time at all--the bean thrasher. And then we had to have two rubber rollers, so all the beans had to go through the rollers to bust the dirt chunks, see. They were just as heavy as the beans, so they'd go in the sack. So it went through them rollers and busted the dirt, so you didn't get it in the sack. Or else you <sup>'d</sup> get about twenty-five per cent dirt in there, chunks like the end of your finger, y'know. No, that bean thrashing, I didn't like that very good--

it was too dirty. And then it was hard to pitch that, y'know, there was no bundles there, you had to tear them loose in the sack you know, and dust and everything else.

SAM: So thrashing beans was a lot dustier and dirtier than the others, eh?

C O: Oh, yea.

SAM: That's funny, it makes sense.

C O: See when they harvest them there, they had a cutter<sup>rip</sup>, you know they went <sup>they</sup> and cut the roots. You couldn't cut em on the top, y'know, then you couldn't get em together--<sup>they'd fall to</sup> pieces. And if they were ripe, y'know, some pods ripen faster than <sup>the</sup> others, y'know. Then they had to let em lay a long time in the field even to let em dry out before <sup>they</sup> could stack it. And they come in late, y'know, it was hard to say. They lost bean crops every once in a while, y'know--they didn't get em in in time. But they got wise--they waited too long before they planted em, y'know. If you plant them real early when the ground was warm they'd grow up pretty fast, but if you waited too long--they froze so easy, y'know, they were afraid of an early frost, see. So they planted em pretty late. But there was pretty good money in beans then. The way they farmed Little Bear, they made good because y'know they summer fallow. <sup>and</sup> they don't do that anymore, y'know--<sup>they</sup> leave a field out, y'know, and put nothin on it. It's what they call summer fallow. And then when the bean business come in they put beans on the summer fallow, and then they'd plant fall wheat on the same ground, see? So they made good, y'see, they got two crops that way, y'know. But they don't raise any more beans at all around here.

SAM: What happened?

C O: Well, the prices didn't come up fast enough, I guess. The price was pretty good then. They made pretty good on beans. But they start irrigating down south and all over, and raise<sup>d</sup> beans, see, and they could do it cheaper and better--so we quit altogether.

SAM: Well now, Carl, when you're talkin about enjoying it, having a good time in the harvest crew, you say it's because you got a chance to spend time with people and get to know em better.

C O: Yea. Well, that's what you did--it was something new everyday, y'know, especially for us, that had small farmers. We could thrash for three, four farmers in a day sometimes--small jobs, y'know, and all that. Now Genes<sup>ee</sup> was a little different--they had a different set-up there. They had <sup>the</sup> cook wagons, and it was the big farmers there, y'know. So that was a whole lot more, you had to have cooks and roustabout, and you had to have your own bundle teams too--they had a heck of crew to pay, y'know. They had about twenty-five, thirty men when we had twelve.

SAM: Is that how you got <sup>to</sup> know a lot of the people around the country?

C O: Oh, yes. I knew pretty near everybody east of town here, y'know, clean on Big Bear and Deary and Dry Creek and Nora and Little Bear--all of them. Yea.

SAM: When you were goin around and thrashin for different people, were most people in about the same shape, I mean as far as how well off they were?

C O: Well, <sup>that</sup> a farmer had, say, up to a hundred acres of field or eighty acres, the <sup>one</sup> were pretty well fixed, them were y'know, but it wasn't too many of em. But the small farmers--they didn't make much, but they worked out a whole lot of them people too, y'know. They work<sup>ed</sup> in the woods, and when they started the woods business <sup>went and</sup> up here, they worked out too, when they had small farms.

SAM: Would you say that many of the families were just barely making it or were most families gettin by so that they were doin O. K.?

C O: Well, they <sup>just</sup> made a livin. There was nothin to buy much those days, y'know

like our family--we didn't buy much stuff. We raised all our food and it was a little game in the country. We shot a lot of grouse to eat and fish in the Bear Creek and stuff like that. And sell butter, eggs, trade for groceries, so you used very little cash, very little. If the average farmer had around a hundred dollars income, he was sittin pretty good. Yea. And most of the women made the clothes for the kids-- they had sewing machines and they'd buy the cloth, y'know, buy the overalls, and make. . . And <sup>if</sup> one kid grewed <sup>out,</sup> and the other one would wear it, y'see and so on. So they wore out everything, there was nothin thrown away. To find a tin can when I was a kid was a helluva job because we wanted them to play with. (Breaks)

SAM: The story about the rooster cannin the man?

C O: Oh yea, that was pretty good. That's the only man I ever canned, the rooster had to do it for me.

SAM: Will you tell me what happened there?

C O: Well, he was kind of a queer duck, this guy, y'know. So it was in the bean thrashing, so we took one man with us extra, in case <sup>they</sup> were short handed, the farmers. ~~They~~ They furnished the pitchers and everything--all we furnished was the sack-sewer and the engineer, about four or five men when we went out thrashing beans. So we thought we better hire a man with us in case they was short handed--then he could get up and help them. So we hired this guy for that, and I said, "You don't maybe have to work at all because if they got a full crew, why you don't have to do anything, but if they're short handed then you gotta get out and help them." So got over there on the ri<sup>dge</sup> y'know, and we was sleeping in the barn. I guess we'd been out about a week maybe and he started cussing and swearing up there about 4 o'clock in the morning. He was rolling his bed roll up, and we couldn't figure out what in the hell was



go on. So he went, y'know, and I asked the fella that slept close by to him, I said, "What in the hell is the matter with Charlie, quittin<sup>ly</sup> away?" And he said, "That rooster crowed all morning and he got mad about that!" So he left. Yea.

SAM: Hey, what's that story about the hooked noses? Will you tell me that one again?

C O: Well, that's a family around here, they all got such big noses, y'know. When I seen them the first time they lived on Little Bear, then the old man and the kids were <sup>about</sup> ten, twelve, fifteen years old, I guess. And somebody in the crew said, "That's the best cherry pickers I ever seen." And one fella said, "What do you mean by that?" "Don't you see that nose?" he said, "they hook that on the limb and they pick with both hands!" (laughs)

SAM:  
C O: You don't have to tell their name.

They're living here now, y'know--three of them in town here. And when the family come and ask me about that one day, and he laughed about<sup>it</sup> Charlie Spencer was the one, one of the Spencers married to that family, see? He was kind of a funny duck all right, that way. You know

other people told me, "You can never tell when he quits. If something hits him he don't like, he <sup>'ll</sup> just quit the job and walk off." Yea.

SAM: Was there much difference among the men that worked for you? Did some of them work a lot better than others? Were some of them a lot more skilled?

C O: Oh yea, you always find that. And there's a little trick in that too. I didn't have to hire too much men, but I found<sup>out</sup> a lot about people. If you put em on the right job, he's good, and you put him on another job, he's just worthless--there's that much difference in people. But people don't understand that. That's why they have so much trouble. Some people seem to be worthless--you put him on the right spot, maybe he's real good, y'see.

And I found that out when I worked on the sawmill down there. I was kind of a half a boss there, I was millwright, y'know. I straightened em up, I know one feller- he was a funny guy--he was kinda helpless, y'know. And Mead said to me, "Well, I guess we'll lay off that feller." They bought the sawmill out, and they they were goin to start new, y'know, new people. So I guess we'll weed our crew out," and <sup>he</sup> said, "We'll let that feller go over there," and this and that. So they started up and they had a tail sawyer is what they called him, he stands behind the saw and takes the lumber away, and that's what this feller done. And my god, he had two, three guys there, and none of them knew how to do it, y'know, good workers too. So I said, "You better go back and get Anderson that used to be here-- he's an expert at that. And <sup>he</sup> went and hired him back. He knew just what to do, y'know. See, there's a trick there, y'know. If you take the slab away and let the slab fall the wrong way, you can't push it down on the rollers because you got limbs on it too, maybe, and it was round, y'know. But you turn the flat side down, and then the boards when you take em, you gotta pull this way and get the narrow side up so the edgermen know how big a piece of board they can get out of that thing, y'know. And that man was an expert there. But you put him in some other place, he didn't seem to know how to work at all, see? And that's the difference on people. So if you line up your crew right, y'know, why you can get along with pretty near anybody, unless it's a feller that absolutely know nothing, but you don't find many of them.

SAM: Would you tell me about what the set-up was in those little sawmills? Take the one that you were millwright in. How many men would work in the mill? And what were their different jobs?

C O: Oh, well when I was millwright down here at Kendrick, why that was a small

mill, it had about twelve, thirteen men only. One was a ratchet setter, he put up the log y'know, whether it was one inch board or two inch board, y'know--he'd pull the lever and push the log up. And then the sawyer, he was the guy that done the sawing, running the lever. And then they had a turndown man--he turned the log with a cant hook on the carriage, y'know, turned the log over. When they got so far in, and then they'd turn it three, four times, y'know. And then they had the slip tender, but we never called him that, the pond duck. They called him here. That's what I done when I was a young kid.

SAM: What was that job?

C O: That's to pull the logs out of the pond, y'see, up on the deck. Then you had the trimmer man. He trimmed the lumber off on the ends, cut off the barky end, and so forth. And the edgerman--he's the guy that put the lumber through the edger and took the edgings off, y'know. Like you'd make an eight inch board or a ten inch board, you'd move the saws back and forth, y'know, see? And then you had a man behind there, that picked edgings, threw em away, y'know, when they come through the edger. And then you had the lumber pilers, they piled the lumber out in the yard, and so forth. And then you had the engineer to run the engines, and that's about all of them.

