

BYERS SANDERSON
Third Interview

Interviewed by:

Sam Schrager

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

I. Index

II. Transcript

I. Index

BYERS SANDERSON

Bovill; b. 1896

master mechanic for Potlatch Lumber Company

2.5 hours

minute page

Side A

- 00 1 Potlatch Corporation manipulations to get timber and profit from land Mr. Sanderson was trying to purchase for logging.
- 14 5 Potlatch discarded a great deal of equipment in Bovill during the Depression, most of which was purchased by junk dealers rather than by local people, who couldn't afford it. Automatic loader brings automation. Potlatch discouraging competition – they wouldn't sell their logging tracks to Mr. Sanderson. They grabbed Beal's Butte timber.
- 26 9 Early homesteaders nearly always sold their timber to Potlatch, but didn't make much. T.P.Jones held timber for Potlatch but sold it to Montana gypos, causing Potlatch to sue.

Side B

- 00 11 T.P.Jones' Montana oil drilling. Many local Potlatch people invested and would have been rich, except that Jones got mixed up with big companies and the stock was watered.
- 08 14 Mr. Sanderson's copper claims in the Hoodoos; a drilling company almost decided to explore it. Small operators can't afford the assessment work. Taking advantage of farmers in the Osage, Wyoming oil fields.
- 21 18 His father's Copper King mine. They sent two carloads of hand-picked ore to the Tacoma smelter; the smelter lied about the assay, and the backers withdrew.
- 28 19 Disadvantage to little guy who mines – government road building regulations.
- 31 21 His placer claim on Swamp Creek. (continued)

Side C

- 00 22 T.P.Jones beat Mr. Sanderson out of a placer mine because of a mismarked boundary. (Mr. Sanderson's CCC dam at Elk Butte). The McGahan brothers' mining on Swamp Creek. Jericho Mine's "glory hole" and ledge. Advice from an old miner.
- 13 26 Harrassment of Chinese miners in Hoodoos. A frightened Chinese miner with a bag of nuggets. Trenches dug by Chinese. Leases for the Palouse River dredge.

Byers Sanderson

minute	page	
Side C		
21	29	Old Hoodoo miners. Duffney's portholes in his cabin and feud with Wagner. The two were somewhat crazy from isolation.
26	31	Miners used a needle in a bottle of alcohol. Chinese mining.
Side D		
00	32	July 3 fire in Bovill (1914) was arson, murder and robbery. Mr. Sanderson met a boy with a great deal of money on the train to Colfax the following day, and was later suspicious.
06	35	More about the killing of Big Red in Elk River.
12	37	Bohunks in the woods. Eccentric Potlatch Joe. Killing of a Bohunk by others in Palouse. He kept time for the steel gangs - their work.
20	40	Summoning back of Europeans during the first world war - some returned and were killed. Bohunks who died and left their insurance to local people. More about Potlatch Joe and other Bohunks. They were good workers, and paid off the bosses.
Side E		
00	44	Paying Bohunks by numbers. They were lower class. A good dancer who was popular with the girls.
07	47	Cougar Jack beats up two drummers. Cougar Jack's car accident. His <i>enormous</i> strength.
15	50	Big <i>Git</i> was a strong man. He was sweet on Mrs. Crawford and insulted her when drunk.
19	52	Drinking moonshine. Framed in a rematch after winning big at poker.
26	54	Phillips, the moonshiner, shoots at a <i>snoop</i> . Mr. Sanderson stole Phillips' booze, hid on the side of the road.

with Sam Schrager

January 23, 1976

II. Transcript

This conversation with BYERS SANDERSON took place at his home near Bovill, Idaho on January 23, 1976. The interviewer is SAM SCHRAGER.

BYERS SANDERSON: Powell, down here at Princeton, I told him ~~that~~ I wanted to cruise the timber and I had this timber ^{that} I could buy, and I says, "Mr. Stout, of Genesee, owns a horse ranch," ^{and} I says, "and he's got a thousand or so acres down in there and ^{there's} lots of timber on it," I want to buy it, or buy the timber." And I was logging at that time. I had the logging crew. I had two Cats and a loader and the logging equipment; chain saws. And I had probably half a million feet of timber out here on the horse ranch- ^{of} off the horse ranch- and I wanted to buy it. ^{well,} And I told ^{him that I'd have} Mr. Powell of the ranger station ~~come up here,~~ and he was an old cruiser, and I says, "He'll go through and give you a maximum estimate of your timber." Well, that was Friday- Monday morning Powell went right down to the old fella, and told him that the government was buying all this timber that they could get ahold of, and he says, "I'll go through and cruise it and we'll buy it ~~of~~ you." Well, Stout says, "I told Mr. Sanderson that he could have the timber." ^{he says,} And ^{he says,} if he don't take the timber, then, ^{he says,} I'll deal with you, if you want it." ^{But} he says, "I won't carry it over his head because I told him, and ^{he says, I figure} my word is trustworthy." So, the next morning ^{why} Mr. Stout come up to the house and he says, "Byers, ^{he says} the Forestry come up there and wanted to buy that timber." And I told him they couldn't have it. ^{And I says,} I give you first chance at it and if you want it, why, we'll ^{go through and we'll} make the deal." And so, I says, "Well," ^{I says,} I was working at the shop and I had the crew out onto the side, working this other ground, and I says, "I'll be over this week sometime, and I'll get papers fixed up and we'll make a deal." And, I went over to the courthouse. Well, they was a hundred and sixty acres up here that I ~~had~~ cruised, and then over on the other side there was another big bunch of timber, and then they

was five thousand acres out here that I had a chance to get ahold of for practically a song. And I went over to the courthouse and it was Saturday, and the woman that was in there,^{and} she got the books down and she says, "Yes,^{she says,} it's all open, you can buy it if you want it." "Well," I says, "I want it." "Well," she says, "I can't make the deal right now, but^{she says,} you come over next week, and^{she says, I'll} we'll make the deal. ^{she says,} you can buy it." I know just as well in the world what she done, she stepped to the phone and called Hanson up at Potlatch, the Land Commissioner for the Potlatch, you know, and he come up. He come up there on a Monday, that monday, and he bought sixty-six thousand ~~thousand~~ dollars worth of ~~back~~ tax ground. And so, I went over a couple of days after that in that same week, I went over, and I says, "Well, I come over to get that ground; we'll get it fixed up." And she went and got the ledger,^{great big} book that square, you know, and she brought it out and she says, "That Hanson at Potlatch-- or at Lewiston- come up and he bought an awful lot of this ground." Well, I looked on the ledger and Potlatch,^{Potlatch} clear all the way down on the ledger and on the next sheet; Potlatch, Potlatch, Potlatch. "Well," I says, "my land, that's monopoly." "Oh, no, no." she says, "not monopoly."^{Well} I says, "It certainly is. ^{I says,} this ground was supposed to go up for a thirty day bid publicly. ^{I says,} that's a public domain." "Well," she says, "we advertised it." And, I says, "What paper did you advertise it in?" "Oh, we didn't advertise it in the paper,^{she says,} we just put it on the books only." "Well," I says, "you can't do that legally.^{I says, a} that's monopoly. Now, ^{I says,} here they've gone through here and they've bought"--"Yes," she says, "they've bought sixty-six thousand dollars worth of tax ground." ^{back} "Well," I says, "I told you it was a monopoly. ^{And, I says,} you didn't advertise it publicly at all. ^{And, I says,} somebody stepped to the phone and called him up and let him know that I was coming up here to get a lot of this

ground." "Well," she says, "I don't know," ^{she says,} "It looks bad alright."

Well, I know what she done, she stepped there and ~~she was in~~. I don't know whether they got a cut out of it or not, but they--

SS: Did you try doing anything else about it?

BS: Oh, no, ^{no.} I was working; the head mechanic for the Potlatch here. I didn't dare to or I'd a lost my job. Although Old Ritzheimer on my timber when I started to haul it out, he said, "Byers," ^{he says,} "I'll have to charge you two dollars a thousand for every thousand feet that you bring out, off a that timber over the road."

SS: Was it a Potlatch road?

BS: Well, he tried to pass it as a Potlatch road, but I says, "Let me tell you something, Ritzheimer," ^{I says,} "you're the superintendent of the Potlatch but you're not running the whole affair." ^{I says,} "that road before the Potlatch ever dreamed of having any ground in there in 1911 and '12, I hauled hay off of those meadows on the county road." ^{And I says,} "Old Bloom lived up there and ~~they~~ was several families lived up there and they-- the county took care of the road." And, I says, "That's a county road and ~~then~~ you rocked it and then claiming it for a road of your own." "Well," ^{he says,} "That's he says, "I'll have to charge you two dollars a thousand," to help maintain the road." Well Hanson come up a couple of days after that and I jumped onto him. Boy, I was hoary eyed!

SS: You were what?

BS: I was hoary eyed. I was mad! I jumped onto him. And he says, "Byers," ^{And he says,} "that son of a bitch ain't arunnin' this Potlatch yet." ^{he says,} "anything comes into my office-- that bill comes into my office," ^{he says,} "it'll go right into the wastepaper basket." ^{He says,} "That's a county road, and ^{he says,} he knows that. ^{And he says,} "he's got no right." But, he was a 100% Potlatch man, you know; that is, everything was for the Potlatch. And one thing like that and then an-

other-- I just got out of it. (Chuckles)=

SS: When was it that you were doing this? About what period of time was it?

BS: Oh, it must have been about ten years ago.

SS: Oh, that recent?

BS: Yeah. Yes, I had two million feet of timber up here on Sam Frei's old holdings, and he let it go back for taxes. Three hundred and thirty-five dollars back taxes on it. I went over there to buy it, and she wouldn't sell it to me on that day because she was the only one there.

SS: Oh, this was that same land?

BS: Yep.

SS: The same land. Sam Frei's-- Was that only ten years ago? Seems awful recent for a guy to let it go for that little in tax money.

BS: Yes, it was only about ten years ago. I don't think it was ten years ago. Do you remember this bank robbery at Troy?

SS: Oh, yes.

BS: Well, how long a go was that?

SS: Well, now, there's been more than one there.

BS: Well, the one they got \$30,000, and he lived over here at Clarkia.

SS: Was there two guys that did it, or just one guy?

BS: Just one guy, *yeah*.

SS: That wasn't that long ago. It was about the same time?

BS: It was the same time ~~as~~ he done that.

SS: I suppose that's about ~~right~~.

BS: Yeah, about ten years a go.

SS: In the early days back around in the '20's and '30's and in there, was it the same deal? If one of you guys wanted to cut timber?

BS: Oh, yes. The Potlatch never cared at all. If you wanted to go out

and cut cedar, as long as you cleared up the ground. And the forestry didn't care.

SS: You mean, they didn't care back then?

BS: No.

SS: They didn't care if you competed with them?

BS: No. ^{Now,} I went and seen the forestry back in those days and got a permit up here on Cocker Meadows to go in and cut old cedar trees, you know, that was old. But I had to clean up the ground and have their inspector come in after I'd got through, and they'd come in and survey the ground to see if it was alright; that I'd cleaned it up. And it was fine and dandy. But when these cedar fellows made a market for it, and these big outfits seen that there was money in it, why, they took over.

