

ROY MARTIN

First Interview

Interviewed by:

Sam Schrager

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

ROY MARTIN

Rural Latah County, Northwest; b. 1908

worker in woods, mining, and construction; hobo.
(Roy Martin is a pseudonym)

3.6 hours

minute page

Side A

- 00 1 Working in Idaho and Montana woods. Chutes. Lumberjacks helped each other out: "Are you eating?" Joining the IWW on the foreman's instructions. Paying dues to the delegates. Without IWW's, men would still be packing blankets and working more than an eight hour day, as is still the case in California. Greed of capitalism.
- 13 4 Falling wages in the woods led him to work in the mines. He enlisted in the Army in '29 and went to Phillipines. Cheating men on the scale while gypping. PFI's nickname: how they fool the people of Idaho and manipulated the government. Low cost of good boots.
- 23 7 Blowing in, getting taken. Hard saving money. Hopping freights to work on fires or harvests. Harvesting in Montana, Dakota and the Red River country.

Side B

- 00 10 Riding freights. Working in the harvest. Farmers were good people.
- 06 12 Getting robbed on freights. Lumberjacks hid money between tongues of boots. An IWW "flying squad" killed two robbers who were robbing everyone on a train. Wobbly card expected of freight riders. Hostility to IWW's. Workers boycotted raisins and ketchup because of California opposition. How IWW's protected and improved working conditions.
- 21 17 Cheap rooms and meals in towns on the road. Families travelling west, looking for something better. Loss of farms in the twenties - he was offered one by the farmer for paying back taxes. Going hungry for days. Charity food in Spokane. Destitute families and help from the Red Cross.

Side C

- 00 20 Leaving home to find work and not finding it makes you a bum. Available work. Work and life in Butte, Montana, a "wide open" town - boarding houses, gambling joints, open saloons and a brewery (despite prohibition). Spokane had speakeasies.
- 13 24 Cheating on the slot machine at Sweet's in Wallace with a borrowed, fixed quarter. "The King" sent him to work at the

minute page

Side C (continued)

Morning Star Mine, where the timbers were huge. Joining the coast artillery in Spokane; they got \$1.80 for food from there to San Francisco. To the Phillipines. Santiana Cabaret in Manilla - taxi dancers.

Side D

- 00 30 Difference between hoboies and professional bums. When there was no work you had to panhandle. Food for the jungles - a nickel's worth of coffee with some sugar thrown in odds-and-ends from a butcher. A cranky butcher.
- 09 32 Parents often couldn't help. In bad weather, you slept in a boxcar. Jim Hill insisted that people be allowed to ride his rails; in general the trains were very good about riders. Decline of freight riders. Striking up friendships in the jungles. Work with horse teams. Lewiston stench. The floating population - drifting from job to job. Married men on the road.
- 21 36 Working on the tunnel by the Golden Gate Bridge in 1936. Roosevelt was the best president we've had because he put the people back to work. Exploding population in California. He purchased his army contract in 1936.
- 31 40 What good is money?

Side E

- 00 40 "Camp inspecting" out of Priest River - they knew there was no work available, but camps never turned men away after 3:30p.m. Getting a bit of money from lumberjacks in town who were "holding"; walking to Spokane. Winning on a Chinese lottery. Cleaning up big during a police raid on a gambling casino; escaping through the hidden door with the house men, and watching the rich get loaded on the paddy-wagons.
- 23 47 Renting a room for the winter in a hotel away from kid road. Counting the money, he had over \$700. He spent more than a hundred dollars on groceries. Reunion with his friend Chet. They bought themselves nice clothes. Lumberjacks wore hats, not caps.

Side F

- 00 51 Meeting a woman in the hotel over a cup of coffee. The women of the hotel who were prostitutes had suspected that the two men were plainclothesmen. Sharing the money with his friend. He and a prostitute split \$40 dropped by a drunk lumberjack. Questioned by the police.

minute	page	
Side F (continued)		
14	54	Spokane places have shut down. The Pastine in Spokane was a dump compared to Dempsey's. People slept in the empty Schwartz's Brewery; it became a home for the destitute in the depression.
19	56	He was comfortable asking lumberjacks for help, because they'd seen hard times. A man with money tried to humiliate him in a restaurant, and was embarrassed in turn. Professional bums wouldn't panhandle men with glasses and moustaches.
25	58	Freight to Wyoming from Nebraska. He lost his check for haying at a beer party. A run-in with the bull as he grabbed the boxcar. (continued)
Side G		
00	60	A sage hen for breakfast, prepared with a sliver of rail. Food from a woman. Separated from his Cockney friend. Meeting a black man - cooking eggs together. Cleaning up. Finding and cashing the check. Returning the favor to the black.
13	64	A free dinner in Pasco from lumberjacks who didn't have any money; they were chased by the Chinese restauraners. His black friend treated him well in a chance meeting in Yakima. He drank very rarely. Live entertainment in Spokane; show people stayed at the Coeur d'Alene Hotel.
24	67	People in California tend to be very stingy compared to inland friendliness. His mistreatment by a baker in Dunsmuir who works him without giving him food. (continued)
Side H		
00	69	He grabbed the baker's hot ham and had a feast with two guys in the freight yards.
(6 minutes)		

with Sam Schrager

July 2, 1976

II. Transcript

This manuscript is derived from a tape interview conducted by Sam Schragger with Roy Martin(a pseudonym). The dialogue took place in the Martin home in Rural Latah County in Idaho on July second, nineteen seventy-six.

R M: ... I was just a kid you know.

SAM: Yeah. When you first started in...

R M: There was no was no such thing as caterpillar tractors. It was all horses. And being this was a short log country in Idaho, I only had, lumber companies had their railroads. A lot of them that went up into the mountains, which most of them did, why it was ^{Just} what they called 'sidewinders'; you know, cogs. Kind of a side, pistons were on the side. You'd go up quite a steep grade. They paid good. They paid four dollars and fifty cents a day. And they'd charge you a dollar and twenty cents for board and room. And two bits a month for hospital and two bits a month for your laundry for your blankets a month. And they fed real good. Real good.

SAM: Did you get much help from the old lumberjacks to break you into the woods?

R M: Yeah. You bet. Yeah. I wouldn't've knowed anything... Well the thing was I was a little bit light to be a ^{cant} hook man or anything like that. But I was pretty good with horses. And I drove team. Skidding. Sometimes on a crosshaul. And mostly skidding ^{and} loading logs sometimes was an old fashioned flosshaul which is loading sleighs in the wintertime. You haul them logs out with sleighs in the winter. Wherever they could. A lot of places where it was steep, they had what they called a chute. And they would chute these logs, it was a log chute. And them logs chute runs for miles. Some places they were quite long. Some places they didn't have to be. But I worked on chutes that were seven miles long. Not in Idaho, this is in Montana. I had a chute in Montana, Ross and Riley's camp in Montana. That was seven miles long. Somewhere along in there. Yeah, right around seven miles. But...

SAM: On a chute like that, what did you do?

R M: We tailed them down into the chute and then you had a team of horses and you'd give 'em a start. And they once got started why, they kept going til they got to the bottom of the mountain. Or, jump off the chute once in

a while, they'd jump off. [redacted] Not very often. Once in a while a log or two would jump off the chute. Where it was too steep, they used goosenecks to stop the logs and sanded the chute and goosenecks and stuff like that.

SAM: Did you think it was very dangerous work?

R M: You had to know what you were doing. You had to, people told you what to do if you didn't know, you know. And sometimes it was dangerous. But ordinarily it wasn't any dangerous than any other line of work, I don't think. Kind of a rough deal but, it was healthy.

SAM: What about the lumberjacks? What kind of guys were they?

R M: Pretty good sort of people. They were different sort of people then you have today. I mean, in respect that they, they would more or less help one another out sometimes you know, if you were broke, as a rule they wouldn't say, "Well, how you doing, are you broke?" They'd say, "Are you eating?" "Are you eating?" "No." "Well, I got a couple of bucks here, couple of dollars here." Well, sometimes you return the favor, you know what I mean? Help a fellow out. They'd help you out. At that time the only union they had was the I.W.W. I started working in the woods, why, superintendent said, "Do you belong to the union?" I says, "Nope." "Well," he said, "you have to belong to the union." he said, "to work here." And I said okay. Charge you five dollars to belong to the union. Charge you fifty cents a month dues. ^{which was} [redacted] alright, you know. And so I became an I.W.W. which is Industrial Workers of the World. And course every craft had a different number and all the lumberjacks were what they called 120, local 120. That took care of the woods workers. And mining and different crafts had different numbers. Although, they were in the same union.

SAM: Did the union do anything? Did you have any contact with the head of the local?

R M: Well, they had what they called delegates. And if you ^{had} [redacted] a camp say

of a hundred and fifty, two hundred men, there's always one or two delegates ⁱⁿ there, you didn't know who they were but, they would come around and they would, they'd find out did you belong to the union. And how you stood with your dues and so forth. And those men collected dues and then they would take the money to whatever union hall they had. They had ~~one~~ in Spokane and oh every here and there they'd ~~have~~ have a union hall somewhere and they would turn their money into the union hall and then they would get new stamps, a batch of new stamps so if they lined someone, they called it line 'em up, you know into the union why, or payed their dues, why they would do that, you know. Like you'd meet a man said, "Yeah, I'm a month behind or two months behind." Well, he'd pay two or three months dues. And then the delegate would sign the stamp with his initials. And put the stamps in there and then you'd pay it. That's all there was to it.

SAM: Did you ever strike or try direct action while you were in the union?

R M: No, they didn't have any strikes while I was in the union. They, course, I didn't belong to the union too long anyway. I think I joined about 1924 and so about 1929 I joined the army and so I didn't take my card with me because the army wouldn't take you if they thought you belonged to the I.W.W. because they were supposed to have been a Communist organization. So they said. But it was the only union that we had in Idaho. If it hadn't been for the I.W.W. they probably wouldn't have ^{had} an eight hour day yet. And probably be packing blankets like they do in California yet. You don't pack no blankets in the lumber camps of Idaho. Or Montana.

SAM: Do they still pack blankets down in California?

R M: Why, sure. You go to work for a farmer down there, say, "Well, where's your blankets?" Yeah. People up in this country here and oh Montana and North Dakota and all them countries, them people up in there, they furnished you a place to sleep and they furnished you blankets. They won't do it in California. You furnish your own blankets. And they wouldn't allow

it was the I.W.W.'s that got the blanket roll off a man's back in this country. And got an eight hour day and got some decent food and good conditions, which they didn't have. Course that strike came about long 'fore I was in the union. But ...

SAM: Why do you think they were always getting pinned for being Communists?

R M: Well, Capitalism. They want a man to work for nothing. They want to treat him like a dog. You see? Money, greed. That's all it is. Just greedy people. Yeah, they'll work you for nothing as long as they can.

SAM: Sounds like they were in the woods pretty good if the superintendent would make you sign up.

R M: Yeah, they had some pretty good camps. Humbard Lumber Company was a real good company to work for. I imagine that a lot of these other lumber companies were just as good. Humbard Lumber Company was a good outfit to work for. Diamond Match was a fine outfit. And there were a lot of good camps. Yeah, I worked for Humbard. I worked out at Priest River, I worked for different outfits up there, Diamond Match and Beardsmore.

SAM: Did you ever go to any of the union halls, like in Spokane?

R M: Oh, yeah, I've been in the I.W.W. hall.

SAM: What did they have there?

R M: Same as any other union hall. It was a union hall, that's all I can say.

SAM: A meeting place?

R M: Sure, ^{oh yeah,} this country's changed an awful lot.

SAM: What made you decide to leave the woods and enlist in the army?

R M: Well, things was getting pretty rough. I went to Butte and worked in Butte, Montana, ^{worked} in the copper mines. And that was not a bad place to work, they paid pretty good there. They paid better than they ^{did} in the woods. They started gyppoing, what they call gyppo and that's contracting, and the wages were so doggone cheap got so cheap they got down to three dollars and sixty cents a day. No three dollars and, I don't know, three dollars and

something a day. Three ~~ninety~~^{ninety} I think it was, a day. And then they'd charge you a dollar and something for board so you was actually working for damn near nothing time you paid your Sunday board. And if you missed a day or two on account of bad weather why you ~~was~~^{was} working for your board and room, practically.

SAM: Was this in the woods?

R M: Yeah, that was in the woods. So I went to work in the mines and was getting six dollars a day. But in '29 I came to Spokane ~~and~~^{and} I joined the army and went to the Phillipine Islands. And I never come back here til 1955. But I like Idaho. Its, I don't know. There's just something 'bout Idaho that I like. I like the people pretty well, I like the country.

SAM: What was the idea of going gyppo? Did they figure they could get more work out of the men?

R M: Yeah, well, you see, at that time they imported I guess, 'cause I don't know where they come from, whether they come from Wisconsin or directly from Sweden, but the Scandinavian people come in here and they could work like a dog, you know, and make about eight dollars a day, you see. Maybe ten. And the harder the work the more... they got paid so much a thousand, they got paid around a dollar and a quarter, dollar and a half a thousand for falling timber. And they wouldn't ~~cut~~^{cut} 'em down on the price, but they'd cheat them on the scale. The log companies would cheat 'em on the scale. I know guys there, it didn't make any difference how many thousand board feet of lumber that they trees that they'd get down, they'd only give them so much scale, maybe they'd let them make eight or ten dollars a day. That's as much as they could make. And they do it today. The lumber companies do it today. Not with the man, as much ~~as~~^{as} the man that's cutting, they just let him ~~cut~~^{cut} so much. Course today they can go out there and make hundred and fifty, two hundred dollars a day. You see, some places. But I know where they had log truckers and they cheat ~~em~~^{em} on the scale, they still do it

today. ^{Log} [redacted] companies still do it today. And Potlatch is one of the dirtiest men, dirtiest outfits in the whole country. One time I said, I come up here you know, and I never worked for Potlatch at that time. In fact, I never did. I said, "What does PFI stand for?" Big old lumberjack turned around, ^{he} said, "Don't you know?" He says, "Potlatch Fucks Idaho." And that's just about the size of it. They're a money making outfit, Potlatch is. And they're fooling lot, they're fooling ^{lots} of people. Potlatch is fooling lots of people. They give you the big old story, "Yes, we clear-cut. We leave seed trees." I can show you clear-cuts and all the seed trees, ^{that} they've left in there, ^{there's} about enough seedlings come up you could put 'em in your eye. You see? And whereas the government in parts of Idaho here where the Forest Service is ^{re-seeded} ~~re-seeded~~ forty five years ago, they're ready to cut timber on that now. The timber's big enough for merchantable timber. Potlatch hasn't done that to my experience. They take the best and that's it.

SAM: Do you think it was the same way back in the '20's?

R M: Sure. Sure, they'd buy a section of land and log a section and a half. They were stealing off the government all the time. And they're still doing it. What do you think, they take the governor and the lieutenant governor and the whole tribe from Boise and what do you think they take them down the North Fork of the Clearwater River. They wine 'em and dine 'em. They wine 'em and dine 'em there at old Bowles' cabin, they used to.

SAM: They used to do that?

R M: Yeah. Take 'em down the river and they'd all get drunker than fish. Have a good time. And wine 'em and dine 'em down at the Lewiston Hotel down here in Lewiston. You see?

SAM: Yeah.

R M: And they get anything they want. [redacted] off of the state of Idaho. Yeah, they buy it but, you see the methods they go about doing it.

SAM: There's no union like the I.W.W. to stand up anymore.

R M: I guess the woodworkers has got a union, alright. But I don't think it means much. I don't think it's meaningful union. I really don't know. 'Cause, I haven't worked in the woods in a long time.