SAM: What did you use to pull the lumber out of the pond with?

C O: Well, I had a cable that went out, and you laid a cable across the chute. The chute was like this, see? And the water was up here and the logs, you pull em up on the chute with pike pole. Then you wrap the cable around them and hook them on the main cable, and then you had the drum up there and the friction. You went and pulled the logs up, y'see--pull up three or four or five of them--it depends on the size, sometimes you only pull <sup>ed</sup> one log up--big ones. I used to do that, and that was the pond duck, but they call that the slip tender, and there's where I got

when I went on the coast that time here, I told you about when I. . .

SAM: Hum uh. You didn't--what time was that?

C O: 1917. I took a hundred and sixty dollars and said, "I want to see the country now--I don't care if I get a job or not!" Because I was gonna be drafted next year. I knew that the war was on, y'know. So I went to Portland and I looked through the window, and there was a sign there that said they wanted a single jack hammer--four dollars a day--eight hours. I looked at it and I said, "I wonder if I should take that job." That's what I'd been doing was mining, y'know. That's where the single jack hammer is, when you hold the bit yourself and then hammer it with the other end. So I said, "Well, I guess, no I don't think I want that job. Outside work too much, and it's in the fall of the year." So I went a little farther up the street and there was a sign in the window, "A sliptender." Four dollars a day, too. So I thought I better go in and find out what that feller does anyway. "What is a sliptender?" And he told me, and that's what I'd been doing on the small mills here when I was a kid. So I took the job then. And I went to Alma, Washington, they had a shingle mill there. And the fella come up, I told him that I wanted to be a sliptender here, and he looked at me. "You a slip tender?" he says, "a small guy like you? I don't think you can make it. I had a man here who weighed two hundred pounds and he quit. We'll let you try it anyway." Heck, that was nothing for me, that was a different way of pulling up the timber--it was easier because the man that sawed the log off, they sawed it off in <sup>sixteen</sup> inch--the length of a shingle, y'know. So you pulled the log--all I done was to hook it on. And one day I only had to pull up four logs --four logs. They was so big--the cedars--that there was enough for two days. So I worked there about month outside there. I went up to the boss, "oh god, it's gettin too damn wet

out here--I don't want to monkey with it." It rained all the time y'know.

"No," he said, "You can't quit. I got a job for you. You go up and sit above the boiler and drop some extra fuel down. They don't get enough sawdust to heat the boiler, so you got to throw out slabs for them."

I sat in the chair like this, and the elevator went right by you, and all I'd do is touch em and it'd fall down to the fire men, y'know. So I sat there--I think it was only two days. I went back to the boss and I said, "No, I don't want to sit there--I'll go crazy sittin there all along doin nothin'." "No, you can't quit," he said. "You go out and help the carpenters." They were building the mill bigger, and so I stayed there for about three or four months. So you can see, And there's where I found out about they had two names only, the people there. I come there and he said, "Hello there Mr. Do-more-see-less." I said, "My name ain't that." "Well," he said, "we only use two names out here." He said, "When you leave now, your name will see more and do less," but now when you're workin, you <sup>re</sup> see less and do more." (laughs)

SAM: What did you think of that country? That country on the coast?

C O: Oh, I didn't like it. I was on the, what do they call that? The wettest place on the coast, anyway, Gray<sup>is</sup> Harbor. A little town name Alma there. And the Saginaw Timber Company was a big outfit, y'know, they put the <sup>shingle</sup> mill. . . (End of Side B) so they kept you fairly busy when you had to pull up them slivers all the time.

SAM: What did you think of that country as compared to this country?

C O; Oh I wouldn't want to live there--it's too wet. And the funny part, of it, the sun shone only two days when I was there. Then <sup>they</sup> stayed in and played poker, the crew--no foolin--not the mill crew, but the ones <sup>that's</sup> that worked in the woods. And that was just opposite than it was here. When it rained we stayed in <sup>there and</sup> played poker. We wouldn't work in the rain

at all in these <sup>sawmills</sup> out here.

SAM: It's funny. Why would they do that on a sunny day?

C O: I don't know. "It was too nice to work," they said, or something.

That was the funniest thing--that kind of tickled me too because it was just opposite here. See, we got <sup>our</sup> free board and everything in the sawmills, so we didn't care if we had to lay off a day--we never worked when it rained hard. We did a lot of our workin outside, y'know, and get wet all over. We didn't have no clothes for rainy weather here--we stayed in.  
They <sup>re</sup> when the sun--they stayed in.

SAM: What did you think on your travels? Did you see much country over there?

C O: No, I didn't travel too much. I stayed there and then I went to Spokane and I went to automobile school for a little while and learned how to run a car or fix em mostly.

SAM: Did you learn much at that school?

C O: Oh, I learned a little. In those days we could take care of our <sup>own</sup> car, y'know. In those days nobody knew anything about a car, y'know, so you pretty near had to do it yourself. They was just comin out, y'know. <sup>I had to laugh at</sup> the teacher <sup>there. He</sup> was telling us how the car works, and all this and everything, <sup>And then he</sup> said, "If everything is all right and the car won't start, what's wrong with it?" Nobody got it right. And you know what was wrong with it? "The man on the crank," he said. Y'see they didn't have no self starters then.

(laughs)

SAM: Hey, were those people on the coast, did they seem a lot like the people out here?

C O: Oh yea, it ain't much difference. They were about the same. You can't tell <sup>one from another.</sup> We had a lot of people that lived here <sup>that</sup> went to the coast too, y'know, and stayed there, and then there isn't too many that

comes this way from the coast, though, I don't think. But a lot of these early people, they went to the coast, y'know, because it started to boom there, y'know. A lot of them sold their homestead rights and went on the coast in the early days. There was one homesteader that lived close to us, he went to the coast, and then a fella <sup>named Ray,</sup> that homesteader right close to where you are, he went to the coast too. But I think he had <sup>proved</sup> up all right, so he sold it. He sold his place to somebody because it was startin to boom there then y'know. Building the cities and. . .

SAM: Well, there was one more thing about the sawmills I was wondering about. What do those rollers do?

C O: Oh the rollers? Well, that's where you, suppose the saw is over here now, y'see, and the logs <sup>are</sup> roll<sup>ed</sup> along there, and then it comes out here. And then you take the board, then they got rollers that push it down to the trimmer men and <sup>to</sup> the edger men, and the slabs, they got to go down in the slab chutes from the rollers, and that's the ones that I and Carmen put in.

SAM: Yea, you told me about that, yea .

C O: And the people they looked and looked to see them--I'll never forget that.

SAM: What was it that you had to do to make em live rollers?

C O Well, y'see they were wooden rollers--they sat in the bench and they pinned in the end, y'know--they swirled around. Well, the line shaft, y'know they had steam engines and then they had <sup>a</sup>big line shaft run through the mill that they took the power to the edger, y'see? And power to the trimmer. And that line shaft happened to run right under the bench.

SAM: Uh huh.

C O: So we took an old belt and cut em this wide--two inches. And we put em on the <sup>shaft</sup> up to this roller, see? And then from this roller we had another one. And from that one this one. So we didn't have em all rolling, ~~y'see~~

Y'see - they had rollers next to there -  
 y'see.

about six, seven of them - we didn't have it on them -  
 All we had to do was just push it a little

bit and the live roller would take it, see? And that's the way we made  
 it easier for the people. And in those days they didn't saw any timber  
 that big, you know. (small stuff) Hell, all the logs were from this size up to that

size, but now they saw stuff like this all the time. So then when they  
 squared a log on the carriage in those days, they made one by twelves, <sup>y'know</sup>  
 because that was the popular lumber then to build barns with, y'know -

(twelve inches wide and an inch thick. Well you squared that log up and  
 sawed all the one by twelves on the carriage, they didn't send that lumber  
 through the edger at all, y'see, they ed the logs until they got it squared up, see?  
 And two by twelves, when they sawed them they did the same thing, and two by  
 tens, they'd make that on the big saw, so the edger man didn't have to do that.

All the edgerman got was outside stuff for the log, y'know. See, when you  
 cut the bark off and then the next one, <sup>'d</sup> be maybe be four inches wide, and the  
 next one eight, and six - finally they had the log squared up and <sup>then</sup> they'd  
 saw it all on the big saw. And then you pushed maybe that many stack of  
 lumber out on them rollers, and that's where the live rollers come in, y'see.

You'd push em a little bit, and they'd catch em and way down they go to  
 the trimmer man. He'd trimmed em off on the ends, y'see. No, I worked  
 on seven different mills here, and there are none of them left. (laughs)

SAM: How long would those mills work after they got the lumber?

C O: Well, they run, like I said, about thirty days.

SAM: That's all.

C O: For thirty, forty days, that's all.

SAM: How much would they put out in that time?