SS: Well, this land that you wanted to get like on Frei's place, was that mostly cedar?

BS: No, no, that had lots of cedar on it, but it was nice, big sawlog timber. I had half a million feet of tamarack on there that was, oh, four feet through. It's still standing. They bought it but they'll never touch it unless it's years, and years, and years from now. And now, if they would take-- if these big companies -- the more they get, the more they want. I don't know, it's a mania for money. Now during World War I- or Depression, in '33, the Potlatch shut down up here and they threw away hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of equipment. Well, the Sheenies over at Seattle, Spokane, Portland got in here and they'd fight over it.

SS: Who?

BS: The Sheenies. Jews. Junk dealers. And they had several fights over it. The Potlatch just threwed it away and said, "If you want anything, ^{Why} now's the time to take it!" They had twenty-five thousand dollars worth of bowblocks, and they'd gone out of stock, and they just

threwed 'em out of the warehouse; they was a pile half as big as this house. And then they had gas engines, and they had tractors, the old Holt & Best tractors, and they told the people if they wanted any of that stuff to take it.

SS: How come they threw all that stuff out? Didn't they think they were ever going to log again?

BS: No, ^{no.} Not up here, And the donkey logging had gone out and they had no use for the blocks. But during the Depression, they went broke and they borrowed a million dollars of the government to start up on. Today, I guess, I guess they're number 2, or 3, richest company in the United States. But that shows-- Now automation had a part to play in that, too. They took-- well, like these scrapples and things, I had a lot to do with that and Vern House and some of us, we all made these scrapples and things for 'em. And machines; now, the automatic loaders-- I made the first one that they ever had, and they've still got it down here, and put it out and they was loading 200,000 feet a day off of this landing down here, but they had two Shay engines and then they had-- well, there was ten men on the Shays, and then they had five men on the landing- each loading crew- on the landing, and then they had the Marion engineers tied on them and I made this machine. I had a twin disc motor in it, and one machine done all the work that all the rest of these was doing and saved 'em twenty cents a thousand over what they'd been loading for. Well, that was the starting of the--

SS: When was that, do you remember?

BS: Yes, that was in the '40's; '44.

SS: Well, all this equipment that they threw away in the '30's now, who did get that? Local people didn't get any of that?

BS: Oh, there was local people ~~that~~ got lots of it. But the majority of it all went to what I called the Sheenies; these junk dealers from all over the country. Now, Block, one of the biggest in the Northwest, junk dealer, he got it by the carload. He had a machine come in there, just a big magnet, and he'd pick it up and set it into the gondolas. He got the most of it.

SS: What would he do with all of it? Would he sell it for other people to use?

BS: Oh, yes, he sold it all over the country. He bought these Shays and rod engines and things of the Potlatch, and they sold it at junk price. Probably, oh, around forty dollars a ton. I cut up five Shays, one rod engine- Block cut up the rod engine- and Marions; had six Marions. Then they cleaned the warehouse out down here of old equipment that they had for old-time equipment that they couldn't use any more. And they threw out those; dump pile as long as from here over to Main's house over there. Oh, it was piled up as high as this room. Hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of brand new stuff, ^{that} they just threw away. But, of course, they had on their contract with Block then-- Block bought all their scrap metal-- I think there was payoff in there, but you couldn't never prove anything.

SS: Well, if there's a lot of money involved, you can figure there might just as well of been. So, did local people get what they wanted out of that stuff or--?

BS: Oh, no, no.

SS: During the Depression times I ~~don't~~ imagine there was much money to buy that kind of thing lying around.

BS: Oh, no, the local people couldn't get it. The local people, now, like Ed Hall, he was a little logging outfit here. When Hall first started

out logging, there was some truck bunks throwed out into the scrap pile. Well, they cost a hundred and fifty, two hundred dollars to make 'em, and Ed come up and he seen 'em, and he went to 'em, and says, "I'll buy those truck bunks. I can use 'em. I'd like to have 'em, and I'll buy 'em. I'll pay you good money for 'em." "No, no, can't sell 'em to you, we're under contract to Block, and after they go into the scrap pile that's it." They wouldn't cater at all. Hall was logging against 'em, you see, to start with. They had two logging trucks, White logging trucks, with the trailers and all the logging harness and everything for \$500 down here, and I heard of it and I went to Joe Parker, I says, "Joe, I want those two trucks." "Well," he says, "you can have 'em Byers." He was the superintendent then. And he says, "I'll fix it up so that you can get 'em. They only want \$500 for the two of 'em." "Well," I says, "I want 'em." And Byers, my oldest son, went out and got to talking with Parker, and he said, "Well, Dad has got up here on Beal's Butte, just this side of Beal's Butte, he's got a bunch of timber that he can get ahold of. A. P. Lewis was gonna buy it, and then he didn't, he moved out here. He told Dad about this timber and Dad has got the first choice on it. We want to log it off, bring it in and sell it to the Potlatch." In an hour's time Parker come in and he says, "Byers, I don't think the Potlatch wants to sell those trucks." "Well," I says, "why?" He says, "I don't know why. But they don't want to sell 'em." And there was a fellow down on Orofino come up the next day and got to talking with him and he says "I just bought these two trucks for \$500. I'm gonna fix one up, sell it, and the other one I want for myself. Not much to do to 'em, but I'll go over 'em and fix 'em up." Well, I says, "Let me know what you get out of the truck. I tried to buy 'em, but they wouldn't let me." And he did, he got \$5,000 for the one truck and kept the other

for himself. (CHUCKLES) Well, the Potlatch-- it wasn't a week after that til Johnny Saglo, the master mechanic here, come in and he said, "Byers, that timber you was telling about^{up} on Beal's Butte there that you could buy so cheap, the Potlatch bought it." Well, Parker went and he went over my head, you see, and had 'em buy that ground. Ritzheimer done the same thing with Sam Frie's up here. He had four University surveyors, cruisers rather, come in and they cruised that timber, they went through it in a day and a half, you know, the four of 'em, and they took and marked every tree.

SS: This on the Frei place or Beal's Butte?

BS: Frei's place. Well, they done the same thing on Beale's Butte, too.

SS: When did this business happen with the trucks and Beale's Butte? Was that in the '30's? Or was that more recent?

BS: That was in '46, '47. I was logging out on the horse ranch at the time running my crew. I was working in the shop here.

SS: Sure sounds like you're better off not trusting those guys.

BS: Oh, now, why, you can't trust anybody, now, as far as getting ahold of anything like that. They bought Sam Frei's place and they bought that on that back tax sale, you know. Sixty-six thousand-- Now you go into the county and any timber land that they've got they'll go out and cruise it and you'll pay forty, fifty, sixty dollars a thousand for every-- for stumpage.

SS: Yeah.

BS: You got no chance. The little fellow's got no chance now at all.

SS: I'm still wondering in your early days what it was like? What about guys back before the Depression and in there when they-- were there some guys that were independent outfits and were logging on their own back there?

BS: Oh, yeah.

SS: Now what did they run into from Potlatch? Did Potlatch care?

BS: Oh, Potlatch'd buy their timber but they wouldn't get nothin' for it. They just made a living, that's all. Well, now, Sam Frei up here at Collins-- that was back in, oh, '13, '14, and he had white pine in there that'd go four foot across the stump and they give him four dollars a thousand to cut his timber and haul it in to the landing, and they'd load it. And they charged him six bits a thousand, I think at that time, for loading it, and he thought he had the world by the tail at four dollars a thousand. You take today, one tree would be more than, those nice, big white pines that way-- I guess they're probably a hundred and fifty dollars a thousand, now.

SS: How many thousand would you scale with one of those?

BS: Oh, those trees averaged over two thousand feet. Maybe some trees'd go three thousand feet. But they got this whole country in here, practically for two and a half and three dollars an acre at that time.

SS: There was no way that you could get around selling it to the Potlatch back then?

BS: Yes. Lots of 'em homesteaded ground here, but they'd sell out to the Potlatch. Potlatch'd go in and buy 'em out and give them a little or nothing and they'd sell out. Lots of 'em ^{even} had to ^{even} stay on the place, when Old Helmer'd go out and cruise it and ^{the Potlatch would buy it and} they'd have to stay ^{and prove up} on their place ~~to~~ and then they'd move out. But money was hard to get at that time.

SS: So Potlatch would buy it from them after they proved up.

BS: Yeah. Now, the Potlatch had a bunch of timber that they-- When Old Jones quit the Potlatch ^{here} and went East on the oil deal, ^{why,} he come back and they had a bunch of timber and they says, "We've got a bunch of timber; you're just the man we're looking for." And, of course, Old T. P. was the superintendent for years and years and the head men all

knew him, and they says, "We'll turn this ground over to you and it'll be proved up on in a little while." And they says, "Then you can turn it back to us." T. P. says, "Alright." Those gyppo timber dealers back over in Montana there, they wanted to buy the timber and they give him twenty-five thousand, - I guess they give him forty thousand-
Potlatch sued him.
for the timber, and Old T. P. sold it to them. Well, til he up and died they still had a case against him. (Chuckles)

SS: Well, doesn't sound like they were-- that Potlatch would have too good a case, since after he proved up on it, it was his land.

BS: Yes. They was just trusting him, that was all. But they tried every conceivable way in the world-- and he didn't dare to keep any money in the bank down here. He had it all up in Canada. (Chuckles)

SS: How did he get in trouble on the oil business in Montana?

BS: Well, Old Stapleson put the first thousand dollars into Montana there, and Jones went in with him.

SS: Was Stapleson a Potlatch man, too?

BS: Well yes, he was an old logger at the Potlatch, and he went in with him. (End of Side A)

And all of the foremens and everybody that wanted to could buy stock, you see, and we all bought stock. And they commenced to buying up this oil land, these oil leases, and we owned, after we got started, we owned 90% of the Keeven-Sunburst oil district. And Jones-- we got to be worth \$3,000,000 - and Jones he got to talking with some oil men back East and he watered the stock then, he went and watered the stock and he went back East, but when they watered the stock they was lots of these fellows that sold out. Sold, some of 'em for a thousand dollars, they got twenty-five thousand dollars for it.

SS: That much?

BS: Yes.

