

Bert Pickens

February 3, 1978

Accession No: LOH 78-95.2

Lloyd Meyer: Good morning Bert.

Bert Pickens: Yes.

LM: First off, I would like to ask you a little information on yourself.

Such as, where you were born, your age.

BP: Well, I was born up in Sweet Home, Foster. I was really born back up in the, about, oh, six, seven miles up Violet Creek up at Foster back in the hills there; In a log cabin where I was born in 1902. My folks had a homestead up there.

LM: What day were you born on? What day is your birthday?

B.P.: March 4th.

LM: So, did you grow up and spend most of your childhood up in the Sweet Home area?

BP: Well, I left that country there when I was about 14 years old. I left there when I was 14 and I started to work in a logging camp for Hammond Lbr. Co.

LM: Pretty early. ~~What~~ Where was Hammond Lbr. Co.?

BP: I worked first for them down in Humboldt County, California. I went down there in the woods down there.

LM: That was logging the Redwoods?

BP: Yes. Mostly Redwoods.

LM: Was that a usual age for most people to start in the woods that early?

BP: Oh, that's about when they started, especially those that were raised around and in logging camps. Like if their father had been a logger. It was not uncommon for them to start in at that age. Even earlier. They start you out greasing skids or something like that.

~~BP: (cont.)~~

LM: Did you come from a logging family yourself?

BP: No, there was no logging going on in that country up there. At that time there wasn't any. There was a little bit a few years later. There was some logging going on up there. But there was very little logging in that country. There was no railroad in there at that time and there just wasn't no way to get the timber out.

LM: What was your first job when you started?

BP: ^{Punking} Pumping whistle.

LM: What is that? Could you describe that?

BP: Well, that's in the signal. The rigging crew would holler what they wanted and you ...I imagine a lot of people who hear this that are old loggers... but I started, the first whistle I ~~had~~ I blew up to was an electric whistle. Mostly everywhere they had jerk wire. Hammond Lbr. Co. there had on this one side, they had electric whistles. That's what I really started blowing first was electric whistle. You had a little bug.

You would put your wire out there 1000 or 1500 feet, you'd stay close to the rigging crew, you know, within reason so we could hear them holler what they wanted and you'd send in whatever they wanted. Whatever the signal was. If it was to go ahead of, stop or slack the rigging off, all these different signals.

LM: So, you were down loading the logs into the cut area?

BP: No, I would be midway out in the woods. The yarder was reaching way back into the woods, you see.

LM: You mentioned the other time that you also ^{greased} ~~in?~~ skids?

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BP: No, I never did grease skids, no. A lot of the young fellows started out greasing skids. When I started in the woods they had the big donkeys there. The big machines, big Humbolt. Hammond Lbr. Co. had practically all Willamette compounds.

LM: What is greasing skids?

BP: Well, greasing skids in the old horse-logging days, you see some of the pictures in there, they propped logs down crossways like that. They towed it over those logs on those skids. They would have a little adverse grade or something to make the logs slide easy on there they had somebody with a brush who swabbed, and bucket, you went along greasing them skids. That made the logs slide easier on the skids.

LM: It was grease that they used?

BP: Yes, they used a low-grade compound; so it stayed on there.

LM: Did any of the logs ever get loose on the ~~six~~ skids?

BP: Oh, yes. Sometimes, particularly in the old ~~heating~~ days, why, they had to be real careful about the grade. But you didn't dare let the logs run down and hit your team. Lots of times you would use horses or sometimes bows or whatever they happened to use. They used lots of horses in the woods. Those skid roads were usually laid out and you tried to keep it on a grade so you wouldn't have too much percentage so it wouldn't run down on your team.

LM: Now, you've worked several places, right?

BP: I've worked a lot of places, yes. For a lot of different outfits.

LM: Was that the nature of the logger to move around like that?

BP: Yes. I think I was, as loggers go, halfway down on the totem pole. A lot of them made a lot more camps than what I did. It was kind of a general thing, you know, years ago. They moved around a lot.

LM: Why is that you think?

BP: Oh, I don't know why we did. It's just kind of the nature of the loggers. Of course, after I got married I didn't move around so much anymore.

LM: That settled you down a little bit?

BP: Yes, that kind of changes the situation.

LM: Well, was it so much the supply of lumber or was it you just moved around?

BP: Oh, one got kind of restless and decided to move on. And a lot of things would come up too, you know. There would be a lot of times they would shut down maybe part of the outfit. Depressions, we always had them. Recessions in the lumber industry, they would shut down part of the outfit. Well, maybe your part, where you worked, shut-off, so you was out of a job. That happened. A lot of the times these outfits might finish logging where they was logging. Now, that happened to me in lots of cases. They just run out of timber, so you automatically run out of a job, ^{then} when you went someplace else.

LM: Were depressions a real threat to the logging industry?

BP: Oh yes. It would really be something. I remember quite a few, in my time. When things really slowed down. What happened in those days when they had a slowdown, why then the next Spring our wages would be particularly way down automatically. They were automatically cut. They would start out real low and when the demand got more then the wages would come up a little more. As the price of lumber went up.

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LM: Was that mostly it then, depending on the demand for the lumber?

BP: That's what it all depended on, yes. In those days, I don't think a lot of people are aware of it now, we kind of drifted out of there now. Of course, now we have the unions to control the situation some too.

