

GEORGE SCHMALTZ
Second Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam Schragger

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

GEORGE SCHMALTZ

Elk River; b. 1893

millwright, lumberjack

2.6 hours.

minute page

Side A

- 00 1 Tracking The Ridgerunner, Bill Moreland, whose tracks disappeared in the middle of a meadow. He was a good man who stole food from the Forest Service.
- 09 3 Rather than spend time with the bootleggers, he trapped mink in winter. Trapping mink in hollow logs. Fifteen pound grouse in Scandinavia: Kentucky Johnson wanted to import them.
- 18 5 Jericho Mine. All the wealth was in a boulder that had been deposited there. Loscamp befriended Charlie Shils and stole Jericho Mine from him. Loscamp never found anything.
- 25 7 Austrians were clannish. Elk River had two sporting houses. The girls were mostly younger than forty. They were shunned by the town. Most probably got started because of their own inclinations. Lumberjacks logged in the whorehouse and talked about the whorehouse in camp.

Side B

- 00 9 Going deer hunting, he and his friends traded a quart of whiskey for a slab of bacon to get some grease; the miners were appreciative. Scaring a couple who'd killed a deer out of season. Homesteaders paid no attention to the season, while townspeople paid some attention, except during the Depression.
- 09 12 Doggin' deer was an unforgiveable sin. The game warden passed up their illegally shot deer at their winter cabin near Dent. Scared by a golden eagle while he was checking deerhides in the riffles of the river. Game warden and a bunch of grouse.
- 19 14 "Shacking up" for the winter. Baking powder biscuits every lunch. George was the black sheep of the cooks. Fishing on a raft in a deep hole in the river. Passing time - caring for a homesteader who got pneumonia. When his Palouser blew out on Boom Rock, he had to crawl around the point on his hands and knees.
- 27 17 Most loggers were bachelors who planned to keep on logging; they didn't have enough money to consider marriage.
- 29 17 Winning a rifle in a close contest at the shooting gallery at St. Maries' fair. (continued)

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Side C		
00	18	In Hoquiam he walked into a shooting gallery to hear himself being talked about – the same man he'd shot for in St. Maries. He ran a completely honest game.
04	19	Getting Knute and Ed out of Minnie's whorehouse in Hoquiam. Firing a gun in camp upset Ed's performance. Minnie's whorehouse had come to camp; they had breakfast with the men. George laughed at Knute's girl. Camping at Lake Quinalt. Elk River's whorehouses disappeared in the First World War.
13	22	Coast lumberjacks got into more fights because of presence of Finns, who fought with Scandinavians. The Coast was too wet for him, and lacked four seasons. He never saw rough lumberjack fights.
17	22	Joking was their main fun. There was little chance for crookedness since everybody worked. An Elk River man who rolled drunk lumberjacks. When he was toploading on the landing, a bully hooktender was trying to block up the landing with no success; on the last day he piled up the timber he'd been holding back, and George quit. The hooktender was Polish. After being called "Swede" once too often, he called Zivinitch "Bohunk."
27	25	A Dent moonshiner who supplied Elk River lumberjacks killed a homesteader he thought was squealing on him. He confessed to another man when drunk. He left his unsold moonshine with a blacksmith in Malker's camp, and the men drank it all up.
Side D		
00	26	The moonshiners were West Virginians. One thought that a man who wouldn't drink wasn't human. Some anti-Catholics joined the Klan.
06	28	Malker Anderson's wife was slightly retarded. What she did to her daughter.
08	28	He rode the rails rather than pay fare. Going east the freights were loaded; going west they were empty and easy to ride. Going to Seltice, Montana, for whiskey for the camp at St. Maries. Drinking was done mostly on weekends.
16	30	A lumber piler who couldn't stop losing his wages to the card sharks; his defense. George never played because he knew what he was good at.

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Side D (continued)		
19	31	Puttman, a hard worker and big liar. The men caught their daily limit in the creek after work. Puttman always caught more than they did; how he outsmarted George and Ed Lilliard. Puttman was a braggart. How he was ribbed about his lie about his shoelaces. He was tight with money.
27	34	Shooting a big elk out of season; skinning it out with Puttman.
Side E		
00	35	A man with a bad case of clap: men got treatment in Spokane. Varying degree of use of whorehouses. Lumberjacks could always find work; a man who got mad when lumberjacks wouldn't go to work. He got married after he got a good job at Elk River mill.
13	38	"Rocking chair money" began towards the end of the depression. His work after the Elk River mill shut down. When he worked in a blister rust camp, the men were being graded to pick foremen for the following year. His job as camp foreman was the best he ever had in terms of cost of living.
20	39	Ike Adams became Elk River marshall after hitting an armed robber over the head with a hammer. A plane lost over Elk River crashed on Cemetery Ridge the night the mill was burned; the CCC boys scavenged the plane.
27	41	He left the CCCs to move to Lewiston to work on the railroad. He got the blacks in the CCCs because he wasn't prejudiced. Blacks listened to Joe Louis fight on his car radio.
Side F		
00	42	A black who worked too hard for the CCCs; George bought him gloves. His Mexican camps.
03	43	Albert Wylie never got used to city ways. His happiest days were as a child on the homestead. He was like the recluse in <u>The Grapes of Wrath</u> .
(6 minutes)		with Sam Schragger August 27, 1976

II. Transcript

This second conversation with George Schmaltz took place in his home in Lewiston Orchards, Idaho on August 27, 1976. The interviewer is Sam Schragger.

GS: Couple three hundred feet ~~above~~ Elk Creek where the bushes were layin' on the ground. They were just down with berries. They been like that once since. Mrs. Vine told me. That was '46, the summer of '46 that the bushes laid on the ground. But the one year since I came up here they told me they were just like, did I say '46? No, I mean '26, '26. And one year after that they been like that. And this Mrs. Olson that I got my berries from, she said that the bushes were just loaded.

SS: This year?

GS: Yeah. Seems like Mrs. Vine told me that the man that runs the store at Elk River, he also delivers groceries to, you know that fire protective association's got a substation instead of ~~those~~ ^{Boll's} cabin. They must have built some kind of an outfit in there. He delivers groceries to them. And he said the huckleberries are just thicker than the dickens, up there, where he goes, to deliver groceries. So he might...

SS: Did you ever hear of the guy they called the Ridgerunner?

GS: Yeah, I knew him. Bill Moreland, that was his name. Oh yeah, yeah. Did you know him?

SS: I've heard of him. I heard he was quite a character.

GS: Oh yeah. I knew him. He was a little fella. Oh yeah. I had to laugh, when I was on civil service with the Bureau of Entymology, we worked right in with the Forest Service. We didn't work for the Forest Service, we had our separate set-up and the Forest Service, only they used our headquarters a lot. We had that ^{Rutledge} headquarters at Elarkia. And one fellow there, let's see now, Merle Oaks, he was on Forest Service blister rust. And the Ridgerunner, he made a habit to clean out the, that Ranger Station up towards Avery there.

SS: Caulder?

GS: No, Roundtop. Roundtop. He ^d clean out Roundtop. And this time they spotted his tracks. And Merle Oaks told me this himself. It's right from the horse's mouth. Merle Oaks and two other guys, I forget their names, I didn't know 'em. They tracked him ^{for} ₁ miles and miles. And finally they came to this meadow in the woods.

And his tracks ended right in the middle of the meadow. Merle says, "By god George, I was gettin' spooky! I started to look up in the trees." (laughs) You know what he done? He walked backwards in his tracks, til he got to a stream that he had crossed. And then he walked up in the water, in the stream. And that's how he lost the track. And they didn't catch him that time. But that's how it happened. His tracks ended, "My god," Merle says, "I was gettin' spooky." (laughs) He wasn't a bad fellow. He was a good guy. My daughter, she works in that drugstore up on the hill, you know that Owl Drugstore up on Normal Hill? She had a friend, what's her friend's name now? Her husband was a cedar pole man. Johnson I think his name was. I forget her first name. Well anyway, this Johnson woman, she worked up at Headquarters, seemed like she worked in a drug store. And she got real well acquainted with Bill Moreland. Boy I tell you, you didn't dare ^{to} say anything against him to her. She got kind of a chip on her shoulder if you said anything about Bill Moreland.

SS: What did she think of him, they just talked? They were friends?

GS: Yeah, they were friends, just talked, you know. He'd come into the drugstore and buy stuff. She'd talk to him, and she said he was just as nice a fella as she ever saw.

SS: What did people have against him?

GS: Stealing from the Forest Service. That's all they had against him. They didn't have anything against him.

SS: Did he mostly take food?

GS: Yeah, all he got was food, you know. That's all. He just lived there. And when they caught him, they thought maybe he was an escaped criminal from someplace, but they couldn't find anything against him, you know. And one year before I got on steady with the Civil Service, I worked for awhile in the spring for Potlatch Timber Protective Association at Elk River and he worked there too, then. That's how I got to know him. He was just a little fella. He never bothered nobody. Have you ever read that book about him?

SS: Bert Russell?

GS: No.

SS: There's a whole book about him?

GS: Little book about him, written by a retired, I think he was supervisor for the Clearwater Forest.

SS: Was that Space?

GS: Yes. He wrote the book. I think you can buy it at Orofino from, I think he lives at Orofino, don't he?

SS: I think so.

GS: Yeah, you can get that book I'm sure from him. It's a real interesting book. You know, he lived in a hollow cedar one whole winter. Can you imagine that? Yeah. Yeah, Bill Moreland, the Ridgerunner. A friend of mine, after they got caught and had him in jail in Orofino, a friend of mine, he's also a blister ruster, By Amspugh^a, went talked to him. And they had quite a talk there in jail and By told him, "By god mister, you ought to write a book." Yeah. That was Bill Moreland. You can get that book, I'm sure, from Space. Mrs. Johnson, my daughter's chum, she had the book and I read it, she lent it to me and I read it.

SS: What was bootlegging like in Elk River? During Prohibition. I heard that there was an Austrian woman who was selling moonshine.