C O: Well, if they had a million feet that was a big run, y'know. But most



of them had maybe 500,000 or less than that even, because they couldn't move the timber very far then. They had to have the mills where the timber was, y'see, because you had no trucks. And they'd haul it in on the sleds in the winter, because you couldn't do much loggin with a big wagon with wheels that high on, and it'd be mud holes and they'd sink down and get stuck. Very few logged with a wagon unless it was right close to the road already. That was tough goin anyway. Y'know the wheel went down in the hole- it'd stick the team, y'know- you couldn't get out even. But on the sled, y'know, it was smooth, just like the ice is here. And they could take quite a load on the sleds in those days.

SAM: Did they just cut the trees down in the winter? Or did they let em season?

C O: No, they cut em in the winter. And snaked em down and then they roll<sup>ed</sup> em on the sleds and haul<sup>ed</sup> em in.

SAM: Snake em down with horses?

C O: Yea. You only need a coupla horses only. On the sled too, because they went up a draw, y'see, mostly. They put a mill where there's a draw and then they'd log everything downhill, y'know. So they didn't have no hills to pull hardly. Unless it was somebody like a farmer--hed had cut a coupla thousand feet--he might haul it over there y'know. It'd take time, just get<sup>to</sup> somethin for it, But the real timber--they<sup>just</sup> set the mills where there was alot of timber, y'see.

SAM: So most of the timber came from right around the mills and it was owned by the own<sup>er</sup> of the mill.

C O: Yea, that or else he'd buy some from the ones that had land there too, y'see. He'd buy from them- so much a thousand. And<sup>then</sup> they'd log it. See, you could buy logs for about fifty cents a thousand--up to a dollar and a half. Of course, the timber was all over and they wanted to get rid of it. They wanted to get field on their land, y'see, and all that.

But like our homeplace--we never logged a log--<sup>from that</sup>there was no mill. It was one there we could have logged to once, but it come so late that all our timber was down in the Bear Creek canyon, y'know.

SAM: Was there species that you preferred in the mill? That they wanted to have to log?

C O: Yellow pine and fir. They took tamarack, too, but not so much. Yellow pine-- they made one inch stuff from that. And the fir was two inch stuff-- two by fours and stuff like that. And then when the yellow pines got gettin scarcer, then they took more fir. Some of them wouldn't log anything but pine--pine logs, that's all. Because this old lumber around here, y'know, was pretty close, most of it too, then.

SAM: I heard the Troy Lumber Company was quite a big operation.

C O: Oh, yea. I worked for them too. They had the first mill up here--the White Pine Mill--that was a band mill, they put that in. That was the biggest one they had, or ebe they had a lot of small ones--three or four small ones around the country. And then they had a factory down here-- they made sash and doors and all kids of building material here then too. And then they moved down to Lewiston and Clarkston. So they haven't got any sawmills anymore. They just retail lumber, I guess. But they were pretty big then, for those days, I mean. See, the Potlatch mill, that come in in 1906, I think.. And then it changed the lumber business quite a bit, y'know--that big mill up there. And then the Elk River<sup>f</sup> mill come in 1912. So then things started kinda booming around here. There was a lot of work then. You could go to Potlatch sawmill and get a job, And , like I said, it was no year round jobs to start with, but then when those big mills come in they run year round, y'see. So a lot of people went and got work there.

SAM: So I imagine then that the little mills started falling off about then.

C O: Oh yea, they were going pretty fast, yea. And then when the Second World War broke out, that's how they happened to get a mill down in Kendrick and Juliaetta, y'know, it was such a demand for lumber, but they was small mills. They bought stuff here and there and put em in.

SAM: You know there's a story I want to ask you to tell me about. You told me it was about a cow dying because his friend the sheep. . .

C O: Yea, I've never figured that one out yeb. It's no humbug about it. It's absolutely the truth--everything that happened. I don't know why the cow died, unless he happened to get sick, but I don't believe so. I think it was because he killed the sheep. No, those two animals be together all the time, no matter where they were. We had five or six more cows, y'know. And this sheep and the cow, they'd be out in the field in the fall, and they'd be together all the time--all the time. And then when fall come we used to throw the hay out on the snow, y'know, so we didn't have to feed em inside, And we done that, and we had the hay scattered here and there, y'know, for the cows, And then this cow and her sheep--they were eating at one pile. And two other sheep come running from the other one down to that pile. And the old cow done and grabbed her and tore her whole stomach open right there. We had to butcher her right there. And then when they got through eatin we put em in the barn like we always did. My brother Oscar and I, we done the feeding, and tied em up-- we didn't have no stanchions, y'know. And next morning come, that old cow <sup>was</sup> standing up in the manger and trying to push herself out against a wooden log barn, y'know, you couldn't push the wall down. And she stood there and chewed foam, y'know, and grunted. And you couldn't do nothin with her. She stood up in the manger and wanted to go forward, forward. And in about two or three days we come down and she lay dead in the barn there. And that all happened

from the time when she killed her friend. I don't <sup>know</sup> if they got instincts like that or not.

SAM: You mean that now the sheep came down to get some of the hay. . .

C O: The other two come. See, this cow and the sheep were eatin from, <sup>The one,</sup> and when them two come the <sup>old</sup> cow didn't want them around her sheep. And she <sup>wrong</sup> and ripped her open, hit the one with her horn, see. And that's what done it. My mother, she didn't know what to think about it. She thought maybe it was something <sup>all right</sup> in that too. There was nothing wrong with the cow--we milked her all the time and fed her in the barn. We called her <sup>a</sup> Redside because she was a white cow with two red <sup>stripes</sup> comin' down on the sides here, y'know. But I never did talk to any animal doctor about that, so I don't know what he'd say.

SAM: But they'd been friends for a long time before that?

C O: Oh, yea. <sup>A coupla</sup> years they were together like that--they wouldn't part at all. Isn't that somethin? Now if it'd been animals with the same kind of a fur or skin--but the sheep had wool and she had hair. And how they could be so friendly is the funny part of it. They never was apart--no time. No matter where they went. Went down the pasture in the woods--they'd be together there. No, that's somethin I never could figure out really.

SAM: How did it come about that you had to go into the World War I? What happened there?

C O: Well, they drafted em. I was that age--I was twenty-three years old then, and I tried to get an extension so we could finish up the harvest, y'know. Hell, we didn't get no extension. They give farmers extensions all right, but it was <sup>just</sup> as important to thrash the wheat as to raise it, I guess. So I didn't get any. I was out two days with the machine, <sup>then</sup> and I had to go. And then about twenty days after that my brother was drafted,

that was with me in the thrashing business. But then we had to turn it over to Albert--Albert and Bob, they thrashed for on this ridge here, so Albert took over, no, Bob took over the machine from then on. And that was a good harvest too, y'know. We got a poor treatment there.

SAM: Did you not want to go at all anyway? Or did you. . .

C O: Oh, no, I didn't want to go anyway, but you caldn't stop it. But they should have give us the same extension as the farmers got to get their crops in. And <sup>then</sup> taking both of us too, that was the worst part of it. It was a big bean harvest that year, too. I 'forgot how many bean <sup>sacks</sup> there <sup>that year</sup> was on Little Bear--the biggest crop they ever had. And we just had our new machine only one year then. We owed seven-hundred dollars on it I guess, on the bean machine too.

SAM: How much did it cost you when you bought it from Hawkinson?

C O: 2500 for the machine there. Then the bean machine--we bought that after, ~~the~~ cost 1,200 dollars, I believe. It was a wooden machine; it wasn't no good anyway. It fell to piece in two years. Yea, 2500 , <sup>rig</sup> like that cost about 3500 dollars new then--the steam engine, twenty horse <sup>Case</sup> engine and thirty-two inch machine, and a water tank with it and wagon.

SAM: When you say a thirty-two inch, what do you mean?

C O: Wide. And there was thirty-two inches this way too--the cylinder. That's the way that they figured, the machine was twenty-eight inch or twenty-four inch, y'see and thirty-two, and they made em up to thirty-six, I believe, the biggest.

SAM: Well, that was a pretty good business when you were doin it for you then?

C O: Oh, yes, that was awful good business. Everybody wanted to be thrashermen y'know--they made a little money there in those days. That's about the only

thing there was any money in, y'know, except workin for a dollar a day, and there was nothin in it.

SAM: You mean it was better money than farming was?

C.O: Oh, yes. If you had a good fall, you'd make pretty good. You had something that paid you a thousand dollars a year--that was a big income then.

SAM: Well, why did you sell?

C O: Well, I sold because steam thrashing was goin out. Combines was comin in, and gasoline power, so the farmers, <sup>they'd</sup> buy a gas rig together, two or three of them, and thrash their own grain, y'see. I bought a gas rig afterwards, but I only used that two years and I got rid of it. <sup>Because</sup> it was too slow, and I didn't get <sup>enough work</sup> because the next neighbor over here, he'd have a gas rig himself. And <sup>then</sup> you had to go way off to get another job and it was scattered out--there was nothing there. So I quit that, and I <sup>then</sup> went into the automobile business down here, but that was worse yet. Depression comin on--so I lived through two of them now. The 1933 depression, that was a bad one, closed the banks up and everything else. I don't know what they'll do yet. Maybe they'll close up the whole country, huh? What do you think about it?

SAM: It doesn't look too good to me. I think there's a good chance we're headed for a depression.