SAM: When you were working in the woods, did you feel that the union was looking out for the men?

R M: Yeah. Sure they did. They got clean blankets. Good food. Eight hour day. And the wages was adequate. We was getting around four dollars and fifty cents a day. That is, if you were working a day's pay. And at that time, four dollars and fifty cents was a lot of money. You figure out, you could buy a pair of overalls for about a dollar. You see. Around that. Give or take a few cents, you know. You could buy one of the best pair of cork shoes for fifteen, sixteen dollars. You could go down here to White's down in Spokane or you could go buy a pair of Kern's or any number of different ^{good} brands of logging shoes and they would run around fifteen, sixteen bucks. But, yeah well. There was a few trucks hauling. They had trucks. Few little, oh, I don't know what they were, shivvies or something hauling logs in the summertime. I remember that. But ~~they~~ were very small at that time as far as trucking operations ^A hauling logs was concerned. A few gyppos, you know, hauling logs. But the biggest logging deals were rivers. They'd drive, they'd drive the North Fork and they'd drive a lot of these creeks, like Emerald Creek and different rivers. And they had their logging roads. That's the way they got their logs.

SAM: Where did the men go to blow in?

R M: Spokane, oh Priest River, Newport, or Sandpoint. All these towns were more or less, well in the lumbering country, they were lumberjack towns and they ^{were} pretty good little towns. They were good working man towns. Little bit different now. You walk down the street with a packsack on your back, you're liable to get thrown in jail for a bum. Where in them days, practically

every lumberjack had a packsack you know. You never carry a suitcase, you carry a packsack. You didn't have a car, you had to take the logging road, you either [redacted] walk to the camp or take the logging train. There was no such thing as driving to camp in a car. Wintertime there was snow. And there was no cars traveling to the logging camps. Only thing they was was logging road. Railroad.

SAM: When a guy went to blow in, would he live it up for a pretty long time? A few weeks or a few days?

R M: Well, it's hard to tell. Some of them went to Spokane and probably wouldn't work in the wintertime. Probably would get 'em an apartment and winter in Spokane. Some of them might, would blow in get drunk, maybe in a week they'd be broke, maybe less than that. They Had plenty of people to take 'em, you know. All kind of bootleg joints. And houses of prostitution. Whatnot.

SAM: There was a lot of girls around.

R M: That's Fletcher there. Is it? I don't know. Looks like his trailer.

SAM: There were a lot of girls available...

(pause in tape)

R M: ...Save a few dollars you know, and then maybe you'd get sick or something happen. But I think the best investment I ever made was buy a little property. And have a home of my own.

SAM: It seems like a hell of a lot of people in the early days couldn't save.

R M: No you didn't. No, you didn't make enough to save. Of course, it all depends on what kind of line of business you were in. If you was a working man, why like I say, you was getting four dollars and fifty cents a day. And if you was married man, you didn't save anything. Very little, and well about the only ones that got pretty good by was probably the man that had a few cows and some horses, few animals and something like that, you know. Course, land was pretty cheap here in Idaho at one time. My folks only paid ten dollars an acre for their, they bought forty-two acres up there out of

Sandpoint. And they paid ten dollars an acre. I went up and looked at the place here about five or six years ago. I didn't even recognize it. There was no stumps there you know. It was all nice ^{flat} land, valley land. Hay was two feet high. And it looked beautiful, you know. I didn't even recognize where I'd been raised.

SAM: It seemed to me that working men like lumberjacks, most all of them took their money and blew in.

R M: Well, yeah. But there was a lot of...
(pause in tape)

R M: ... I started working in the harvest about 1924. And ^{would} work in the woods and then when the weather got real nice, you know, we'd grab an armful of boxcars and we'd want to go somewhere. We'd probably go up to Missoula, Montana and maybe work on a fire, maybe, they'd always have a lot of forest fires you know out at Missoula, Montana. Maybe work on a forest fire for a week or two or something like that. Make a few dollars. Then go up into North Dakota. And work in the harvest there. And once in a while ^{would} work out of Spokane. And you'd get jobs up here, some places had thrashing machines. We'd get a job on a thrashing machine. But a lot of this country had combines and the ^y had all horse drawn, you see. And they just didn't dump their grain like they do in the combine today. They had sack sewers on there and they sewed them up in sacks. And then as you sewed them up in a sack, then you'd kick them off, you see? And they had men with wagons and teams that would come along and pick the sacks up later on. And load them up and take them in in the sack.

SAM: So there was lots of work.

R M: Oh, yeah. I never did work on a combine. I worked on a mungle rack, you know. Thrashing machine.

SAM: Why did you go to Dakota and Montana instead of staying in the Palouse?

R M: Well, it's a bigger, actually it's a bigger grain country, you know, Montana North Dakota. It's flat. Most of it's flat. And the bundles are not as

heavy, you see. Over here, these people never seen a bad year, I don't think, as far as crops is concerned. They've never had a failure in the Palouse country, that I know of. But they did have failures in like Montana North Dakota, South Dakota and places like that. They had some pretty slim years there, ~~dry~~ dry seasons. But you'd work up there in the bundles and the bundles weren't as heavy and you got just as much money. You made just as much money. So we'd go up there and pitch bundles because there wasn't that much bundle pitching in this part of the country anyway. Most of it was combine. Horse drawn. I think they used anywhere from twenty-six to thirty head of horses or mules or whatever they used to pull these combines. But they didn't use combines up there. They used ^{all} thrashing machines up in North Dakota, Montana.

SAM: So to get over there, you usually rode the frieght?

R M: Ridd^e_A a frieght, yeah.

SAM: How long would it take?

R M: Oh, it, we ⁱⁿ ~~no~~ hurry. As a rule, we'd try to get up into oh, try to get up around Fargo, maybe go up what they call Red River Valley country you know, and thrash up there and get the early grain, they had some early grain up there. And then you could work all the way back down to, through Montana. Or you could go up into Canada. Canada was good. Work in Canada.

(End of side A)

SAM: ...I've never ridden one myself.

R M: You never have?

SAM: No, I never have. I've gotten on one.

R M: Ride boxcars you know. You get inside of a car. Inside of a boxcar. And as a rule they don't bother you too much riding boxcars. I don't know how it is now, not being, sometimes some of them frèights have a hundred men on them or maybe more on one frèight. And if it's nice weather like this, you ~~ride~~ ride along. If you feel like going to sleep, why you go to sleep. And you know where you're going. Maybe you're going five, six, seven hundred miles ^{or} whatever it is, why you know where the next division point is. And

if you got a few dollars, why, you get off in that town and maybe get yourself something to eat. And in them days, lot of people riding freights. Lot of people. Nobody had any money. Couldn't afford to pay your fare..

SAM: Would they all be strangers to you?

R M: Most of them. Most of them. ^{Like} maybe a bunch of guys would leave Spokane or Priest River or Newport or anywhere along the line up through here. They'd have the same idea, you know, of going, going to take in the harvest, because five dollars a day and board and room was better than four and a half and paying a dollar twenty for board and room working in the woods. And them farmers was pretty nice to work for. They fed real good. But the only thing about working on a thrashing rig like that, you put in about ten hours for your five bucks. But that was alright. That was five dollars clear. There was no... and nobody asked you your name. I mean they might say, "What's your name?" "My name's Roy." That's all. And as a rule a check was unheard of. Most of them people would pay you in cash. They wouldn't write you a check. Because the banks, most of the banks was no good. And people didn't trust the banks. When you got through working as a rule, they take you to town, yeah, they might have a bank account, but he'd pay you in cash. He wouldn't give you no check. Once in a while you'd get, farmers' would give you a check. But a check wasn't as common place as it 'tis today.

SAM: What were the accomodations like? Where did they have for you to sleep?

R M: No. Most of the time, course if there was a big bunch of men, like say, twenty or thirty men or something like that, why you slept in the barn or you know and sleep in the hay mounds. And they'd give you blankets. They'd furnish you with blankets. A lot of times you ^{go} to work for farmers that, well the farmers would go in together. One guy would hire maybe two or three men to shock the grain except they ^{cut} it with a binder and then you had to go up and shock it. Then when thrashing time come, the thrashing machine would move in there and you would go with the thrashing

machine then from farm to farm. But as a rule when you worked for a farmer they give you a bed in the house.

SAM: What did you think of the farmers that you worked for?

R M: Very good. Nice people. Yeah. ^{them people was} Some of the nicest people I ever worked for. They fed good. And of course that was a great time for them ^{be} cause that's when their only money crop came in is when they got that thrashed. But they were nice people to work for.

SAM: Did they treat you like an equal?

R M: You bet. Yeah. You set down ^{and} you ate with the family. Yeah they treated you wonderful. I never worked for any of them farmers, wheat farmers there that didn't treat their, that didn't treat the men they had working for them real good. Good bunch of people.

SAM: Did these people, did the crews come from all over the place?

R M: Anywhere and everywhere. People come from all over the country, take in the harvest. Course, lot of people didn't like I say, lot of lumberjacks that was here that they just stayed in the woods and they never did work in the harvest. I was versatile. I worked the harvest. Worked whatever I could get a job at. And jobs weren't so plentiful then, either. But you had to take what you could get.

SAM: What about on the trains. Did you have to worry about people trying to rob you?

R M: Oh, yeah. You bet. You, you didn't jingle no money. And I had three and four hundred dollars in my pocket. I had three or four hundred dollars on me. And be riding a train with a bunch of men and I went out on the, I went from resturant to resturant and asked to do some work for a bite to eat. So that they could see that I was broke. 'Cause if you showed like you had any money, you didn't know who might rob you. And then another thing, lumberjacks as a rule had cork shoes on, you know. And you have a double tongue in your shoe. We used to take our folding money, put it in between

the two tongues, and lace you^r shoe up. I've been robbed on freight trains. And I've had them take my shoes off or make me take my shoes off and they'd shake the shoe like that. But no money would drop out because it was in between the two tongues you see which was laced up from about here to here yet. But I could still get my foot out of it. But them two tongues layed in there like that. And the money be between them two tongues. I've been robbed and had quite a lot of money in^{between} the two tongues of my shoe, double tongue, you see.

SAM: When you'd be robbed like that, would it be one guy or several?

R M: Sometimes it's one, sometimes it's two. And sometimes it'd be the brakemen's ^{be} doing the robbing. Yeah. Oh, I've had brakemen, two brakemen come along and they'd go down the train and they'd rob everybody on the train. Yeah. Rob everybody on the train. Knew they were brakemen. 'Cause I've seen them later on in the resturant when they were eating. And, but what you going to do? Just keep your mouth shut that's all. They rob you. But they do that on harvest. You know, about harvest time, when they knew that men was coming back from the harvest and everybody had a few dollars, not very much. Some of them might have a hundred or two hundred dollars. Some of them fifty dollars. Some of them nothing. Lot of people were broke also.

SAM: In those days, did you ever see anybody packing a gun?

R M: Well, I guess that some of them did pack a gun. But of course, if you knew somebody was packing a gun, you wouldn't want to be riding with him. You know. Probably some of them was packing guns that you wouldn't know about you know. But, that's another good thing that the I.W.W.'s. They had a, well, in towns all up and down the railroad like you know, good sized towns like Missoula, like Bismark, North Dakota, Fargo, North Dakota, and Mineic North Dakota. All those big cities, they had, they had union halls, I.W.W. union halls. Well then they had at that time some of them union halls had what they call a 'flying squad'. And one time we got robbed, a whole train

was robbed by some couple of robbers, you know. Come along, they just rob all the working stiff's on the, riding this train. But they just go from car to car rob everybody even, you know, while the train was enroute. And somebody on the train, one of the men on the train, ^{he} went by some little town station and he threw a note on the station platform and so told them that they were being robbed and to call, to wire in to the the union hall of this town and tell them that train so-and-so was being systematically robbed, that there was two robbers on there robbing the train. Well what they did was, the union hall sent out this flying squad in a pretty fast car, you know. It was summertime. The roads were pretty good. And they caught up to the train and they finally caught the robbers on the train. Everybody got their money back. And the robbers got shot.

SAM: You were on that train?

R M: Yeah.

SAM: Did you see it?

R M: No I didn't see it, but they got shot. They killed both of them. And ^{then} we got into this next town, I can't think of the name of the town 'ceptin' up in North Dakota somewhere. But they took everybody off the train and took ^{us} all in the courthouse and there was about a hundred and fifty of us, I guess. So then everybody told them what happened and nobody was arrested for killing these two guys. And turned us all loose. But that's one thing that the union did do. They tried to protect the men as much as they could. Course, I was just a kid then you know, only about sixteen I guess. *Something like that.*

SAM: I heard that on some of those trains that your I.W.W. card was your ticket.

R M: That's right. That's right. Course, they wouldn't kick you off. They wouldn't kick you off the train. But they'd tell you that you get to work now, you join up. 'Cause you know they tell them that everything was union. That the best way to do it is to join the union. And a lot of people joined the union

but course it was a lot of dirty work done and course the I.W.W.'s got the blame for it. Some of the, some people say well the I.W.W. put matches in the bundles and burnt the thrashing machine up and all that stuff, you know. Anybody could have put a box of matches in a bundle. And of course when it goes through the concaves of the machine there, it's going to set it on fire. The I.W.W.'s got the blame for it. Whether they did it or not, I don't know. Probably nobody else does. That's the way things went. But finally the union, the union disintegrated and lot of things happened I guess that made it go haywire. Politically and economically and crookedness. And they had, had somebody who was president run away with all the money in the union and there was big organizations that spent a lot of money to try to break the union and so forth, you know.

SAM: Was that in Spokane where the guy ran away?

R M: Run out with the money?

SAM: Yeah.

R M: Oh I don't, no I think it was in back east somewhere, it was, where it was I don't know. I think it was back east, **someplace**.

SAM: Well these organizations that tried to break the union must have been the corporations.

R M: Well, Hollywood movie actors spent quite a few million dollars, contributed quite a few million dollars to break the union. And that was a long time if you went in a restaurant and you was a lumberjack, you didn't eat no raisin pie. They come from California. And boycotted California and they wouldn't, and if you had ketchup on the table that was made in California, you better not eat it. You see. Oh yes. The reason they boycotted California was because California was one of the biggest contributors to try to break the I.W.W.'s.

SAM: It sounds like the I.W.W.'s worked more than just with the lumberjacks. They had some of the harvest crews and...

R M: Oh yeah. Yeah they were the same as the American Federation of Labor or ^{the} CIO is today. You see if you belong to the American Federation AFL or CIO today you're either number so-and-so, you're either in the mine mills, smelter, you're in the lumberworkers union local or you're machinist local or you're what have you. Same thing.

SAM: So it was the average working man who worked at a lot of things.

R M: You could work in many trades and the I.W.W. ~~cover~~^{ed} it just the same as they cover, as the AFL-CIO covers trades today. You see. It was a good thing. It had to come. And you see, before I was, in 1916 of course, I was only eight years old. That's when they had the big strike somewhere along in there but before that they were packing blankets and they'd work you any amount of hours from daylight ~~til~~^{til} dark in these camps and they'd feed you sowbelly and beans and everybody was lousy ^{be} cause everybody was packing their own blankets. And everything ^{was} not as good as it is today. The simple reason is that you might hire out and get fifty dollars a month board and room. And if they wanted to they could pay you off at twenty five. You see. And there ^{ain't} nothing you could do about it. So the union was a good thing. They got a wage that was adequate and they got good board and room. And you had somewhere to go for a little protection. Before that you didn't have it.

SAM: If you were in different towns that had I.W.W. halls, could you stay in the halls overnight?