- SS: It increased that much?
- BS: Oh, yes. And, of course, Dad and I--Dad had mined with Jones for, oh, thirty years- thirty-five years as a partner and we stuck with Jones. Well, he went back East and he got in with those big oil outfits, and they got him tied up in the-- and they broke him. They took over the oil fields and everything. Well, he come back and that's when he bought this timber. That is he sold this timber. ^{He didn't have any.} He was dead broke. And when he stepped off at Shelby there, why, the Potlatch man met him, and turned this ground over to him. (Chuckles) Well, Old T. P. was just shrewd enough then that he sold it.
- SS: Did he hold on to it til he proved up before he sold it?
- BS: Oh, I suppose he did. He held onto it and when the Potlatch come to get it why they found out he'd sold it.
- SS: Well, this oil, now-- it went up so high because he watered it?
- BS: Before he watered it.
- SS: Oh, it went up that high--
- BS: If he hadn't a watered it all of us fellows'd a stuck with him, we'd a been well-to-do today, because them oil fields are still going. They brought in one gusher there on the Howlding (?) ranch that was, I guess was a ten thousand barrel well. It's still agoing yet today.
- SS: Now what is it that happens? What do you do to water stock? What does that mean?
- BS: Well, it was only a hundred thousand shares, you see, he had to start with. Well, he watered it-- in partnership proposition, he was just the same as a king. ^{would be - his word.} He could do anything he wanted to. Well, we trusted him, you see. And, of course, I found that out in later years, that he was the same as a king. But he knew it. He'd had lawyers and things that he knew it. Well, he put five million shares out onto the

market, ^{you} see; watered the stock. And these big oil companies, ^{well,} they had men working right in there and they knew what it was, and before he knew it, he was ^{why,} tied up and broke. And we got nothing! I did sell-- Dad and I sold, and we got ten cents on the dollar, I think.

SS: How much had people invested in it? I mean, like-- did you guys have much tied up in it?

BS: We had-- each individual around here had a thousand, fifteen hundred dollars in on it.

SS: Did many sell?

BS: Oh, yes, quite a lot of 'em sold. And I'd a sold when I could a got twelve and a half to one. That's when a lot of 'em sold; twelve and a half to one. For every dollar they put in; they put in a thousand dollars they'd get twelve thousand five hundred dollars out of it. Some of 'em got more than that.

SS: Now was this after the Depression or before, when this happened?

BS: Oh, this is before the Depression.

SS: Did your father ever talk to T. P. Jones about it, I mean, about what he'd done to him? If someone stole fifteen hundred bucks of my money I don't know what I'd do, but I'd be mad.

BS: ^{Yes.} Well, T. P. explained to Dad. Dad was a mining man, he was a mineral-ologist and geologist and he understood a lot of that stuff and he had perfect confidence in Old Jones. If he hadn't a got tied up and the big companies gotten ahold of him, why, we'd all been ^{here,} rich because we had that stock. I've got a lockbox upstairs full of that stock, but when it went down to nothin' we was sold out.

SS: Did your father still like T. P. Jones after that?

BS: Oh, yes, Oh, yes. That never changed Dad about -- he'd been into the ^{here,} mining game, and --

SS: Was the idea that Jones himself wasn't so guilty, but he'd been used

by the company?

BS: Jones, himself, was-- he meant alright, there's no question to T. P.. He meant alright, but, I'll tell you, when you get tied up ^{with} by them big fellows and everything, why, and they get you where you can't move, why, they got you. They'll break you. That's ^{what} when I had this copper mine up on the butte here, I had the Anaconda engineer and he come up and he spent, oh, he spent all the afternoon with me. Simplot had him out here when Simplot first started, and he told me, he says, "When you deal with these big companies, I know ^{now} what I'm atalkin' about, I've handled hundreds and hundreds of cases for this big Anaconda Copper Company, and I'm still handling, and I get big money telling them just what I told you." He says, "I get big money for that." And, he says, "Before you get their man to come in here, these big outfits, you have everything tied up perfectly legal and know that it is legal. Go to a lawyer and have it drawn up ^{to} where it's absolutely foolproof, and then bring your men in." Well, I had a big outfit from Sheridan, Wyoming, they flew in by plane, well, they had to go to Elk River to land and then I met 'em with a car and brought 'em back and took 'em up there and they was going to invest \$100,000 in diamond drilling it, and I had it so ^{that} they couldn't get ahold of nothing. They surveyed it and they gave me great prospects. He says, "There's no question to it, you've got a good thing here; ^{and} a big thing. We'll come in and we'll diamond drill it and we'll know just exactly what you got. But, to do that you'll have to sign papers that we get seven eighths and you get an eighth." And, I says, well, I'm willing to do that. I knew, I'd been in the mining game and oil game enough that I knew that an eighth royalty was a big royalty. And so, this big outfit down in Oregon-- there was forty acres down there-- they heard it over the television

that a big discovery and they left the next day. I took 'em to Elk River and they got on the plane and they told me that they was going to Oregon to this big strike and see what they could do down there, and they'd be back. Well, I took 'em to Elk River and they took their plane, they had a private plane and they went to Oregon. Well, they sewed that up, the Anaconda got that forty acres. Open pit mining, that's one of the biggest in the West. They never did come back to me. Well, later on in the mining game I found out that the mining done the same thing. They'd come in; look over your property; investigate it, and with a copper mine and 90% of the other mines, the little fellow can't hang onto it, because the government demands that you do so much assessment work on every claim every year. Well, a little fellow like I was with this mine up here- the mine's settin' up there today, but now these big companies when they get short of copper, well, they'll come around to these places and they'll just relocate it and go to work and they've got it for nothing.

SS: Did you let it go?

BS: I couldn't keep it. I had eight claims, that'd be a thousand dollars a year that I'd have to put in. Now, it'd probably be two thousand or three thousand dollars a year.

SS: Was it Anaconda that came to check your mine out?

BS: oh, yes.

SS: When was that? Was that in the '50's?

BS: No, no that was in - yes, that was in- no, that was about '48. But that's the way they work. Now, I was in the Osage Oil Company field when they made that big strike, you know. Went in and got oil riggins and stuff to bring to Montana, and they-- the people in Sheridan, Wyoming-- these farmers, every one of 'em had natural gas on their places.

Well, the country is full of natural gas there. And they had three quarter water pipe out in their barnyards and they had a little valve up on top and they'd light that and they'd burn it twenty-four hours a day. Never cost 'em a dime. The community's that way. And they burned it ^{into} their homes and never cost 'em a dime, and they're still doing it, I suppose. But, I found out- this Army captain I was with, they come in, these farmers- they heard that we were there, and they come in and turn over the whole ranch and some of 'em had oil on it, but they wasn't big oil strikes there at all, they was only a five, ten barrel oil well. Well, it costs from \$50,000 to \$200,000 to put down a well. But they offered to turn over their ground for 12½% royalty to Burkholtz and I because they thought we was big oil men, and we wasn't at all. But that shows you the crooked work, and I says to Old Cap, I says, "Well, land sakes, Cap, " I says, "how do you expect to handle that ground? If you take over their leases; make leases with 'em, how do you expect to handle it?" He says, "My boy, you leave that to me. That's the most simple thing you ever seen." I says, "Well, I'd like to know." "Well," he says, "I'll go to the Ohio Oil Company and I'll go to these oil companies and say, "Here, for 12½% I'll turn these leases all over to you."" He says, "I got 12½% through, clear and above board without investing a nickel." Well, he was a banker, this old captain was a banker in New York and during the Depression he went broke. They lost \$10,000,000 back there in the bank. Some of the bankers committed suicide over it and he just laughed at 'em. He says, "The idea of them committing suicide because he lost his life's holdings."

SS: Well, did he do that? Did he take those leases over? The Captain?

BS: He took over some, I guess.

SS: Where is this Osage?

BS: Wyoming there.

SS: When was it that you were in there?

BS: Oh, that was in the '30's. That's when the Potlatch shut^{here} down for a year and I went to work for the- on the side with Old Burkholz in the oil field.

SS: Well, he would get 12½% and then the-- what would the farmers get?

BS: 12½%, that's what they offered it to us for.

SS: They would get 12½% of what? Of what he got?

BS: Yes. No, they'd get 12½% of the royalties.

SS: He'd get 12½% too?

BS: Yeah. 25%. The oil companies took it over for 75%, you see. There wasn't a nickel invested and these oil companies they could get ahold of it. If they got a well, you never knew it. They was out south of Morecroft, Wyoming. Their gas wells at that time, years ago, that they got afraid to even open 'em up because they was howling and screeching so that they was afraid they couldn't have anything to hold it and they plugged the holes. Poured 'em full of cement.

SS: The copper that you found, was it up in the Hoodoos, or where?

BS: No, it's up on the- just north of Abe's Knob here on the backend of Beal's Butte. It's wideopen today. Bob Olson tried to beat me out of it.

SS: The Olson brothers of Troy, you mean?

BS: Yeah. Bob and Henry. They was crooked. They never did-- well, Bob he pulled all kind of crooked deals all over the country. But I'd known 'em ever since they was young fellows, and I didn't think that they'd-- but they tried jumping it on me up here, and I took after Bob once on it and he never went back there-- if he did he never let

me know! (Chuckles)

SS: Is this the Olson that there's quite a few brothers in the family?
There's a bunch of Olsons around there.

BS: Henry worked-- he died just a few years ago-- you remember he bought the old, where the Moscow post office is now? The old building. And he wanted to hold 'em up; he bought it for \$1000 and he wanted to hold 'em up for \$25,000 on it. But they went and looked the records over and and they wouldn't take it, and they told him if he was willing to-- they was willing to give him some on his investment, but they wouldn't pay any money like that. He sold it to 'em. But he's dead now, too. Bob died.

SS: I was going to ask you about that Copper Chief that your father was invested in. Wasn't that the name of the mine, or was it another name?

BS: Copper King. That's still open, too, today.

SS: Did he make much money on that when he was mining it?

BS: No.

SS: You told me how afterwards--

BS: At that time they sent a carload of handpicked ore over to the Tacoma smelter and they had it estimated-- it was running sixty-five to seventy-five percent on the assays. Pure. I've got some of it right here. 60% copper. You can take a torch and put on that and the copper'll just run right out of it. And they-- it was a corporation, you see, they sold stock and then they commenced to lose faith because it was back in there twenty miles, and the mountain road wasn't a road like they've got in there now. It was up on top of the mountain and down and it'd cost 'em-- I don't know what it cost 'em-- I don't remember now-- for hauling the-- This feller at Harvard had an old Model T Truck, at that time he'd just bought it, and he could haul a ton at a

time. Well, they hauled two carload, and it cost 'em-- well it cost 'em plenty to haul it, but they had this handpicked ore, and they hauled it to Harvard and loaded it out into the gondolas; sent it to the smelter. And after they'd had it for a while, Dad got a letter back saying "Ore runs 5%. Isn't worth handling." Dad told 'em they didn't have any more of this highgrade, and he says you owe us \$1,200 for the freight. We had to pay the freight. And, he says, "Your company owes us \$1200." And then he says another-- I forget what it was-- for handling the ore. Well, they dropped it, and the stockholders all-- When Dad made it known to 'em, why they all commenced dropping out. Well, Dad kept it for three, four years and paid \$800 a year to do the assessment work. He hired the men himself; him and Jones, to work it, work out the assessments and then Dad throwed it up. Well, then, this pile-- they had a pile, oh, as big as this room--

SS: You told me-- this the one where the college kids found it and made money off it? You told me that.

BS: 'Course the logging roads then was up the valley and perfectly smooth road all the way into it, and they just went up to the stockpile and loaded up two car loads of it and they got \$30,000! (Chuckles)

SS: You said, the first two carloads and that was highgrade-- didn't they make good money off of that?