C O: Yea, we got both at one time. We got inflation and depression, but the 1930's <sup>then</sup> they had the depression only--no inflation. So you could do something. <sup>Or</sup> that one hand that would help if you <sup>do something now, it</sup> helps ~~the~~ inflation again. Awww, the people are asleep. They don't know how to run nothing when it comes right down to it. Don't you know that every man that's walkin is just as important as the other one! They can't get that in their noodle, y'know. They want to pay one man \$100,000 dollars a year

and another \$1,000. If it wouldn't be for you and me and that, there would be no houses--there'd be nothing. Aren't <sup>we</sup> important? Here these politicians they get sixty, seventy thousand dollars a year and they raise their salaries anyway. No, we can't run a nation like that, that'll never work. You <sup>should</sup> see that everybody gets a job and there's where they <sup>should</sup> ~~should~~ <sup>start</sup> start with the people. I think we should have a thirty hour week now myself. And they should be paid enough so that <sup>you could</sup> we live according to our country. And no overtime, that's another fake. Because then the people can't work and make a few dollars extra anymore, because they don't want to pay that, see? And it's the same thing, if you have a contract somewhere, and you <sup>got to</sup> move a whole lot of machinery in there and you got a job to finish before winter; *Well*, you can't pay them time and a half to finish jobs, so they have to quit and go back next spring. That puts the cost up. You have to re-start, y'know. And waiters are the ones that get hooked worse. They can't work over eight hours, y'know, and y'know <sup>what</sup> <sup>is,</sup> a restaurant those eight hours a day may not have a god damn person there. Should let em work twelve if they want to, but no overtime, see?

SAM: Do you think everybody could be given the same amount of money? Everybody could make the same?

C O: Well, I don't say it should be exactly the same--that wouldn't work either I don't think, but I mean <sup>they</sup> should have it pay according to how we live in this country, what it takes for a family of four or something, and pay that kind of a wage, see. And then <sup>they</sup> should get away from this income tax business, taking your money away from you before you can use it. That's the dirtiest law we have. When you go out and work, you want to <sup>work so you can</sup> get some money so you can buy your car or <sup>a</sup> home or clothes or stuff. Then they take

that money before you can use it. They should tax it at the factory--  
 manufacturing <sup>or</sup> tax, that's where it should be. Then if you got a bad year,  
 say, well, I'll wear these shoes twice as long now, and I won't buy  
 me no pants, add that way you can get back up, see? That's adjusted itself--  
 that tax system. If a man's get a lot of money, he'll buy just the  
 same anyway. And how simple it'd be to collect it. Just one man, one  
 person, you might say, at the factory, owns it and does the business, and  
 he sends a check to the government and that's all there's to it. Here  
 they got income tax where they <sup>can</sup> deduct for this, deduct for that and  
deduct for this, and fuss it up, so it costs them twenty-five per  
 cent to collect the taxes. Yes, it does. <sup>Under a</sup> manufacturing tax it wouldn't  
 cost them anything. Y'know, you make so many yards of cloth or automobiles  
 or whatever it is, but then the politician will come around,  
 or other people -- they're queer, y'know. They don't  
savvy how, stuff works. You <sup>got to</sup> have labor, don't you, to make  
 something and you gotta have taxes to run the country. Those two things  
 are with us forever, see? But then they'll say, "Well, if you make a  
 manufacturing tax, then the man that buys <sup>that material, he'll have</sup> <sup>to pay the tax."</sup>  
 Well, don't they pay for labor? Isn't that more than the tax? They don't  
 kick on that. So if you get somethin left in the store that you can't sell,  
 you have paid for the labor. So there you <sup>are</sup>, same thing, <sup>it's</sup> here. It's  
 got to have the taxes to run the nation with, and you got to have the labor  
 to make the things. And if they don't sell that part, they're out the  
 labor, aren't they? They're out the taxes too. It's nothin wrong with  
 it at all. But that's what they'll use, y'know. They won't! Well now, when  
 I buy something I have to pay taxes on this and have it in the shelf." Well,



why don't they say "I've got to pay labor and leave it on the shelf" too?"  
Same thing.

Because taxes and the labor we go to have.

SAM: Carl, did you borrow money from the Bank of Troy when you went in to business? Did you have to borrow? Or how'd you get started?

C O: No, I never borrowed any. Well I did too. I owed the bank \$1,800  
I think, when they closed it. But I had that much on the account too.  
And I asked them afterwards--"I wouldn't have lost anything then," I said.  
"You bet you would have lost, you wouldn't get paid for that money you  
had there--you had to pay the bill anyway." So you see how the laws are, don't  
ya?

SAM: So you didn't use the Bank at Troy.

C O: Well, I did for a while there. I wanted to sell the farm y'know, and then  
I'd get money and the banker said, "No, you don't have to sell the farm  
for that. You can come in here and borrow some money if you want it." But  
I was just about ready to pay up there what I owed. I'd been buying a whole lot  
of cars and stuff. I think it was 1,800, and I had that much in the checking  
account  
, but I would have lost the whole business the way the law was.

SAM: Were they good to you as far as giving you what you needed? The bank?

C O: Oh yea, I could get anything I wanted. The banker even, when I built the  
his  
service station, y'know, I had a son with me when we went to Moscow and  
it didn't pay good there so I sold out. We didn't make no money, we were runnin behind  
to beat hell  
up in Moscow. So the banker, he come over to me and said, "You build  
a service station." And I said, "No, I can't afford it now, I'm broke."  
"No," he said, "you go ahead and build, and you go out to the lumber yard and  
get your stuff and charge it and build it!" So I did.

SAM: This was Ole, Ole Bohman.

So first you started in Moscow and then you came to Troy with the business?

C O: Well, I first started here. I sold Oldsmobiles here, y'know, and things  
was going pretty good so the Bohman kid, he come around and he said, "I want

to go in with you. How much will it cost?" "\$5,000," I said. And he done that, y'know. And then the big outfit in Spokane we dealt <sup>through</sup>, they had a garage in Moscow, the fella wanted to quit, so we bought them out, see, up there. And then we moved across the street and took the Chevrolet afterwards, But then <sup>things</sup> started getting so bum <sup>we</sup> couldn't sell nothin. And then the trade-ins were bad those days, y'know, cause all the cars you trade<sup>d</sup> in, you couldn't hardly sell em, because they were out of date, a hundred per cent. Just like the Model T now, and that Chevrolet, first to come out, they fell to pieces y'know in a hundred miles. And you couldn't sell that stuff. And you couldn't hardly make a deal without takin a trade in, y'know. And the profit wasn't too much on the Chevrolet, either.

SAM: About when was this?

C O: 1927 and '28 when I was up there. And then in '29 I went down here and built this service station.

SAM: Did the bank change much from Behman to Brocke, or were they much the same in their way of philosophy, way of dealing with people?

C O: Well, they were both good that way. Behman there were a lot of Swedes here and he was a Swede, and a lot of them come from the same part, so he got a lot of help from Behman.

C O: Yea.  
SAM: The same part what, of Sweden? Where?

C O: Oh Yarmland they call it, and right around <sup>there</sup> too. And Brocke, he learned a lot from him, y'know, how the bank was run. They run this bank just like it belonged to everybody, the way it should be run, y'know. If they knew a man was good, why they gave him money, he didn't have to put up any mortgage, <sup>or nothin</sup> y'know. And that's what kicked Brocke out. He was running in on the old liberal way. And they got new bank laws now, y'know. And that's the trouble there. And there's so many people banking now, too

so you have to run<sup>the</sup> banks different, y'know, too. Such a thing as writing a bad check those days, it was never heard of anything like that hardly, And being in the red, and all such things.

SAM: But I heard that Broke was real good at being able to decide if a person could be trusted or not--he was a real good judge of people.

G O: Yea, he did, see, he was born and raised around here<sup>too</sup> and he mingled with the people so he knew them. . . . (End of Side C)

And that's ~~the~~ way a lot of them got started here, y'know, <sup>They</sup> didn't have to put up any collateral at all. Just like when I went down there and I talked to Bonman, I said I wanted to sell my place, I guess. He said, "You don't need to do that. You can borrow the money if you want, if you need any." So things are different y'see.

SAM: Well, when you started selling cars were they just pretty new in the country still?

G O: Well, they wasn't real new because they'd been selling a lot of Fords and Chevrolets then, y'know. In 1920 is when the car business started to boom, y'know. Then everybody started owning them, in the twenties. And I was down here in '26 and '27 and '28 and '29, y'see, so it was goin up pretty fast. But then we got that depression<sup>in there</sup> y'see, and set back things. Pretty near all the people that was dealing in automobiles went broke, and every one of them. Two, three in Lewiston and Spokane and here, down in Pullman. It was just like I said, you had to take in <sup>poor</sup> trades And then, you had to guarantee the paper. The banks wouldn't look at anything when you sold a car--they wouldn't take it at all. Then if you had to repossess it, then you had to pay it <sup>out</sup> yourself--even a new car, y'know. If you bought a new car you had to pay so much down, and then there was interest to pay, and then there was insurance to pay and all that. So if you got a third down on it and put it on the paper, he hadn't paid anything

that guy--he still owed just as much as the car did. And then we <sup>'d</sup> got stuck with that, y'see, it would put us in, we could buy a new car for that money, less money than the old. And they had one finance company that would take it and guarantee it, but the rates <sup>were</sup> so high that you couldn't sell a car if you used that. So you had to use that other one, and when you signed it.

SAM: Why wouldn't the banks take it. . .