R M: No, there was no place in the hall that you could stay as far as I know. It was a business hall. ~~It was~~^{Just} the same as a union hall is today. They dispatched men out on jobs, helped them, and not always dispatched a man on a job as much it is they would tell him where he could go and he might get work. As a rule he would go find his own job. They didn't find him a job. You found your own job. You see. Now today, the union will dispatch you on a job. But at that time, as far as I know, they didn't. You found

your own job. You was going, find your own job as far as jobs is concerned.

SAM: If you got into a town like Missoula, where would you sleep overnight?

R M: Hotels. Hotel rooms were cheap then, you see. You could get a pretty fair hotel for a dollar a night. And lot of places it would be four bits. You know, you wouldn't get hot and cold running water or anything like that. But you could get them cheap hotels, would give you a bed for fifty cents or two men could get a double bed you know, for a dollar. Or a dollar and a half or you could get a room up to five dollars if you wanted to if you wanted to get to the Florence Hotel which was one of the finest hotels there in Missoula, at that time. But, no things were reasonable. Food was cheap. You'd get a pretty fair meal for ^{about} thirty five cents. That ain't too bad either.

SAM: Sounds pretty darn good. Would women ride the rails too?

R M: Yeah, I've seen them. Not too often but once in a while you'd see them, you know, you'd see women riding the rails. Course in, when things are pretty tough, I've seen whole families moving out and riding freights. A lot of them poor people you know ^{that} lost all their, lost their farms through well; they couldn't pay the taxes or they belonged to the banks and they'd borrowed money from the banks and they couldn't pay it and the banks would foreclose. And I've seen people with wagons and hayracks and everything they had piled on it and, "Where you going?" "Heading west." You know. Going somewheres. Some going to Oregon, some of them to California. They didn't know what they was getting into but they knew ^{what they} was leaving. Take around oh, nearly 1920's why things was, crops weren't too good. It was a pretty dry cycle. All through the midwest and lot of people they, well they wasn't getting very much for their grain, nât getting much grain when they did harvest it. ^{some of 'em} Went broke, you know. There was all kinds of land in Montana and North Dakota and up in there you could have bought for the taxes. Just pay the taxes and you can have the land. I seen one farmer there, he going down

road. And I asked him where he was going. He says, "Well, we're going west." He said, "We ain't got nothing to keep us here," he said, "the bank has foreclosed," he said, "there's my ranch there. Nice looking house. All the furniture in it, all the machinery's in the shed." What he had was horse drawn of course. He said, "Do you want it?" He said, "You pay the taxes on it, I'll write you a deed." He said, "I'll give you the deed if you want to pay the taxes you can have it! Hundred and sixty acres or what had he. Nice looking land. Well I haven't been up in that country now for forty some years or pretty close to fifty, yeah, I guess it's ^{about} fifty years. And they tell me that that country has had nothing but good crops for years now. And the people are well off in North Dakota and Montana and up in there.

SAM: You didn't want it at the time, or was it just too much money?

R M: I didn't have a nickel to rub against a dime. So what could I do? He'd of give ^{me} the place if I'd've paid the taxes. Well how much was the taxes? I don't know. Might have been couple thousand bucks or something like that. Maybe less. But he didn't have any money. I didn't have any money. Nobody had any money. They only people I'd see come out on that was the bankers. They owned all the land. And eventually they probably made out. Course, like in '29, ^{all} the banks went busted, but I don't know. ^Somebody got something. There was hundreds of farmers left their farms, it all belonged to the banks. But all the banks went broke so somebody got it, I don't know who got it.

SAM: Did you see many people in those days who didn't have enough to eat?

R M: Oh boy. Yeah, you'd better believe it. And I was one of them. Many and many a day I postponed eating. I postponed eating for two and three days at a time. No work. Couldn't get a job. They might hire a man if they needed a man, but they wouldn't hire a kid. And there was nobody that I know that you could go to that would help you. They didn't have such thing as welfare. And oh, I guess the Salvation Army helped a few people you know ^{like} in big cities and give them a place to sleep and give them a bite to eat once in

a while and the Catholic institution sometimes would, well, they did it in Spokane, they had, you could go up to the hospital, that big hospital there, Catholic hospital, there, what is it, Sacred Heart? And boy they fed thousands of people up there. You know, men that was hungry and wanted something to eat. And there was quite a few places that would help you but you had to know where to go and how to go about it. You could go up to the Davenport Hotel and you'd see the manager in there and they would set you in there and set you in there and give you a great big bowl of chili beans, good beans, too. Real good beans. And give you a great big bowl of beans and a stack of crackers. And they give you something to eat and that was the Davenport Hotel. It was good. Course they had quite a few soup lines and missions of different kinds, you know. Salvation Army and Goodwill. Volunteers of America. But I never did hit those places if possible, I've only, I've only about once or twice in my life ever went into one of those places. That was just last resort, you know. But right now people better not complain. They got it pretty good.

SAM: What period of time was the soup lines?

R M: I'm talking about the '20's.

SAM: That sounds rough to me to find yourself in that situation.

R M: It is rough. It is rough. You know. If you're talking about not being at home, getting away from home. You see, at that time, if a family was destitute at that time, about the only people that would help you, that could help you would be the county and the Red Cross. Red Cross put out a grocery order for a family to keep them from starving to death. And that's all. You didn't have any other way to go. You take for instance, you take a mother or something like that, had two or three children, if her husband died or something like that well the bread earner was gone. Where's she going to go? At that time it was pretty hard for a woman to get a job too.

It was pretty rough.

SAM: Can you remember how you got in the situation without a dollar in your pocket?

(End of side B)

R M: Just like anybody else. The thing is...

R M: ...Leaves home because he wants to get a job. Or maybe he leaves home ^{be} cause his family can't afford to keep you. They don't kick you out. ^{But} You take an initiative ^f of your own to get out and find something. But you don't find anything. So you're a bum. That's what it turns out to be. Or a hobo or whatever you want to call him. But it's pretty rough. Sometimes you find a job, you make a few dollars. You have no education. Well, education wouldn't do you any good at that time, anyway. I've seen professors riding boxcars. Yeah, I've seen professors, all kinds of guys with degrees riding boxcars. Yessir. So, when times get rough, no matter how well educated you are, it can be rough on people with an education, too.

SAM: Was the job market just going up and down?

R M: Well I don't know really. It, ^e someplaces there was work, someplaces there wasn't work.

SAM: You had to be lucky to fall into it?

R M: Well, you could say that, yeah. Course, Idaho here, if you weren't a lumberjack, that is, Northern Idaho, if you wasn't a lumberjack why or work in the woods or work in the mill^s or something like that, that's about all you had. Nothing else. You might get a job seasonally, you know. Or you might get a job working on a railroad, extra gang. Or maybe a section gang, or something like that. Oh, it didn't pay very much. Only paid about oh, I don't know. They paid by the hour. Thirty five, forty cents an hour, something like that. And they paid you twice a month. Well that was alright. Quite a few people, quite a few men you know, in the summertime would work on the extra gang. And a few of them would book on as section hand. And then of course there was the mines. You'd go to Cour d'Alenes ^{and} work in the mines, Wallace, Kellogg, Burke. And then if you didn't work in the mines, ^{or} you could go to Butte. Butte, well you figure, when I was there, see I was in Butte in '27, winter of '27 and '28, well you had a population of forty-five thousand, resident population. And they had a floating population of

about forty thousand, you see. So it was a pretty good size city, Butte was. Well it paid prtty good compared to what ^{They} ~~it~~ paid in the woods at that time. See they was only paying about three something ^{a day} in the woods. And they paid from six dollars to six and quarter in Butte for working underground for eight hours.

SAM: Was that kind of work something a guy could pick up pretty easy?

R M: Well, it wasn't too hard to learn the mining game. You learn how to run ^{The} ~~A~~ machine, learn how to timber and so forth. And I'd say within two, three, ^{or} four months you'd, you wouldn't learn everything, but you'd learn enough that you could work, you know what I mean. And it was pretty good and board and room was cheap. It was eight dollars a week for board and I think it was eight dollars a week for board ^{and} five dollars a week for the room. Well, that ain't too bad. Figuring that you were getting six or six and a quarter. I started out at six and then finally they got a raise in copper, the price of copper, ^{then} they raised the wages, the daily wage was then raised to six dollars and [^] twenty five cents a day. And you worked six days a week. And that was pretty good. And you got awful good board for eight dollars. I mean awful good board. And you'd get a nice room.

SAM: Would this be company or private.

R M: American Smelting and Refining. ATM.

SAM: They had their own boarding houses?

R M: No.

SAM: That's what I was talking about.

R M: No. You could stay in any boarding house you wanted to. The boarding houses was in the city of Butte and they was different boarding houses. They went under different names. Oh some of them boarding houses had over a thousand boarders in one boarding house. Belmont boarding house was one of that I stayed in, was a big boarding house. I don't know exactly how many people did board there ^e. I would say over, I'd say a thousand, anyway. Or right around that.

SAM: How was it set up? Did you have your own room there?

R M: Well, they had different places in town. They had their own rooms there at the boarding house. And then they had other places that they had leased where you got your room. And of course, they charged you for your board at the boarding house, they charged you straight eight dollars a week. And then your room run around five bucks, for your room. And that was a good town. Wid^e open. I mean just as many people on the street at one o'clock in the morning as there'd be one o'clock in the day. Because they run three shifts, you see. There'd be just as many people at one o'clock. Stores all open. Grocery stores, clothing stores, gambling joints, bars. You see, that was during Prohibition, but they didn't have no Prohibition in Butte. And the only time that they had Prohibition in Butte is when one of the congressmen or something was to come. They would close the front door, but they'd always leave the backdoor open. And they had bars there that was a complete block long. I've seen six and seven bartenders behind one bar. And you'd go in there and get a bottle of beer for two bits. Better beer than you can get today. I mean, it was beer. Made right there in Butte. Made right there in the brewery. And they got a big brewery up there. You'd go up there you know it's a brewery. ^{But} All the windows are boarded in with big boards. But it's running full blast. And they ~~would~~ haul the barrels of beer with horses and wagons, regular beer wagons. And they made whiskey there, too. Beer and whiskey. Good whiskey. Good beer. And the guy on the beer wagon would stop at a bar, and he'd say, "How many do you want, Mike?" He says, "Give me two and one." Two barrels of beer and one case of whiskey. Got a little old ~~hand~~ truck out and take two barrels of beer off. In the middle he kept the whiskey. Pulled out a wooden box full of whiskey. Sat her on the truck. Wheel ~~it~~ in. Right broad daylight. No Prohibition. There was Prohibition everywhere else, but there wasn't in Butte. Gambling wide open. And they had, they had some big places there. They had the Crown, which was a big

gambling joint. And they had the Rialto and they had...

SAM: Gambling and drinking both?

R M: No. Just in the gambling joint was just strictly gambling. And of course they had ^a resturant in there. Most of the places had a nice resturant in the...

SAM: How honest were the gambling joints in those days?

R M: Oh, they were honest. They were, as far as I know, it wasn't crooked, it was honest. Yeah it was honest. Oh, about like going to Reno or Las Vegas. They were, as far as the house was concerned, they didn't have to be crooked, because the percentage was on their side. It was, as far as I know, it was honest. That is, the big places. I never went any, I didn't know of any little places, only places I ever went was big places. They were, oh, just like the places are in Reno or Las Vegas. They didn't have any floorshows or anything, but...

SAM: Roulette wheels and that kind of stuff?

R M: Oh, they had everything, yeah. They had dice tables. They had the wheels. Blackjack, 21, Fantan, Chuck-a-luck. And the Chinamens had a place where they sold lottery tickets, you know. Play lottery and chuck-a-luck. Stuff like that. Fantan.

SAM: They had poker too?

R M: Oh, yeah, they had everything.

SAM: Did the bars have tables, or were they mostly just bars?

R M: No, just like going into Reno.

SAM: I'm talking about the saloons.

R M: Oh, the bars. Oh, yeah, they had bars. Big long bars.

SAM: Was Butte real different from Spokane?

R M: Spokane, everything was bootleg, in Spokane, bootleg joints. They had a jillion bootleg places in Spokane, but you never knew when they was going to be raided, you see. It wasn't open. But in Butte it was wide open. Nobody bothered.

SAM: Bootleg joints in Spokane, they'd be small rather than big?

R M: Yeah, it'd be small places, ^{as a rule,} small places. Maybe some of them were clubs. Probably a Scandinavian club of some kind. Or a Greek club. Or, and then of course there's just plain bootleg joints. Spokane had a lot of them.

SAM: I've never heard of anything like Butte. I suppose it must have been because so many people were in the mines.

R M: Yeah, and then they had, course they had ^{they didn't have no} slot machines ^{then;} in Butte. That I know of. They might have, but maybe I don't remember, but I don't think, I don't remember seeing any slot machines ^{there} there. But Wallace, up here in the ^{over} Cou d'Alenes, they had slot machines. They had one place there was called Sweet's Place there in Wallace. Oh they had a lot of slot machines. So I was just a kid and I was looking for a job and ~~get~~ off a freight and I must have walked about thirty five miles or so. Wintertime, it was cold. Lot of snow on the ground and, I finally got into Wallace, ~~me~~ and another young guy. Both of us broke. Didn't have a dime and hungry. I could eat anything, I was so hungry. Hadn't had anything to eat for about two days, you know. So went into this Sweet's Place and it was the only place you could hang around. It was warm and there was gambling going on in there and they had oh all kinds of slot machines. So I got talking to an old fellow there, you know, and so I said, "Say," I said, "haven't ^{got a} price of a meal on you, ^{have you,} you could spare?" And he said, "Heck no kid," he says, "I'm on the bum myself." ^{But he said,} "I'll ~~loan~~ you my quarter." I said, "What do you mean?" He had a quarter with a hole drilled in it with a silk thread on it. And he says, "You go in there and play ~~them~~ two bit machines over there," and he said, "the minute that the wheels start turning," he said, "you ~~to~~ yank that quarter back up again." With the silk thread on it. "But don't let the houseman catch you." So I went over there and I didn't buy any quarters and I just kept sticking that quarter in there and

pulling the handle and everytime it would pay off I'd put the money down in my pocket. I was doing so good I got carried away, you know. And I had both pockets full of quarters. I remember having an old suitcoat, somebody give me an old suitcoat or something. And I had quarters in both pockets. I was just playing Cain with that machine. Everytime she'd puke out two or three dollars, I'd stick 'em in my pocket. Ever feel, you know, like when you was a kid, you'd do something wrong, you'd feel like somebody's looking at you, you know? I looked around and there was the houseman there about six foot six, you know. Standing right behind me. And I knew what was going to happen. And he was great, big, tall guy. Standing there like that, you know. ^(SS') (Hands on his hips.) And I turned around and there was no way to get around him. And I was just about fifteen, you know. And zoom, I dived right between his legs. And just slid in between his legs. And I got on the other side of him. And it was a straight shot. And they had two back-wing doors, you know, going in and out of that place like a bar, you know. And he caught me about the time I got to that door with about a number twelve shoe. And I lit way out in a snowbank. Well it didn't hurt me, but he give me a good start. And I went head first right out in the big old snowbank. And ~~when~~ I picked myself out of that snowbank and I took off and I never went back in there no more! But I had all these quarters in my pocket and I said, "Well boy, at least I'm going to eat and have a place to sleep tonight." So I went in and ^I got something to eat. Course it cost a little bit more for a meal in Wallace then because they had quite a lot of you know, lot of working guys working there. So I don't know, for about fifty cents I got a pretty good meal. ^{Then} I went over and I got a room for about a dollar. And I went up to my room and I started digging out all these quarters. And I had the old man's quarter with the string on it yet. So I figured, "well I got to find that old man, I've got to give him ^{that} quarter back with the string in it." And I counted the quarters and I had forty-two dollars worth