BS: They didn't get nothin'! They owed the Tacoma Smelter \$1200.

SS: But I thought you said the smelter said it was only 5%?

BS: Well, yeah, that's what the Smelter said.

SS: It was 60%, you said.

BS: Well, yes, it was. And that's the way they beat the little fellow out of the money. You see, the Tacoma Smelter, they found out later that a lot of BC copper ore come into there and they beat 'em out of every

bit of it. The smelter was making the money. But the mines wasn't even clearing their--

SS: Didn't they have any proof on that, that they had good ore?

BS: No, at that time they never paid much attention to that stuff.

SS: Well, did they know at the time they had 60%?

BS: Yes, they knew it. They had a mineralogist come in. And the way they take an assay on a bunch of ore that way, they take probably 500 pounds and they'll pound it all up, and then they'll put it on a blanket and then they'll walk in the center and lift the blanket up and ^{quarters} they make four ~~quarters~~ of it and then they take that quarter and they pound it up and do the same thing again. When they get through with it they've got an actual value of what the whole thing'll run. Well, that's what they done, and they knew what it was.

SS: I would think that some of the brass like T. P. Jones involved in it, they'd have a chance to do something about it, maybe have some influence.

BS: ^{You take} T. P., he was just like all the rest of us, he was working for ~~their~~ ^{their} living. You had no chance to get it. That's what I say, the little fellow-- with a copper mine, you've got no business monkeying with a copper mine. Because, now, this mine here-- I talked with these mining engineers from the Anaconda and they told me that-- well, he says, "It'll take \$100,000 to even drill it, and then it'll take, if you open it up, probably \$200,000. And time we get a railroad in here to ship it out, we've got a half a million dollars ore more invested into it." Well, what chance has a little man got at that? And the government-- I went to the government and told 'em I wanted to put a road in there; and there's five miles of road, and I wanted a right-of-way over their ^{ground} to put this road in. "Fine, fine, we're glad that

you're doing this, but the government calls for sixteen foot road bed, steel culverts in all the creeks and bridge 'em and the timber that you cut to put the road in has got to be taken care of. We've got to salvage it. And you'll have to pay for the timber that you cut."

"Well," I says, "if I had that kind of money, I wouldn't be in here trying to put a road in here." "Well," he says, "that's the government law and I guess that's all we can do. We'll give you a permit, alright, but you've got to comply with our rules. And, we'll have men there to see that it is." Well, I come back and I-- in the wintertime I hired two bulldozers; went up there and bulldozed the road in to it, so I could go up to it with a car; with a four-wheeled Jeep. And, the next spring the forestry commenced to use the road. And the logging company uses the road for four and a half, five miles in there where I went before I turned off to go ^{up in} ~~onto~~ the mine. Now, I went-- a few years ago I went up there and the water had come down ~~the~~ road, it's just a dirt road, and washed gullies in there as deep as this house.

SS: You know, talking about T. P. Jones-- I'd heard that when he came back here in the later years there, Mrs. Jones wore the pants and doled out the money when he wanted anything.

BS: Yeah. Yeah. Yes, she handled all the money. She-- Well, like when I had that gold claim: placer claim over there on Swamp Creek, why I was coming down from cleaning up and I had two gallon pails full of the cleanup and he come in onto the meadows there as I happened to be coming down from the mine, and I told him where my claim was. He talked a while and he says, "Have you got any gold here, Byers, I'd like Marjorie to see what gold looks like in the raw." I says, "Yes, I've got some nice samples. I've got gold all through it." ^(End of side B) They come down with me and I took a handful like that and put it into a goldpan, put

it down and I had a string of gold that wide and about that long right through the pan, you know. And she just went wild. T. P. says, "Well, Byers I got a map of our holdings, I own all this ground in here, but I've got a map here and I'd like to know where your property is." I looked at the map and I showed him, and they had it all encircled in red. Well, down to Orofino, they'd made a mistake, you see, and they took in more ground than he had. ^{There was somebody} ~~it~~ in there and they didn't know what they was doing. And he had it in his ground. He says, "Don't pay no attention to that, Byers, you go ahead and work that, and I hope you make \$10,000. I got plenty of ground down here and don't worry about ever having to get off^{of} it." Well, I knew very well at that time, I'd have to put in probably \$1000, \$1500 to get it on a good paying base. And I got to thinking it over and I walked away from it. And then, in '33 the Forestry come to me and wanted me to take and run camps for 'em. So I went into the Forestry.

SS: What kind of camps? CC camps?

BS Yes, CC camps. I handled two hundred and fifty CCs in different camps throughout the time that I was with the Forestry. And I was in the Forestry up on Elks Butte, I put in a big dam there for 'em, and put in the water system for the camps. And they took pictures of it and everything else; the finest water system of any of the CC camps when they was here in the Depression. I had water just as nice pressure as you had in the cities. I could shoot water-- stand here at the road and I could put water clear across with an inch and a half hose clear across the road out there, I had that much pressure. And I had about seventy-five, eighty pound pressure. And I got to talking one night with one of the foresters, foremen, and I was telling him about this deal with T. P. there over on Swamp Creek. He laughed and he says,

"I'll tell you something, Byers, Old Jones thought he really owned that ground. But, I'll tell you something, he had a surveyor come in there and survey their ground and your ground wasn't in on it at all. It was this side of it. He come into the bunkhouse and he paced up and down and he says, "Smaltz, do you know anything about locating a mine?" "Mining claim?" " Smaltz says, "Yes, I know how to locate a mining claim." "Well," he says, "I want you to go up and locate that claim. Byers Sanderson owned it, but I thought it was mine. But he hasn't done anything for two, ^{three} years about it, and I want you to go up and locate it for me." So, he went up and he located it for Old Tom. And that's the way I got beat out of that.

SS: You let it go because you thought it was Jonse's?

BS: Oh, yeah, yeah. The paper ~~was~~ right from Orofino that it was included in his ground. Well, I knew that if I'd go ahead and get it opened up and everything and went to making anything big out of it, why, Jones would have said, "Well, the company says I'll have to put you off of here, Byers." Well, that's what he'd a done, too. Because, they wasn't making anything on their ground down there because they put in a steam shovel and they put a bunch of greenhorns in there and they didn't know how to handle the dirt at all. They just scoop it up with a steam shovel and run it on a-- they had water into a big cage and run the water through there and they made expenses, but they didn't get anything big. Their fine gold was all getting away from them.

SS: Was this the company, really that had it, or was it Jones that had it?

BS: No, it was the company ^{with} Jones. He had stockholders, you know.

SS: The company being the Potlatch or? *his mining company?*

BS: No, no. It was individuals. You see they-- Old Jones never intended ^{ever} to work the mine to make anything, he was selling stock and feathering

P
S
137

his own nest. And I suppose he made a lot of money on it.

SS: This was a different deal than the oil wells?

BS: ^{Oh,} yes, this was after he'd got out of the oil field, after they broke him and the Potlatch was after him, he couldn't go back to work for the Potlatch.

SS: This was back in the '20's when he did the oil well business, wasn't it?

BS: Yes, it was.

SS: When you picked up that placer claim on Swamp Creek--

BS: That was after '33.

SS: There's been a history of people mining on Swamp Creek years before that, hadn't there?

BS: Yes. ^{come in there.} Mc Gann Brothers, They owned all of the Swamp Creek gully where we were. They owned all of that, and they worked their ground every year.

SS: Mc Gann brothers, was that related to the Mc Gann in Troy?

BS: No, I don't think so. They come in and they'd take a half a gallon fruit jar and each one of them, ^{the two of them,} the brothers, ^{each} they got it full of gold, ^{each} the two half gallon fruit jars and they'd go to California and put in the winter then they'd come back in the spring and stay in the summer up there and work their claims.

SS: These would be gold nuggets?

BS: Oh, yes, they was little gold nuggets. Some of 'em run, oh, the size of a pea, popcorn.

SS: Did they do quite well in there then?

BS: Oh, they made thousands of dollars. And the Jericho Mine in the ledge up on top of the Jericho there, they took out twenty-five thousand in what they called the Glory Hole.

But they turned around and spent the \$25,000 in follering up the ledge and never got anything. But that's the way that ledge runs. You may go partly into the road, go down into the ledge and go right into another Glory Hole.

SS: Is a Glory Hole, just what you called a place that's got a lot of good gold in it?

BS: Yeah. Probably half as big as this room. And they'd get that worked out and then the ledge'd run maybe-- sometimes they'd run a half a mile before you'd find another Glory Hole.

SS: Well, how far was that from where you were mining?

BS: That was just as far as from here to the cedar camp, just up the mountain.

SS: What about the Grohs? Didn't they mine on Swamp Creek, too?

BS: Yeah, they was on Cranberry Creek. And that's a ^{pockety} pocket country. The Cranberry was a coarser gold than Swamp Creek, but this ledge ^{with} went out of the question up on Jericho that was carrying that gold. The erosion of time had washed it out. I've went in on Cranberry, go down that far in under the ground. So many of 'em, the old prospectors, went to bedrock first, they'd go right down to bedrock and they never found a sign of gold. Once in a while they'd find a speck. But the old-time prospector that knew that country he told me not to go over twelve, fourteen inches under the ground, and I'd get gold. Well, I went in on the head of one creek there and they was a tree that blew over and they was, oh, probably a hundred gallon of water that had, in the spring, had settled in this hole. Well, I put down a test hole, I went down about that far, and there was wash gravel there and I'd take my shovel and run around in under the rocks on the wall and I brought out there, just a testing the ground, I brought out, oh, a string of gold, oh,

that long around the goldpan. And, oh, that wide. Prettiest stuff you ever seen. I went in there, oh, six, seven years ago and tried to locate it again and I could never find it. But it was there.

SS: Why would these guys like the two brothers, the Mc Ganns-- what happened to them?

BS: They died. They were old men. The last time they was in there, they were old men, then. They was around eighty years old.

SS: And they were still at it?

BS: Yeah, the last time they went out of there, they went to California and then never did come back.

SS: This was considerably before you ever did your mining?

BS: Oh, they was there. They come back just before I was there. And the old fellow up on the hill-- I told the old fellow that had the Jericho Mine about it and about Jones, he said, "Son, don't you think it, that's your ground and don't you give it up. I know that country foot by foot and you keep it. If you don't keep it, I'd like to have it myself. **But, I've got so much to do here on the Jericho Mine.**" - and he was an old man then- and he had whiskers.

SS: Do you know his name? Who he was?

BS: I don't remember his name. ^{Fellow} I could get it on the records.

SS: Oh, I just wondered. Was he helpful to you, this guy? Did he talk to you about mining?

BS: Yes, you bet he was. If I'd a listened to him, I'd a still owned it.

SS: By the way, did you ever hear the stories about the Chinese miners up out of Harvard, you know, up on the Paloose? Did you ever hear about them getting killed and all that business?