GS: Yeah, you know, I don't know, there's a fellow by the name of Hunt that did some bootleggin'. He didn't do any moonshinin'. And I kind of, I wasn't in with that crowd too much, because my interest was hunting and fishing, and trapping. I've trapped every Sunday in the wintertime, all through the winter, you know. I made, well, I'll tell you. You know you have to put in a yearly report to Boise how much you catch, ~~how much~~^{what} it's worth. And you know one winter I made 351 dollars. And the next winter I made 352 dollars. And the third winter I made 353 dollars. Can you beat that? But then the fourth winter, I think I only made around a 150. I had all the mink cleaned out. See the mink, that was my money. I had the mink all cleaned out, and I don't remember, but it was a way down.

SS: How did you catch them?

GS: Well, mostly I used hollow logs. I'd find hollow cedars, you know. You know, about so big around and ^{with a} hollow about like that, and I cut off pieces like so. I'd nail one end shut and I'd ^{get} my trap inside the log. Course, in Elk River, you know, there's lot of snow, you know. Winter. And you can set your traps out in the open, you know. And then I used timber leaves for trap cover. And then I had to, course that's against the law, but I used it anyway. In rough grouse season, ^I used to cut the fine feathers off with a pair of scissors, and I had a little bag with a straw, drawstring and I'd scatter a few feathers and down towards the water. Hell, when the minks smelled those. And then of course I had bait inside the log too.

SS: What season is that? You call that rough grout?

GS: We call 'em woods pheasant, you know. That reminds me, we have a grouse in Sweden that's almost as big as a turkey. It goes up to 15 pounds. And I, I had, when I was running Headquarters there for the Bureau of Entymology in the wintertime, the supervisor used to come up and, to my shack, and we'd ^{sit and shoot} the bull, you know, and I told him about this big grouse that we had in Sweden, that weighed up to 15 pounds. The English name is Caper Kelly. And I couldn't imagine where in the hell they got that name. The Swedes call 'em ^{Cheheder} and the Norwegians call 'em Cheheder and the Finns call 'em Chedra. But where in the hell they got the name Caper Kelly, I don't know. So I looked it up in a dictionary. And some big woods in Scotland by the name ^{of} Caper Kelly Woods. Where they used to have these birds. And they finally got extinct. And they went to the Scandinavian countries and got new breeding stocks. So in our English dictionary they call them Caper Kelly. ^{on account} of the English name for 'em. But I was gonna tell you Hartman. And I was telling him about this 15 pound grouse, you know. He set and looked at me, and finally I said, Goddamn it Hartman, don't you believe what I'm tellin' you? I've got a picture of one right in my scrap book with my ^f face in the lower corner of the picture. I said, my brother's double barrel shotgun is hangin' above the grouse and you can see both ends of the shotgun, but you can't see the wing feathers of the grouse. My mother

spread them out. My mother was a photographer by trade before she married dad, she had her own studio. And she pulled a sheet up on the warehouse and took my picture. . . I've ^{still} got it right in my scrapbook. "Well by god, I'd like to see it." So I had an extra picture I brought with me the next time I went home and show it. And "By god," he said, "I never heard of it." Have you?

SS: No that's the first time.

GS: Fifteen pound grouse, huh? Wait a minute, wait a minute now. I think I saved that out, long time ago. (pause in tape) And he worked a lot with those Swedes in the lumberyard, Herrig's lumberyard, you've probably heard of old Herrig. And he just, he just has a hangup on gettin' those imported here. But he never made it.

SS: Kentucky Johnson?

GS: His name was ^{Levi} Johnson. He, he know all about it from talking to the Swedes in the lumberyard. They're all over Sweden, those big grouse. I knew a Laplander, after I got out of school I got on with the Hydrographic Bureau, over in Sweden. And we were in Lapland, measuring streams, you know, for water power. And I knew a Laplander that one winter alone, he killed over a hundred of those. You can sell game there, you know. And he killed over a hundred with a mauser and solid bullet. It just makes a good hole, you know, clean hole. Yeah.

SS: Were minks easy to trap?

GS: Oh, they're smarter than hell. I'll tell ya. There's only one animal that I've caught and I ^{any} never was good at catchin' cyoots (coyotes). I could catch cyoots before snow came. But after snow, they, mink is damn near smart as cyoot. Damn near. Not quite. And martin step into anything. You don't even have to cover your trap for a martin. But mink, oh. And I got good at it. I got to be a good mink trapper. But I worked at it. I got to be a good mink trapper.

SS: Did it get rough in the winter to get around to check traps?

GS: Well I had Penobscot special snowshoes, them long ones, you know. And then after awhile, I started to use skiis. 'Cause I'm an old skier from way back, you know. So I started to use skiis. Yeah. I was gonna tell you the story, I don't know if you heard it. Have you ever heard of the Jericho Mine? Up at Elk River?

SS: Just the name.

GS: Well you know, long time ago, there never was any Jericho mine. What they found was a great, big boulder. What the miners call a float. It had come from someplace else. And deposited there, I imagine by the Ice Age. Well that took time. And they took out, what I heard, they took out eighty thousand dollars out of this boulder. And old Pete Sharry told a friend of mine about it, you heard of old Pete Sharry ? That had a mine down in Long Meadow Creek.

SS: No.

GS: Well he was an old prospector in that country in the early days. He says, "Jesus Christ, was that boulder ever rich. And Jesus Christ (Jesus), did we ever scratch up that mountain." (laughs) Well, there, I guess somebody, I don't know who it was, that started a mine. And dug a tunnel up there. And then there was this Charlie Shils, he had a homestead about halfway between Jericho and the Clearwater River. Up in that kind of a flat country. You been through there probably. And when he sold out to the timber, what timber company he sold to, I think he sold to the Potlatch. I understand he got 16,000 for it. And he spent that trying to find that vein. And, course, he had to do assesment work, you know. Well then there was a crook from Leavenworth, Washington. Name was Loscamp. He had been some kind of a businessman in Leavenworth, but I guess he was so damn crooked that his family and the town, I think, kicked him out. And he came and took up a claim below Charlie Shils. And ^{then} he befriended Charlie Shils. And it was during the first World War. And Loscamp said, "When the war started, you know Charlie, you know nobody's gonna come up here and check on our assesment work or anything. We don't have to do any assesment work so." They just had a good time and hunted and fished all summer, you know. I don't know if that is just ^{went on} one summer or two summer. But seems like Charlie Shils had some friends out on the coast. And I don't know if it was just one summer that they didn't do any assesment work, or it was two summers, but anyway, Loscamp hurried up and staked the claim on the mine and went to Orofino and had it recorded and everything. And when Charlie Shils came back from the coast he didn't have no mine. And he just stold it from Charlie Shils. Charlie Shils

was a nice fella.

SS: How could he get away with that, 'cause Charlie Shils hadn't done the assesment?

GS: Yeah. See, he hadn't done any assesment work so Loscamp, so he just told Charlie Shils to get the hell out of there when he came.

SS: Nice guy.

GS: Oh yeah, yeah. ^{Hell of a} nice fella, yeah. But he damn near went crazy trying to find that lead that he never found nothing. He, well he must of stayed there til the Second World War, I think. He worked that mine from the first World War to the Second World War and he never found a thing. That's what he got for bein' crooked. Whatever became of Charlie Shils, I don't know.

SS: What did people think of Loscamp? Did he have many friends around?

GS: Oh no.

SS: He didn't.

GS: No.

SS: I can see Charlie Shils knockin' him off for something like that.

GS: Well I tell you, see, I'm afraid that's what did happen. They couldn't have told who shot him out of the brush. I'm afraid that's just what would've happened.

SS: Did I ask you about the story of Big Red. Was that before you come into the country? Big Red who got killed near Elk River. (pause in tape) Things get forgotten. I had a feeling that the Yugoslavians, Serbians and Austrians were a separate group. They were more to themselves.

GS: Yeah, they were clannish. Kind of. Yeah. And lot of 'em, lot of 'em hung around the prostitutes. A lot of 'em. I wouldn't doubt if, Sam ~~P~~ ^P ~~was~~ ^{was}, he was kind of a shady character.

SS: How many sporting houses were there around Elk River?

GS: Two.

SS: That's about as many as there were around Bovill.

GS: Either one or two in Bovill. You know, as you drive into Elk River, you know before you cross the last hill, you know you go past a couple of farmhouses. Well the sporting houses were just a little past the last house that you pass.

before you go over the hill. They were just about, well where that highway goes now, I'd say there'd be one on each side of the highway. And the old railroad track went, no let's see know. No, the railroad track went west past the, they use to call it the big whorehouse and the little whorehouse. One was bigger than the other. And the railroad track was just west of 'em. Just, well, only about as far as from here to those lilac bushes. To the loggin' tracks. That's where those guys, I told you about...

SS: Coyote Smith.

GS: Coyote Smith and Sunny Nelson. Yeah.

SS: Were those girls in the houses, what were they like as people. Were they old or young?

GS: Generally the landlady, the momma, she was generally middle aged or so. The whores were generally, oh, all the way from 20 to 40, I guess. Something like that. Yeah.

SS: Could they just go into town like anybody else or were they shunned?

GS: They were shunned. They were shunned by the town people. Yeah. Oh yeah. They were shunned by the town people. By golly, I'll tell ya. I don't know how they got their grub. The drayman must have hauled their grub out to 'em. But I never seen 'em come into stores in town. I bet you, I bet you the drayman hauled the grub out to 'em. They never hung around town at all.

SS: They didn't even come into town.

GS: No.

SS: Must have been kind of a lonely life in a way. All they would have would be the other whores for friends.

GS: Yeah, that's all, that's all. Yeah. One fellow that I knew real well, he married one of 'em. And they went to Spokane and run a hotel and for years. They had a restaurant in Spokane. They're both dead now.

SS: Do you think he just fell in love with her?

GS: No, I don't think so. I think for one thing, I think he was oversexed. And that did it. I don't think that, he actually fell in love with her.

SS: I wonder what would make girls turn to that kind of life.