(whistler)

of quarters. Man I was nigger rich. So I got the room, then I walked around Wallace for about an hour. And finally I bumped into this old gentleman, you know, and I gave him his quarter back. And so then, the next day I went up, and they had a, they had a hiring hall there in Wallace. And the guy that run the hiring hall, they called him the "King". I don't know what his name was. But he was the "King", they referred to as the "King". And so I said, "I like to go to work in the mines." He says, "Did you ever work in the mines before?" "Oh, yeah!" "Where did you work in the mines?" "Oh, I worked in Butte." "Where'd you work in Butte?" I told him. And so he says, "Did you ever do any timbering?" And I said, "Oh yeah, I done timbering." Well, in Butte timbers, most of them are small, you know, about that big around. And not to ^o big a job, timbering Butte 'cause it isn't heavy ground, you know. Pretty good ground in Butte. So "Alright. I'll send you up to Mullen. Go to work in the Morning Mine". So I went up to Mullen. Give 'em ^{the} piece of paper that the King had given me. "Okay," he said, "boarding house right down here." Showed me where the boarding house was. Company boarding house. Got into the boarding house, I got me a bed. Next day I think it was I went to work in the Morning Mine. Well I'd never seen timbers like that in my life! Man, I'm telling you. They put me down there as timberman with another guy. Two of us working together. 'Sposed to put a cap in. That's, you got two posts like that, ^{the} cap is what goes on top. Twenty two feet long and that big around. And it had to go up six sets. ^A sets about ten feet high. So ^{it had to go} up about sixty feet. Then we had to lead it off into a stope, a timber stope, they call it. And we took it into this timber stope and I had to pull it all in there with what they call a "tugger". Air tugger. And had to fair lead it and get it in there. Well then after we got it in there in position where we wanted it, well then we had to face it. In other words you had to flatten it so it would lay on the post flat. You had to cutout for the timbers and you

had to have posts already put in, and ^{then} you had to build a platform to raise it up so far. We'd raised it quite a ways with the tigger, maybe about three feet, you know. Three and a half feet you'd raise it up. Then ^{you'd} build a platform under it, ^{and} then when you got everything all squared and all ready, then you'd go around ^{and you} get all the miners you could find around there to give you a hand to pick that up and set it on the posts. And you can imagine twenty two feet long. And that thing was green, wet and slimey about that big around. Oh boy, I'll tell you, well it took us a couple of days to get it up there. But you had to have timbers like that to hold that ground that was ^{lead and silver, and} Pretty heavy ground.

SAM: Did you stay with it?

R M: Not very long, no. That was in nineteen, 1929. 1929. So the weather got nice and this young fellow that I was chummed up with said, "Let's go to Spokane." And I said, "Alright." We got to Spokane. We didn't have much money and we was broke pretty soon in Spokane anyway. So he said let's join the army. I said okay. So we had our choices. We could go to, we could join the infantry. We could join the coast artillery. We could go to China or ^{We could} go to Panama. Or we could join the marines and go to Nicaragua. We had a lot of choices of places to go. I said I don't want to be no infantryman. I don't think I want to go to Panama. Heard about all the people dying there of malaria when they had the, building the canal and so I said, "What do you say we go to the Phillipines?" And he said, "Well," he said, "that might be pretty good." We joined the coast artillery. We joined the coast artillery and we went to the Phillipine Islands. That was quite a deal. Well then like I say, times was pretty tough in '29. That was before the crash though. So, anyway, they give us the big sum of a \$1.80 ^{a piece} to eat on from here to San Francisco. That wasn't very much money. I could have, ^{about} twenty of us all heading for San Francisco, join the coast artillery. So oh, we kept picking up more people as we went. We was on this train, see. Well, we

had a couple of guys that was in charge of us. And I think that they was probably previous service men or something like that, I don't remember now. I know we got pretty hungry before we got to San Francisco. Dollar ^{and} eighty cents didn't do us much, didn't get us much to eat. And that's what the government allowed us to eat on from Fort George Wright right here in Spokane to San Francisco. So we got to San Francisco and so a couple of these guys ^{they} got on the telephone so pretty soon a truck pulled up loaded us on, took us over to Fort Scott in San Francisco. So we got something to eat next morning. And then they took us down, put us on another, think they put us on a boat, took us over to Angel Island. Call it Fort McDowell. So we was over there for, oh I guess we must have been over there for about a month before the boat would go to the Phillipines. So we got on the Grant, U.S. Grant. And we headed for the Phillipine Islands.

That's quite a trip. ^{SAM:} Did they give you much training?

R M: Well they gave you a little basic training, yeah. They give you a little basic training then at Fort McDowell but when we got to the Phillipines, we got, I don't know, about a month's training there before they put us in with the regular troops, you know. With the battery. They assigned us to batteries when we get over there and then they, I don't know. It was either ten men assigned to this battery that I was in. And they gave us basic training there.

SAM: Did you mix with Phillipine people much when you were over there?

R M: Well, not a great deal. I made quite a few friends, yeah. They, we had, you see they had a Phillipino scout regiment on Cregidore. That was on Middle side. And I knew quite a few of those. Just casually, you know. And then of course we had Phillipino mess stewards and you know, things like that. Well, yeah, you meet quite a few, quite ^a few ^{of the} Phillipino people. And then course we'd go on, get a weekend pass or something like that, go to Manilla, and you'd meet people over there. ^{We'd} Go over there and they had a big dancehall.

One of the biggest dancehalls in the world is in Manilla, Santiana Cabaret. That's a big one.

SAM: Who would be there?

R M: Any and everybody. There'd be sailors there, there'd be soldiers there. There'd be civilians. And one of the biggest dancefloors in the world. And they had built like a big bowl, you know. Orchestra's in the middle. Dancing on this side of the orchestra. Dancing on the other side of the orchestra. Like a big football field. Just as big as a football field. And then it was terraced all the way around. And palm trees. Palm trees in there. On the terraces. Palm trees all the way around, be tables all the way around. And you'd go up a stair and there'd be another terrace above you. There'd be palm trees up there. And tables. And you get anything you wanted to drink. You could order a highball or gin fizz or anything you wanted. And they had taxi dancers, you know. Girls there, dancing. You had to buy the tickets, you know. And I think it was oh, either ten centavos or fifteen centavos a dance. I forget now. I think it was fifteen centavos a dance. Which is only seven and a half cents, in ^{American} money. And you could go over there and have a pretty good time in there. You could dance and a lot of times you'd dance with some girl that you liked and probably go home with her, you know. And spend the night with her. Something like that, you know. And things were awful reasonable there. It was a good little town.

SAM: The girls would be locals?

R M: Yeah. Some beautiful, you talk about ^{some} beautiful women, they got them.

(End of side C)

R M: A what they call a mistesa. They could be, oh, they could be any nationality and Phillipino. And some of them, most of them talk ~~Ph~~ English pretty good. Could talk good English. Once in a while you'd get some of them that couldn't talk English very well. Well, I got to go do some work.

SAM: Do you have to go?

R M: Yeah.

SAM: Okay. Let me ask you just one or two more things before I go.

R M: What's that?

SAM: Well there was one thing I was wondering about and that is like you saying that you didn't have any money. That you were a hobo or a bum. What I'm wondering, was there much of a difference, I thought there was a line between those people who were working stiff's and those who were hobos. Is that true?

R M: Sure, it's true. Yeah there's the old saying, 'You might call me a hobo but don't call me a bum.' You know. A hobo is a man that travels from place to place 'cause he tried to find a job. But a professional bum doesn't work. He's just a professional bum. And there's a lot of them ^{that} just professional bums that don't work. And but a hobo is as far as I know, ^{is} a man, he travels trying to find a job, trying to better himself. Pretty hard to do at that time, it was pretty tough all over, you know what I mean. And, for certain people. Certain people, if you, if you had an education or your folks had a big ranch or something like that and you had money, well that was different. But thousands ^s of people that were destitute. No way to better themselves. ^{Actually,} There wasn't that much work.

SAM: If you had no money, did people treat you different?

R M: Well, sometimes, yeah. Sometimes they did. It all depends where you were at. Now of course I lived in the west here most of the time and I never got treated too bad in the west. 'Cause there was always somebody ^{was} broke. Somebody that was hungry or somebody was looking for a job or something like that. And if you looked hard enough, as a rule, you could find a job. Course, when the Depression come along that was a little bit different situation. But it was pretty close to a depression when I left here. You know, it was pretty rough. Especially in the wintertime. But in the summer as a rule,

you could look around and find a job some place. But people didn't treat me too bad. I was treated pretty good. I worked when I could and when I could find a job. And if I didn't have a job, well then I, sure I bummed, I bummed something to eat. If you get hungry, you bum something to eat.

You ^{ain't} got any money, you got to do something. You got to live somehow. And a lot of times you'd, you could get some meat in the butcher shop, or you could get some bread or cake ~~or~~ doughnut ~~or~~ something from a baker shop. I'd ask him to do a little work for something to eat. A lot of times I went in bakery shops and washed dishes and pans and scrubbed floors and he'd give you a great big sack of toppings. They call them toppings, and I'd get a ~~big~~ big sack of toppings. Maybe ~~your~~ ^{your} buddy would go along and he would hit the butcher shops and grocery stores. Well, maybe you had a dime or 15¢ in your pocket, why, you'd go into a grocery store and ^{you'd} buy a nickel's worth of coffee, you see. Give me a nickel's worth of coffee, see. And then, you just tell the grocer, well, we're jungling up, you know. And all these towns had little jungles where you could have pots and pans and cans, and old frying pans or something to cook in. Other people ^{would} use it, but you clean it up and use it too. Well, then you'd maybe like I like sugar in my coffee, and I'd say, hey, would you mind pouring a little sugar in that coffee. All for a nickel, see. Well a guy, he wouldn't feel at that cheap, he'd take the scoop, you know, 'cause always had a barrel of sugar, you know, with a scoop in it. They didn't put it in sacks like they do now, you know. They ^{had} it in big barrels. Well they'd get it in maybe hundred pound sacks and they'd dump it in barrels, like a housewife would come in, she'd say, "Well I want five pounds of sugar." Well he'd put five pounds in the bag set it on the scale and weigh it. Five pounds of sugar. That's the way you got five pounds of sugar or ten pounds, ^{or} whatever you want. Oh he'd throw a little just throw it right in, just

throw the sugar right in with the coffee and then when we'd boil the coffee in the tin can we'd boil sugar, coffee and all. Well a lot of times you'd go in, say well, you ain't got much money, you know, give me a nickel's worth of potatoes. Hey, will you throw an onion in there? Oh yeah. He'd throw an onion in there. Well, then you go up to the butcher's shop. And butcher, "Can I help you?" "Oh yeah, I'd sure appreciate it if you could. We're My friend and I, ~~we~~ broke. We're trying to cook up something to eat down at the jungle. And pretty hungry and you got any odds and ends?" You know, bacon butts or something like that. Something to eat. "Well, let's see. Yeah, I got a couple of ham butts here and I got a few bacon ends." Maybe you'd get a good hearted butcher, he'd, and hadn't been hit too often he'd give you a pound or so of hamburger. "Well, can I scrub out your place for you or do some work for it?" "No," as a rule, they'd say, "that's alright kid. Go ahead." Okay. Once in a while you'd hit a cranky butcher, you know. Like a friend of mine, he went in a butcher shop and said, "told a butcher what his story was and he said, " You got any odds and ends?" And the old butcher, he was madder than hell you know, anyway, probably been bummed to death, and he "What do you mean, odds and ends?" And this lumberjack knew he wasn't going to get nothing and he said, "Oh hooves and horns and assholes." Just like that and then walked out.

SAM: When you were jungling up, what kind of setup was that? Was it a place to sleep?

R M: No, as a rule, it was outside of town, longside of a railroad track where there was water away from everybody. Where you could build a fire, where you could cook up... I got to piss.

SAM: So do I ...

(pause in tape)

R M: ...you ain't got nothing to depend on, you got no folks to depend on or anything, it's kind of rough. Now, of course, I had folks, but they weren't in a position to do much for me either you see, because they were just, my

father was a pretty good man. He was a contractor, but, he was limited too, what he could do. But, ^{hell}, times are good now. Never had it so good. You know. Things are high, we got to pay a lot of money for everything that we get. But if you're working you get a lot of money. You know what I mean. May not be worth anything but it's a lot of money. And...

SAM: When you were talking about the jungles, what would you do if it was raining and you had no shelter to sleep under?

R M: Well then you'd go in a boxcar. 'Cause your jungle is generally long side of a railroad track. And there's one thing that the Great Northern railroad was one railroad that they wouldn't kick you off. You know, you could ride a boxcar and they wouldn't kick you off. And old Jim Hill, you know, the guy that built the railroad, he said, "By god it was the people of this country," He says, "The floating population that built this railroad." And he said, "If they want to ride my train, they can." And he said, "Don't you kick nobody off of my train." You know, freight trains. And you could ride, now I never rode the Great Northern any further than from here to Fargo, North Dakota. That's as far as I ever rode Great Northern railroad. But I never had any trouble in any of them towns. As long as you rode a boxcar, freight train, they wouldn't bother you. You know, if you mind your p's and q's they never bothered you. You could ride 'em, trainmen were all good, nice people.

SAM: So the Great Northern was the train to ride if you could pick it?

R M: Yeah. Well the Northern Pacific was good too. Oh yeah. So was the Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul was a good railroad. Hell of a good railroad. They never bothered a man, you know if you, course, it was a lot of times when there was people that was crooked probably would rifle a car or something like that. And made it bad on a lot of people, but ordinary hobo wanting to go somewhere and I don't know, as far as I know, you could probably ride them today, but... You don't see many people riding trains ^{any more} today for the simple

reason there is that most of them guys that used to ride trains and was broke and destitute, they're either dead or they're on welfare or they're drawing Social Security or they've made a niche in life that they don't have to, and the younger generation, they're all car consci~~ous~~ous, you see?

SAM: Yeah.

R M: And if they ain't car consci~~ous~~ous, they're on welfare or something. And they ain't nobody riding trains like they used to ride. I imagine...

SAM: Was it easy to strike up a friendship or conversation with guys in the jungles?

R M: Oh, yeah. Always. Yeah, you'd meet people there that you'd never met before. And you're both in the same boat, you're both broke. And if you're not broke, why, you tell them you're broke anyway, because that's a good idea, never tell anybody you got any money. You see.

SAM: So you could strike up friendships pretty...

R M: Oh, absolutely, yeah. You'd talk about places you've been or where you want to go or the things that you've done and the other guy does the same thing. It's just like me talking to you. I'm just yap, yap, yap, you know. And once in a while you meet, well, as a rule when I worked in the woods here, I'd ^{enorm} up with maybe two or three lumberjacks and we'd all maybe go back east together, you see. But I never did go any farther ^{than} Minneapolis, that's as far east as I've been. And that's far enough for me. And then come back. And then of course I worked with Canada and Alberta and places like that. British Columbia, you know. And course, I could always get a job at that time because everything was horses and I used to drive, it didn't make any difference, two, four, six, or eight head of horses. Whatever I was doing, you know, ^{either} working in the woods or maybe in a dirt camp or something driving a Fresno or shaking a plow you know, or breaker-bottom, you know. When they built the Orofino railroad there, well, a lot of that was all done ~~with~~ horses and Fresno, shakerbottoms, someplaces

it wasn't dirt, it was just rock ^{that} you had to move. And it was pretty rugged. But it wasn't too bad, you had some good times and you had some bad times. But, heck, right now actually people got it best right now.

SAM: What did you think of as the good times?