BS: Oh, yes. Yes, there was a bunch of Chinamen in there. This Ot Slat during the Depression when the Potlatch was shut down, I had him as a

pardner. But I found out he was crooked. And he was one of the men that was in there. He was a good gold man. I had gold property up on Gold Center. We done a lot of hydraulic work up there. The old workings is in there yet. Get out, work all summer, get an ounce of gold, probably, there wasn't no gold in there to amount to anything. But you see, there in the Hoodoos the Chinaman had his cabin right next to the-- along the edge of the mountains. Well, these other white men would get up there and they'd throw rocks down on the house, and the Chinamen would come out a singin' and cussin' them in the Chinese language, you know, and then they'd pop some of 'em off and others they'd shoot into the house, and the Chinamen^s all left. They were superstitious any^{how}way. And that was in the early days. And the Chinamens all left. Then Old Ed Powers got ahold of one of the Chinamens-- He found his claim was off from the Hoodoos there and when Ed Powers found him, he was out of his head, but he had a buckskin bag and he had it full of nuggets big as the end of your thumb, and the Chinaman said, "Lots of gold, lots of gold there. Lots of gold." And he couldn't talk very good English and Old Ed kept him for years, and every summer he'd go up in there and he'd try to get the old Chinaman to get into where he knew the country and locate the claim, see. But the Chinaman'd get up there and he'd go crazy. "I don't know. Me no go in there. Me no go in there." And he'd take off and they'd have to catch him and they'd go back and he'd keep him another year. Come up the next spring. He thought maybe he'd gradually-- but the old Chinaman was-- if he'd a understood the Chinese are very superstitious.

SS: Wonder why he didn't want to go up in there any more?

BS: Well, he thought he'd get killed, without a question.

SS: Did this happen in the early days, too?

- BS: Yeah. Yeah that's when the Hoodoos was in its prime there.
- SS: Do you know where, or did the people say where the Chinese cabin was located?
- BS: Oh, yes, I know where *they all are.*
- SS: There was more than one Chinese cabin?
- BS: Oh, yes. Yes, they had-- I been into trenches that'd go as far as from here down to the cedar mill there, and they'd only be about that wide, and they'd be as deep as this ceiling. I've gone down into 'em and walked right along.
- SS: The Chinese had dug 'em, huh?
- BS: Oh, yes. Piles of rock on each side. There's lots of 'em in there yet.
- SS: They must have done a lot of work.
- BS: Oh, they done lots of work. And then when the dredge come in, they was a mining man, an outfit, from Seattle come over and see me. I was down in the cedar yard, here working for Billy O'Merril for the Potlatch, in the cedar yard there. And, he come in and told me who he was-- I forget the company he represented. And he says, "I want you to do something for us. It's a chance for you to make \$15,000, \$20,000 if you want to do it." "Well," I says, "yes, you bet I'll do it." He says, "I want you to go into the Hoodoos and get leases on every one of these old farmers that own the ground for gold dredging. And then I'll sell 'em to the company, and I'll make you \$15,000, \$20,000, maybe more." He says, "We want that ground." "Well," I says, "I'll go over." Well, I put it off for two weeks. I have his address and everything here. For two weeks and then I went over and I knew those old fellows that owned the ground, you know; I'd known 'em since I was a kid that high. And I went in. The bank up here

at St. Maries, they had a mining outfit, and the bank had got down there the week before and sewed up all that ground. And then this big miner that had the dredge, he leased the ground from them. Well, they took about \$7,000,000 out of there. They didn't let it be known **though**, and they took it out. Of course, the other outfit, we lost out. But if I'd a got those leases, why, I could have made big money there.

SS: Did you know any of those old-time miners that were in there that had little cabins and were mining in there?

BS: Oh, yeah.

SS: I've heard those guys were real different-- quite a few old bachelors, were they?

BS: They was most all old bachelors.

SS: What were they like, those guys?

BS: They were the finest people in the world to talk to and to get along with, but if you crossed 'em, pulled any dirty work with 'em, you wouldn't want to go back in there, because they'd kill you! Now, let's see, it was Johnny-- no, Old Duffney. Duffney had a cabin, square cabin, log cabin about as big as this room. Well, he had his kitchen in one end and over here he had his bed and his table and stuff was all in the one room. But he had portholes in the side of that cabin about that big.

SS: Maybe three inches or four inches big?

BS: Yeah. And he had portholes there. Well now, the Copper King, when we first located the Copper King, Dad told me lots of times, he says, "Every time I go through there, there are guns pointed on me. If we don't lock the gate," -- he had cattle you know and he had-- and we went through part of his ground to go on up to the mine, the Copper

King. And the Northrops had the same thing, and he says, "Old Duffney says, "If they don't lock that gate, they'll never go through them through here again." And he had that gun trained on these portholes. And they'd lock the gate and they'd see that it was locked good. Then Old Duffney'd come up to the mine and set there and talk, but he wasn't gonna have his cattle to get out.

SS: I heard a story ^{about} abotu, I think it was him and another guy named Wagner.

BS: Wagner, yeah. Old Charley Wagner.

SS: Right. Well, the story that I heard was that, I think it was Wagner went over one day and beat Duffney.

BS: Yeah.

SS: You heard that story?

BS: Yeah. I seen it.

SS: What happened?

BS: He beat up on Duffney and Duffney got his rifle and Old Wagner jumped the fence and got into the brush-- and he meant to kill him-- and Old Wagner went down and got his gun and they watched for one another for a long time. And Wagner was out working in his garden and Dad come out of the brush and Wagner runned over and picked up his .30-30 and turned around and Dad walked out in the meadow and he was coming right up to him; Dad didn't have no gun, and when he got as far as from here to the road or further, he says, "By gosh, Charley, you know, I was watching you awful close. I was getting ready to shoot you. Old Wagner says he's gonna kill me. But, when I work in the garden here I have my gun right with me. And, by, gosh, Charley, he don't want to come down here and think he's gonna kill me because-" And Dad Laughed and says, "Well, I'm not Wagner!" (Chuckles) He liked Dad.

SS: You got any idea why they started feuding?

BS: Oh, they were crazy! They'd been in there for years, and in the winter-time they probably had nobody in there to visit with 'em, and they was practically crazy. Superstitious. They'd go to town and get a wagon-load or a packhorse full of groceries and they'd hole up there all winter. Then in the summer he'd raise cattle. He had quite a bunch of cattle. That's why he was so particular about his gate. Campers'd come in there and left the gates open and then he'd have to work two, three weeks til he'd get 'em rounded up and back into the pasture.

SS: You know, speaking about superstitious and mining: Are you familiar at all with the dousing that some of the old-time miners used to do, the ones that were trying to find gold by maybe a bag of bugs and--?

BS: The most of 'em had a needle in a bottle ~~in a bottle~~ in a cork, and they had alcohol in the bottom of it and they'd shake the bottle and they claimed they'd go over the ground and, ^{if} that the needle'd start to working- like that- why, there was gold there.

SS: The needle would have to start doing what? Going back and forth?

BS: Back and forth, yeah. And other fellows had all kinda contraptions, trying to locate gold. But I don't think any of 'em ever worked.

SS: Did you know the Caricos at all?

BS: The what?

SS: The Caricos. They were up on Gold Hill. That wasn't really in the Hoodoos.

BS: No. That was over-- I had lots of history on the old mines there.

SS: I've never been able to figure out why they disliked the Chinese so much.

BS: The Chinamen'd come in and make money where the white man'd starve to death, and they'd get gold. You take the Chinese, ^{one of} they were the finest

gold men in the world. Now, you take in China there where they- 90% of our gold comes from there- they'll take old barrels or anything and make a furnace out of it and they'll melt the rock out; work on it for days to get a little spoonful of gold. They're the greatest gold men that we've got today, and it's the greatest gold country in the world is there, because that's where most of the gold comes from.

SS: Seems like a lot of people really hated them. Just thought they were dirt, you know.

BS: Well, yes, they did. They treated them like dogs. Take in on the Salmon River there, they killed-- there was one fellow that went in there- a gangster, is all he was. And he'd wait til the Chinamen would get in and work and have their gold and then he'd go in and hold 'em up; kill half a dozen of them and take their gold. Then he'd move out and nobody knew anything about it. And lots of goldⁱⁿ on the Salmon River there- that's the way they operated.

SS: Were there any Chinese in Palouse there when you were living there? When you were a kid?

BS: Oh, yes, there was around seven hundred. Most of 'em always in that gold fields, on Gold Hill and up in there and on Moscow Mountain. There's gold on Moscow Mountain in there that the Chinese worked years ago. I guess some of 'em do a little work on their mines, yet in there, ain't they?

SS: I don't know of any that are still around.

BS: You could probably go in there from the road-- I don't know where the road goes up there.

126 ? Side D

SS: -- about the fire that they had here on the Fourth of July. Remember that Fourth of July fire? You were right there.

BS: Yeah. I was right here.

SS: What's the story? What happened and how it started and all that?

BS: Well, it was always surmised, and I don't think they was far wrong; Joe Safer, he went to the bank the night before, July the Third and he ^{drawed} got_A about \$1,800. And Joe was a fine fellow, he was middle-aged. As fine a fellow as you ever met, and he went up to his room there in the Sherman House, that was the end hotel, the old Sherman House, and the fire started there. We knew the fire started there. But he was burnt pretty much by the time we got in there and pulled him out, and he was face down on the mattress, and the mattress was all burnt and his back was all burnt, and he never had a cent on him. And, of course, the fire went right through then and was uncontrollable and it took the whole town. The whole block out; block and a half. Took the main street and half of the other street out. And there's no question somebody knocked him over the head and took his money and then they realized that they'd killed him and they set that fire. And on the Fourth, the morning of the Fourth about eleven o'clock when the town had burned up on the night of the third, I got on the train to go to Palouse to the celebration, 'cause there wasn't no celebration here. And there was a man and his wife and a young kid about, oh, fourteen, fifteen years old; well, of course, this young kid-- I sidled up to him and made friends with him, and got off at Palouse, and I told him I was going to Colfax to celebrate down there and ^{then} coming back. And I got to talking with him and he said, "I'd like to go to Colfax." "Well," I says, "see your dad and get some money, if he'll let you have it, and you can go to Colfax with us." There was four of us young fellows together. And I says, "You can go to Colfax and come back with us. We're gonna get a car and go down in the car." Old Bill Thompson the policeman there in Palouse had an old, I guess

it was an old Studebaker, no roof on it or anything. And we went down in it. Well, that kid, he says, "I don't need to see my dad about money." And he pulled his pocketbook out and showed it to me and he had a stack of twenties about that thick; could hardly shut his purse, in the purse. And he says, "If I haven't got enough money here, Dad's got all kinda money." And, you know, I've often wondered if they wasn't the ones that hit Old Joe over the head and robbed him because for a kid fourteen years old, I thought years later, a kid a having that amount of money, unless they was rich people, and then they wouldn't give him that amount of money; he musta had three, four hundred dollars there in twenty dollar bills.

SS: Were they from Bovill?

BS: No, they was complete strangers.

SS: Were they coming from Bovill that day?

BS: Well yes, they was taking the train, and on the train I got acquainted with this kid, you see.

SS: Did he come with you to Colfax?