GS: I think most of 'em are oversexed and that's how they get started. I think so.

That's what I think. Yeah.

SS: I suppose for lumberjacks not being married it was a good thing.

GS: Oh yeah. Yeah. I always used to say that ^{the} a lumberjack gets together and log in the whorehouse and when they get back to camp, they talk about the whorehouse.

(laughs) Yeah, I never had any use for that Loscamp. I had to laugh one time.

There was three of us gonna go over to Big Island. There's Ed Cookenbaker and Earl Hood and myself. And we got all ready the day...

(End of Side A)

SS: Is Big Island down on the Clearwater?

GS: Yeah, that's right above where Swamp Creek comes in, 'cause there's no island any more, its all Dworshak Reservoir now.

SS: You were going to go down and...

GS: Go deer hunting in the fall. Weather about like today. And Ed had been playin' poker all night. So we got up to the grave, do you know where the graveyard is up in Elk River? Up on the hill above town?

SS: I've seen it.

GS: We got as far as the graveyard, and Ed said, "By god boys, I can't make it. I'll go home and go to sleep and rest and I'll come out tomorrow." Okay, that was fine. So Earl and I, we took off. And we got to the Jericho Mine about noon. And the miners were all down in the shaft workin'. That was when Charlie Shils had it. And we rested a little while and had a little lunch and then we got to takin' inventory and you know, Ed had everything that had any grease. He had all the lard, he had all the bacon, there wasn't a thing that we even could fry an egg with, you know. Just happened that that was all in Ed's packsack.

^{But} here the miners had seven or eight slabs of bacon, hangin' up on a ridge pole. You know outside, you know where the poles are built out like they used to do. Well, I'll tell you Earl, we take a slab of bacon and we'll leave 'em a quart of whiskey. Well a quart of whiskey those days, you know was ^{quite} somethin'.

see, Clearwater County was dry. The only way you could get whiskey was send to Spokane and have it come in by express. That's the only way you could...

SS: By train?

GS: Yeah.

SS: That was legal?

GS: Yeah. If the sheriff didn't catch you between the depot and your home. Well, so we took a piece of paper and stuck it over the neck of the bottle and we wrote "compliments of Earl Hood and George Schmaltz." And, by god, two days afterwards, Ed came. He came out all right and we hunted 'round ^{there} for, oh, we must have hunted 'round for over a week 'round there. We stayed at the homesteader's cabin, Steve Willer was his name. Him and his wife Myrtle lived there, out there on the homestead. On a bench above the river. When we got home, the miners had just come in from work in the evening when we hit the mine on our way back. And my god, they just fell all over themselves. My god! That quart of whiskey that we left. Oh, they thanked us and thanked us. Well, finally I said, well ^I it was about an even break in the whiskey and the slab of bacon we took. And they never missed the bacon! (laughs) "What bacon?" Well, we didn't have anything to fry anything with so we had to have bacon so we left you the whiskey. Well by god they were sure tickled to death. They just had a feast on that quart of whiskey, you know. In the middle of the week too. Yeah. One time we were, there were four of us. No, let's see, there was Elmer Johnson and Bert Johnson and Dave and Harold and I, there's five of us. Stayin' in a cabin, oh just about a half a mile below Big Island. We used to call Shorty Green's cabin. And we had to go 14 miles to Dent to get our grub. So about, oh, once every other week or so, we'd go down to Dent, there was an old Dutchman by the name of Shessler had a little grocery store there at Dent and we used to go down there and of course, I knew Steve and Myrtle Willer. And there was a homesteader lived about two miles below us on the river, Tom Howard. Had a cabin right up on the river bank. Well, we stopped into give Howard some stuff that he sent for us to get and Steve was there and he acting nervous as the dickens. Boy, he was nervous and I noticed there was blood all over his hunting knife. Course, they didn't

know us too well, They knew me, but they didn't know them other boys too well. So we said good-bye and started for home and we hadn't gone just a little ways there was about 8 inches of snow down by the river. And here came Myrtle Willer with a deer strapped on each side of the horse. And course, she didn't know the boys. The only one she knew was me, you know. And I was the last one. And here these guys come trotin' along, you know and she just pulled the horse off the side of the road and just stood there, and she was scared to death, and she said, "Ohhh Hello, George." (laughs) And she knew everything was all right. I said, "Hello Myrtle, how are you?" And she just went on with the killed deer on the packhorse.

SS: Did people pay attention to the seasons in those days?

GS: Oh no. We never paid no attention to the season. Yes, we did pay a little, but the homesteaders didn't. They got it whenever they could. And they, by god, they were entitled to it. Yeah.

SS: So hunters like from town...

GS: They paid a little attention to the seasons. The town guys. Except during the depression, we never paid any attention. We just practically lived off ^{of venison} when we were in the depression. But in those days, the town guys generally paid attention to the hunting season, but the homesteaders didn't, they hunted year round.

SS: I'm surprised that the town people did, but I guess that's because it seems like there used to be so much game around there.

GS: Yeah, but there's more game now than there was then. More deer, oh yeah, and more elk. There wasn't any elk ^{round} there then. No elk. The elk were imported. They were imported, they were imported in the 1920's. They imported 40 head to Bovill. And that's how, there used to be elk in that country.

SS: There had been elk at one time?

GS: Oh yeah. But they're all killed off. And then they imported them.

SS: Killed off by the early homesteaders?

GS: Yeah.

SS: Did you ever know anyone to get caught? For shooting out of season in those days?

GS: No, no I don't.

SS: I don't think they were looking too hard.

GS: NO. But I'll tell you what happened. Se~~e~~at that fall when I was down on the river with Earl Hood and Ed Cookenbaker, I, there was a game warden by the name of Snyder from Orofino. And he was going up the river, further up around Bose cabin, he said there was a bunch of guys from Genesee that were doggin' with deer, with dogs. That was an unforgiveable sin. You could shoot deer out of season, but, by god, don't get caught doggin'. That was, so I took care of his horse. He rode as far as Big Island, and then he took the ferry across, there was a little ferry there, you could pole across and he went up the river. And he never caught these guys, so when he come back that's all there was to it. Well, then that winter when I was shackin' up with these three guys in Shorty Green's cabin, I told you we had to go to Dent to get our grub? The cabin was built on a kind of a sidehill. And under the porch there was a little door where you could go in and there was just room enough to hang a deer ^{under} there. And there was a fence. And the trail up the river would start on the other side of the fence. And I was out on the porch lookin' and I seen this guy comin' up the trail. So I walked over to the gate to see who it was. And ^{got} by god, here it was Snyder. He had report on some more doggin' goin' on up the river. And he had two Airdales ^e with him. Those goddamn Airedales just started 'round that goddamn cabin with a nose right to that bottom logs, you know, just a sniffin' and sniffin' and sniffin'. And Snyder and I, we talked a while. And "Goddamn it, George," he says, "you know them goddamn dogs, ^{are} I always trying to look up somethin' I don't want to see." Well I couldn't say yes and I couldn't say no. What would you say in a case like that? I don't know what in the hell I said. (laughs)

SS: So he just went on?

GS: Oh yeah, he just went on, yeah.

SS: When he was by the first time checking on 'those guys, don't you think he might have had the idea then that you guys were hunting?

GS: Well, it was season then. Yeah. Oh, it was in season. But these Genesee guys used to have hounds, and they used to go up in that country and dog 'em, you know.

SS: But the second time, that was out of season?

GS: Oh no, that was in the middle of the winter. ^{The season} was closed. In fact it was long, February (pronunciation) or March. Oh no, season was closed then.

SS: Did he know that what you had there was out of season?

GS: Oh yes, he knew.

SS: 'Cause it wouldn't have kept?

GS: No, he knew that we had venison hangin' under there oh yes. Yeah.

One time, we was gonna make some snowshoes. And you know, you can get the hair off a deer hide by laying it in the riffles. You know. You can weigh it down with stones in riffles. After it lay so long the hair will slip, you know. We were gonna make rawhide.

SS: What are riffles?

GS: Over the water. And that river just had a gradual slope from where we lived in that cabin. And it was in the spring when the golden eagles were comin' back you know. And here came this golden eagle up the river, and the way it looked to me it looked just like he was hittin' right for me. But he was just followin' the same, 'cause I was up here and he was just followin' the same course, you know. And you know, when he went over me, his wings went, (sound of flying). He was just that close. I just almost ducked, you know. (laughs) They're big.

SS: Huge, yeah.

GS: They're bigger than the bald eagle. Way bigger. Back in the old country they feed on this big grouse I was telling you about.

SS: The eagles do?

GS: Oh yes. The golden eagle. That's their meat. They feed on those big grouse just the same as the red tail hawk feeds on blue grouse here. You know, a red tail hawk will just stay with a covey of blue grouse til there's only one or two

left. And they move on and find another batch.

SS: Will they kill them all at once or one at a time?

GS: No, just as they need 'em. Stay with 'em til they can't find anymore, then they' move on, see if they can't find another covey. Yeah. They're the golden eagles' meat back in the old country. Those big grouse.

SS: What do you think was the deal with the game warden? I've heard where the warden would come and know that something was out of season, and would just ignore it. Is that because the warden's knew the people? At that time.

GS: Yeah, I think so. I think so.

SS: I don't think they do that anymore.

GS: No, no, no, no. One time there's a homesteader out there by Big Island. We used to call that country the Big Island country. Red Nelson and, it must have been about eight inches of snow. And the deer season was open, but the pheasant season was closed. You know, the rough grouse season. And Earl Hood and I was gonna go down and have dinner with Red Nelson and I don't remember if I had three or four rough grouse and, course, I didn't know who'd be down in the cabin. So I just threw the rough grouse in the snow by the gate and then we walked down to the cabin. By god, 15, 20 minutes, here the game warden came down, to eat dinner with us. He asked us who those rough grouse belonged to that were layin' up by the gate. God, we didn't know. No, we didn't know. He didn't press it either, but we left before he did and we took the grouse with us and nothing was heard of it. Yeah.

SS: Why were you spending the winter in that cabin?