R M: Well, the good times is when you have a job, you're making four dollars and fifty cents a day and four dollars and fifty cents would buy something. You figure out that a blue denim shirt that they want six, seven dollars for downtown only cost you thirty five cents then. And it was a better shirt. And you could buy, for a dollar and a half, you could buy one of the best pair of overalls, dollar and a half at the most. You see. A good pair of overalls.

SAM: What was Lewiston like when you hit there for mill work?

R M: Well, Lewiston was about the same as it is now. I don't see very much difference only that the pulp mill is there. And well, it was a pretty nice little town when I was here then. Only thing was, at that time they were dumping all their garbage over in the river. They had a dump right on the river, right by town. I don't know, I don't suppose it was ^{their} main dump but it was a dump. And it stunk, you could smell it uptown. So when I come back in '55, and I hadn't been here since '26, you see, I came back here in '55, I got into Lewiston at night and I could smell that pulp mill. I didn't know that pulp mill was there and I didn't and I was sitting in a resturant there, sitting in the Headquarters Cafe. You ever been in there? And I, "Jesus Christ, they still dumping the garbage into the river here?" And he said, "No that ain't the garbage dump you smell," he says, "that's the paper mill." "The paper mill." I said, "That smells just like the old dump they used to have here."

SAM: Where did the floating population come from? Who were they?

R M: Anybody and everybody. Anybody and everybody. As far as I know.

SAM: Were many of those people ones who had just come over to this country?

R M: No, no, I wouldn't know, well some, yeah, some. But, fact, we're all foreigners, come right down to it. You know. But, no, just like me. I left home, I left a home out of Sandpoint here and I said well, I think I'll go to Missoula. I hear, it's about fire season, I think I'll go up there, see if I can get a job fighting forest fires. 'Cause you could make, oh, I don't know, forty or fifty cents an hour ^{something like that,} fighting forest fires then. So I was of those population that was moving. And the forest fires are done, well, let's go take in the harvest. Or let's go somewhere else, do something else. Maybe there wasn't nothing else, the guy'd say, "Well I hear they want men on the extra gang." "Where's the extra gang?" "Oh, they got an extra gang maybe up in North Dakota somewhere, or maybe way up in eastern Montana. It might be any place. You go down and you get a job on extra gang. I've hired out right here in Spokane on extra gang.

SAM: Was there very many married men with the floating population?

R M: Oh, yeah. Yeah, lot of times man didn't have a job where he might have a home somewhere and had maybe a family. Didn't have anything for them to eat, there was no work, so he took a few clothes and started out looking for a job somewhere. And he found a job, whatever it was and ^{held} send money home. And that's the way it was. It ain't much, well, it's different today.

SAM: Seems like right now it's easier to have your family with you.

R M: Well, today, yeah. The thing is that everybody's got an automobile. They go somewhere and get something and even if they ain't got nothing, they can get welfare or they can get something, you know.

SAM: Did you stay in the army during the Depression?

R M: You better believe it I stayed in the army. I didn't get out til '36. And '36 I got out of the army. I started building that Golden Gate Bridge. So I went to work on the Golden Gate approach road to the bridge. And man, we got through with ~~the~~ approach road and they still had that tunnel to

put through, I don't know if you've ever been through that tunnel. Ever been through that tunnel?

SAM: Yeah.

R M: Well, I went to work in the tunnel then, being as I worked in the mines and had timbered. And I went to work there as an underground laborer. Five dollars and, five dollars and twenty cents, a shift. Five dollars and twenty cents was about, that's what they paid for underground labor. That was union, union wages. And then they had what they called a "jumbo" in there to hold, there was a form that they would jack up, a big steel form on a railroad track, and they would run that in there, and then they would pour concrete around this. Then after it was set, it was made so ^{that} they could let it down and move it ahead and then jack it back up again, you see. And ^{all} they did was they took out, they took the dirt out on both sides all the way around, like that. And they'd leave what they called a "crown", which was the main dirt they would leave in there, they just take the dirt out around like that, you see. Run this tunnel in there and run this jumbo in there and then they'd concrete it up. And after it was all concreted, then they'd come along and they'd, they would shoot this crown and had shovels in there loading it into trucks. And that way they'd move that dirt out in a hurry. When they wanted to. Well, so I was working there about, oh, a week, I guess, and they, and I heard the boss talking that they carpenters ^{that} they had, they couldn't hold a jumbo, it was, it was losing anywhere from an inch to an inch and three quarters and the state would only allow them three eights of an inch variation. And so if it dropped an inch or so, they had to chip that off and they had to smooth it and, you know, cost them a lot of money. I said, "Well, I don't see why they couldn't, can't hold that lousy jumbo." I said, "I timbered in Butte," and I said, "hold up a whole mountain and I never had any trouble. I want to hold that little jumbo up." And so he said, "What do you know about timber?" And I told him what I knew. And I said "I'll hold it and guarantee to hold it." So I got a job then as a foreman on one side

of the jumbo. We had two foremen, one on one side and one on the other. And each foreman had fourteen men, carpenters. And they had fourteen carpenters besides laborers to bring them material up, you see. To serve the carpenters. So then I helped timber that tunnel. ^{open} And of course I was getting carpenter's wages plus fifteen percent, I think it was, for graveyard shift or something like that. So then when I got through with the tunnel why, I, being ^{as} I belonged to the carpenters, I went and did carpenter work after that. And working underground there, it was nice and cool but, when I got out and it was a hundred ⁱⁿ the shade and I was working on some of them houses there in Marin county, boy, I just couldn't take that and the, and of course, that was in about '37, I guess, about that time. And things, things was still pretty tough, you know. I didn't like the carpenter boss looking down my neck all the time. It was too hot so I said "I'm going back to labor. I'm going to quit carpenter." And the boss said, "Oh, you're doing fine, Roy," he said, "I don't want you to quit." And I said, "Ahh, heck with it!" I said, "I'd sooner ^{take} less money and go back laboring." I said, "I ain't got nobody looking down my neck," I said, "I don't like anybody looking down my neck." So I did that. Things started picking up pretty good then, you know. Course that was the time Roosevelt was in and and jobs were picking up all over the country and everything was getting pretty much ship-shape, you know. People were finally able to go to work and make a living, you see. And the government helped the people. That's one thing. I think that was a wonderfulest president we ever had. 'Cause he put a lot of people to work that couldn't eat before. And I would show you men that were qualified men at their trade that hadn't worked ^{for} six, seven years. No work. And there was no welfare or nothing else and they were having one heck of a time, you see, in debt and everything else and and of course at that time, well then they had ^{the} CCC, WPA, and all them projects there. Everything helped, you know, to get the people back to earning a living and and putting the country back on

their feet. Oh, I^{ll} tell you, it was pretty rough. I don't know what it would be like now if things was to get that tough in California right now boy, it would be terrible, because there's an awful lot of people there now. And you see, when I come there, between Sausalito and ^{San Raphael} there was nothing but ranches, both sides of the highway. If you go up there now it's damn near chuc-a-bloc with businesses of some kind, a housing, big housing projects and well, just people, that's all.

SAM: What gets me is how rough it was in the '20's. You think of the Depression starting about 1929, yet from what you're telling me, I see the mid'20's was no easy time.

R M: That's right. But, you know, before, see, say around 1925, 24, 26 and on in there, it wasn't all that bad, you know, it was pretty good. People were working and everything was not too bad. But then of course, like in '29, why, ^{when} everything got real bad, there was no work, no nothing. But I was in the army and I was glad I was. And I stayed there. But when things started ^{so} picking up in '36, I was still in the army and I had, let's see, I had oh, I had another year or so to do. But I purchased my contract. See, you could purchase your contract at that time. I don't know, I don't think you can do it now. I'm not sure about it but then after so many years you could purchase your contract. Well, it cost me, after seven and a half years, it cost me sixty five dollars to purchase my contract.

SAM: Why did you want do it, 'cause things were looking better?

R M: Well, hell I was I was only first class private. Get thirty one dollars a month. And I was married. **I** got married, you see. And so I could go to work up here on the highway and make twenty eight dollars and fifty cents a week. That was a hell of a lot better, see. You figure it out, you was only getting four bits an hour.

SAM: Jungling up and riding the rails, that was before '29 too.

R M: Oh, way before, yeah. (Pause in tape)

R M: ...save no money.

SAM: Yeah.

R M: And there was a lot of them in the same shoes as I was in. But what the hell, is 's money. It ain't everything. I ain't got no money now and I don't want any, but I'm getting by. Because you can't take it with you. You can't take it with you. What the hell is money do me any good. One guy told me the other day, "I wish I had a million dollars." I said, "I wouldn't give a shit for a million dollars." What the hell is money?

SAM: You're right.

R M: A lot of people would make a lot of money and what the hell they got? They got heart trouble and they got something, afraid somebody's going to steal it off them. I ain't got nothing worth stealing. I figure, if I've got a roof over my head and a good bed to sleep in, something to eat and a comparatively healthy body...

(End of side D)

R M: ...it's cold and I go up to this big farm house and knock at the door. So, they asked me in. I didn't have to tell them I was cold and hungry, they could see that. And says, "Where you going?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I'm going to Priest River. Never been to Priest River before, see if I can get a job working in the woods, you know." And so they put me up for the night, gave me something to eat, gave me a breakfast in the morning. So I takes off again for Priest River. I get to Priest River, and I met some lumberjacks there. Course, I was pretty well dressed. I was cork shoes on and lumber jacket and what not. And so they took a thirty five or thirty, thirty five mile hike out of Priest River up to the logging camps. Well there was Beardsmore's camp and, called him "Old daddy Beardsmore", and then there was the Diamond Match camp, and had a few camps up there. And I don't know, probably two or three other companies up there as far as I

know. But you couldn't get a, we knew it was out of the question to get a job. It was just tight you know. Middle of the winter. But you had to go somewhere, you had to try. And the law was, in them days, that after three-thirty in the afternoon you never turned a man away from your camp. That was so a man wouldn't freeze to death, you know in the wintertime. As a rule, that was, that was a custom ^{amongst} the logging camps. They never, you know, you come in there in the afternoon and you go in and have supper, and the bull cook would give you a bed and blankets. And in the morning you got up and folded your blankets up, but them on your bed, and the bull cook would take the blankets away again, you see. If you didn't get a job. But the next morning, you went in, you had your breakfast with everybody and nobody asked you nothing. You just went like you's working there. You sit down, eat a good meal and make you up a good lunch, you see. We'd make ourselves up a good lunch and as a rule, all lumberjacks, as rule made up a lunch. Sometime ^{they} had hot meal^s sent out in the woods. They'd send it out on a "go-devil" and a team of horses, you know. They'd take a stumboat, go-devil, take hot meals out there to the lumberjacks. But otherwise, they made up lunches. And we'd make up a good lunch, 'cause we figured ^{it was} maybe fifteen miles or ten miles to the next logging camp. We'd take our time and get to that camp so'd we'd get there around four o'clock. Well, four o'clock is almost dark in the wintertime. So you get there and you go find the bull cook and get a bed and, I'm getting ahead of my story, but in the morning after you make your lunch and everything, you come back to the bunkhouse. The camp boss opens the door at eight o'clock and he says, "All out." And everybody goes to their job. Then you ask, "Everybody's out? You're the last man out?" ^{then} You ask him for a job. "Well, I'm sorry, young fellow, but I'm all filled up." That's generally the story that you get. So you thank him. You get your packsack and you know where the next camp is up the road. Maybe ten miles, maybe twelve miles, maybe fifteen

miles. And you go to that camp and you do the same thing. Alright, maybe you're thirty five, forty miles from Priest River. And you've taken in about three, four camps. Well on the way back, you stop at each one of them camps but you don't have to ask him for a job the next morning 'cause you know there's no job. But you're welcome to stay, have supper, have a bed, have breakfast, and then you get out of there and go to the next camp. Or maybe your socks are dirty or something or your shirt's dirty when you get in there in the afternoon, you know where the wash house is. You've been in the lumber camp before. You go in there and you wash your clothes and you hang your clothes up by the heater. By the next morning, all your socks are dry and then you got tow or three pairs of wool socks, maybe you got some underwear, your wool shirts, next morning they're all dry. So you put them in your packsack or you put them on, whatever you want on and go about your business. And they call that "camp inspecting." Yeah. "Where you going?" "Well, I'm going up on the Priest River, I'm going to do a little camp inspecting." You see. Alright, then you get back to Priest River, that's when the trouble starts. You get back to Priest River, you're ain't hungry, but you got no place to eat, or no place to sleep. So you look around all the goddamn places that you think that you might meet some lumberjack. ^{that} you know that might have come out of camp, that might have a couple of bucks. And you say, well, "Hi, Jim. Hey, you holding anything?" "Well, I got a couple dollars. I'll let you hold four bits." Fine, fine. So, you take four bits and you buy something to eat with it. Or if it's real cold, you do a little more looking around and see if you can't get a meal somewhere. You take the four bits and you buy a room. You see. Or, if it's in the summertime, why you don't worry about a room, you can sleep in the boxcar. 'Cause there's always a lot of empty boxcars sitting around these towns.

SAM: How long can you keep that up in Priest River?

R M: Not long. You just about two days in Priest River, then you'd better move. So you go to Newport, Washington. ^{You do the} Same thing, but Newport ain't got a bunch of lumber camps out of it. So you stay maybe overnight in Newport. Or maybe you don't stop there at all. You stop there and get something to eat. You keep walking. And I'm walking towards Spokane. And so then me and another guy, we chummed up and we walked and we walked and we walked. We got, oh, I don't know, Diamond Lake or Spirit Lake or one of them lakes down there. I don't remember which one it was. Little house off the road there and oh, we were getting tired. "Let's stop in and ask this guy if we can't bum for a cup of coffee or something." Got in there and there was an old fellow in there. He was getting the big sum of twenty two dollars a month pension. He was a Spanish-American war veteran. Old man. Oh, I don't know how old he was. ^{He WAS} Probably sixty five, seventy. "Come on in, come on in, come on in. Sit down and have a cup of coffee and just about to cook something to eat for supper. You fellows will eat, won't you?" "Oh, yeah. You bet." Sit there and eat and spend the night with him, we had breakfast next morning. We start walking. Well, we get just this side of Hilliard. You know where Hilliard's at? It's just this side of Spokane. It's a division point on Great, Great Northern. Yeah I think it's, yeah, division point on the Great Northern. Five miles from Spokane. Well, just before we get to Hilliard, oh, the snow was slushy and wet and just miserable, you know. Well we're walking along, walking, walking, walking. Finally, here come a car. I think it was a Buick touring car. And, oh, it was a young fellow of some kind. So we had our packsacks on our backs and we was walking down and we didn't flag him or nothing. "Want a ride?" "Yeah." We started to trot up there to get on to get a ride and he pulled off and left us. See. Ha, ha, ha. So about a half a mile further there was a road leveled off and was cattails and swamp, both sides of the road. I remember that. Got up there and here he was, off the road, head first, down into the cattails into this