BS: Yes, they went down to Colfax, and he spent money like water. They'd get beer and bring it out ^{and give it} to him, but he couldn't go in the saloon. And that's when-- one of the kids that was with me was 24 years old, and I was only sixteen, and I had a heavy beard and went into the saloon there and I ordered a beer, and George David ordered a beer and the bartender reached over and got ahold of George's face, he says, "Outside, boy, you get no beer in here." George says, "I'm old enough to get a beer. I'm older'n this fellow." He says, "I said, outside, you get no beer in here. Now you get out." And he reached over and felt of my chin and he felt the heavy growth of whiskers and he handed me up here.

the pitcher (?) (Chuckles) I was over sixteen, yeah, I was seventeen,

eighteen at that time.

SS: That kid and his family; did they disappear after that?

BS: Yeah, I never knew what become of them after that.

SS: After that day?

BS: Seems to me they said that they was going back to San Francisco, if I remember correct, I think they said they was on their way back to California and they was stopping in Palouse, they had a relative or something there that they was gonna visit. Course, there might a not been nothing to it, but at the same time I-

SS: Did you think it was them? Did it strike you at the time or was it later?

BS: No. ^{Not til} Later. I got to thinking of a young kid having that much money and I often thought about it. Same way when I was part of that fight up at Elk River, I went over and told the sheriff, I says, "You better get over there. I don't know whether they killed this man or not, but they was fifteen, twenty of those Bohunks jumped onto him and stabbed him to death, I think. I got out of there, and you'd better go over." And they went over. But, as I remember, the fellow that done the most of the stabbing was a little, glassy-eyed, bald-headed fellow with a mustache.

SS: Is that the description that you gave to the cop?

BS: Yeah. I give him the description, ^{told him,} and he went over there, and he went all through the logging camps. There was camps all over there, you know, and they couldn't find anybody, and nobody knew anything about a man of that description. But, I got back here and Mike Bubuly come up to me on the street and he grinned and I recognized him, and He's the man that hit him over the head with the gun. He had a big gun and he rapped him over the head and knocked him out and then Old

Sam is the man that killed him, ^{with} ~~it was~~ ^a out of the question, because I've seen Sam lots after that.

SS: You saw Mike Bubuly and he grinned, and did he say anything to you on the street?

BS: Yes, he said, "I'm gonna get out of the country." And he had a bag and he had saving bonds in the bag; til this thing blows over. "Well," I says, "no use a getting out of there if you wasn't in on the killing." But I was just a young punk and I didn't realize then til later that Mike was implicated there.

SS: He hit him over the head?

BS: Yeah. ^{He} Hit him over the head with that big six-shooter. It was an old-fashioned six-shooter, about that long.

SS: Over a foot long.

BS: Yeah.

SS: When you---

BS: Mike says it wasn't Sam. I guess you told me.

SS: That's what he said.

BS: I've never talked with Mike. I go and see Mike every little while when I go to Spokane I go down and visit with him. But it was Sam Piwash (?) because I played card games with Sam and he'd get mad and the first thing he done, jerk out a knife about that long.

SS: Now wait a minute: was Sam the only one that stabbed him? As you remember it? Was he the only one that stabbed him?

BS: Well, he was the main one, yeah. There was two, three others that was kicking him and everything, but Sam stood right over him with this knife and--

SS: And you saw him-- well, you came in-- had the ruckus already started up when you came into the--

BS: Oh, ¹⁶⁵ it had started up and I got him away from 'em once, and I grabbed him and pulled him out onto the porch and I says, "Boy, don't tie into them. There's fifteen, twenty of those fellows in here and they'll beat you half to death." He says, "I can lick them fellows just as fast as they get to me." And he went back in there and they started for him again, and boy, he hit four or five of 'em and he just knocked 'em end over end, and then the whole bunch started in ^{for} on him.

SS: Was this place a whorehouse, too? And a place you could get booze?

BS: Yeah. Yeah, that's what we went over there for was so we could get drinks.

SS: How come it was all Bohunks in there? Just a whole bunch of 'em?

BS: All of the Potlatch men, the men in the woods, 90% of 'em were Bohunks. Foreigners. And they was donkeys all around there on the flat, and they was three camps right in close there. 'Course, that's where they went.

SS: What were they like? These Bohunks?

BS: 90% of 'em were morons, without a question. Now, Old Sam couldn't read or write. And you take this other Joe-- it wasn't Joe Popovich--

SS: Potlatch Joe?

BS: No. Well, he was another Bohunk. Potlatch Joe they'd fire him outta one camp and he'd go right to the next and go to work without being told to go to work, and they'd let him work a month or so and then they'd give him a check. But he'd go into the table and eat like a hog.

SS: Why would they fire him out of one camp? Why would they fire him?

BS: Oh, they'd get tired of him and run him outta the camp and he'd go to another. (Chuckles) When Nogle first took over, went up there and the railroad crew'd get out and snowball him. "You sons of bitches,

you sons of bitches!" And they done it just to torment him, you know. And Old Joe'd say, "You sons of bitches, you sons of bitches." And he'd pick up a snowball and they'd grab him and wash his face. He was a good mannered old fellow. He never got mad. But that's the way they were. They were just the ^csum, I think; those fellows. And when the railroads come in; when the railroad come in there at Palouse, on the Inland, they killed a man right below Hartley's. He'd run in- to the neighbor's house that lived just right ^{as far from} ~~near~~ to the road, right below us; this fellow run in there and he says, "They're after me to kill me. Can I stay here tonight? Them fella's gonna kill me, gonna kill me." And Woolsey, Allen Woolsey ^{is} Granddad says, "Yes, you come in and stay. I'll fix you a bed on the lounge here. You stay here to- night, and go out when it's daylight." Well, the fella did. But he come into town the next night, hung around and then he started home, and they caught him. They killed him and robbed him and then they beat it. They didn't know their names. They all signed their named by Xs.

SS: Was he a Bohunk, this guy that was killed?

BS: Yeah.

SS: He was one of 'em.

BS: Yeah, he was just one of 'em. And then they fight, get into the saloons there; there was thirteen saloons there and they'd get into the saloons and fight like cats and dogs.

SS: Palouse, you mean?

BS: Yeah. You'd see 'em when they'd go back to work, they'd have their head all bandaged up and some of 'em'd have black eyes. Terrible looking outfits. But even back when I was on the steel gang, I kept time on the steel gang when I first come up here about 1912, and them fellas couldn't sign their own name. They'd come in, I knew 'em by name, cal- led 'em by numbers. I had 'em all numbered by numbers and they'd come

in and buy stuff and they'd give me their number and I'd put it down on, and that's the way they were paid, by numbers. They was illiterate.

SS: How big was the steel gang that you would keep time for?

BS: Oh, they had two, three hundred men.

SS: You were keeping time for that many?

BS: Yes.

SS: This all for Potlatch?

BS: Yeah. They had the steel gang, you see. They had five or six big cars, well, that's one of 'em right down here. You know this place that Laud owns? Down here?

SS: Oh, yeah.

BS: That big long building?

SS: Yes.

BS: That's one of the old steel gang buildings. And they would haul 'em into different campsites. Well, you went right along with 'em, you know. And they build the logging roads. They'd go in and they'd-- it was like going up on Cougar Meadows, here, they'd go in there and they'd-- til they built all the roads in there, why, they wouldn't come out. Then they'd go down into ^{by} Deary. Go in and build 'em in next to the mountains there.

SS: These roads, now, was this for the shays? This was mostly for the engines?

BS: yes, it was, the railroads. That's what the steel gang was, was the railroad crews. And they never had anything to lift the rails, the men lifted the rails by manpower. They'd be thirty, forty men get ahold of these rails and they'd pack 'em out. They never had anything that'd-- And then, later on, they got the Marions there and they handled the rails by the Marions, and there'd be four, five Bohunks

on each side and they'd get ahold of the rails with tongs and they'd slide 'em up and pull 'em in on the railroad.

SS: How many men would it take on one rail when they were doing it by hand?

BS: Oh, there'd be-- well, ~~thirty foot~~ rail and they'd be just as thick as they could get there. I'd say there'd be twenty, twenty-five men ahold of it, and they'd walk right off with 'em. (Chuckles)

SS: And the crews, they were all foreigners on the crews?

BS: Yes, 90% of 'em was. The only white ones was the bosses. The bosses and Mc Farland was the boss over the steel gang, and then they had-- Dick Kammeyer was the foreman under him and then the cooks and flunkies were white people. Well, these others were some of 'em white, but they didn't-- they all talked in their ~~own~~ language. You couldn't understand 'em at all.

SS: Were most of these guys?-- Like Mike Bubuly, I guess he's from Bosnia. He's from Yugoslavia, is where he's from. Were these guys from different countries and some from Italy and some from Greece?

BS: Yeah, they was Slovakia, Serbians. Pete Julevich was a Serbian. And during the war one, they sent for Pete to come home. He was out of the army there, and go into the army. ^{"Oh no!"} Well, he had big holdings. He was worth thousands of dollars in property back there - his folks left him. He wouldn't go back and claim it at all. He says, "I go back there, I get killed." And then there was a couple big other fellas- one of 'em was a man about your size and the other fella was a great big fella, and I had an automatic Colt, and he seen it one time, and I don't know whether we started shootin' or something, and he seen I had that gun and when the war broke out they sent for him, and Pete Julevich and a lot of these fellas to come back and go into the army, and this big fella, he come to me and he says, "I've got to go back to Serbia," I

think it was, "and go in the army. I'd like to take that gun that you got with me." And, he says, "Would you sell it to me?" "No," I says, "I won't sell it to you, I'll trade it to you." "Well," he says, "I've got a .32 automatic, but, I'd like to have your gun." He says, "I see how you can shoot with it and that's what I want." Well, I traded him the gun for something, I don't just remember ^{exactly} what it was. He tried to get this little fella, he told this little fella, "They can't kill me." The little fella says, "Let me tell you something," he says, "a bullet will kill you just the same as it'll kill me." "Oh, no," he says, "I don't go back there," he says, "I'll leave everything. I don't go back." He says, "I'm satisfied here." The big fellow went back, and sure enough, he was killed. Just a few days after he went back they put him right into the front-lines and he was killed.

SS: Even with your gun?

BS: Oh, yes. Yes.

SS: What did he trade you for it?

BS: I don't know. It seems to me he traded me another gun. But I've often thought of that. The little fella had more sense than he thought he had. He said, "Just because you're big, a bullet'll kill you just as quick as it'll kill me." And Old Beck, he was worth probably fifty, sixty thousand dollars at that time, he went back and he was an old man, and when they got into the fight with the States here, "Well," he says, "I'm an American I'm going back home." And the Kaiser wouldn't let him out. Put him into the army and made him fight. And he was killed.

SS: Was he German?

BS: German, but that's what-- Old Joe Beck.

SS: Why did he go back in the first place?

BS: Well, he wanted to visit. He'd never been back and he married an old

German woman that owned two, three big ranches in the Palouse country there and he wanted to go back and visit his folks and he went back and visited 'em alright, but when he come to get back, why, he had to give this data on his record, you know, and they found out he was a, one of the Kaiser's bodyguards at that time, when he left Germany as a young fellow, and the Kaiser says, "Once a German; always a German." He says, "Put him in the army." And he was killed. (Chuckles)

SS: He was not a young man?