GS: Everything was closed down up at Elk River.

SS: This was depression?

GS: Oh no.

SS: This is before?

GS: Oh yeah. Too much snow.

SS: So guys would just take off and hang out in some little place.

GS: Lot of 'em. They used to call it shackin' up. Yeah, they'd go to an old homestead

cabin that be pretty good shape, you know and stay over winter and...

SS: Was that fun?

GS: Oh yeah, it was fun. Put out rabbit snares, you know and you'd shoot a deer out of season, you know. And, we had a fellow with us, he was born and raised in Michigan. His name was Bert Johnson. His mother was Swede and his father was Irish. And I tell you, he could bake the best baking powder biscuits I ever ate. And every afternoon we had baking powder biscuits and butter and jam and coffee. And you know, that makes a good lunch. I was always the black sheep when it come to cookin'. I never learned to cook. They'd say, "Well, we'd better fill up today, 'cause it's George's turn to cook tomorrow." (laughs)

SS: Did you take turns cooking?

GS: Yeah.

SS: One guy cook every day?

GS: Cook a day, I cooked a day and Bert cooked the next day and Dave cooked the next day and so.

SS: But Bert cooked every day?

GS: He made the biscuits all the time. Yeah.

SS: You guys get on each others nerves after awhile living that close together?

GS: No, we never did. We were always doin' somethin'. There was awful good fishing. Just below where Swamp Creek ran out into the river. There was a deep hole and there was a raft, a log raft. And we used to pole it up along the shore, then pole out into the riffles and let it drift into this deep hole for a ways and then we'd throw this rope with a rock on it down and there we were. And boy, I'll tell you, we caught fish. Holy Mackarel.

SS: What mostly were they?

GS: Cutthroat trout. Oh yeah. But those day, Carnation Milk came in wooden boxes, they didn't come in pasteboard like they do nowadays, you know. And we had four Carnation milkboxes, five we had. We had four to sit on and then we had one in the middle that we threw the trout in. Boy sometimes that Carnation milkbox case was almost full, you know. Oh we ate fried trout, I'll tell you.

SS: There wasn't enough room on there.

GS: No, no. But you could feel the trail, you know. I'll never forget that.

SS: Were most of these guys, these other guys were lumberjacks, weren't they?

GS: Yeah, they were all young fellows, we were all young fellows.

SS: Bachelors.

GS: Yeah.

SS: In them days, did you guys think much about getting married? Were they looking to get married?

GS: No, I tell you, not too much. The wages that you got those days wasn't enough to get married on, as a rule. Pretnear, a loggin' camp those days were all bachelors, they whole camp. Except probably an occasional camp foreman, now and then. But as a rule, they were all single men, every one of 'em. Yeah.

SS: What were the guys thinking about for a future? Did they just keep on loggin' and just be bachelors?

GS: Yeah. I guess so. Yeah.

SS: Most of 'em liked logging enough to want to stay with it?

GS: Well it's the only thing ^{they} knew. Yeah. I been out on the coast and worked the same way. Did I tell you about when Minnie's whorehouse came to camp? Hah? Well sir, I was workin' in the loggin' camp ^{for the} Paulson loggin' company. On the Grace Harbor. And the woods got dry and you know when they get dry on the coast they get dry. Right now! And they had to shut the camps down right off the bat, you know. So they were gonna shut the camp down for 14 days and this fellow, he was quite a little older than I but he was from my hometown in the old country, his name was Gus Lessen. We were gonna go up to Quinalt Lake and go fishing. You heard of Quinalt Lake? Well that was, they hadn't finished the highway up to it yet when we walked up there. Well anyway, but we had to go down ^{Hogiam and outfit} ~~n~~. Well I have to put this story in with it. They'd had a big celebration in St. Maries they year before. And there was a shooting gallery man there and he gave a Remington pump rifle for the one that had the highest score that week. During this week, it was kind of a country fair, you know. Well, I tell you, we was five of us tied on 28. Then we shot off the tie and I was high. And

Cap Laird that ran the boat from Cour d' Alene to St. Maries came up that afternoon and shot 29. And the shooting gallery man called me in when I walked by. He was gonna close up the next day. And he told me Cap Laird came up and shot 29. And he won't be here tomorrow, so I had him shoot off a tie. And he shot 21 on the tie. Now he says, "I'll tell you, George. If you can shoot 29 and if you can't beat him on the tie, I'll give you ten dollars out of my own pocket, the second prize." Well I got mad, and here was somethin' ^{that} I'd been tryin' to shoot all week so I wouldn't have to beat those guys from the tie and I shot 29 right off the bat. And then I just got cocky you know and I just, bang, bang, bang, and I shot 22. And I got the rifle. He told me, he said, "Well, I don't think anybody will beat that."

(End of side B)

GS: ...before you get off work, you'll find a rifle in the pool hall." Well it was there. It was waitin' for me. Well, when Gus and I went down to get fishing tackle and camping equipment and stuff to go up to Quinalt lake, they were gonna have a big celebration in Hoquiam, they called it the Splash. And Gus had a lot of friends in town. I was a stranger in that country. But he had a lot of friends and he told me he had to go see these friends and I walked around town and I seen a shooting gallery sign sticking out down the street and I thought, well, see, so ^{when} I came in there, there was quite a few guys in front there, you know, where you shoot, you know, you seen a shooting gallery. And just as I walked in there through the door, somebody up at the other end said, "George Schmaltz in St. Maries Idaho." And I thought, "Jesus Christ, what's goin' on here?" He says, "There he is right now comin' ⁱⁿ through the door." And it was the same guy that had the shooting gallery in St. Maries the year before and he was telling these guys how I shot. Can you beat that? By god. (laughs) Well I'll tell you, finish the story, after I cashed my time check with the Paulson logging company at the office, ^{I went over} and shot, ^{Well he} had that week, you know these great big hunting knives with, like a pocket knife, folding hunting knife. For each day, the man that was high each day got one of them knives. I went back

and I said, I'll shoot for a ^{knife} ~~an~~. I didn't do very good. There's a saloon right around the corner. I went in and I had a good swig of whiskey. I went back and I shot again. Well he says, "That looks pretty good George." So I gave him my name and address and by god, 14 days afterward when I got back to camp, the hunting knife was in the foreman's office waiting for me.

SS: Sounds like he was running a straight game.

GS: Oh yeah, oh yes, he was. He didn't care to have a drunk come in and spend his money. He wanted to see good shots. Oh yes. He was, had a Buffalo Bill haircut, you know, and a goatee, you know. ^{But} He was a good guy, oh, he was a good guy. You know, like in St. Maries, he could have taken off. He says, "You'll find the rifle will be in the pool hall." After I pull out. And it was in the pool hall. What I was gonna tell ya, though, there was two guys, one was with another guy from my hometown that worked in that loggin' camp. Knute Venberg was his name. And I forget who this Ed name, he was a Norway, oh he wasn't so little either, he was a husky Norwegian. Knute and Ed were gonna watch camp. During this 14 days they promised the camp foreman that they were gonna watch camp, but the camp foreman knew their failings, see. So he made Gus and I promise that we'd see that Knute and Ed got back to camp, you know. Well, we got all our camping equipment and everything. And fishing tackle and stuff and there was what they called Minnie's whorehouse. Well, Gus said, "Now George, you're a stranger here and they know me. You go in and get 'em." I'm a little on the tough side those days. So I came in and I imagine it was Minnie that came to the door. Asked me what I wanted and I said I'm looking for Knute and Ed. "Oh they're upstairs with the girls." I says where are they? "Well the first room over to the right." ^{Okay.} So, here were two girls and both the boys were layin' sprawled on top of a bed. I said, "Come on boys, we're goin' back to camp." Well them girls started to cussin'. And I just ^{herded} those two guys right out, you know. And these two girls following the boys you know, and crying and oh they had almost shoes and socks and a G-string. And here they stood on the sidewalk kissing these bastards good-bye! Come on, come on, get in that car.

We had hired a taxi to take us to where the railroad track, the road across the railroad track, but you had to walk about a quarter of a mile down to camp, see. Well, we got 'em in the car and got 'em on our way to camp. Everything went fine. And the campforeman ~~has~~ hired a second cook to do the cookin' for these two guys for, and he went with us too. So we had a little lunch that evening and you know, went to bed. There was Gus and I stayin' in this bunkhouse and there was, oh I think he was kind of a Lutheran, you know, they used to have circuit riders those days, you know. Go to little towns and loggin' camps and preach you know. And this fellow, they were Norwegians, his partner worked in camp here in this camp, but this circuit rider, and they were also goin' ^{to the} up ^{lake} to go fishing. We were the four that stayed in this bunkhouse. Well right at the end of camp, just at the end of the bunkhouse ^s was a high trestle over Granite Creek. It was real high. It was from the trestle to the water it was *I would imagine almost ^{as}* high as this garage, from the tip of the roof, you know. Well somebody had stuck a willow fishpole with a fishline out, sticking out between the ties and hangin' down into the creek you know. And Gus had seen a lot of my shooting, you know, and he was gonna take his .30 Remington with him. And we were just packed and but the cook was gonna have lunch for all of us. So Gus said, "See if you can cut that fishline, George." I got down on my knees and I got a good aim and I missed the fishline. Well you know, a lot of the lumberjacks had tents you know. Up on the riverbank up on the other side from the bunkhouses where they'd live by twos, you know, instead of staying in a bunkhouse there'd be dozen guys, you know a lot of these guys would buy their own tents and stay in the ~~se~~ tents. Well here was this Ed that I'd herded out of the whorehouse. He was standing in the tent opening, his dong was hangin' out and he said, "Goddamn you George, I was just gonna put it in and then you had to fire that goddamn rifle." *I* figure what in the hell is this? Through the night, all of Minnie's whorehouse had come up to camp. They hired a taxi to take them as far as the railroad crossed and then they walked down and they were in camp. Well, I'll tell you, I think there was four or five hookers in camp at the breakfast table that morning.

SS: How many gus were there?