I don't know.

C O: They wouldn't take any automobiles at all. Oh, they might take some rich feller, but he didn't need the money, he wouldn't buy one unless he had the money anyway, bigger people.

SAM: Did you have many contracts fall through?

C O: Oh, yea, we <sup>had to</sup> repossess quite a bit. And that's what made it so tough y'know. And then those old cars, y'know, that you took in, they were outmoded anyway. There was one car that the Chevrolet had--they gave \$35 to smash it up, <sup>take a sledge.</sup> Yea, because they didn't want to make parts for em anymore, see? And when you trade, maybe you have to give fifty or a hundred <sup>dollars</sup> for that. Well, that was your profit right there, see? So it was pretty tough sleddin. They'd come down, yknow, and then they changed the model; from '27 to '28--the '28 was twice the car the '27 was, see?

SAM: Twice the car?

C O: Yea, twice as good built, everything in it. The '27, that fell to pieces all the time, y'know. <sup>So</sup> they come down and said, "We got four carloads of '27 cars you gotta take." I said, "We won't take a godamn one." "Well," he said, "then you lose your franchise." I said, "What's the difference. If we take the cars we <sup>are</sup> broke and we lose it anyway." So we finally agreed then we had a truck sold, and there was a truck on one of them, so we took one of the carloads because we had that truck on it. But then we had three '27's anyway there. And we had some on the floor, and you

would have made ninety dollars profit on those damn things, y'know. And the new Chevrolet didn't cost any more and they were worth \$200 more at least, just even the looks on em--they were a little bigger and nicer and better built all over. So you see what a pickle that was. No, <sup>we</sup> one went and we repossessed, the big finance man come out, and "We got to go down and repossess it. Yea,<sup>a</sup> Model-T on Texas Ridge, you better go with me." So we went and there it stood way<sup>off</sup> on the rimrock. I said, "Leave it there. Let's go home--it's goin to cost us more to take it home than it's worth."

SAM: What had they done? They'd thrown it over the side? How had they gotten it down there?

C O: I don't know, somebody that couldn't pay for it, he didn't give a damn, I guess he drove it down there and left it there. Then I talked to a dealer from North Dakota after I was in the service station on how he come out. "Oh," he said, "I went plumb busted. They come around, the finance company <sup>come</sup> around and said <sup>you</sup> gotta go out and repossess the cars." Well, "if <sup>he</sup> said, I do I'm broke. There's no use--I can't do it." Well, "the finance man said, 'we'll let it go for six weeks and then we'll go out and see what we can do.'" And when they went there wasn't a goddamn tire on the cars or nothing--they'd stole all the tires, broke the windshields and everything--ruined them. He lost everything, see? And it won't <sup>be</sup> much better now, if it gets really bad. I think ninety per cent of the cars, not ninety but fifty per cent of the cars. <sup>They owe for-</sup> maybe more than that. Who are they gonna sell em to? Most families got two cars already, or three. And there's no opening for a used car. If you have to take them back, why gee whiz, what a pickle that would be. You'd never come out--they couldn't sell em anyw<sup>heres</sup>, because they already got cars.

SAM: When you were selling cars were most of the cars the first one that the

person had owned?

C O: Yea, a lot of them. I had to train people how to drive, y'know, too. Quite a few of them. But he said, "Never train your wife to drive because that don't work. Let somebody else do that. Because they get so nervous and funny. The best place is to go out on a field somewheres where there's open ground, and they learn quickest there, y'know. Because if you get on the road they get nervous--seeing another car comin. And if you get on the field, you can drive any old direction, stop and start." So I done that a little bit, all right. Took em out on an opening somewheres.

SAM: Who is this he you're talking about.

C O: Well, it was one of the territory men that comes <sup>around</sup> and checks <sup>and</sup> see if everything is all right.

SAM: So you took people out and taught em how to drive?

C O: Yea.

SAM: Was that hard?

C O: Oh no, it was pretty easy, because they were pretty simple then. The only thing when they jumped from the Model-T to the gear shift, y'know, then they was a little <sup>puzzled</sup>. But for a drive we were all right, y'know. But I guess I told you about that man who come around and the fella told him, "I traded cars up here two years ago and I got beat," he said, "and I didn't want anybody to know about it."

SAM: No.

C O: He told the Chevrolet guy <sup>that</sup> "Well, what's the matter with it?" he said. "Well, it makes a helluva noise in there," he said, "when <sup>I was gonna</sup> back up." He had it in the garage, y'know." So he said, "I'll go with you home and see."

There stood a car, two years old, brand new--he just drove it home, that guy. And there was nothing wrong with it--he was gonna back out--he didn't push the clutch in--he pulled on the lever. And it rattled when

the gears started goin together. And this fella said, "Why <sup>didn't</sup> you go back and tell him or. . . ." "Oh, I <sup>didn't</sup> know, "I thought somebody had beat me," he said, "and I don't want anybody to know that I g<sup>o</sup>t beat." And that was true, that story, it was the Chevrolet man himself that told it.

SAM: So he left it sittin in his garage for two years?

C O: Yea. Never moved it. <sup>He</sup> just drove it home. He traded off a Model-T, y'see, and he thought the outfit beat him, sold him a rattletrap, see?

SAM: I heard stories about how when they first came in with the cars that people would try to stop em by yellin "Whoa."

C O: Yea, they done that too, all right. Yea, they done that all right, But take a Model-T was pretty easy to learn to drive. If you could steer that's about all you had to do. You had your pedals there, you know. Pedal for back up, pedal for brake, and pedal for second gear and all that. So it was a pretty good little car. Because they had <sup>awful</sup> poor roads then too, you know, <sup>mud</sup> holes so you had to carry a stick with you to see if you could get across or not. One fella went back East in a Model T, he said he drove that car about forty miles an hour all the way there, <sup>he still</sup> on the highway, see? It never hardly ever broke down, y'know--Model-T's--they were tough. You had to do a lot of upkeep on em like the ignition system, y'know, they had them coils in there, you had to file them so they'd cut the electricity off right, y'know--that's about all you had to do in em, and then put brake <sup>on</sup> linings in, so nothin else broke <sup>em</sup>--hardly ever. And they were handled pretty rough, too, y'know on these kind of roads we had, where you'd have to back up and take a run at it to make it over the hill and all that. But they had the best steel in them, Model-T's was ever made, y'know, pretty near all of it <sup>where</sup> was Swedish steel in all the shafts and axels. <sup>there's</sup> Peterson and

Carlson stated there, a wrench factory, they bought Model-T axels and braces, and that's what they made them good tools from. Even the fender brace, y'know, that come out to hold up the fender, a little rod 'bout like your finger, but it tapered, kind of. And you know what they made of them? They just took em in there and cut em off and made punches--best punches in the world.

SAM: What factory is this?

C O: That's Model T--Ford.

SAM: Oh, you said Peterson and. . .

C O: Yea, Peterson and Carlson, they used to come around and sell tools when I was in business, y'know, sockets and all kinds . . . And they started from that, buying up old Model-T wrecks and stuff, and took all that good stuff, the axels out and braces, and made tools from them. And they guaranteed their tools, that's why they got such a good name. Pretty hard to beat that Swedish steel, y'know. And they put that in the axels and stuff, y'know too, something that had to carry any load, they always put the best steel in there.

C O: Where was the money in the business for you? Did you get it from sellin the cars?

C O: Well, I never made any money, never made any money there. Made more workin, thrashing and workin out. No, and the damn gas <sup>business</sup>, I didn't make no money there. I was right through the depression with the whole works. I just had the station finished in 1930, and it was depression after that. But I was single and I lived upstairs and had a bed up there--it didn't cost me anything to live. So I didn't lose it. But I got a good break when I got through building that station and the shoppack there too, y'know. And the fella who was hauling oil to me from Deary, he bought it. And I got \$8,500 for it and that's what I paid for the whole works. So I had the shopp left, so I come out there, y'see, or else I'd been broke.



And then lease<sup>d</sup> it back from him, y'know, so I run it then for about eight, ten years. But didn't make any money though. I was sittin in there watching the other day, three cars come in there and bought gas. You know how many trips I had to make out when I was there to sell that much gas? Twenty trips! Well, they bought two gallons, three gallons, and four gallons was a big sale--that was two bits a gallon--one dollar, see? And they come in and bought six, seven, eight, ten dollars worth of gas-- those three cars. And there's ten times as many cars out as there was then.

SAM: Yea, that's right.

C O: Sure. We only got three cents a gallon profit.

SAM: That's what you got then? Three cents a gallon?

C O: Yea. Well, hell, you'd go out there and sell a dollars worth, four gallons, you'd make twelve cents. And then you had to wipe the windshields for em and put the chains on for nothin and. . .

SAM: Put the what on? You had to put chains on?

C O: Oh, yea. We never charged for that, because the other service station didn't. So you had to do what they did. Now they charge you a dollar and a half, I believe, to put chains on. So there was no profit.

SAM: What about on repairs? Did you make money fixing up cars?

C O: No, we never done any, I leased the shop out back the<sup>re</sup>. It was different people run that. I got thirty dollars a month rent from it, y'see, and that's what kept me goin, see. I slept upstairs and went across the street and got a hamburger and a glass of milk, then I went up and slept upstairs. Then I had six-hundred dollars in the safe. I had a safe down there--I didn't deposit any money there for three or four months, y'know. I just put the cash in the safe and deposited the checks only. So I had a little money in the depression. That helped me collect some bills that way too, y'know. They come in there and want to pay with a check, y'see.