BS: No, and he was an old man then.

SS: Was he a logger? Had he worked in the woods?

BS: No, he was a farmer.

SS: Oh, he was a farmer. What happened to these Bohunks? Did most of them disappear at that time, or what happened?

BS: Oh, they was hundreds of 'em that went back when they got into World War I there. Their country called 'em back and they went back. They got their fare and everything, I guess back. And they went back. No, some of 'em didn't go back. Now, you take Mike Bubuly and this other fella that we called him Happy. He couldn't write his own name, but he left Earl Crane his house. Earl give him money now and then to spend, and he didn't have any money to pay him back and he left his home and stuff to Earl Crane down here and his insurance. He had insurance; Potlatch insurance, and he left it with Earl. And they was lots of 'em that way. Now this other little, I forget his name, he used to be a king bootlegger here, and he left-- he was stuck on Marge Olson that married the bookkeeper for the Potlatch-- what is his name? He's the head bookkeeper, anyhow, up at St. Maries there now, and he was stuck on her, he thought there was nobody like her-- and he says, "I leave my insurance to you." Marge says, "I don't want your insur-

ance." "Oh, yeah, yeah," he says, "You gotta have my insurance." And she wouldn't take it, and I don't know who he left it to. But he was a janitor around the office, cleaned up around the office here and Marge wouldn't take his insurance. She didn't want anything to do with him, because she knew that he tried to shine around her all the time. Well, he died and I don't know who he left his insurance to. Oh, I do too. I think he left it to Dudley Hauges. I think Dudley Hauges got a couple of thousand dollars out of it.

SS: So there just were hardly any of them left after the First World War?

BS: Huh-uh.

SS: You know we were talking about Potlatch Joe a little bit. Now, I'm still wondering what was-- this guy sounds like kind of a strange guy.

BS: He was strange. If you could talk to him a minute you would know that he was a moron. Bad. But he was real pleasing to talk, but he couldn't talk about anything. They'd push him around, you know, and he'd laugh and giggle but he didn't know sic 'em. (Chuckles) Now John Pavich (?) Pete Julevich and all those fellows-- now Pete Julevich he was a well-to-do man. He wouldn't go back, or John Pavich wouldn't go back. John Pavich, I run highline over on the Winton's for him-- it wasn't the Wintons- it was, oh, that other logging outfit that was out of Clarkia-- Yeah, I guess it was the Winton's, and he took a liking to me and he wanted me to go with him down to San Francisco or Los Angeles and go into the trucking business. I says, "I got no money." He says, "I got money," he says, "you come and go with me." He says, "I want you." Well, I wouldn't go, of course. I was a young punk just as ignorant as they was, I suppose. And he died a few years ago and when he died he had over a hundred trucks doing business outta Los Angeles. He come to Spokane, Portland and all over ^{haul all over} the country. Worth millions.

- SS: What were these guys like as workers when you were keeping time for 'em?
- BS: They was good workers. They'd do anything. That's the reason Old Mc Farland-- cuss 'em any everything else and say, "You get up there and get ahold of that." And they'd run up there and grab that rail. And that's the way he handled 'em. He cussed 'em every move they'd make. This big German, Dick Kammeyer, he was a 6'4" man, weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, call him all the names that you could think of; they'd grin and-- I think them foreigners was all paying alimony. I've seen 'em come out to the end of the car there when I was keeping books- time there- and I'd see 'em; a line of 'em come right along and give 'em ten dollars out of their paycheck. And that's how old Dick bought his farm, I think. Because he was just a common workingman. Wages was only a hundred dollars a month at that time for a boss.
- SS: You mean they were paying him off for---?
- BS: Yes, of course they was.
- SS: For him giving them the job or something?
- BS: Why yes. END TAPE C D
- SS: Work?
- BS: Well, they didn't know how to work. And they'd put him bullcook^{ing}, splitting wood and lugging it into the kitchen, sweeping out the bunkhouses even taking and washing their clothes. They ^{had} some of 'em even washing their clothes.
- SS: This Dick Kammeyer he was German? He was in charge of the--? Was he the foreman of just one group or the whole three hundred? Or how did they do that?
- BS: He was the head boss outside of--
- SS: Mc Farland?

- BS: Mc Farland. Mc Farland was the big boss. But Dick was the boss in under him you see. He was a big, rough man.
- SS: Did they have interpreters? Somebody who could speak English and spoke their language, too?
- BS: No. No. They'd have letters-- lots of 'em had letters they'd bring and had their names. I suppose they had an interpreter when they come. But they never paid no attention to that as long as they turned out the work. That's the reason we had 'em numbered. They'd come into the commissary and I took care of the commissary at nights along with the bookkeeping, you see. And they'd come in and then they got pretty wise, too. They'd come in and give some other number, and lots of times I had fellows come in there ready to kill me because they was charged up with stuff they didn't get. And we got wise to that. And then ^{we} made another system, I just don't remember exactly what it was, that they had to have-- I think they had to have a card with their number on. Each one was given a card, and had a number. I think it was on a keyring, and they had to show that number when they come in, then we'd take the number on the payroll and that's the way they were paid.
- SS: What did you sell out of the commissary? What did they buy?
- BS: Tobacco and socks and gloves and overalls, shirts, mackinaws. Most everything that a ^{working} man needed on the job, you know. And the Potlatch furnished the commissary. And the foremans all got their clothes from the commissary.
- SS: They got it for free?
- BS: But when you're talking about it, I got the idea when you started talking about it, that you really didn't think much of the foreigners; these men at all. Is that right? Or did you like 'em pretty well?

BS: Oh, once in a while there was some of 'em that was pretty nice fellows. They'd-- the type of fellows that was there, if they'd get mad, they'd want to kill you; knife you, right now. First thing they thought of was pulling a knife out. Now, they get mad at you in the office there, and they'd bunch up and they'd come back and chew the rag to beat the band. "Oh, me no git it. Me no git it." Well, you had the ^Wnumber down that's the ^Aonly thing you could do, say, "Your number was there, the number you give us. That's what we put down." And then, Old Kammeyer was generally around there when they come in that way. "Well, you fellows get out of here!" And they'd run like whiteheads. He was their boss, you see. But I've seen 'em get in between the cars when they'd come in after a payday and I've seen money changing hands right along, regular string of 'em. And that's what they was doing, they was paying for their job; to be kept on the job.

SS: Most of 'em couldn't speak English very good?

BS: No, huh-uh.

SS: You'd think they were pretty lower class?

BS: Yes, without a question. They was just the scum the old country wanted to get rid of, and they let 'em get out of the country. They learned English. They were smart. They learned English after they was here a while and they got so they could talk pretty good.

SS: Did they mix with the other people besides themselves?

BS: Yes, some of 'em did. Once in a while. Now Gus Millich, half of the young girls in town was crazy over him. He was a good-looking feller and a good dancer, but he never had any education. He was always happy. Laugh at nothin'. But being a good dancer, the girls liked to dance with him, and he thought they was crazy over him. Well, it was just the opposite. They didn't care anything about him outside of

dancing with him. He was a good dancer.

SS: Were most of these guys young, or mostly older?

BS: No, they were young, or middle-aged. Some of them was twenty-four or twenty-five, twenty-six, along in there. But I've heard lots of 'em say that the old country wanted to get rid of that lower class and that's all they'd let come over here was the morons.

SS: So, your impression was that they not only couldn't speak English, but that they weren't smart to begin with.

BS: No. No, they wasn't smart.

SS: I wanted to talk to you a little bit more about-- You were telling me about Cougar Jack, a little bit. Cougar Jack, now I couldn't remember the story because you told me just when I was going to leave and one of them was about him beating up on a drummer.

BS: Oh, yeah, two drummers. He was coming up the Kendrick grade, you know the old Kendrick grade that come out of Kendrick across the bridge there, and then it went up over that steep hill, and there was these little round rocks that would roll and you'd come down-- at that time-- you'd come down the grade with a car, you had to put it in low gear and come down and just use your brakes now and then, because the back wheels was all that had brakes on 'em, and if you wasn't careful you'd burn a set of brakes out time you got to the bottom of the hill, they'd burn up. And, this old Motel T Ford with the two drummers was coming in, they was coming up to the shop-- they come in and they both had black eyes and their noses skinned up! (Chuckles) And Dad, he says, "Well what in the world happened to you?" And they told him. This old fellow, said he was an enormous big fellow, was coming up the grade with a load of hay, and he wouldn't get out of the road at all. Well, he couldn't get out, it was just a one-way road, and he set there and

the team wasn't moving over, probably, two, two and a half miles an hour, and the longer they set, the madder they got. And, when Cougar Jack got up to where a road went into a farmhouse he pulled over and stopped the team. Well, they was fighting mad by that time and pulled in to the side of him, ahead of him and jumped out of the car and run back and says-- and called him an old son of a B. And he says, "You get out of there and I'll give you a lickin'." Old Jack looked down and he says-- and he wrapped the ^{lines} _^ around his outfit and he slid out of ^{the} _{his} hay and here he was 6'4" and he was that wide across the shoulders (Laughter) and he took the two of 'em and just beat the daylight out of 'em and popped their heads together. He was an enormous man, you know, and he got back up in and he pulled out ahead of 'em and he went all the way up the grade. When they come in to Dad, Dad says, "Why what in the world happened?" "Why, we got against a cyclone," he says, "This old, big fellow," he says, "he just had his head sticking out of the hay, but when he got down there we found out-- that feller could take one of us in one hand, just lift us right off our feet." (Laughter) Old Jack, he was quite a character. He brought a load of liquor-- he had an old Ford runabout up at the CC camp. He wasn't coming to the CC camp, he was going over to Clarkia with it. I had charge of the CC camp there at Clarkia, and he run off of the edge of the road, and the car lit right on top of him. Well, there was a bunch of the CCs that seen the car go over the bank and they run up there and down in the ditch to get the car ^{off him} _^ up and old Cougar Jack got his feet against it and he just shoved that old runabout, he had a Ford cut down, you know, so it'd be fast, and he just kicked it off his back.

SS: He kicked it off his back?

BS: Yeah, he ^{got} dug his feet against it and his hands and he kicked it over onto the side and they grabbed the car and held it. And, he says, "Oh, my back, my back!" And the CCs all carried him into camp and the doctors all looked at his back and he was just black and blue from his shoulders clear down to his thighs down here, just scratched and blood was runnin'. "Oh, my back, my back!" It was burning him, he was about half stewed then, that's the reason he went over the bank. And they rushed ^{by} to the phone and called up Fort George Wright for an ambulance to meet 'em and they'd bring him by truck, and they told 'em where they'd meet him and take him to the hospital, because he probably had a broken back. And when they was gone out to the phone Old Cougar Jack got up and beat it. He come to himself enough to know, and he got up and he beat it; went out and he got somebody to take him down home, out on the Ridge here. And, they come back and they couldn't find him and they thought he'd-- in the pain, he'd got up and got out into the brush somewhere and they hunted all over. And finally one of the foremans says, "Why don't you go down to his place, maybe the folks heard about it and come and got him." And the Captain and two doctors got in the car and they went down; found out where he lived ^{out} here on the Ridge, went down to his place and here he was out slopping the hogs! (Laughter) They talked to him, I don't know what they said, but they raked him over the coals for not paying attention to the doctors.