GS: I think there was a couple guys, they was gonna stay in camp along with Knute and Ed. But Gus and I and the circuit rider and his partner, we didn't have anything to do with them but we ate breakfast with them. I had to laugh. There was a little redheaded whore eatin' right across the table from me and she was cute as a bug's ear. And she was Knute's girl I understand, but she couldn't say Knute, they say Ka-nute(sic). Well that's canoe in Sweden. She was talking about her darling Kanute. And I started to laugh right in her face. And I guess she'd had a few drinks, "Ka-nute, that man is laughing at me." (laughs) Well by god, we took off, I tell you, we took off. We had a good breakfast though. But we took off. Oh we had a dandy trip. We spent 14 days on Quinalt lake. We were there, this circuit rider and his partner and Gus and I, we were the only campers on the lake. There was only, there was a fellow by the name of Olson, Herb Olson. Ran a kind of resort, where you could hire boats and you could stay, have your meals there too and everything. But we camped out. We rented a boat from Herb Olson and then we rowed up the lake to where there was a point. And we rowed the boat up on this point and we just make a little trail through the bushes and here was a little natural meadow. Just big enough, just little bigger than what we needed for the tent. Just flat as a floor. And we really had a time. Oh I tell you.

SS: You think that now and then the whores would come into the camps?

GS: Only time I ever heard of it.

SS: That was the only time?

GS: Only time I ever heard of it.

SS: When did the whorehouses disappear out of Elk River?

GS: Well they disappeared sometime during the first World War. 'Cause I worked out in the shipyards and when I came back, they were gone. They weren't there no more. So, sometime during the first World War. (repeats to himself what Ed had said about the shooting incident).

SS: Were lumberjacks on the coast any tougher, more likely to get into fights than

they were here?

GS: In a way yes. There was, the Scandinavians and the Finns fought a lot. There was an awful Finnish community around Hoquiam and Aberdeen. And I think the Finns and Scandinavians did a lot of fighting.

SS: Weren't there Finns around Elk River?

GS: Very few, very few. Oh.

SS: Just a few.

GS: By god, I tell ya, I don't, I have to think of any Finns ^{around} Elk River. They generally come in batches. But there was a lot of 'em around Hoquiam and Aberdeen.

SS: Was there any special reason why you preferred the Elk River country? Over the coastal country?

GS: Oh, it's too wet over there. Oh I don't like it over there. It's too wet. I like a country with ^{four seasons}. Out in the coast you might say, they get only one season. You might say two. It rains a little more there in the winter than it does in the summer. But I,...

SS: I think the old time lumberjacks have a reputation for mixing it up quite a bit when they were drinking. Fighting. Kicking with cork boots.

GS: Yeah, you know, I never seen that. I've never seen that. And that used to be back east, I think among the Frenchmen and those. But I never, I never backed down. But I never had any occasion to fight. No, no we got along pretty good. Oh yeah.

SS: Would guys job each other allot?

GS: Oh, you mean play jokes?

SS: Yeah.

GS: Oh yeah, oh yes, yes. Yeah. That's about the only fun we had up there. We kidded each other, you know, in a friendly way and so on, but we never...

SS: What about a lumberjack that was no good, a guy that you couldn't trust to take advantage of the other guys, were there some like that?

GS: No, no. No. See, there was no, there were no chance for anything like that. You all had to work and do your job and you got your pay at the end of the month

and there was no, no crooked work goin' on.

SS: There weren't guys that tried to make their living off of gambling that were like sharks?

GS: I tell ya, I just about came here, I came in 1912 and there were guys around that tried to supplement their income with, with the cards. And there were some guys too, that made a habit of rolling dice when they were passed out drunk. That happened too. Oh yeah. I know there was one guy in Elk River, I ain't gonna mention no names, but he's dead and gone now, but he's got children living yet. He made a habit of rolling lumberjacks when they were drunk. Oh yeah.

SS: Was he a lumberjack?

GS: No. But we had bullies. You know, well, I give you an example. I was top loadin' on this donkey. And I guess I was the youngest man on the landing, and I, the top loader is the boss on the landing. But everybody that works on the landing knew that when the landing was cleaned up they sit down. I didn't find a peckin' job for them to do here and there. Clean up the landing and go. We had the chunk pile, you know, where logs break off, they got to saw that off smooth, you know. And you ^{have to} hook a block to it and you have a chunk pile. Well you can always start a fire in the chunk pile, you know. The men knew that when they had the landing cleaned up they could go over to the fire by the chunk pile and there's a big Polack. He wasn't a bad guy, but he was a bully. And he ^{could} never block me for the simple reason that guys just worked like the dickens 'cause they knew that when we had the landing cleaned up they could sit down. So all through that setting, he never had me blocked. I always...

SS: Blocked?

GS: Well the landing is so filled up that you can't send the bullhook back to the woods and get more logs. You just filled up, you know.

SS: He was trying to block you?

GS: Yes, I think he was. Well, we had two days left for that setting. And next to the last day there wasn't hardly any logs came down. We didn't do a darn thing that day. Not a thing. One ^{or}, I think there was one or two drags came down. And

I didn't know what the hell was the matter. And then the last day, that was gonna be the last day the bullhook would go up into the woods and here a drag would come down and we'd unfasten 'em and the bullhook'd go back up into the woods and here another drag, what he did, he yarded out all these logs the day before so he could block me. See? He never did learn my name. He, and I just threw my peavy and said, he ~~must~~ have been watching me from the trees up on the hill, 'cause when he seen me start down the railroad track for camp, he came running and waving his arms, "Hey boy, hey boy, wait a minute boy!" I says, "Fuck you, you goddamn Polack sonof a bitch." I never took shit from nobody these days. And you know, he never could learn my name. I just went and took ^{my} time and I let Tony, his name was Tony ^jBerks^e, he was a Polack. He had to clean up his own landing.

SS: What was his job?

GS: He was the boss for the whole thing, he was hooktender. He was the bigshot, he was boss for the whole thing and I was boss on the landing, under him. Only as a rule, the hooktender didn't have too much to say about what was goin' on on the landing. The toploader was boss on the landing. And he never did learn, lots of times he was after, he finally got married. And he lived in Bovill. And lots of times he'd see me on the train goin' by. "Oh hello there boy, hellb boy!" He never did learn my name.

SS: Why not? Maybe he didn't like y you.

GS: No, he liked me, oh yes, he liked me. Oh he, whenever I seen him afterwards he acted like I was one of his long lost friends. Oh yeah.

SS: Were there many Poles in the woods? Around Elk River?

GS: No. Not very many Polacks, no. No. There weren't very many Polacks. There were lot of Yugoslavians. There was one there, Zivinitch. And he'd always say, "Hello Swede!" I says, "Hello Zivinitch." And I thought, I wonder if he's using that as a slur word? 'Cause I'm not ashamed of bein' a Swede. It kind of was stickin' in my craw. One day when I met him on the street he said, "Hello Swede." "Oh hello, Bohunk." And by god, you know, it always was "Hello George" after that.

(laughs)

That's why I never got into a fight, 'cause I generally took care of it before they started.

SS: Before it reached that point. Ma Vine was telling me that the Austrians in town had big bootleg.

GS: There was one Austrian there,

SS: Povitch was one she said,...

GS: Oh yeah, Joe Pavitch(sic), yeah he was the big bootlegger in town. Oh yeah. yeah.

SS: I wonder where he got it from?

GS: They brought it in by car at night.

SS: You think all the way from Spokane?

GS: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. They brought it in. And some of it was moonshine. There's some moonshiners down on the river by Dent. What were there names now?

SS: I heard there were some in Ahsaka.

GS: Yeah, I think there was some at Ahsaka too, but there was that, what in dickens was that fellow's name? It's a blank now.

SS: They get it from him too?

GS: Oh yeah.

SS: Would they sell it to all the lumberjacks no matter what the nationality was?

GS: Oh yes.

SS: They were just big suppliers.

GS: The moonshiners.

SS: The Austrians. Pavitch and those.

GS: No, no, Pavitch, he bootlegged. Oh yes, he bootlegged. I can't think of that guy's name down on the river, he moonshined and he's also the guy that killed, there was a homesteader right down, the first homestead down on the river, this side of the old Dent bridge. And a fellow by the name of Fordyce lived there. And somebody killed him, I think with an axe or somethin' and chopped a hole and stuck him ⁱⁿ through the ice into the river and they never found out who done it. But I found out who done it after I came to Lewiston and worked for the

railroad down here. And that's why I'm trying to think of this guy's name, 'cause there was another homesteader from up there, came down and worked on the railroad here, name was King. And him and this guy, what the hell is this fellow's name? They got drunk together up on the homestead one time and this guy told him that he's the guy that killed Fordyce. Goddamn it, I can't...

SS: Did he say why he'd done it?

GS: He thought he was squealing on him for moonshining.

SS: Did this guy from Dent supply a lot of the guys from Elk River?

GS: Yeah, oh yeah. He used to bring, oh I guess, 15, 20 quarts over.

SS: It'll come to you when you're not thinking of it.

GS: That's right, that's right. But if you ever find out, there were two brothers, I think of 'em, and they were suppliers and, god, I can't think.

SS: I heard that some of that moonshine was bad stuff. Most was good but some was terrible.

GS: Oh yeah, some of it was terrible, oh yeah. Jinx, Ira Jenks.

SS: Jenks?

GS: I think so. Ira Jenks is the guy that killed Fordyce. Yeah. King told me that he told him, that old King said, that he had killed Fordyce. Yeah, one time, he didn't sell all of his whiskey in Malcker Anderson's camp, so he left 14 quarts with, I think with a blacksmith to peddle it for him. I guess the blacksmith got drunk and they just drank up the whole works.