swamp. Well, we didn't say a word, we just kept on walking. So we got into Hilliard and so we was both of us broke, no, I had five cents. And so this kid's name was Chester Von Knocley he was a Dutch kid from oh, up towards Ione or somewhere, I don't remember now where his home was but, I said, "Well Chet," I says, "I'll flip you to see who rides the streetcar to Spokane?" Five miles. He says, "Oh, let's both walk!" I said, "Okay." You could ride the steetcar from Hilliard to Spokane was five miles, for a nickel if you had a nickel. So we walked. We got into Spokane, it was late, well, it wasn't real late, it was probably five thirty, six o'clock, something like that. So Chet says, "Well, you go up on Stephens or Main and I'll go along Trent here and we'll see how many lumberjacks we know and see if anybody's holding, see if we can get enough for a room tonight and something to eat." I said "Okay." So we're looking around for some lumberjacks that we know and so I met a lumberjack I knew. And, "Sure, come on in. Let's eat." So we went into Jack Welch's resturant in Spokane. Hell of a nice man that run this resturant, big resturant. Went in there and had a nice meal. So then this friend, this lumberjack friend of mine, he, that I'd met, he give me a couple dollars. So I stashed that down my jeans and he said, "Hey," he said, "I got a couple tickets on the Chinaman over here," The Chinaman had a lottery joint in the alley behind Dempsey's poolhall, just off of Trent. And, "I want to see if I got anything on my ticket." So we went in there and, oh jeez, there was a lot of people in there. They was all poor people, you know. Nickel and dime stuff, you know, buying nickel and dime lottery tickets. So he says to me, he says, "You ever play lottery?" And I says, "No. Never played it, never seen it." And he showed me how to play it, little bit about it. He says, "Go ahead and play a ticket." he says. I says, "No, I'll save this two dollars." I says, "I'm figuring maybe go up on the Clearwater and try them camps up there and ^{this} two dollars will give me something to eat to go up there with." "Oh," he said, "Go ahead," he said, "I'll give you a

couple bucks, I'll give you a couple of dollars more if you lose it." So I played a ticket, ten cent ticket. And he said, "Oh, how you play it." "Oh," he said, "just mark ten spots anywhere." And so I marked ten numbers, put the ticket in, didn't get nothing. So the next time I played another ticket and the fourth ticket I had played, I caught eight of the ten spots. And I said, "Is this any good?" I said, "I got eight of them. I didn't get all ten." "Holy mackinaw," he said, "I guess it is good." So I went up to the Chinaman, the Chinaman looked it over you know, and he said, "Velly lucky, velly lucky, velly lucky." I say, "What do you mean, Velly lucky?" He said, "Eighty seven dollars and fifty cents." He gave me eighty seven dollars and fifty cents for that ten cent ticket. Whew, man, man, I was in heaven. So I said to my friend, I said, "Give you half of it." And he said, "No." He said, "I've been working all summer," he said, "I got three hundred and fifty dollars in the bank," he says, "I got enough to keep me all winter," he says, "you ain't got a dime," he says, "you'll need ^{this}." He says, "you keep it." I said, "Well, I think I should give you at least half of it." "No," he says, "you keep." I says, "Okay, thank you." So I said, "Well, I got to go find Chet now. He's my friend." So I went around looking for Chet and finally a guy said, "Boy, you're sure lucky that ^{he} was a guy that was down and out too." And he was in the Chinaman joint. "You're sure lucky with that Chinaman." He says, "Hey," he says, "there's a big gambling joint right up here," he says. "You might go up there," he says, and he says, "they got blackjack tables and everything in there." I said, "They have?" And he said, "Sure." "Well, I'll go up there and try a couple of dollars and if I don't win anything, well a couple of dollars won't hurt me too bad." Went up there and I hadn't, I was only going to play two dollars and all this money soaked away and I took two dollars ^{out} and you could play twenty five cents on a crap table, you know. That was the lowest you could play. Oh there was all kinds of people in there, people ^{that} had money, you know. Business people. So, by

golly, you know, I had won, I won the first two bit piece I put down there and I had won a dollar and seventy five cents all told. And I heard a bunch of noise behind me and somebody says, "A raid!" There was a raid, policemen coming in, you know. ^{They had} a big double door, fire doors, you know, big glass in them with a little wire in the doors. And the doors couldn't be opened real easy, they was fixed so that they had to pry then open to get them open. Well, everybody that was in there, there's a lot of rich people that was in there, you know, people had lots of money. And there was gambling, heavy, blackjack tables and poker tables and everything. Crap tables. And everybody got excited and started running right to the doors where all these policemen was and they was just, oh, there must have been two hundred people in there or maybe more. And hell, they was all crowding up ^{to} where the policemen was, trying to get out, you know. Hell, they wanted to get away, you know. But there was no way to get away, all the plainclothes, all these, bluecoats, you could see them through the glass and finally they got the door open. There was so many people there that I had plenty of time you know. And they just left their money laying on the tables. They just walked away, they were so excited they just walked away, and I just went around scooping up money, scooping up money. Just handfuls of it. And I went from table to table and I didn't get it all, I only got about, well I imagine I ^{most} got about twenty per cent of the money that was left on the table. I didn't even bother change. Just paper money. And cramming it and putting it in my pocket. And well, these guys running that table, they all had little boxes with chips, you know, and their money in there you know, cor pures ^U or whatever they call them, you know. Running these tables. And they had a little, they was all going out some little bit of a door that you couldn't see and it was a great big room, you know. Enormous, big room. And you know what they call tongue and groove ^{side} like on that door. Up and down. The walls were that way, you know. Made out of this T and G.

SAM: And there was little doors in there?

R M: You couldn't see it but there was a little door about that wide and it was, the whole thing opened up and when it closed it looked just like a solid wall. And all these guys knew how to open that thing. There must have been a certain way, ^{that} they opened it or something. And the last guy to get his money boxed, house man, you know, to go through there, I made a dive and slid my foot in there so that door couldn't close 'cause I didn't know ^{whether} it could be opened or not. And he looked at me like that and I was right behind him. Had all the money and, I could've got more money but I was afraid of missing out on that door. And ^I was watching them guys and the last one to leave, I was behind him. There was a stairway about that wide. Went right down between two buildings, and then turned like that and came out right behind the kitchen stove in a Chinese restaurant. Downstairs. ^And I walked out behind this restaurant and walked out and a big old ^Chinese cook looked at me you know, says he knew all these other guys, but he didn't know me. And here I walked out into the dining room. There was a great big counter, long counter there besides lots of tables, but I sit down at the counter and sit down there and waitress comes up and she says, "What'll you have?" And I said, "I'd like to have a cup of coffee and a piece of that pie." So she gave me a ^{pie} piece of pie and a cup of coffee. I laid two bits out there and she went and rang it up, fifteen cents. Ten cents for the pie, five cents for the coffee. See. I sit there and watch them load all them people up on on the paddy wagons and take them to jail. So after they had all them people loaded up and everything quieted down, I had another cup of coffee and then I walked out and had pockets just bulging with money. I ^{didn't} know how much I had. But I knew I went in there with eighty seven fifty, you see. I knew that's what I had when I went in there. So I had all this money. And I said, well, I got to find a room now. And it was about eleven thirty then. Night. I went way up towards NP depot, I don't remember the street now, but

it was the Cornell Hotel and so I went in this Cornell Hotel and it looked like a nice hotel. And it was away from the trashy part of town, you know what I mean. I didn't want to, I got away from the skid ^{road}, what they call the skid ^{road}, I got away from the skid ^{road} and I got up to that part of town which was mostly kind of a business houses in there, and there was a few restaurants and a few hotels. I never been up there, but it looked good to me, so I went in there and it said apartments for rent. So I went up there and I said, landlady come and I said, "You got sign down there," I said, "rooms and apartments." I said, "Do you have an apartment to rent?" And she said, "Yeah." "Could I look at it?" She says, "Sure." Gee, it was a nice apartment. Kitchen, a nice bedroom, but the bath and the lavatory, you had to go out in the hall and they was men's lavatory and women's. And so forth. I said, "How much?" She said, "Fifteen dollars a month." So I said, "That's fine." I said, "I'll take it for four months." I didn't know how much money I had but I knew I had, if I was going to stay here that winter I had to have a room for all winter. So I figured four months ought to be long enough. So I bought, I paid her sixty bucks. I went in the room, locked the door, and I started pulling money out, I started counting. I had seven hundred and forty ⁺ dollars all told, after paying for my room for four months. Seven hundred and forty bucks. Most money I ^{ever} had in my life. Never had that much money in my life, you know. So I took some change and put it in my pocket and unlaced my cork shoes and took the, folded this false tongue back and took all them fives, tens, and twenties, and folded them all up and put them between the tongue and ^{then} laced my shoes up, because I had sixteen inch ^{tops} on these shoes. I laced them ^{all} up good, ^{rawhide} laces and so I wasn't worried about losing any of that. And I kept, oh, I don't know, five or six dollars in change in my pocket. So then I looked all around, I couldn't find, I couldn't find Chet. Couldn't find him no place. So I said, well, I better go to bed. So I went back up and went to

bed. The next day I run into him and it was in the afternoon and he says, "Where in the heck have you been?" And I says, "Well, I," I said, "I been here and there and all over." "Well by golly," he said, "I got a room paid for for tonight." And he said, "I got four bits." And he said, "I've eat." So he says, "Here's four bits." He says, "You can go ahead and eat now." And I said "No, I've eat, Chet." I said, "I don't need it." "Oh," he said, "gee, that's good." So I said, "Well, I got a room too." I says. But in the meantime, before I met him, I went down to the Washington Groceries, one of the biggest grocery stores, I think, in Spokane. It's still operating, but I don't think they call it the Washington Grocery now, but it's still operating. It's still a big market. I went in there and I bought a hundred and twenty-five dollars worth of food. And they delivered at that time. I told them what apartment and where to deliver. Well, man, when I brought all that food up there that I'd ordered, there was a pile in the kitchen there, must have been a half a ton. Great big enormous pile, you know. Canned stuff, bacon, eggs, ham, you know, mostly stuff that would keep, 'cause I didn't have no refrigerator, they didn't have refrigerator.

SAM: You went into the store and picked out everything you wanted?

R M: Yeah. I made a list of everything I wanted. So many pounds of beans, so many cans of corn, so many peas, so many this and that and, oh, I took old Chet up there and his eyes get about that big. "My god," he said, "how did you?" I had to tell him the story.

SAM: You didn't tell him til you got him up there?

R M: Yeah, I told him. He couldn't believe it. So I says, "Go ahead and get your money back out of that room." He says, "I will." I think he only paid six bits for it. He told the guy he ^{got} a job and had to leave town. So he got his money back. So then I went up and we stayed there all winter, Chet and I in Spokane. And we dressed pretty good. We had some pretty fair clothes. And we dressed pretty good. Wasn't dressed like lumberjacks. We had a good

^{suit} of clothes. And we both had good overcoats because it was cold. And what we did, we went up to, I think it was a Salvation Army and got us a good overcoat a piece. We had, we already had a suit a piece. We ^{got} a good overcoat a piece. Both of us wore hats in them days. And a lumberjack was kind of frowned on wearing a cap in them days, you know. If you wore a cap, they didn't figure you was a lumberjack. They all wore hats. And...

SAM: What's the difference between a cap and a hat here?

R M: Well, they figured you was a, they didn't figure you was a lumberjack if you wore a cap.

SAM: Cap like the kind you're wearing?

R M: Yeah. And you hardly ever seen a lumberjack that didn't wear a hat.

SAM: What kind of hat?

R M: Well, lot of them wore black hats. Something like an Indian would wear. You seen Indians with just common, ordinary black hat?

SAM: Broad brimmed?

R M: Yeah. Not cowboy style, but about like ^{what} an Indian would wear. Mostly black. Course, lumberjacks did dress up and wear conventional hats, you know, one with a crease in the middle or something like that, if they were in town. But, lumberjack clothes, lumberjacks, they didn't hardly ever wear a cap.

SAM: So you had, you didn't dress like lumberjacks?

R M: I did yeah. I wore hats, yeah. We both wore hats...

(End of side E)

R M: ...been there for about, oh, month and a half. And oh, it was cold one night, you know and no heat in our apartment, you had to open your door. They had a great big heater in the hallway, you see. Had a gas heater, but it was a big one in the hallway. And we had gas in ^{our} apartment to cook with but we never use it to heat with 'cause we were afraid might get suffocated or something like that. So if it was coal we'd leave the, ^{we could} sleep at night, we had plenty of blankets on our bed, she gave us plenty of blankets.

It was a completely furnished apartment, blankets and everything. So anyhow, one of us would jump out of bed in the morning, you know, cold, it was pretty cold. Spokane can get miserable in the winter, you know. And jump out of bed, put the percolator on, put the coffee on and jump back in bed ^{again} cause it was cold and leave the door open about that much. Hot air would come in there and warm that apartment up. Well, you know how it is when it's cold, you got the old percolator starts perking, you can smell that coffee cooking, you know. And some good-looking gal came in there and stuck her head in there and "U-m-m-m, that coffee smells good." And me and old Chet was in bed, you know, we just look out and see her, you know. "Yeah, you want some? Come on in and get it." "By god, yeah, I'll have some of that coffee, that smells real good." So Chet and I, we got out of bed by then, dressed and went out. Three of us sit down, enjoyed a good cup of coffee. So course, like I say, we'd dressed pretty good and at night we'd either go to a show or something. We didn't spend any money. You know, it only cost you ten, fifteen cents to go to a theater. We took in a show and probably bum around town. We'd never get in til twelve, one o'clock in the morning, you know. This gal said, "What do you guys do, anyway?" Chet said, "We don't do nothing," says, "we're lumberjacks." "Lumberjacks!" "That's what we are, we're lumberjacks." She said, "Oh, I don't believe it." "Yeah, that's what we are." Chet reached in there and he said, "What the hell do you think we keep these for?" and showed her a pair of cork shoes with the corks in them you know, setting back in the closet. "Well, for crying out loud." she said. She went out and let a scream out of her. I knew they had a big reception hall of some kind down at the end of the hall there. We never, I could always hear chatter coming from there once in a while you know. But, you know, the doors were all closed. Pretty soon the landlady come in. "For Christ's sake," she said, "these two guys are lumberjacks." And the landlady said, "Is that what you two guys are, lumberjacks?"

And I said, "Yeah. Why?" "Well for crying out loud," she said, "we been quiet here for over a month. We thought ^{that} you were plainclothesmen." Thought we's detectives, because we never come in til one, two o'clock in the morning. And we didn't fool around, you know. They had about eight girls working there. Prostitutes. And here they thought we's plainclothesmen and they was real quiet about everything while we ^{WAS} around, see. Well that was a kick. So after that, it was in the wintertime, after that, we'd open the door in the morning, there was always some gal different, as a rule, different gal every morning, "Come on in. Can you cook?" "Yeah" "Well if you want to eat, you got to do the cooking." We'd have a different cook every morning cook our breakfast. And things was that tough that they was glad to cook a meal for something to eat. 'Cause you figure out that them gals was only getting two dollars for a trick and as tight as money was, they was few and far between, you know what I mean. And we spent all winter there, had a good winter. So...

SAM: Did you share your money with Chet that winter? Did you give him what he needed?

R M: Yeah. We ate and...

SAM: It was like it was his money too?

R M: Oh, we never, neither one of us ever drank but if we felt like going and eating, we'd eat. And if he wanted, he said, "Well, I need some cigarette." "Okay, here's some money?" And we never spent any money just to eat, go see a show, go down and play pool, something like that.

SAM: Nowadays, you just don't give your money to somebody else, but he was your friend, so you felt that he should live good too.

R M: We both ^{of us} lived, well, like we both owned the money, but neither one of us drank and we didn't, well I did a little gambling after that, not very much. About twice, a couple little places, and both times I was lucky, didn't win much money. I think I won forty five dollars one time and seventy five dollars

or so another time and the rest of the winter I just lived on what I had. But what I did, I went and put it in the bank, you see. Put it in the bank. And whenever I needed, say I needed twenty bucks, I'd go draw twenty bucks out. Well twenty dollars would last us for, him and I for what money we maybe spent, probably last us for a couple of weeks or a week.

SAM: Can you tell me a little of what you remember those girls being like?

R M: Well they were...

SAM: I mean what kind of people were they?