SS: Well, did he have moonshine in the car when he went over?

BS: Yeah, the CCs took the moonshine and they got away with it, they didn't give it to the Captain.

SS: Well, he wasn't going to be getting into any trouble then, for moonshining?

BS: No. No. He wasn't getting into any trouble.

SS: But he just left.

BS: Yes, he left on high.

SS: Sounds like he was a real strong man.

BS: Oh, he was enormous strongman. He, land, He licked everything that was in the country. Land, he'd go to these bars or anything and if he got into a fight it was no trouble for him to lick ^athe man at all. He'd just pick 'em up and hold 'em up there and hit 'em with a fist and once or twice and they'd go down. That's all there was to it. He'd take three hundred pounds and just like that-- take a sack of wheat-- reach down and get it and ^{throw} it up onto them old Model T Fords. He was enormous. They was another man in this country that was like him, it was Old-- what was his name?-- he was 6'6", broad. A bunch of the train crew was trying to get one of these big bullblocks, they weighed 350 pounds, just the lone block, you know. The Cable'd go through 'em and they'd tie 'em onto a stump and the cable'd pull the logs in, and they'd get it about up to their knees to put it on the flatcar and they couldn't do it; what was his name?-- He says, "You fellers make me tired." He says, "Let a man get up there and put that on there for you." "Ha, ha, ha, you get up here and just try it." He went up there and got ahold of it and give it a lift and throwed it over onto the car. Well, that's just like Old Cougar Jack was; that powerful. Them fellas after that they showed him great respect! I didn't think I'd ever forget his name. He was stuck on Mrs. Crawford in the drugstore. He got drunk and go in, and she'd order him out and he'd abuse her something terrible. Cuss and swear. He was a typical old, tough lumberjack, you know. She was a bawling one time and I went in there and I says, "What's the matter, Mrs. Crawford?" And she says, "Old"-- what was his name? I wish I could think of it.

SS: Well, you'll think of it later.

BS: "Was in here and he swears, insulting me and everything." I says, "The next time he comes in here like that," I says, "you beat him to the punch. The minute he comes in there and opens his mouth, you say, "You get outta here or I'll get the sheriff after you right now. The sheriff is right down ⁱⁿ the hotel, and I'll put you over to Moscow where you belong."" Sure enough, he come in and he started to open his mouth and she lit on him. "Oh, oh, alright, alright." And he backed up and out he went. She laughed and says, "I wish I'd a thought of that a long time ago." "Well," I says, "you just beat him to the punch," I says, "because you didn't say a word and stood there and took it, why, he was getting all kinda kick out of it, but when he found out he was going to get in trouble over it, why, he went like a shot." He was a foreman in one of the camps.

SS: Why was he giving her a hard time? Because he was sweet on her?

BS: Yes, he liked her. When he wasn't drunk he was the nicest man you ever talked to. He'd go in and talk and jolly with her, but he'd get drunk and then he'd get ugly. He'd go in there and cuss her out. 'Course, she was an old maid, you know. (?)

SS: She didn't mind it when he was sober?

BS: No. She liked him. Big Gil.

SS: Big Gil?

BS: Yeah.

SS: Yeah, sure, he was a Frenchman, wasn't he?

BS: Yeah. Yes, he was. He was big French. Him and George La Forrest. George La Forrest was a big Frenchman, just like him.

SS: I'd heard that Gil was a strong man.

BS: Oh, he was terrible strong.

- SS: I've heard that he was also- once in a while- was a bit of a coward, too. I don't know where I got that.
- BS: No, he was never a coward.
- SS: Big Gil. I've heard he didn't say very much, either.
- BS: He was quiet til he got drunk, and when he got drunk he was ugly. Lots of fellows is that way, you know.
- SS: Well, this Cougar Jack, what kind of a personality did he have?
- BS: He was a fine man to talk to. He had a nice family. And some of them were orangutans. They was bootleggers, but they was making the easy dollar when the money was agoing. Land, kid, at that time you had to pay twenty dollars a quart for moonshine.
- SS: Really?
- BS: Yeah. Hundred dollars a gallon. Yes.
- SS: The stuff was pretty strong, now didn't most people mix it? They didn't drink it straight, did they?
- BS: No, they'd take and dilute it down and mix it with different drinks. Lots of 'em used coffee. Coffee Royal. They'd go into the restaurant; set down and order their meal and then they'd get their coffee and they'd pull out a quart bottle and each one'd put it around in there. And the gambling was wide open then. There was a \$300 fine if they caught you gambling. But, that didn't stop the gambling at all. Every night there was poker games.
- SS: Where?
- BS: ^{All over.} Oh, up in Billy Wattses apartments and the Sherman House and into the hotels. They'd rent a room and eight or ten of 'em would get in there and they'd gamble all night. I gambled there with 'em there one night. I gambled with 'em lots down at the card games in the poolhalls. I got broke-- I broke the game there one night. And I musta had \$1000,

\$1500 at that time, and I went down to breakfast and some of the fellas-- just young fellas and married and they'd lost their whole checks and they cried, wanted me to come back and give 'em a chance to get a little money back so they could take it home. I says, "Well, I'll loan you some money." "No, we don't it that way. If we can't win it, why, we'll make up an excuse when we go home." And I went back up there and in an hour time I was broke flatter than a fritter and lost \$400 of my money! I never gambled from then on! (Chuckles) And Sam Frei; Sam Frei, we walked up the track together and he says, "Byers," he says, "I tried to get your attention time and time again last night," he says, "them three fellas in that game, they got together and they framed you." And they said, -- in stud poker, you see, if they had two pair, they'd hold two fingers back of the cards, if they had three of a kind, **they'd hold their** fingers back here, and if they had a pat hand, why, they'd hold the cards and pat 'em, like that." And they told me the whole role." An, he says, "I had a notion several times to just stop the game and say, 'You're crooked, and come on, let's go home'" "Well," I says, "why didn't you?" And I went back to everyone of 'em; I was young and fought like a whirlwind anyhow when I was a young punk. I tried to get everyone of 'em to fight, but there wasn't a one of 'em to show fight. "Ha, ha, ha, you'll learn to come back and play like that!" Well, I never did gamble after that, either. 'Course, that was years ago^{too}.

SS: I guess you did learn, then. How come you went back and did it? Did you feel sorry for 'em, Byers, or did you--?

BS: Yeah, I felt sorry for 'em because Walt Hornby and France O'keefe and them was all just young fellows. Walt wasn't so bad, but Johnny-- what was his name?--Last name? Comfort. Was the only one out of the bunch that wouldn't go in with them. He says, "If I can't beat Byers

square," he says, "I'm not going to frame up on him." And he says, "You fellows can go ahead, if you want to, but," he said, "I won't do it."

SS: I wonder why Sam Frei didn't tell you?

BS: Well, he tried to get my eyes, but I was watching those fellows all the time.

SS: Wondering why you was losing all the time?

BS: Yeah. Well, I was playing against three of 'em. Once in a while they'd let me have a little bit, but in an hour's time, why, I was broke flatter'n a flitter. 'Course, I was just that foolish--

SS: Flatter than a flitter?

BS: That's pretty flat, a hotcake! (Chuckles)-----

BS: And to start with Ollie Hughes knew he had the still in there but he didn't know where it was, and he was sneaking in there trying to find it. Well, Old Phillips was pretty sharp and he watched and when Ollie got at the side of a tree and was standing there, he pulled up and he cut a limb right above his head with a .30-30. And Ollie let out a beller, "Hey," he says, "I'm down here a-huntin'." Never heard a word. Pretty soon Ollie started to mosey on up the creek a little more and right at the side of him, why, a shot and it clipped the bark offa the tree, right in ahead of him. And he never heard a word then. And Ollie bel-
lered just as loud as he could. Well, ^{finally} he started back down the creek just as hard as he could go. Well, there was two shots fired over his head then, and he knew that they was after him for snoopin' . He was a snoop anyhow. And then, Phillips was tellin' me about it, and he says, "That's one thing, Byers," he says, "they never find my booze." He says, "I'm a little too smart for 'em." That was Summerfields and Happy Moody. He says, "They've hunted for it, but they never find it."

And, of course, at that time it was in the wintertime, and they'd plowed the road. Well, the snow, you couldn't see a horse and team come down the road, them three Cats'd get ahold of this big V plow, and it was about six feet high, this plow, ^{and iron} well, like that-- and it curved up and it was a regular wall. Well, Saturday night I knew they'd be down early and I went down and clumb this tree down here on the lower place; got up in the top of it. It was cold but I dressed heavy and had kid gloves on, and I could see the road up here and see it clear into town; the edge of town from that tree. Well, I'd see 'em come along and they'd walk along, they wouldn't turn sideways, but him and Burt Ervin'd stick a bottle into the side of that wall and then they'd pat fresh snow in it, and they'd keep their feet marks square with the road and I see 'em plant it all along and then they'd come to these light poles and they'd toss the gallon jugs that they had, they'd toss 'em out in the snow and they'd light in the snow and there'd be no tracks going out to it, and they'd go on to town. When they went in to town --when I see they went into town, I clumb down outta the tree and come up the road, up to that end, and I picked out their booze there and then I went down below where they'd throwed it over in next to the light poles-- the light poles only come to our place then, and the cabin used to be across here. And I'd pick all their booze up! (Chuckles) I seen 'em later at the dance and him and Burt Ervin, they was standing there and they was a bobbin' their heads up and down- (Laughter) And I had their booze!! And Old Pat-

SS: Did you ever let on to them that you had it?

BS: No, I didn't dare to let 'em know, they'd a beat the life outta me!!
I give it all away.

SS: How much do you think you got?

- BS: Oh, I got two, three gallons— jugs, and then there was I forget how many quarts.
- SS: How did they mark the quarts so somebody else would know where to find em?
- BS: Well, nobody else found 'em. They'd come and get it. Burt'd come and get it.
- SS: Would they mark the ground somehow, so they could tell?
- BS: Yeah, they both knew where they was planted. They'd mark 'em by trees and such as that, you know. And, of course, they had a flashlight and they'd come along and they'd come up. Old Pat-- there was a bootlegger at the same time come into town and Pat had word that this bootlegger'd be in town and they musta had stooges to tell 'em how much they had, because he says he's got a barrel and three suitcases full^{of}, he says, bonded liquor. Well, he'd come in from Spokane, you see and he stopped out over town and ditched it in two different places, and Old Pat got a bunch of us punks to go out there with him and I led Old Pat off onto the side of the road and Jimmy Mc ^{ISSAC} ~~W~~isic and Earl Grady and them fellers went over to where the booze was; we could see his tracks, you know, and...

END

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