(End of side C)

GS: And so when you're over here and then around the point, you can talk to each other across, you know, across the ridge, you know. The fellow, he was clerk for years for the fire patrol, Frank Pennington was his name. And he was, he had a girl out on the homestead, him and this girl finally got married. Well anyway, he was goin' out to start his homestead, here came Tom Howard, and of course, Tom, he wasn't bootleggin', he was just goin' into town for grub or somethin' and here was the two Jenks's. And they stopped Frank and they asked him if he wanted a drink. And Frank didn't want no drink. He thanked them, but he didn't want no drink. When they got down to around the point, Frank could

could hear Tom Howard say to Jenks', "Didn't you know he don't drink?" "I didn't know. He looked human." (Laughs) So he should drink. (laughs)

SS: I wonder if the Jenks boys came from the South. I understand that the good moonshine came from those folks.

GS: They came from Virginia. Yeah. That whole outfit. And all those Snyders and Carrs and Bonners and stuff up above Orofino, they're...

SS: Virginians.

GS: They're all Virginians. West Virginians. Yeah.

SS: I was gonna ask you about the Klu Klux Klan in Elk River.

GS: I tell ya, I think they were pretty strong during the first World War. But by the time I got back from Seattle from the shipyard, of course, I worked in St. Maries for a while, there was no more Klan in Elk River. Lot of people, you know, a lot of fanatic Masons, you know, joined the clan. On account of 'em bein' anti-Catholic. You know. I know one guy that, he was a real anti-Catholic. He wasn't a Mason though. He joined the Klan I know on account of bein' against the Catholics.

SS: I heard that they burned some crosses around Elk River.

GS: I heard that they did. But it didn't happen while I was there. It happened while I was out in the shipyards. And then of course, I worked in St. Maries a while. Before I went back up to Elk River. And that's when, I guess when they burnt the crosses up there. Yeah. Wasn't that somethin'?

SS: The Klan?

GS: Yeah. That had just about died out. Ain't it?

SS: I hope so. I could never figure out what they were trying to do. I know in the South they were against the blacks.

GS: Well I'll tell you, during Reconstruction, you know after the Civil War, I guess the carpetbaggers from up north really raised hell with the white people down South. And they had to just do something. And I, they just about had to start something you know. And...

SS: But out here, there were no black people to speak of, so it must have been, I

heard it was against Catholics, and I guess that's the main thing going out here was against Catholics.

GS: Yeah.

SS: I think it would be scary to see sheets and burning crosses. Talking about Walker Anderson and his wife, and you said she didn't have enough ^{sense} to come in out of the rain.

GS: Yeah.

SS: I was wondering what was so strange about her. Was she a loose woman?

GS: No, no. She just didn't have good sense, you know. I'd say, well I'd say she was slightly retarded, let's put it that way.

SS: Was she childish?

GS: Yeah. And well, just one instance, for instance. If she had to go someplace, when she had a baby this time, I forget now, what she used to, it was turpentine or somethin' that she'd put ^{on} this baby's vagina she'd the sheet, urinate before she left so she wouldn't urinate in bed. Now what do you think of that?

SS: That's terrible.

GS: Yeah. I understand that girl, now, I've heard, the last I've heard here about a year ago, course she's grown up now. I think she's been married but they say she's complete alcoholic. Absolutely gone.

SS: Was she a good looking woman, his wife?

GS: No. Uh un.

SS: I hear a lot about the hobos in the '20's and '30's and I've heard that lumberjacks who couldn't get jobs wound up doing the same thing.

GS: Oh yeah. Oh I tell ya, after I, I just quit payin' railroad fare. For quite awhile, you know. If I wanted to go someplace I would catch a freight, yeah. Like when I worked out on the coast. Like I told you when Minnie came to camp with her girls. When I got word that they wanted me to work in a planing mill in Kamiah up here, I took a freight to St. Maries. I didn't pay no railroad fare. No. When I got to St. Maries, I think ^I bought my ticket from St. Maries to, no, wait a minute now. I bought, yeah, the guy that I was gonna work for

was gonna run the planing mill in Kamiah was in St. Maries and then we went, course I beat my way to St. Maries on a freight and seen him and then we went to Spokane on the Milwaukee and then we took the NP to Kamiah. But I never paid anything between Hoquiam and St. Maries. I just rode the freights.

SS: Was it easy to get on and stay on?

GS: Oh yeah. It wasn't always easy goin' east. Generally goin' east they're loaded. But goin' west they're empty. You can beat a freight goin' west any time. But goin' east they're pretty loaded. Generally pretty loaded.

SS: Usually a lot of guys riding when you were on?

GS: Yeah, lot's of times. Lots of times. One time I worked in St. Maries. And there was an old Swede by the name of Gus Benson, was green lumber foreman. At that time ^I Idaho was dry. I don't know now, no, it was, ^{I think it was} local ~~option~~. Benwah county was dry, that's the way it was. And, but you could get whiskey in Seltice, Montana just over the line, you know. And nobody, all those Swede lumber pilers and stuff, they'd didn't know a darn thing about beatin' a freight, I was the only one. And I'd go to Seltice and get five gallons of whiskey and, course Gus Benson the foreman, he had to have some of it and the rest of 'em. But he paid my wages all the time while I was gone. And you know, well it was like this, here's Harry's lumberyard. Like so. Here's the St. Maries River. And the railroad comes like this, round the lumberyard and into town. And the boarding house was over here. And the freight, she comes along in the morning, always pulls to where the engine is just about into the railroad yard and the freight is strung out all along the lumberyard. So all I had to do was ^{just} jump on the boxcar and walk through the lumberyard and into the boarding house, where we were stayin'. I walked through the lumberyard, nobody to stop you or nothin'. There was nothing to it.

SS: What town was this by?

GS: St. Maries. The lumberyard, the St. Maries River runs like so. And here's the town of St. Maries. Here's Harry's lumberyard. And the railroad track comes like this. And into the freight yard. Well the boarding house ~~where~~ we stayed

was here. All of us every morning that freight would stop like so. Dead stop. All you had to do was jump out of the boxcar and walk through the lumberyard and into the boarding house. That's all there was to it.

SS: Would you be able to get to Seltice and back the next day?

GS: Yeah. I took the passenger over to Seltice.

SS: You didn't ride the freight.

GS: No, but I rode the freight coming back. With the whiskey. Yeah.

SS: How often would you go?

GS: Oh whenever Gus wanted me to. I think I made about three trips that summer while we were there.

SS: And the rest of it was for the other guys?

GS: Yeah.

SS: Was the drinking being done when the workday was over?

GS: Oh yeah, or weekends, generally. That's when they do it most, weekends.

SS: Not too much on the week night?

GS: No. No. There was a couple of card sharks in Elk River one time and this same Gus Benson, he was green lumber foreman up at Elk River at that time. Same guy that was down for Herrick when I used to bring the whiskey from Seltice. We boarded with a Swede family there. And here was this John, I forget his last name, he was a lumber piler. A husky guy. And every payday, these card sharks would get ahold of him and get his paycheck. Oh, he'd always hold out and pay his beard and stuff, but they get the rest of it. And he was a hard worker. And finally Gus Benson, his boss, he was boardin' there too. He got after John. Told him what a darn fool he was. To give his money away. And John, he listened to Gus and I guess, three, four paydays the cardsharks didn't get him. And finally one Saturday, they got him and took it all away from him. And Gus heard about it. So John, he had a room, him and his partner had a room with this family. But Gus had a room someplace else, but he always came down for his meals. And I had a shack of my own, and I came down to breakfast table, I think it was a Sunday morning. Gus had found out that John had lost all his

money. So he started to give him the devil. And he really talked turkey to him. So he was ashamed, he was eating and he didn't have anything to say. "Yes, but goddamn it Gus, it was an awful goddamn good game!" (laughs) What can you do with a guy like that?

SS: Those guys really knew how to play good crooked poker didn't they?

GS: Oh yeah. I never played. I know what I'm good at and I know what I don't know how to do. And I don't know how to play poker. So I never played. I told you about *Puttman* and only fishing 20 minutes. Huh?

SS: No.

GS: Well you know I was working with a fellow and this was one *of the hardest works* and biggest liars that I've ever known. His name was Puttman and Ed Lilig was the boss on the loading dock, he's retired, lives downtown here now. Well Ed and I used to fishing together a lot. All you had to do was bring your pole and your basket down at noon and go up the creek little ways after the whistle blew and get your fifty limit and go on home. You know, there was no such a thing as, you'd just say, well we're gonna have fish for supper. And that was it. Well, you know. And Puttman, he went fishing a lot too. And so he brought his pole down and his basket too. And he went fishing up the creek, but we never saw hide nor hair of him after Ed and I went up. Well, how Ed and I fished, he fished a stream and I fished this hole. Ed would be below me and he'd go by me to the next hole and fish and I'd go and fish the next hole. That's the way we always fished, you know. You don't hog it you know. So Ed passed ^{by} me. And he stopped and he said, "Goddamn it George, in the morning let us ^{ask} Puttman first." It took it a little while to soak in you know. But then I got to thinking, always when we went fishing Puttman would rush up to Ed and I and ask us how many fish we caught and we'd tell him and he always caught more fish than we did. So, yeah, I said, by god we will! Well Ed, he was ^{the} a foreman and in the morning Puttman and I had already started to load lumber into this car. We were working contract. We got paid according to how much lumber we put in the car. Well Ed was still puttin' up a few, you know, they have clipboards that go in every boxcar

shows what goes in each boxcar. And as he come by, he "Ask him, ask him." So I quit puttin' in lumber to Puttman and I went up, I said, How many fish did you catch yestarday, Puttman? Well I forget the count now, but I think he said 27 or something like that. Course he had to say how many did you catch. Well I said, I got thirty five and Ed got forty two. "Yeah but I only fished 20 minutes." And Ed just took one look at me and he started to walk down that dock, he never said a goddamn word, here we had it all figured out and we got beat anyway. (laughs) By god, I'll tell you, that was one of the best ones I ^{ve} ever heard. And that's honest to God truth, every bit of it. You ought to see the look on Ed's face. I tell ya. He just looked like "It's no use". That's the expression he had on his face.

SS: Was Puttman as good a liar as Harry Adams?

GS: No. No he told such ridiculous lies, Harry Adams just told lies for fuh.