And I got squared up and the banker said, "Where in the hell did that fella get all the money from, anyway. That's the only bank in Troy that's any good,"

Ole Bohman said. No, I didn't want to quit depositing all together because that would hurt the bank, y'know. I knew that they was goin under. A fella from Spokane told me that. And then I told that fella in Deary <sup>that bought</sup> <sub>my</sub> service station, I said, "If you got any money in the Deary bank you better pull her out." "No, no," he said, "the big bank on Spokane is behind it," he said. "Well," I said, "that's why it's goin under." He didn't take it out either, and they lost quite a bit up there. "No," he said, "the reason they're goin broke, they got so much money loaned on timber." And you couldn't sell a board in the depression, y'know--the timber was worthless. And if you had it on cattle, then you were finished right. You couldn't sell the cattle--you had to feed em and that cost money, y'see. But that was poor loans, y'see, and that's what this fella said, he was a government man, I think. And he said, "They're goin broke all them banks."

SAM: But not the Bank of Troy--the Bank of Troy made it.

C O: Yea. It made it. It was the only one around the country that made it too.

Yea.

SAM: Oh, I wanted to ask you about prohibition.

C O: Prohibition? (chuckles)

SAM: Yea. I was goin to ask you about what you remember about that? You told me once that you got arrested but you didn't do anything.

C O: Yea. I took a guy home then. I was workin in the service station down there, that Dinsmore, he had the first one, <sup>here,</sup> I worked for him. And we were open till eleven o'clock, y'know, and I closed the doors, and had this money in my pocket and everything, and then a fella said, "I want to <sup>you</sup> take me home." <sup>he says,</sup> "It's too far to walk."

And that was a fella that owed me some money- thrash bill--he owed me a thrash bill. I thought I'd better be on the good side with him and took him home. Then I went to drive up to his house he said, "No, it's a rough road, stop here by the road." We stopped there and here comes the policeman. And he had a pop bottle full of whiskey, and he sat that in the car and jumped out and said, "I want to see who they are." And then I found out they were policeman, and I was goin' to throw it out, y'know, and they grabbed it before I got rid of it. So we got arrested for havin' liquor, but I didn't get anything for that. I proved it there, but they wouldn't take my word, I said, "Lookie here, I'm no bootlegger or anything. I'm workin' for a station down here, there's the checks in here and everything." So Axel Bohman, he heard it the next day, and he come right up to Moscow and turned me loose. He told em the whole story. But he got a little fine and thirty days or somethin', I forgot, twenty days or somethin' . . .

SAM: So they believed you after. . .

C O: Well, I had the proof, I had nothin' to do with that. But I went up to the trial when they had it, this guy, y'know.

And I learned a whole lot there. The people on the witness stand lies only; they never tell the truth. And he didn't tell one thing the truth. Here's what he said about me: "He reached down here, he said, 'Do you want a night cap?' and handed it to me." And that's what he did. He's the one that had it here. And everything they asked him, pretty near, it was the same story--it was all lies. (cuckles) Yea.

SAM: Did you ever hear about Sam McKeon's moonshinin'?

C O: Oh yea, he was one of the experts here. He's the one that sat on the box and had a whole gallon under it when they come out to search him. They

never lift<sup>ed</sup> the box up, and there was his whiskey sittin out on the lawn, see?  
 He knew they was comin, I guess, so he <sup>took and</sup> put the whiskey under the box and  
 sat down on it. And then they searched his house and didn't find nothin.  
 Yea. Everybody made whiskey pretty near then, after <sup>they</sup> learn<sup>ed</sup> how to make  
 it. It was <sup>foolish</sup> to pay thirty dollars a gallon for moonshine when you can  
 make it for fifty cents. (Breaks) We went barefooted in the snow, that's  
 true, but I'll tell you how it happened mostly. See, we didn't have no  
 overshoes those days, we only had leather shoes, and <sup>we</sup> used them in the  
 winter--they get wet. And then they got so hard you couldn't get em  
 on your feet, y'know, you had to grease em up when they dried out. So  
 we'd run to the barn and back and fed the cattle baref<sup>ooted</sup>. We didn't  
 run out <sup>through</sup> the snow or anything like that, y'know. And that's the way  
 that happened. So we made our own shoe grease, y'know. We got ahold  
 of a big cast iron kettle and then cut a whole lot of chips, y'know, it  
 was pitchy, and then we built a fire outside and got the tar out. The  
 tar, you know what that is. And then we mix that with lard--tallow.  
 And boil<sup>ed</sup> it, and that's what we grease<sup>d</sup> our shoes <sup>with</sup>. And we didn't have  
 any grease then so we couldn't get our shoes on.

SAM: So then you had to run barefooted?

C O: Yea, we had to run out and feed the cattle, y'know. You could put somebody  
 else's shoes on if you wanted to, but we just done that for fun to see  
 how we'd like it, about a hundred and fifty feet to the barn and back, so  
 it get's pretty cold, <sup>all right.</sup> We got kind of a kick out of it, y'know, too. But  
 we couldn't get out in the winter very much <sup>with</sup> leather shoes only, y'know.

SAM: I don't know how your feet could stand it?

C O: Well, the only time we could stand it was when the snow was real frozen  
 hard so we could run on the top of it. Then leather shoes would do pretty  
 well, y'know.

SAM: No, I mean in barefeet, how you could stand. . .

C O: Oh, well, you had to run fast, y'know. It got pretty cold all right.

SAM: So everything you told me is true.

C O: Everything. And I could maybe tell you more too, but I don't know.  
 did you,  
 Yea. You didn't make your second lady and show your wife that I showed you  
 here?

SAM: What?

C O: Victor Anderson, the clown.

SAM: What was that again?

C O: He played the Jew's harp, this guy, and he went between the house, he  
 homes,  
 lived there right close to us and played for you for fun. He made a  
 of  
 horn/bark and you could hear him for a quarter mile.

SAM: He made a horn of bark?

C O: Yea. And sang in it. And then he played the Jew's harp. And then they  
 always ask him, "Are you single?" "No, I got my wife with me all the time."  
 Then he'd take that out of his box and put them two eyes here and a little  
 hair and "Here she is--She's with me all the time," he said, "don't you see  
 her?" SAM: (laughs) I showed you that here, didn't I?

SAM: Were the two eyes little buttons?

C O: What he used, he had regular doll's eyes, y'know, those that tip back and  
 forth. That's what he got ahold of, and they fit good here, but I made me a pair  
 here for fun. Maybe I lost them too--here--just a couple beads. See,  
 (Carl clinches his fist.)  
 put that there, see? That's the eyes, see? Like this. And then you wrap  
 your handkerchief around there and then you got a real person there. See?  
 And you see the y're alive too, it moves. (laughs)

SAM: Carl, what's the story that goes along with the heaven and hell that. . .  
 What's the story that goes along with that?

C O: Oh, you can use any story you want. If I was goin to show it to you now  
 I'd use it between Nixon and Agnew.

SAM: What was the story that he used to tell.

C O: Well, he used the presidents all the time, this fella that told it, but they were dead then. But Nixon, and if you want to make a good story about it, what I'd do, I'd say, "Well, here is Nixon and Agnew goin to Heaven. And then Nixon says, 'What did you do with my passport?' 'Oh, don't you remember,' Agnew said, 'you told me to sell that for \$50,000 and we split the money. Oh and don't worry--you can have half of mine, we'll get in anyway.' That's the story I'm gonna use on it.

SAM: He said, "You give him half of mine, we'll get in anyway," and then he gives him the bad half.

C O: Yea, he gives the bad half to him. And St. Peter said, "You go down there--you don't belong up here." When the one that gets across he says, "Come on in, come on in."

SAM: And what was the song that Victor Anderson used to sing?

C O: He used to sing a Swede song.

Did you understand it?

SAM: Come on, you know I don't. <sup>CO:</sup> "May I put a ring on your little white hand, and a crown in your hair, and you shall be my maiden so long as we're here on the world." That's the way the song goes in English. It's a nice song, y'know. "May I put a ring on your little white hand," see he's singin to his girl. "And a crown in your hair, and you can be my maiden so long as we're here on this world." That's what he used to sing. But this rigging see...

SAM: With the Jew's harp and the. . .

C O: Yea, Jew's harp--he played that all the time. He was a real clown. They haven't got any clown as good on T. V. as he was. He's kind of funny

lookin too, y'know, so he could put on. That's old Vic Anderson.

His brother lives in Clarkston, the oldest one, he's ninety-three years old, I believe.

SAM: Is that Art Anderson?

C O: Yea. And Victor he was the oldest in that family, well they had three or four girls too.

(End of Side D)

SAM: You know, there's one thing I want to ask you about and that was. . .It seems to me that it's hard to find what the true story is of the early days, y'know, in the West. It seems like you always hear about Buffalo Bill and that sort of stuff and you don't hear about the homesteading and the way that it was.