R M: Pretty good. Pretty good. Pretty good. I mean they wasn't about, they were good, if you got to know them they were good people. Like one night, it was cold. It was miserable. So a lumberjack, a lot of lumberjacks, they'll come in town and they just gloriously drunk, they get so drunk, you know, just like anybody else, and throw their money away, actually. And if they're not careful and they got a lot of money on them people will rob them out of it or you know. And so anyway, I came up there one night and there was a girl standing there by the stove trying to get warm and some big lumberjack, he was a Swede, standing there and he was chewing Copenhagen. And he was slobbering all over himself, chewing Copenhagen and he was trying to make time with this gal, you know. And he reached in his pocket to get his Copenhagen and out dropped a couple bills. And he didn't even know he dropped them he was so drunk, he didn't even probably know he had it. So I just put my foot on it. Well this gal seen me put my foot on it, you know. So she got him to go in the back room with her, the parlor or somewhere and so the minute they was gone, I just reached down and picked it up. I didn't know what it was. It was two twenties. So I just stuck it in my pocket. I went to the room. In about two minutes, that Swede, you could have heard him a block away. He was squealing bloody murder. And somebody robbed him, so anyway, the landlady got rid of him. And 'cause he was pretty drunk. Pretty soon somebody knocked on the door, bang, bang, bang. Opened it, "Hi. How

much did you put your foot on?" I said, "Well, I'll split it with you. There's forty bucks." (laughs) She said, "Oh, hell, that Swede had seven or eight hundred bucks on him. But he squealed like he'd lost his whole fortune." That's the way things was in them days. Oh, boy.

SAM: That sounds like a once in a lifetime deal. To find money like that.

R M: Yeah. I never run into anything like that again. Come in town with a nickel.

SAM: You stayed there all winter and then went back to camp or what?

R M: Yeah, went back to work in the logging camp.

SAM: What year was that?

R M: About 1925 I think, about 1925, somewhere along in there.

SAM: Do you think it was easier being a kid?

R M: Yeah, I think so. Yeah, well, yeah. I'd say that a kid had a better chance.

But he also had to have a litte ingenuity too. You know, you had to, you had to be able to work and to know what you were doing and where you were going and how to get there. You see. I was pretty lucky, though, I never did, I never did have the police bother me. One time. One time I had the police pick me up and and they took, interogated me and, "What do you do?" And I said, "I don't do nothing." And he said, "Well, we see you over here all the time over in Dempsey's and Erlich's and what-not and, we never see you bumming. And he said, "What do yo do?" And I said, "Well I work in the woods when there's work to be had. But," I said, "right now," I said, "I'm living here in town. I have an apartment." So they turned me ^olose. That's all there was to it. Nothing they could do. I hadn't done nothing wrong, you know. But Spokane was a pretty good town, but boy, it's sure a different town now. I go down there and places ^{that} I used to stay and, boy, they're closed up, boarded up. Even the Spokhoma Hotel which was a pretty good sized hotel at one time. It's all boarded up. And empty. And it was a pretty good hotel. And then there was Dempsey's poolhall, one of the

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biggest poolhalls in Spokane. Then they had [redacted] games and they had oh, a lot of pool tables, snooker tables, billiard tables. They had a nice resturant in there, they had a nice cigar counter in there. They also had rooms upstairs, nice rooms, you know, real nice place. And then of course they had the Pastime, which was kind of a dump, I'd call it a kind of a, well, it was a big poolhall, but compared to Dempsey's it was a dump. And then they had another one...

SAM: Why was it a dump?

R M: Well, it was small, it was congested, it was not as clean, it wasn't, it was just kind of a rundown place. But if a guy was broke, he could come in there and sit on a bench and it was warm in there in the winter and many a guy sit on them benches all night long, and go to sleep, you know. No place to go. Well then, of course, there was one winter that I was there and if you couldn't find a place to sleep, and you couldn't make out, if you couldn't make you know, what I call making out, if you couldn't raise the price of a room, you could go over to old Schwatz's Brewery, which was on the east end of Spokane, out towards Division, up past Division. And it was empty. It had been empty all during Prohibition, I guess. I don't know when it, I imagine it was right after Prohibition. But there was no windows in it or anything, but up on the second or third floor, somebody had brought up a lot of straw, I guess it was straw. It was either straw or hops or something, but it was, I think it was straw. And you could go up there and sleep in the straw. But that was pretty cold in the winter time too, but, it was better than nothing. You know, but if you're a lumberjack, ordinarily you dressed pretty well, you generally have a good coat, good wool clothes and so forth. You could burrow down into the straw and sleep pretty good. But then I was talking to a guy later on, that was during the Depression after '29, told me that they opened that up for the destitute, the bums, I think they called it oh,

Debunk or something Hotel. I don't remember what they called it but they had a name for it. And the bakeries would deliver all their day old bread and different organizations, I guess, kicked in and brought in potatoes and meat and stuff like that and they, I think they fed a lot of people there. People that were down and out, you know.

SAM: They slept there too?

R M: I think some of them did, yeah because it was pretty good size place. It was old, it was Schwatz's old brewery.

SAM: It seems to me being a young person on the road that a young person would have certain advantages because people...

R M: I couldn't do it now.

SAM: Like, you were a teenager when some of this was happening to you. I think people feel more for a young person than for some one who was thirty five or forty.

R M: Some of them do, some of them don't. Some of them do, some of them don't. One time, I'll tell you how that happened is, now if I'm in lumberjack country with lumberjacks, I'll feel at ease, 'cause at one time or another, I don't care who the lumberjack is, at one time or another he has seen bad times. You see. And you ask him, "Are you holding?" or, "Jesus Christ, I'm sure hungry, I could sure eat. Are you holding anything?" And he either says yes or no. You may not know him, probably don't even know the guy, but you don't feel too ill of ease asking him. But to ask a businessman or a man, possibly of means that is anything but a lumberjack, you feel out of place, but sometimes you have to do it. Like one time I was up in Miles City, Montana. And it was in the spring of the year, it was nice weather. But I was hungry and I was broke and I was just a kid. It was in the morning. This fellow walking down the street, well-dressed, might have been a banker or a lawyer or I don't know who he was. And so, I put the bum on him. So he said, "Yeah, I'm going in to eat breakfast in this restaurant. Come in with

me." So I, fine, I wanted something to eat. So, it was a nice restaurant, you know. Quite a few people sitting down there eating, you know."Give this bum something to eat."he says. "Not over two bits." And the way he said it and pointed his finger at me, you know, and oh, I burned up you know. And I said,"Mister, you take that two bits and ^{right} save it." I said,"You probably going to need it someday pretty bad." And I said,"I wouldn't take all your abuse," I said,"for anything to eat off of you. I'd sooner go hungry." I told him. I belted it ^{right} out in front of him, you know, and I told that son of a bitch what I thought of him. For you know, for fucking me up in front of people. And there was some guy sitting down, sitting down there and he says,"Hey kid, come over here," He said,"To hell with that guy." he said. "Eat anything you want." Just like that. So I sit down there and I had a stack of hotcakes and a side of ham, cup of coffee. There."Come over here young fellow,"he says."I'll feed you any damn thing you want. Sit down." He told the cook, he said,"Give this kid any damn thing he wants." Just like that. Now that's the kind of people you meet, you see. You see, he tried to make an asshole out of me, I made an asshole out of him. And oh boy, he didn't eat breakfast either. He walked right out. He was going to eat. I told him off,told him,"You might need that two bits worse than me," I says,"you keep it, 'cause," I said,"I wouldn't take all your abuse for two bits."(Laughs) But, once in a while, you meet people like that. I'd sooner have a guy say nope. That's fine, that's good. You tell a guy you're broke and could he help him out for a bite to eat. Guy'says,"Nope. Can't do it." "Thank you! That's what I say,"Thank you, sir." I don't feel bad about it. But you take a professional bum that never works, he won't bum a man with a pair of glasses. He won't bum a man with a moustache. Don't tell me why. But he won't do it. That's a known fact.

SAM: That sounds like superstition to me.

R M: Nope. It ain't. It works. It works. Not all the time, not a hundred per

cent. But ~~at~~ that time it did, cause there wasn't too many men wearing, well, there was quite a few men wearing moustaches, what not, but that's what the professionals would tell you. Now, I didn't know it cause I never was a professional. And I never was out of work long enough, oh, I was out of work quite a while, but I mean, I always found different ways of getting something to eat, I'd, I'd go in a grocery store, ask them if I couldn't do some work for a bite to eat or a restaurant or a butcher shop or bakery or something like that. One time, one time we got into Gillette, Wyoming. Me and another guy. And guy just met on the train. He was a Cockney Englishman. And we got put off a train, we's coming from Alliance, Nebraska and we was going to Gillette, Wyoming, we was going on through to, we was going on through to, originally we was going on through to Billings, Montana. That's quite a ways from Alliance. You go on through Gillette and then over to Cheyenne and then over to Billings. It's a long way. But, that was quite a trip. And so I had been working in a hay field two and a half a day and I worked for this guy and I chummed up with another kid, just about my age. Oh, we got into, we got into Alliance and he said, "Let's go over to my sister's house." And I said alright. We went over to his sister's house and so, they had a birthday party or something and they had some home-made beer, and we all got tanked up on beer. And I felt myself slipping, you know. And I had this check that this farmer'd give me, he paid me off in a check, 'cause he wouldn't take me to town. I had to walk to town. So I felt myself slipping drinking this beer you know, and I wasn't a drinking person and about half a dozen glasses of beer and I ^{was} get^{ting} drunk. And I felt myself slipping. And I had these bib overalls, and you know they got a pencil hole. I rolled that check up and stuck it down the pencil hole. So I woke up the next morning, no check, no money, no nothing so, I grabbed a freight. And that was quite an experience. That was on the CB and Q railroad, don't, yeah, I think it was the CB and Q. ~~Got~~ there. Guy says, "You

can't rid this train out." He said, "You have to get on the west end of town," he said, "about a mile." And he said, "There's a big grade." And he says, "them trains," he said, "never make over about five, six miles an hour and just getting over that grade." He said that ain't a real long grade, he said, they ^{don't} need a helper, they won't go very fast, they go pretty slow and he said, "You grab the train there." So I walked out of town and walked up to this grade. And waiting and waiting, and I heard the engine highballing out of the yards. Well, got to this grade and so it kept slowing down, slowing down, slowing down. You know ^{be} cause it was a big grade you know. And the reason for getting the train there was that they had a bad bull, that would kick you off the trains down there in the yards in in the main yard. So the guy says, "You catch it on the hill up there." He says, "I think you'll be alright." But I didn't know that that bull would ride that doggone train. And he'd get off on the hill. Well, I got on this and it was as dark as the inside of a cow. And I got on this doggone boxcar and no way to get inside nowhere because it was night and the train was traveling. So I climbed up on top and then at the first stop, look for a place to ride. ^{be} Cause all the west bounds are empty so that you find plenty empty cars. I get up on top of this car, and I'm sitting there, it's as black as the inside of a cow and I says to myself, talking out loud, "Well, by golly, I made it. I'm safe now." And about that time, baloomey!, something hit me right across the shoulder, hit me across the shoulder with a club or a .45 or something and cussed me and, "Get off of this train." So I got off and I let about five or six cars go by and I grabbed the next car. And instead of getting on top, I rode in between the cars hanging on the brake rod, you know the deal that you turn the brakes with that the ^{shaft} goes up. I was standing on the coupler. It was dark at night, I knew he couldn't see me. So I'm real quiet. I ride there oh, forty, fifty miles I finally come to some little old place and they stop, yeah, I think it

was to go in for siding for some other train. So then, but any way, I met this Cockney Englishman, and so we get about twenty miles from Gillette, Wyoming. Nice beautiful day. And course, I'm hungry, like I always am. Young person's always hungry, you know. So we're talking about something to eat. So I found out I didn't have any money. I didn't know what I'd done with the check or anything, and I didn't know if I'd spent it or somebody took it or I lost it. I just forget it, you know.

So, I forgot about money and, About twenty miles... (End of Side F).

"If I had any money, I'd be paying my way." I says. "Get off." "Alright." Got off. And so I says to the Cockney, I don't know how far it is to Gillette. And he says, "Twenty miles." So we started walk^{ing} down the track and highway's on the right hand side of the railroad, but it wasn't a real highway, it was just two tracks going down through the the mud is all it was. It wasn't mud, ^{but} it was just dust and wasn't even a graded, a good graded road. I suppose it's a highway today. It was called a highway then, but this road coming up through here's just as good. Well anyway, pretty soon, a fast train come along and run through a whole flock of sage hens. Sage hens had been on the railroad tracks. They ^{were} either beating grain that had dropped out of some cars that had been along or they were up picking up gravel to digest whatever they'd been eating, you know, possibly. Well, we seen these sage hens fly up when this fast train went by, passenger train, coming this way. We was going that way. So, by golly, one of them birds must have hit into the train and broke a wing. So I finally run it down, ^{or} ^{it} rock, you know. It was a big bird, must've weighed four pounds, three of four ^{five} pounds, something like that. Big bird. Big as a great big chibken. Didn't even have a jackknife. What are we going to clean it with? I don't know. So, walking down the track, and finally I found where the rail had been wore, a sliver had, a flange of the rail had worked a sliver, a sharp sliver off the side

of the rail. And I said, this will do. It's sharp as a razor, almost. Kind of jagged. So I cleaned the bird and just took it's entrails out. Carried this bird, and we'd seen a little brush way down the line. Went down there and it was a little bit of a creek, very small creek. The water looked nice, clear. So we washed the bird out, ^{we} dug into the side of the bank and got some clay and covered it feathers and all and made us a fire and ^{we} roasted it. And that was pretty good. We ate that bird. Then we proceeded to walk twenty miles. And we walked twenty miles, and finally we got to Gillette. So we was late so we stayed in a boxcar that night. So the next morning, we didn't get up too soon, but the sun was shining nice, a beautiful day. So we asked the station engineer, when will ^{there be} another freight be through? And he said, well, they'll be one through here about eleven o'clock. Good we'll get that. Gillette was just a little bit of town at that time. Now it's a pretty good sized burg. Probably big as Moscow now. That time it, maybe bigger. At that time, just a little bit of a town. So the Cockney said, "Blimey, is that," he said, "a woman washing windows?" Two story, nice two story house. Sure enough, woman up in the second story window, she's just washing, reaching out there washing that window, you know. "He says, "I'm going up," he says, "see if I can get us something to eat." I said go ahead! We hadn't et no breakfast yet anyhow, but I wasn't terribly hungry 'cause that chicken did pretty good for us the day before. So he went up there and he asked that woman for something to eat, and told her, said, "I got a friend down there that's hungry too." And she said, "Well you wait right there," she says, "I'll fix you some sandwiches. I got couple chunks of cake here." So we waited there. So she fixed up a great big sack of sandwiches, cake and everything and ^{she} dropped it out the second story window and he caught it. So we come back and we're sitting there on a ^{tie bar} waiting for a train and he says, "You know, choppy," he said, "I've heard of knock outs and poke outs but," he said, "this is the first bloody, blooming dropout," he