SS: But Puttman told lies to build himself up.

GS: Yeah. Always kind of a braggart here, he always had the watch that kept the best time, or something like that you know.

SS: He's always a little bit better.

GS: Yeah. But you know, one time Ed and I had seen an ad in Sears — Roebuck catalog. These Army lash shoes. So I sent for a pair and Ed sent for a pair. And they were no good shoes, I tell you. And the eyelets frayed, you know. They'd eat up the shoe strings. And I was for ever getting shoe strings for those shoes. This day shoe string broke and I can't stand a broken shoestring. I went into the tie bin where we tie the logs and got some of that twine and made me enough so I'd get home, you know. I was cussin' those goddamn shoe strings and there was an old fellow there, he was a real gentleman, Old man Rowan and he was, he'd been around. He'd been a schoolteacher and he'd been a banker and storekeeper and homesteader. I think he'd been telegraph operator and depot agent on the railroad and he was one of the best read men I've ever know.

SS: Best what?

GS: Read. He read everything. And Rowan was there and there was Puttman and there

was Ed Lilliard and I and I think there was a couple of other guys standing around. And I was cussin' those goddamn shoes that wore out so goddamn, I can't keep shoestrings and these goddamn shoes. And I forget now, but Puttman says "You know, one time I had a pair of shoestrings and you know, I wore out four pair of shoes with that one ^{pair of} shoestring." We all looked at each other. Nobody said a word. Nobody wanted to say, "Oh you're a goddamn liar." We just kind of looked at each other kind of funny and we went away. And ^{every} time anything afterwards came up that was kind of ridiculous, we'd say, "Well that's just about as bad as Puttman when he wore out four pair of shoes with that one pair of shoe strings." And each time he kept on looking down his nose a little more everytime it was sprung, you know. And finally one time, I sprung and he said, (shouting) "By God, I never did say that!" (laughs) By that time he'd seen how goddamn ridiculous it was and he took it all back. Beats hell what you hear in a lifetime, ain't it?

SS: Was Puttman a nice guy?

GS: Yeah, he was a nice fellow, he was a nice fellow. Yeah. Yeah he was a nice fellow. But he was, he was tighter than a bark on a tree. He was a nice fellow.

SS: You mean with his money?

GS: Oh yeah. He was tight, I'll tell ya. One night I was out in the moonlight. It was in June. For a fact it was ~~in~~ the fourth of June. I was gonna get me a venison. I was in this homestead cabin. And I had a migraine headache, I tell ya, ^{that was} almost killin' me. And I had a hole in the shakes. I laid up in the attic, and I ~~had~~ had a hole in the shakes. It was moonlight. And I had one of these mummy sleeping bags. I thought, I'll take one more look out in the meadow and if there's nothing, if I don't see anything I'll just sleep til morning, see if anything comes in. So I looked out of the shakes and here came the biggest thing walking into the meadow you ever saw. And I was praying to Christ it would be a deer buck, but when I pulled the trigger I knew better. It was a bull elk. And, by god, anyway, I got him. And there I was all alone with that goddamn ^{big} bull elk. But Puttman had a car. And I went into town. I walked back into town and got

Puttman and I said, "We got to get Berg too." But Puttman, oh, he didn't want to get anybody else in it, Oh my God, Puttman, this thing is big, we got to get Berg." He's a young Swede and he was at a dance. And we finally got Berg. And we got washtubs and everything we could think of to, in the car and started down the street and the city marshall and the deputy shefiff stopped us and told us we forgot to turn our headlights on.(laughs) Anyway, we went out and we had damn near half a mile from where we left the car, we had almost half a mile to walk to where the elk laid in the meadow. You know, and he laid right by a fire patrol trail. And I tell you, we worked that night. Oh Jesus Christ, how we worked. But Puttman could see why I wanted one more guy when we came up, he,"Jesus Christ, is he that big?" I tell you that thing was big. Oh man. We packed meat, well, we packed meat til daylight. When we delivered the meat to Berg's and my place and Puttman's it was daylight in the morning. The town wasn't up yet, but it was good daylight.

SS: Did you have your migraine all through the night?

GS: No, it went away after I got to, I ran into town and got to sweatin' and that took it off, I think. Jeez, I had a headache. I really had a headache. I got him up at Christason Meadow. If you know where that is.

SS: Which meadow?

GS: Christason Meadow.

SS: I don't know.

GS: Did you ever take the trail, the road up to Elk Butte?

SS: No.

GS: Well its that meadow that you pass. You go through a kind of a canyon and then you come out into an open meadow, road goes by. That's Christason Meadow.

SS: I was gonna ask about the whorehouse, the guys that got V.D., what did they treat it with?

GS: I'll tell you,...

(End of side D)

GS: You bet. Yeah. I guess know all you ^{have} to do is take a couple of pills and it's over with.

SS: That's what I think. I don't think its a big deal anymore.

GS: No. I understand, I don't know if its sulfa or penicillin or, I guess syphillis is nothing to it anymore. Is it?

SS: I don't know. I don't hear much about it these days.

GS: No. I think sulfa and penicillin cure both of 'em, I don't know which is which, but for those guys that had gonorrhoea, oh god. Oh.

SS: They suffered.

GS: Oh yes, and I tell you, it took money to get cured. Umm. I was just lucky. And it was rampant, those days.

SS: Lot of guys got it?

GS: Oh yeah.

SS: How often would the guys in camps wind up going to the whorehouse? Very regular?

GS: Some of 'em did. Went fairly regular and some of 'em just went ~~once~~ in awhile.

I guess some of 'em never went at all. Seems like they never got the urge. I know one guy, I was working, loading cars in St. Maries for Harry. And it was in 'bout this time of the year. Nice sunshiney days you know. There was a meadow on the other side of the boxcar and I used to go out and lay in that meadow and eat my lunch. And there was this young Swede. Him and another fellow they were batching in a little house, oh about a quarter of a mile from the mill and he went home for dinner and when he seen me laying in the grass there, he came over to me. And he said, "You know George," he said, "I think I got a dose of clap." "Well let's see." I said. So he, I laid this away and he laid right opposite from me. Open up his pants and Holy Jesus Christ! Mr. Man, I said, "You better get to Spokane and get quick." "Well" he said, he told me afterwards by the time he got a room at the Galax Hotel. That isn't there, that's a parkin' lot now. His pants are wet clear down from the discharge, and I guess he's really had it. He really had it. I guess he was half ate up with it.

SS: There was a place you could go for treatment in Spokane?

GS: Yeah, there were doctors in Spokane.

SS: That would treat it.

GS: Treat it, but Jesus, Christ, I guess the treatment was really something.

SS: I wonder how they treated it.

GS: I don't know. I don't know. I heard one guy tell that they had something that they stuck in there, then they pushed on something and two or three little knives came out and ripped it open.

SS: Sounds pretty bad.

GS: Oh Jesus Christ.

SS: I wonder why, I hear about blowing in in Spokane. What would be the difference, were there some guys that would just hang in Elk River and others that would go to Spokane to blow in? Or did everybody go to Spokane once in a while to blow in?

GS: Yeah, and then you, you went to work, you'd go to Spokane and then you'd go off from there, work someplace else. You know there was work everywhere, those days. You know. You say, you say, well I think, you didn't say, "I'm gonna go up to Sandpoint and see if I can get a job." You just said, "I'm gonna go up to Sandpoint and work awhile." .No

SS: When guys blew in, I always had a feeling that you spent all your money and didn't save any.

GS: Oh you always had a little. ^{left} You didn't blow it all. I spent a lot on guns.

SS: What about guys that were down on their luck? Did you ever see lumberjacks ever have a hard time trying to make a go of it? No money and having to borrow?

GS: No. 'Cause you could go to work anyplace. No. No. Un un. The only thing to put a lumberjack down on the luck would be sickness. But outside of that, hell, they could always work. I'll tell you, I seen the time in St. Maries where they'd get mad at you if you didn't ^{go to} work. They had a great big, I don't know what he was, I think he was a shoemaker by trade. Great big husky. I think he was a Norwegian nationality. And a lot of them lumber camps used to put in orders with him for men, you know. And he'd try to talk you into going to work and by god, he'd almost get mad when you ^o wouldn't go to work. "No, I'm not ready to go to work yet." Oh he'd talk, you know, he'd talk worse than an insurance salesman. Oh yeah. I forget his name now. Yeah, can you imagine that? He was a pest. He was just a pest. If you didn't ^{want to} go to work, if you wasn't ready to

go to work he was a regular pest, I tell ya. All the loggin' camps up the St. Maries and the St. Joe rivers was lookin' for men. And he really was a pest if ever there was one.

SS: Did a lot of guys travel around to different camps. I always thought there were guys that travelled and guys that stayed put in camps. Like you stayed at Elk River a long time, didn't you?

GS: Yeah, but that mostly after I got married. Oh yeah.

SS: So before you got married you went around to all different places?

GS: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SS: Why did you decide to get married if lumberjacking wasn'tta good way to support a family?

GS: Well, wages came up and I got a pretty good job as millwright in the planing mill. By that time I was pretty good planing mill man. And I got a job as millwright. And that paid pretty good wages. Course the wages came up to beat hell during the First World War. ^{too, you know} And that's how I happened to get married.

SS: Did you meet your wife in Elk River?

GS: Um um. She was from St. Maries. That was my first wife. I got dealt off the bottom of the deck the first time. (laughs) I got a good wife now.

SS: So marriages didn't work out in them days either?

GS: Un huh. No, she was, ummm.

SS: These days it seems like half the marriages don't work out.

GS: Yeah, a lot of 'em don't.

SS: When the depression hit, did that make times tough for the lumberjacks?

GS: Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Yes, it was tough on the lumberjacks. But let's see now. When is, Social Security started with Roosevelt. But seem to me like during the later part of the depression there was some workman's unemployment compensation, wasn't there?

SS: I don't know.

GS: I believe there was.

SS: I heard was the public work stuff and the CCC's and WPA.