C O: I read an article in, I don't know if it was Reader's Digest over three or four years ago, and they said that they didn't give the right people the honor for building the West. They wrote about Cody and them that didn't do nothing but shoot one buffalo, ~~it~~ said. It's the homesteaders--they're the ones that built the West and raised the families. And they never give them anything at all--it was a big article about it. How they can throw everything on one man, y'know. And Bill Cody, he was nothin but a crook, pretty near like the rest of the politicians are. He didn't do nothin, but he'd ride around. And that's the way everything is--one of them got <sup>to have</sup> all the honor, and the others nothing. No, it was quite an article I read about that.

SAM: I can't figure that out. I mean do you feel that the story hasn't been told yet?

C O: Well, in one way it hasn't, so people understand--they just think that all you had to do was go out here and take a homestead and everything flew up. It wasn't even a road--it wasn't <sup>even</sup> a town--it wasn't a horse even. There was one team of horses here for the longest time before anybody else had a team of horses even. Now they got three, four cars to jump in and go and they just think things are that way, was that way then, I guess, but it wasn't. You had to walk, carry your stuff on your back like my dad did. He carried everything from Moscow out twenty miles except the stove. He couldn't carry it--it was too big. So he got old Osterberg with his team to haul his stove out for him. And there was no roads, you had to go through the trees, and it was no roads or nothin, not even a town here--rail wasn't here even, see? I don't see how they made it myself. I can't figure it out. Just think if you and I should start out like that, and go way back and there isn't a home or house or nothin to go into. That's what they had here--it was no houses, no roads, no nothing. And they couldn't build a house very fast either because them trees were too big to handle and everything. And you couldn't find anything to make a roof of hardly.

SAM: What was the first place that your father built? Was it just a . . .

C O: Well, he had a lean-to then. They just put up some poles--like this-- and it leans. And they slept under that. And then they cooked out on a fire. They used to call that, they had a name on that canyon, I don't know what the name was now--it wasn't much of a canyon, but there was a Swede name for it--Lean-to anyway, they called it. Call that canyon after that lean-to they had there. And then the <sup>COWS</sup> come in and they wrecked all the food one time. They had one cow, and he got in and tromped everything to pieces. 'Course it wasn't too bad, because <sup>you</sup> had neighbors pretty close



all over, y'see--half a mile or so, quarter mile. So you got a little help that way. No, people don't see those things. They go into town-- you drive to town, nine, ten miles and you got nine, ten miles back, you got a twenty mile trip just to go to town. So goin to town--that's something that didn't happen very often. They couldn't afford <sup>it</sup> unless they were hauling wheat or something like that. And they hauled that in <sup>in</sup> the winter always. But the only thing that helped them at all, they just happened to get the railroad in here next year, y'see. My dad worked on the railroad here and made a few dollars that way. So he had a little to buy with, y'know. And that helped quite a bit. And <sup>then</sup> later on they started farmin in Genessee because that was open country there, y'know. They plowed there and seeded and he used to work in the harvest there. But then he could never come home--he had to stay until the harvest was over. It was thirty, forty mile trip, y'know. He had to ride with somebody down here to get to the job, and then you stayed there until it was finished. And she, my mother, was sittin up here in a lean-to with a couple of kids, but her dad homesteaded right by so it was <sup>'nt</sup> too bad. He was home--the old man. But her brother, he lived there to <sup>o</sup> but he had to go to work like the rest of them.

SAM: How many years was it before he built the house?

C O: Oh, I don't know for sure. He <sup>built</sup> first a small cabin, I think and then he added on to it. They were all logs, y'know--<sup>hewed</sup> logs and dovetailed together. Not the regular--you know what the dovetail looks like? I don't see how he could do all that and get it to fit like that. It old my brother to leave on <sup>e</sup> of those buildings but he tore all down. So you couldn't see how the dovetailing was. And then the house had to burn up on top of it. And then after they got the houses built, then they went out with the big, broad-axe and smoothed the walls down, see,

so they got . . . smooth, and then they put lumber on the outside to make em look better, y'see. But the house I was born in was a log cabin. But when you see the picture of it, there's boards . . . all over, but the logs are still in there. And then they had the scaffolding, y'know, and that was quite a job. They called them . . . broad-axes-- You had a big broad axe, . . . , about that wide, y'know, and then they'd have a scaffold and then they'd go like this. And smooth<sup>ed</sup> the wall even all the way down, see? There was one man up here, Johnson, he was an expert in that broad-axing. They hired him sometimes to come and do the broad-axing for us. So they were pretty good on woodwork , the Swedes. They come from a wood country, y'know, in Sweden was. . . . Dad, he <sup>My</sup> was <sup>only</sup> twenty-two years old when he homesteaded here, y'know, and how can he learn all that stuff that way? I can't figure out--he was a carpenter and he laid bricks, and all that, so that's helped him. It isn't very many houses around--they're tore down now, lots of em-- <sup>part</sup> on the Dry Creek Ridge that he wasn't along and built. He was with pretty near everyone. They come and got him all the time to do any carpenter work. And then when we made the brick out there, he laid the brick in the chimneys for them too. So he worked out quite a bit.

SAM: When did you have this fire at the house?

C O: Well, that's when Emil lived there alone--no, they wasn't alone. And no, they wasn't alone, they were both home. I don't know--it caught from the chimney. It <sup>settled</sup> some way and made open a crack like that in it, see? And they had fire in the stove and it caught upstairs, y'know and there was no chance to get up there either. It was way up in the attic.

SAM: What about <sup>for</sup> your mother--the kind of work that she had to do with all the kids...

C O: Oh, there was a lot of work. She did all the <sup>seeding</sup> by hand, when they farmed, y'know. And my dad, he run the harrow and harrowed it down, see. The seed was on the ground and then they'd harrow over it, to cover up the seed, so he done all that work. I used to watch her. She held this bag here full of <sup>wheat</sup> and then she'd go like this.

SAM: From side to. . . one hand to the other hand.

C O: No, she was quite a worker. She was a pretty husky woman too. And then she milked cows and took care of the cows pretty near all the time.

All those kids in the family.

SAM: | You had so many bothers and sisters.

C O: Yea, eight boys and four girls. That was quite a family. But to start with would be the worst anyway, because when people have their first kids and they're all small, y'know. But after the other ones start growin up, then they got help, see. They'd help then, y'know, but till the kid got about eight, ten years old, y'know, then they can start helpin a little. But to have kids that's just born and only a year or two old, another one about three and four and so on, that makes a lot of work. So that was quite a thing, but after they grew up then they got help from the bigger ones. Yea, so you see this country isn't very old. It isn't more than a hundred years old about. So you see how fast things have moved the last fifty years, and this country's goin to ruin theirselves if they don't change it, she'd go in all the pieces. Well hell, goddamn it, they're takin, all the big farmers taking all the land now. And now they're tryin get em back on. I seen in Canada, they're workin that now. The government buys up land and he sells it to get the people back on the land. Well, you keep drivin everybody to the big cities, crime there and

fighting <sup>and</sup> stealing and everything else. When they made the law, the law was a hundred and sixty acres was all you could take of land. Why don't they make a law now that you can have about three-hundred acres only. And then split it up and get the people out and everything, will help the whole nation, because all these smaller farmers, they got two or three cows, they got some pigs, they got some chickens, and then there wouldn't be a trust on all this stuff you're buying. They made butter and sold it, see? Now they have to come from a big outfit and they raise the price <sup>and</sup> just control the food, practically. And now it'd be worse than ever, And then when they raise this five dollar wheat, that was a real land killer, because if you and I sat here and wanted to buy a hundred and sixty acres of land, and <sup>it was</sup> five dollar wheat, them big ones would bid a thousand dollars an acre. And we could never pay it off if we bought it, because we didn't have enough. See, we do things so crazy here. I don't know what to think about this country anymore. It's no sense in it.

SAM: Do you have much of a feeling about when things started going haywire? Or who the president or when?

C O: Well, I don't know what started it a-goin--it was too free, I guess. They didn't regulate the right things. That's the way I got it figured out. And the big guy took over everything, practically. He took over the mill and he took over the farms and he took over all the factories, he took over all the small stores--they're goin out of business all over because of these big chain stores, and they control the prices, see? So it's no good. And another thing, we make too much stuff that we don't need and sell to people. Yea, I talk to people down in the grocery store, and they said, "By god it's gettin so I can't even buy anything anymore, because I don't know what to buy, it's so goddamn many things here, I don't

know what I want!" (laughs) Here he'll have a dozen kinds of cereals, maybe, made from the same thing, only one is rolled this way and the other <sup>one</sup> is rolled that way. (laughs) That makes it hard on the dealers because they carry so much stock--it takes money for that, y'see. Now when ~~we~~ went to the store when we was kids, there was about five or six articles was all we had to buy, and went home. Buy some coffee, sugar, and had their own milk--never had to buy milk, But they sold butter to those stores for people that didn't have any farms, so they could buy the butter there, y'see and the <sup>d</sup>eggs, and stuff like that. And the coffee would come in big barrels y'know, and they'd scoop a couple of scoops in the package and wrap it up; and you took it home and put it in the old grinder and ground it yourself. You had better coffee too. That's why they seal the cans so tight because they lose the flavor when you break it up, see?

SAM: I grind my own coffee.

C O: Yea, do you? Well, that's what you should do--it's better flavor isn't it? SAM: Yea. CO: But it's one thing you can do that I don't think about, that's if you got ground coffee, put it in the Frigidaire after you open it once, see. It don't steam off then when it's warm, y'see, it steams it off and you lose a lot of the flavor.