said, "I ever got." (laughs) So anyway, we started for Sheridan, Wyoming. So anyway, I got on this train and we stopped in some other little town in and the Cockney, he was going out and bum something to eat, or something, I don't remember what it was. The train stopped there for a half an hour, I think it was a place where the train crew could eat, you know. Stop there just for a half an hour. So anyway, him and I got separated and he got in a different car or something. I got in a car, and so anyway, that night I was looking for him and I didn't find him and I thought, he's a nice guy to talk to. So quite a ways yet, you know, to Sheridan, Wyoming. And, oh train'd ramble on pretty well all night, you know. I was in this car, I thought I was by myself. So, wake up in the morning and somebody opened the door, you know. And it was a colored guy. He'd open the door and he'd been in the same boxcar I was in. And so he said, "Monin', monin' man, monin'" I said, "Good morning. Where we at?" "Oh," he said, "I don't know," he said. "I think we's in So and So." some little town. He had a schedule, you know road map. And so it was another place we were going to lay over there for a half hour. And it was in the morning, early. So he said, "We're going to be here for a half hour," he said, "I got two bits," he said, "will you run up and get a dozen eggs?" And he said, "While you're gone, he said, I'll get a can of some water and a fire going here and we'll boil up a dozen eggs. to eat." I said, alright. So I hot footed it up, I was running all the way uptown went in the grocery store and bought a dozen eggs, I think it was only fifteen cents a dozen. And come back and we just put the whole sack of eggs in this can and just about got them hard boiled and the old train said, Toot, toot, we just picked ^{up} the can and set it in the car and we got in the car and then we ~~ate~~ a half a dozen eggs a piece. So anyway, we gets into Sheridan. It's either Sheridan or Cheyenne, I don't remember which now. But anyway we got into Wyoming in this division point. And oh, man cinders off of them steam pots, you know. They get you all dirty. I had cinders in

my ears and in my eyes and my clothes was all black and, I figured well I'll go down to the jungle and jungle up, cause every one of them towns has got a jungle and I knew that. So I bummed a bar of soap of ^fa grocery store. And big bar of Fel's Napa, you could get a bar for about a nickel or less, you know. I bummed him out of a bar of soap. Go down there and wash up all my clothes. Nice day. Started going through them doggone overalls and damned if I didn't find that check for seventy five bucks, rolled up in ^{at} that pencil hole. Goddamn, I said, how I got to travel two hundred and some odd miles ^{back} to get that check cashed I suppose, you know. So I washed all my clothes and went uptown and so I went in the bank and asked them, I said, told them what happened and so he said, well we don't know them people, we can't cash that check. I said can you send them a wire or phone them or something? Yeah, phone the bank. ^{Over where in Nebraska} Alliance ^{Nebraska}. But he said, cost you a dollar and something cents. Okay, call them up. They called them up and said yep, the check was good. So, I got the check cashed. Oh, man, I felt better then. I had clean clothes, I could go into a restaurant ^{then} and have something to eat. And I met this colored boy downtown and, that'd bought the eggs. And I didn't tell him nothing. I didn't tell him about the sevanty five bucks. I told him I had a couple dollars stashed away, see. I think I had five or six dollars in my hand, I said this is what I got. I had that stashed away and I said, now, I can go in and eat. I took him in and fed him a good meal, you know. Him and I ^{we} grabbed a freight. We go to Billings, Montana. Well, Billings is a big town too, you know, big pretty good size city. Well, I was going west, yeah I think he was going west too. But anyway, he went one way, I went the other. I fed him in Billings and I give him the price of a room and breakfast next morning. I think I split the money with him that I had in my hand. Well, you know, that's the first colord guy I ever helped because a colored guy helped me one time and so I thought there's nothing to do but, that guy helped me and I'll help him.

So I fed that night and fed him next morning and give him the price of a room. I didn't see him no more. So, about two years went by and I ^{went} back here trying to work in the woods and I didn't do so good. So guys says to me he says, "Hey," he said, "Let's go to Cliellam." I don't know if you know where Cliellam is.

SAM: Yeah.

R M: He said, I think we can go to work for the Cliellam Lumber Company. I said alright, let's go. So broke again. No money, you know. It was a couple of years later. So anyway we got into Pasco, we got something to eat in Pasco, and met a couple of lumberjacks I knew. And that was a funny deal too, you know. I knew these two lumberjacks, not real well, but I ~~id~~ met them before. I think it was in somewhere along the line. So they were both huskies, both of them weighed better than two hundred pounds a piece. Course they knew me, you know, had lumberjack clothes on so I hung the rigging on them. "Sure, sure, lad," he said, "come with us. We're just going to go in and eat here." Great big nice Chinese resturant. So I was going to eat just a stack of hotcakes, he went oh, no, no, no, I won't think of that. He said, "You got to have ham and eggs and a side **of** hotcakes." Fine, stack of hotcakes, side of ham and eggs, coffee and. I said gee them guys are real, there's lumberjacks for you. You know, they think of, they think of the other guy too. So they were kind of munching along, taking it real easy eating, you know, and christ, I went through them ham and eggs and hotcakes in nothing flat, 'cause I was hungry. And they said, "Where you going lad?" "Well, I'm going to Cliellam and see if I can't go to work ^{up there} for the lumber company up there." "Yeah," he said, "that's where we're going too." He said, "You go down to the yard," he said. "We'll meet you there." I says okay thank. So he told the Chinaman, that's on us, we'll take care of it. So I'm walking down and it's a long ways and this resturant down to Pasco and there ain't very many buildings, there is for maybe two blocks and then it's sand

and nothing til you get to the railroad which is about a quarter of a mile I guess. At that time, nothing, sand. Sagebrush and road. I get about a block and a half, two blocks down the street and I heard a bunch of ky-yiin! And here there was two Chinamen and one had a cleaver and the other one had a fork or something in his hand and they was chasing these two lumberjacks and going like a bat out of hell down the street. And the first alley they come to, the lumberjacks turned ⁱⁿ the alley. And these two Chinamen right after them. And boom, boom, boom, they hit those two Chinamen and knocked them flat, you know and then just walked on down to the railroad tracks. They just cold-cocked them Chinamen, ^{just} like that, boom, boom. And they were taking it out on mileage. But they wouldn't tell me. I thought they had money. Well, that was a funny deal. ^{So} then, got into Yakima, Yakima's a pretty good size city. Got into Yakima and I'm hungry again. And it was night. All day on that freight you know, and by night I was hungry and, oh it was a beautiful evening. Couples were strolling up on down the streets on the outskirts of Yakima, you know. Well, the east end of Yakima had a lot of colored people living there. So I wasn't paying attention to nobody, I was figuring on going downtown and see if there was anybody I knew down there and maybe rustle up something to eat, a cup of coffee or something. Walking down the street and there's quite a few couples pass me there, ^{they're} just strolling, you know, strolling down the street. More of a, kind of a residential district. And so finally this one couple stopped and this colored fellow said, "Hey, don't you remember me?" I looked up. No. All dressed up like a million dollars, you know. He said, "You remember we had eggs together one time?" And he said, "You had a couple dollars and you got me a room, you fed me in Billings." Oh, yeah. I said I was sure I wouldn't recognize him. "What are you doing?" I said, "Just got off of that freight and about seventy others were getting off with me." He says, "You hungry?" "Sure am." "Come with me?" Went up to his house, and boy, got a

nice meal. And he had a place of business there and, in Yakima. He was running a speakeasy. And maybe something else too, I don't know. Nothing to do, ^{but} had to go up there, I didn't drink, but I was offered a drink, but I didn't drink. They had dancing and an orchestra up there and everything. So then, I stayed up to his house that night. So the next day I took off for the Lumber camps and grab a train and all to go to Cliellam. He gave me twenty bucks. That was quite a quite a sashay but see, that's what it payed, you know, ^{some} times you'd meet a guy that you'd helped and they remember. But that's the way things were in them days. I don't know how they are today. I wouldn't want to go back to them days. Now I don't have to bum anybody. Don't have much but every month I get a couple dollars Social Security.

SAM: Sounds like you made it a principle not to drink in those days.

R M: I didn't drink, no, didn't drink.

SAM: Is there any special reason why you didn't?

R M: I just didn't care for it, you know. I have had a few drinks, in the winter time, you know, like it was cold, I'd take a hot glass of water and fill the cup up say half full of boiling water and put a little sugar in it and a shot of pure alcohol. Stir it and drink that for, you know, a hot toddy or something like that when it was cold. Maybe about twice or three times in my life, I had that. But I made up for it in later years.

SAM: That winter that you were in Spokane and you had all that money, did you have any of it left in the spring?

R M: No, I just came out about even.

SAM: 'Cause you lived pretty high off the hog.

R M: Yeah, but, you know, I didn't throw any money away, but, by golly, I'll tell you, five or six hundred dollars, seven hundred dollars at that time was a lot of money. But both of us lived all winter. And we lived good. We could play a dozen games of pool a day if we wanted to or two dozen.

Take in all the show. We never missed a show all winter. All the way from a ten cent show to the **Pantages** Theater. They had the **Pantages** there then. I don't know if you knew where the **Pantages**, I don't know...

SAM: What kind of shows was there?

R M: Well, I think the **Pantages** was the biggest show in showhouse, well, as far as I knew,...

SAM: Was it live?

R M: Yeah, they had vaudeville, plus pictures plus vaudeville. And they had some good talent there. **G**ood singers, opera singers and all that stuff, you know. It was good. And most of the people that stayed, that made, made the tours, you know of the theaters, that, well, the **Cour'd'Alene** hotel was the hotel that most of the people stayed, it kind of catered to the showpeople, a good deal. And I stayed there too. But it was a pretty fair hotel. It wasn't too awfully expensive, but it was nice. It was a nice hotel. Course, it couldn't compare to the Davenport or anything like that, but for a small, it wasn't such an awful big hotel, but it was real nice. Nicely kept. Clean and and it was in a part of town there that was pretty good part of town, you know. Nice place.

SAM: Did you find much difference in the coast than from the country over here?

R M: Oh, yeah. Lots. Lot of difference. Yeah. Find a different class of people all together. Believe it or not. I don't know about know.

SAM: Back then is what I'm wondering about.

R M: Yeah, it was quite a lot of difference in a way. People up here as a rule, I don't know, they were more generous, courteous. That is, the general public. You could go down there and you could find a difference down there. People down there they wouldn't, uh, lot of them, I don't say all of them, you know, but California brags about hospitality. Why, they don't know what hospitality is in California. No they don't. The most tight and stingy people I ever met in the world is in California. They wouldn't even give

you a drink of water if you was, tongue was sticking out. No they wouldn't. I don't say everybody, but I mean the Californians. They claim to be the friendliest people. Why I find it just absolutely opposite. They wouldn't give you a drink of water if you was dying. And I married one of them. And she's the same way. Absolutely. That's one thing I don't know, I don't say that they're all that way, no. Not by any means, but a hell of a lot of them. Maybe I just met all the goddamn tightwads in the world and all the stingy people and what not, but that's the way I found them. And...

SAM: Lumberjacks were kind of different too?

R M: Well, not always some lumberjack. The farther west you go, seems the farther this way you go, up in this part of the country, the better it gets. Seemed like to me. The people were more friendly. They weren't tight fisted. Them people down there, well, goddamn it, they wouldn't do nothing for you. You know. I mean, you don't expect people to do something for nothing, no. But they don't even try to be friendly. Hell, I've met all kinds of people, but I've met some awful good people, too. Don't misunderstand me. But I think about the friendliest people that you'll find as a whole is up in this northwest country. To my estimation. But California, no. Dang it, I been on the bum in California too. Broke. One time, oh boy, one time, you know. A place called Dunsmuir. I don't know if you know where Dunsmuir is.

SAM: I know the name.

R M: Sets right in a canyon, right in a canyon, like that. And the goddang town is built up on a, up above the railroad. It's just a little bit of a town. And I never was in Dunsmuir since and I don't ever want to go in there again. I got into this town. Oh, man, talk about hungry. I hadn't eaten nothing and I hadn't eaten nothing since I left the Columbia River. And across the bridge there, Dishman or somewhere down in there, across the Columbia River and you go all the way through California, oh, it's a long

way. Get into Dunsmuir. Hungry, I was so goddamn hungry I couldn't see straight. So, nice bakery there and I went into this bakery and I asked told the man in my predicament I said I'm hungry as a sonofagun and I said, I'm willing to work for something to eat. And do you have some work that I could do to earn something to eat? God damn, he had stacks of pans that high and great big bread pans and he'd been cooking these cinnamon rolls or something in them, and the stuff had all burned ^{and} stuck to the sides and the bottom and I got them all washed and then I mopped, I had to mop out that whole bakery. The back end and the front end and everything. And I worked about two and a half hours. And you can imagine, I was hungrier than a sonofabitch and hadn't had a bite to eat. Got everything all ship shape, all cleaned up and I worked there about two and a half hours. He gave me two snails and two doughnuts and I hope Christ kills me dead if they weren't as hard as that goddamn thing right there. You couldn't put your teeth into them. And I had all my own teeth then, I had good teeth. You couldn't even put your teeth into them. Where in the hell he'd had them, I don't know. But, impossible to eat them. Two doughnuts and two snails. Two and a half hours work. Well, while I was working there he had a ham about that big around that he had baked for somebody...

(End of side G)

RRM: ...had a platform up there with the bakery wagon and drive up to the platform and unload the bakery stuff, you know. On that platform there he had a great big meat board there about yea long and about that wide and he had this ham sitting on there cooling. And he just put it out there. Boy, after I seen what he gave me for two and a half hour's work, I said, "Okay, thanks a lot." Walked off and ^{I just} picked that ham up and threw it under my coat, took off. Down the street. I didn't run, I just walked real fast. I knew he was going to holler bloody murder pretty soon, so, I got the hell away from town. Course the town ain't very big. Hell approximately from here to

the highway is out of town, you know. I got down to, big railroad yards there, and I got down to the railroad yards and I went through the yards and went on the other side of it. It's all wood^s and timber like this is. Started walking down, I'm going to go way down to the other end of the yard. So I met two guys going the same way I was. I had this ham, I had to had to have a coat under the ham because it was burning my arm, you see. It was so hot. So, by golly, you know, these two, they were two lumberjacks. They were from Eureka, or going to Eureka, California, going to work in the woods there. "Hey," he said, "you make anything up here, Jack?" Said, "Yeah." I still had this bag with the two doughnuts and the two snails in there. ^{Just that hard} I said, "What do you think of that for two and a half hours of work?" "Holy Christ." They said, "We were lucky though, we had twenty cents. We bought two loaves of bread." Went in a grocery store and bought two loaves of bread. You could buy a loaf of bread then for ten cents. He said, "That's all we got, and he said, that's all we can get." And he said, "If we didn't have twenty cents we wouldn't have had that." So I told them what happened, I said I got a ham here and it's all freshly cooked and it's burning the hell out of my arm. "You have?" And I said, yeah. "I wonder what the hell you was carrying there." And Jesus, about a twenty pound ham. So we get down to the other end of the yards, we get way away, and a big old ^{Tie} pile there and we layed the ham on the ^{Tie} pile and the bread and got it out. One guy had a big jackknife. We slices up that hot ham and making hot ham sandwiches. Just sit there and just eat all the goddamn ham we could eat. And we had about three quarters of a loaf of bread left or half a loaf, and we split it up. We made sandwiches out of it. And oh, there was a chunk of ham about that big around left. I got a couple of, I went in a boxcar and found some paper that was tacked to the wall you know, for grain car. Something like, heavy paper, you know. I wrapped this ham up and I had two or three sandwiches, I wrapped them

up. And them guys, they had a couple two or three sandwiches wrapped up a piece. So was well heeled. **S**o we grabbed a freight out of there. And when we got to Sacramento, next day, so finished off, I finished off the ham there ~~/~~ in Sacramento and made a loaf of bread or something somewhere. I think it was a loaf of bread I got somewhere and rest of my ham and finished that up. I'll tell. That's the stuff you run out of when you're broke. And can't find a job and you see how people take advantage of you. That guy, if he would have said, no, I'd have been just as well off. But he worked me and then didn't give me nothing to eat. So the next poor bastard comes in there won't get nothing neither. He just as well not get nothing. Just get what I got for two and a half hours work. You're not forgetting them things. Well, shit, I'm not getting no wood cut.

(End of side H)