GS: Yeah, lot of that. Oh yeah, it was tough alright. It was tough. Yeah. It was

pretty tough. It seem like there was, I don't remember if it was towards the end of the depression or what, there was some kind of workmen's ^{unemployment} ~~compensation~~ the lumberjacks used to call it, "he's drawing rocking chair money." Have you ever heard that expression?

SS: Yeah.

GS: I don't remember when that started. Oh they'd say, "He's sittin' in a hotel in ST. Maries drawing rocking chair money."

SS: How long did you stay in Elk River after the mill shut down?

GS: Oh I stayed in Elk River, I think two years, I stayed in Elk River. Then I got, well I had odd jobs. I was ^{foreman} on the road for a gang, then I drove road truck and ^{generally} I got a little work now and then, you know and I raised a big garden and I killed a lot of venison. Lot of it. And then when the blister rust started, they were lookin' for men, and Jesus, the pay was great. ^{those days} I think we go five dollars a day and board, or something like that, you know. That was good money, those days, you know. I worked in a 60 man camp and I didn't know that ^{they} were gonna have a hell of a big setup the following year. And they were looking for foremen. And everybody in that camp was graded, just like a bunch of school kids. Course, I didn't know that, you know. Well in that 60 man camp, the fellow that got the highest grade was a fellow by the name of Jim Skene and I. And I didn't know that ^{on} til the next year.

SS: What was the work they were having you do?

GS: Eradicate these rybies.

SS: So you were pulling bushes?

GS: Yeah. And Jim Skene and I, we were tops. So I got a CC foreman job the following summer. Then after that I stayed right with 'em til I got on the civil service.

SS: What were the CC boys like, that sent from the east?

GS: Well, I tell you, they weren't, I had some awful good boys. In my gang I had some awful good boys. For a fact, I don't know that I had any real bad ones. Most of my boys were good boys, but most of my boys were country boys. It was the town bastards that was hard to handle. You know. Yeah, I had good boys.

SS: Did your boys come ^{from} around Idaho?

GS: Oh no. No, I think my boys, a lot of 'em ^{was} from Kentucky. That's the best job I ever had. You know I got 140 dollars a month and the United States government sent me a bill for 15 dollars for board every month. And so the 125 was clear. And you know, those depression prices, they were really something. You know, eggs for a while at Deary was six cents a dozen. You know. Yeh. I tell you, I think that's the best job I ever had. If you compare what I earned with what it cost to live. (talks about neighbor hammering in background)

(pause in tape)

GS: Simple. ~~For~~ ^{Ike} .

SS: I can't remember who told me but I heard a story that he hit a robber over the head with a hammer.

GS: Oh yeah. Yeah. And the robber had a gun.

SS: He did?

GS: Yeah. (laughs) And he ran across the street and hit him over the head with a hammer, and that's how he got to be city marshall. (laughs)

SS: He wasn't the marshall at that time?

GS: No. No. He was doing some carpenter work across the street. And he heard a fracas, he ran across the street and hit him over the head with a hammer. (laughs)

SS: Do you think Ike was in with the bootlegging?

GS: Oh no, no sir. No. No, neither was Dick Howlett or Pierson. Pierson was city marshall and Dick Howlett was deputy sheriff. They weren't in cahoots with the bootleggers. No sir. No.

SS: Did you hear about the plane that crashed when they were burning the mill?

GS: Oh yeah.

SS: How, what is the way you heard what happened?

GS: I tell ya, let's see, I think I got one of the riggs off of one of the propellers. I don't know if I've got it, (looks for it) Yeah. This is one of the rings off of the propellers. I got the other ring someplace else too. It's black.

SS: What happened, why did the plane crash then?

GS: Well, they got off course. They got off course, you know. And, course they got

radios, you know. And they contacted Spokane. And they said that they were off course, but they were circling ^{a place} where there is a big fire. They were burning the mill down. And Spokane contacted all the places that they could in the Inland Empire. And Viida Paulson was telephone operator in Elk River at the time. And she got it so she sent the messages back to Spokane says, they're burning the mill up here at Elk River and there's a plane circling overhead. And then they knew where they were. Then they telegraphed to the plane and they hit for the beam that goes between Kellogg and Missoula, I guess. You know, there's a beam. But they weren't high enough, they hit this Cemetery Ridge.

SS: In Elk River?

GS: No no. It's a ridge between the Big Creek drainage and the, what is the name of that river that goes through Kellogg?

SS: The Cour d' Alene?

GS: The Cour d'Alene. The big, it's a big ridge between the Big Creek drainage and the Cour d' Alene River drainage. ^{Its} This Cememtery Ridge. And they hit that.

SS: How far from Elk River, pretty close?

GS: Oh no. They were almost to Kellogg, Idaho, you know.

SS: How'd you get the ring?

GS: (laughs) You know, they had a blister rust camp up in Big Creek one year. And they were all eastern boys there. And they spend every weekend taking that plane apart. Taking parts of it for souvenirs. And they say that when that camp broke up, that, those boys were just loaded down with things from, off of that plane. And one of the guys over the headquarters gave me this ring, he said it comes off of the roller bearings on the propeller. It was, what do they call it? Lockheed Electra. I think that's what it was, maybe. A friend of mine, Neil Fullerton, ^{was the} he ^{was the} head of the timber sales for the St. Joe Forest. He was the head of the party that went in there and got the men out.

SS: The pilot didn't die?

GS: Oh yeah, they were right in their seats, froze solid. Out in the snow. I guess they flew through the window when it hit. I guess it, when it hit, it just sheared off great big tamarack just like they'd been almost cut off with a

knife. They were just a little too low. But that's a long ways from Elk River to Cemetery Ridge up by Kellogg. But it was Vilda Paulson who Spokane wised 'em up to where they were.

SS: When you got on civil service, where did you go and what did you do? After the blister rust?

GS: No, I stayed with the blister rust til I quit 'em. I finally quit 'em. I came to Lewiston, I went to work for the railroad.

SS: And then you lived in Lewiston from then on?

GS: Yeah.

SS: Had you and your first wife split by that time?

GS: No, no. My first wife and I, we split up while I was on civil service. My second wife, she's from North Dakota. She was born in Tacoma, but she was one year old when the family moved to North Dakota on a farm. So she was raised in North Dakota. (break in tape)

GS: I think they had some trouble in Elk River, too. With some black kids. That's one thing when I was camp foreman for the blister rust, I got all the niggers. 'Cause they knew they'd get a fair shake. I have no prejudice against any nationality or any creed or color or anything and the supervisor that we had, he knew the niggers would get a fair shake at my camp, and I never had any trouble with the niggers. (laughs) I had a Chevy at that time, and it had an awful good radio^{in it}. Boy, it had a good radio, and when was this, you must have been pretty young. You don't remember when Joe Louis was fightin' somebody. You remember Joe Louis?

SS: Oh yeah. Great fighter.

GS: Yeah. And I forget he was fightin'. And there was a few radios in camp, but they couldn't get a thing. So I finally, I went out, I thought, well I'll see, maybe I can get it on my car radio. So I, and it came in like a house a fire. And I just got out of there and in nothin' flat, my car was full of niggers. I just enough niggers in camp to fill it up. And I just let 'em have it. And listen, oh they wanted to see Joe Louis win. I forget who he fought.

SS: He fought a lot of guys.

GS: I forget now. But boy, I tell you, when those niggers found out that I could get it on my car radio, they just came arunnin'.

SS: Were your boys, were they able to go into town?

GS: Oh yes.

SS: They could go into Elk River?

GS: Oh yeah, they were grown men. Oh yeah.

SS: Young men?

GS: Well they were in their '30's. I'll tell you, I had a couple three of them there that I wouldn't advise anybody in Elk River to tackle 'em. I had one guy there, he was about as husky as they ever make a man. I'll tell you, he was husky. But as a rule they didn't stay long.

(End of side E)

GS: Harder than I wanted him to. Oh. I bought him a pair of gloves. You know, on rainy days we'd cut wood and send into headquarters so ^{that} headquarters would have plenty wood for the winter. And you know, this guy, he, he split wood, he almost wore the skin out of his hands. I went in ^{to} town and bought him a damn good pair of buckskin gloves. And gave ^{em} ~~him~~. Oh, he was a working sonofabitch, I tell you.

SS: Where did these guys go when they had time off?

GS: Elk River.

SS: They probably came from the cities back east. Or the South.

GS: I don't know. No, I think they were, I think they came from smaller towns down South. I had two Mexican camps. They're a happy go lucky outfit. The Mexicans. I like 'em, personally. But it's hard to get any work out of 'em. If it was a rainy day and we sawed wood, you could get a lot of work out of 'em 'cause you pitch 'em against each other, one crew on this log and another crew on another log. Then they'd try to out-saw each other, or something like that.

They aren't ⁺ hard workers, the Mexicans aren't. They're easy to get along with. I had one Mexican camp, and the other Mexican, he told me that he was a bandit. And they said when he took his clothes off at night, his ^{hide} ~~skin~~ looked like a sieve where he'd been shot at, with buckshot and stuff. But I never had any trouble with him.

SS: I wanted to ask you about Albert Wylie.

GS: Oh yeah.

SS: Was he a dumb kid?

GS: Well, I'll tell ya. If you can say that a guy can take a little flour and sugar and salt and a 30.30 carbine and go out in the woods and live for months, would you call him dumb? Huh? I wouldn't neither. He just never got used to city ways. Have you ever read The Grapes of Wrath?

SS: Yeah.

GS: Well do you remember readin' about that guy that stayed there after everybody pulled out and he went from house to house and just kind of like a recluse after everybody pulled for California? Well, Albert Wylie was kinda like him. The happiest days he ever had was when he was a kid on the homestead. Then his father and mother died and his sister scattered and got married. Albert was left all alone and he was just, well, he was just a pitiful character. You know. I told you about Albert and the moon. Huh?

SS: Um huh.

GS: I don't know if he's still alive or not. He's got a cousin in...

SS: That's Bob Smith, right?

GS: Yeah.

SS: You mentioned him to me.

(End of tape)