SAM: I wanted to ask you about the family, too. You said that they weren't religious--your father, he wasn't religious, but your mother, she was. Is that right?

C O: Well, she wasn't very religious at all--she never went to church at all, but she brought <sup>was</sup> <sup>up</sup> in Sweden, I guess. Religion had the big power over there then. That's why they left the country, for the bankers and religion and militar<sup>ism</sup>. You had to go to the army and spend four years there all

the time.

SAM: But you said that your father and she, they used to disagree about the Bible?

C O: Oh, yea, but she didn't read much. My dad, he read all the time. He was posted and everything. He'd read all the time. And lots of them, they don't read, y'know, they just hear a few good things, but they read the whole thing out- you can find out yourself.

SAM: So what would they disagree about?

C O: Oh, it was something about, oh, I don't know, marriage or somethin. Pa said somethin and Ma was against it. So Pa said, "You go and read it in your Bible yourself then." And she did, and then she told me, "I never thought anything like that was in the Bible!" (laughs) So you see, here a few preachers tell you somethin. They just take the high spots and talk on that only.

SAM: Well, the thing I was wondering about that, and I asked you this a little before was that if they didn't teach you religion very much, they taught you though to be good to other people?

C O: Oh, yea, that was the main thing, Honesty. If there was any crooks around our neighborhood we could never associate with em. She wouldn't allow us to be close to em, see? So when I went in the business, I got fooled. I didn't know there was that many crooks in the world as they was. They wouldn't pay their bills or nothin. I lost over four thousand dollars the time I was there on gas. So you see how much you lose then. Because it was such a small profit in gas, and four thousand is just pretty near like taking it out of your pocket. But if you're selling something that you double your money on and lose four thousand, then you don't lose so much. But on gas, it was such a small margin, y'know--awful loss.

SAM: Well, what did your parents teach you then? As far as dealing with other people--gettin along with people?

C O: Well, they just told us to be honest and do the right thing, and help people if they need help and stuff like that. And everyday life that you live is simple if you do those things, why you <sup>'ll</sup> have no problems.

SAM: You mentioned to me about getting a black spot on your heart?

C O: Oh, yea they told us that, if we swear too much. Everytime you swear you get a black spot on the heart, Ma used to tell us. And when that gets black all over, you die. (laughs) Well, that maybe was pretty good teaching for a kid so he wouldn't get too rough, huh? (chuckles) Yea, I 'll tell you what's wrong with the cuntry too, y'know. A lot of people, they were poor that come to the country--but that's so old now, that should have died it looks like. And always readin about rich people, y'know--how nice they have it. And they come here to get rich, see, that's on their mind and that's all they seem to give a damn for. There's more than riches that counts, y'know.. But that's the ones th<sup>ey</sup> talk about--that rich man, he got everything, he got everything, and of course, you can't <sup>blame him</sup> for that. But I <sup>never got</sup> rich--I wanted to get rich all right, but I had a different idea in my head. If I got rich I was gonna help the poor because I know what it was to be poor.

SAM: Did you really feel that way?

C O: Yea. That's why I invested a lot of money but never hit anything. I was in <sup>the</sup> oil fields in Montana, mining, mining several places, bought stock in a lot of different mines--never hit a darn thing. The only thing I hit at all was the brick yard here--I had stock in that, but <sup>I</sup> that didn't have much--I doubled my money there, that's all.

SAM: But how were you going to help the poor if you had money?

C O: Well, if I seen somebody that needed a better house I'd fix it up for them. Not keep donating to them all the time--that don't help anything. Do something for them that does some good. Some people live in shacks, y'know, and they got kids and they got nothing and they never get ahold of nothin. Some people you can't help too, but that ain't very big per centage. Put them on their feet so they can make it. See, if you get behind one time, you get so hard up that they have to pay debts all their life--you never get anywheres, you're workin for somebody else all the time.

SAM: Oh, yea there was one more thing I was thinking of too. That was when you quit school. Now what was the story on that--why did you quit?

C O: Well, it was many reasons. I didn't like the teacher very good and they didn't teach anything that done me any good. I was so darn good at arithmetic that I beat him all the time. And I wanted to go out and earn some money so I could buy me some better clothes and stuff like that. And that's what done it. But I didn't know, I stood there and I looked at the schoolhouse and I <sup>then</sup> looked at where we lived, and finally I turned and went home. I come pretty near goin back again. But they didn't teach you much <sup>that</sup> help <sup>ed</sup> you much in school in those days. We didn't have much schooling anyway--three months a year, I started with. Then it went to six finally. Then they had the teacher--she got thirty dollars a month. And then they raised it to sixty. When I quit the teacher got sixty dollars a month, I believe.

SAM: Did you come to blows with this teacher when you left? Did this teacher hit you?

C O: No, no, I never was hit. I never had any trouble with teachers hardly. <sup>the</sup>



It was something I said or something that he didn't like--I forgot what it was, out playing with the other kids, I believe. No, I was good in school--I never started any trouble. Never stood in the corner, never had to sit in afterwards like to punish them--you had to stay in school after it was over, y'know. None of that--never. I went back and seen one teacher I hadn't seen for a long time and I said, "You know who I am?" "No, I don't know." I said, "I used to go to school for you." "Oh, you're Albert," she said. "No, I'm the younger one, Carl." "How in the dickens could I ever forget you? You were my pet in school!" she said. She is still alive too. She lives in Boise now. She must be eight-five<sup>OR</sup> ninety years old now.

SAM: How old were you when you quit school?

C O: About fourteen. 1909 is when I quit.

SAM: When you quit then did you go to work right away?

C O: Well, not right away, but I got a job from my uncle then to be a clerk in a store in Helmer. There was a little town there then--he had a little store there. So I was there in 1909 and '10 when Haley's Comet was on.

SAM: What do you mean--you saw Haley's Comet then?

C O: Yea, and the fella <sup>that</sup> was my partner, he was a barber--he had one wooden leg and he done a little bootlegging--he sold beer, y'know.

SAM: Yea?

C O: See they come out with two beer--one with no alcohol in and then the real beer. You could get that yet, but it was against the law to sell it in Idaho. So when they come in and bought beer he gave them the good beer and then when they went home he gave them the near beer. And they come back with a dozen bottles and what do you do with them? "I throwed em in the gol damn gutter," one fella said. "Give me the good beer--that's what I want!" (laughs) And then they were searching down

in Deary and I come home late--I went down with a couple of boys and we missed the train so we had to walk back. So I come home about midnight up to Helmer and I told that bootlegger there, "The revenue man<sup>is</sup> in Deary, searching all the beer parlors and everything. You better get your beer hidden!" So he had the barrel upstairs, y'know, he had to roll it down the stairway and<sup>we</sup> roll<sup>ed</sup> it out in the chicken house. But nobody ever come though. Morton Low, his name was. I had to fix on that wooden leg every once in<sup>a</sup> while, too, so it would work.

SAM: (laughs) What went wrong with it?

C O: Well, he lost it, he had the wooden leg. . .

SAM: No, I mean. . .

C O: And the joints here y'know would get so they'd wiggle too much. And you had to tighten it up and screws come loose.

SAM: So you went down and warned him that the . . .

C O: Well, we slept upstairs in the same building that it was in, so I woke him up and told him, "By god those beer fellas, they're liable to search you too." Yea.

SAM: Now was that your same uncle when they were building the railroad through, you pulled out some of the stakes?

C O: Yea, that's the one I stayed with on the meadow up there.

SAM: What did you do that time?

C O: Well, he had a nice meadow there, y'know, and what we looked for was bigger fields <sup>and everything</sup> in those days. It was timber all over and I didn't want em to ruin the meadow. So I pulled the stakes out and hid em. But they built the railroad anyway. (laughs) I didn't pull out very many though.

I was only about nine years old then, I guess. But I was down to the surveyors when they were there, y'know and talked to them and everything, y'know ,yea.

SAM: Were there a lot of foreign workers, Italians and people like that?

C O: Yea, there was a lot of Italians, a lot of Italians <sup>here</sup> at that time. When they built the Elk River Mill and that, twenty-five per cent of them I believe was Italians. They couldn't talk English hardly at all. But most of them, they went back, y'know. They come here to make a little money and then go back to Italy. But <sup>I guess</sup>, they were pretty fair to work, but they had to have a boss over about every four or five of them, they said to show them how and stuff like that. Yea, there was a lot of them in Elk River. Yea.

SAM: Did you tell me, Carl, that Johansen, the man that started up Nora, the mill there. . . You told me that he made some money, that he was sort of a tricky guy.

(in Sweden)

C O: Yea, he was a tricky guy. He burnt up the sawmill they said, and he took all the insurance money and his partner didn't get any. Then he had a kid to carry it for him when he come over here so they wouldn't search him. But he was kind of smart too, y'know, He started the brickyard up here.

SAM: Was there something about him using Confederate money? Did you tell me something about that?

C O: Yea, Axel Schman, he told him, "You better pay up that guy now that you swindled back in. . ." Course they were neighbors back there in Sweden. "Yes," he said, "I'll send him the money." He sent Confederate money to him! Yea.

SAM: Oh, I should really get goin, Carl.

(End of Side E)