Also, everything now, whether people believe it or not, are ^(is) on a plus-cost.

Everything was done on a plus-cost is what it amounted to, more or less.

All of our building is done on a plus-cost. Just about everything. The only guy that isn't is the farmer. He isn't on a plus-cost. That's why he's about to starve to death. He wants to get on a plus-cost too.

LM: ~~So, is the,~~ Was the Great Depression pretty hard on the lumbermen in the 1930's?

BP: Well, yes it was a real...but the first one, well not the first one I remember, ^(was) in 1921. Now '20 was a real good year in the woods. It was one of our best.

LM: That was for the whole Pacific Northwest?

BP: Yes. That was the whole Pacific Northwest. The lumber prices were good and the wages were good. Our wages went up high in 1920.

BM: What was the average wage?

BP: Well, the price of a chokersetter went up to...oh...six, six and a half a day. That was the rigging crew. The hooktenders in the old days, you used to figure that he got just about double what a choker-setter did. He was really the boss over the side. His wages in the old days was usually double what a chokersetter or a chaser would get.

LM: Nowadays that doesn't sound like much money but I imagine there was a lot more buying power.

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BP: Oh yes. Alot more buying power, yes. Sure. Our money ^{went} just quite not as ^{fast} our money went right now. Alot of the younger people working today ~~reali~~ don't realize what an advantage they've got in regards to wages what we had in the old days. You got alot more buying power because ~~the~~ their wages are so much higher and lots of things haven't gone up in comparison. ~~is~~ They think they're taking a réal beating this younger generation but they're really not. They are way ahead of what we was, compared to wages and buying power.

LM: When you lived out in the woods did the loggers have much opportunity to spend the money?

BP: No, there was very little unless you played poker, which alot of the loggers did. And a lot of them lost all of their money. I've seen guys that stayed in camp six months and when they went out on the 4th of July they didn't have a dime. Spent it all on the poker game.

LM: Gambling was quite predominant?

BP: It always was a factor in the old days in those logging camps. There was always a poker game going on in ~~the~~ there. One of the bigger outfits would have a pool hall right in the camp with a set of card games with the old rake-off system. The house raked-off so much out of each pot.

LM: ~~That~~ That way the camps would get their money back?

BP: That's right. That's about what it amounted to.

LM: Sort of tied into gambling; was there a lot of booze in the camps?

BP: No, not too much in the camps. That was always ever since I could remember, was kind of frowned on, very much drinking around the camp. Usually, if you, the guys did any excessive drinking around it wasn't long before they was gone.

LM: You told me that you worked for Consolidated ~~Timber~~ up here. Could you tell about when that company started and a little bit about it?

BP: I didn't start with them, you know. They already had been operating there for several years before I really started. I actually didn't ^{start} with Consolidated Timber Co. until 1939. They ~~had~~ started ~~logging~~ there I think, sometime in '34, '35. I think they started logging up here ¹⁹³⁴ out of Glenwood.

LM: It was a combination of different log companies that were operating before?

BP: That's right. It was quite a number of outfits. Several of the big timber companies had gone in and gone together and formed the Consolidated Timber Co. Then they put ~~them~~ in different contract loggers in there. The first big ones they had in there of the contract loggers was the Connacher Logging Co. and Interstate Logging Co. Then soon afterwards Consolidated started logging too. So, they were the first three, big ~~outfits~~ outfits logging in there.

LM: They were set up to salvage the trees in the Burn?

BP: Yes. That's why...it was all logging in the Burn. In the area up there there was quite a few areas that had green timber. They also logged that too, you know, that which the fire didn't go through, or around it. There was always blocks of timber. Really, they had quite large blocks that didn't burn.

LM: So during that time there really wasn't much of a depression going on in that area anyway?

BP: No, things was going pretty good at that time. We'd come out of the big Depression. It was pretty much over by...oh...'35-'36. We'd got over the Big Depression.

LM: When you started ^{at} ~~at~~ Consolidated, you were a hooktender?

BP: Yes, I started as a hooktender.

LM: What is a hooktender?

BP: Oh, that's a fellow, he's the forman over a side. The side consists of any area where the logs are logged to a certain landing and loaded out there. That constitutes a side.

LM: How many people were in a side?

BP: Well, they ranged from different...they usually be around...oh...20 to 25. They could go up. I've tended hook on sides where I have

as high as 50 men.

LM: Were they hard to manage?

BP: Oh no. There was no problem.

LM: The side was in charge of yarding, right? Loading the logs?

BP: Yes. The more donkeys you had to contend with and rigging you had, why it constituted more of a problem alright for the hooktender trying to keep things going. That was his primary purpose of ^{being} ~~being~~ there, to keep things moving and keep the ^{logs} ~~logs~~ coming. The more donkeys you had strung out and the more men you had working ^{the} ~~more~~ ^{would} ~~problems~~ come up.

LM: How did the steam donkey ~~work~~ operate? Are there different kinds and sizes?

BP: Oh, there are all different kinds, yes. There was the Willamette Iron Steel Company donkey. The Willamette was the most prominent in the Oregon ~~Country~~ Country although we had all different makes down here, in later years. They was pretty predominant. They was just a little better machine than the others to my notion. Smith and Watson, they was made in Portland. Tacoma 's they was made in Tacoma, Washington. The Seattle was made in Seattle. They also had Ledgerwoods and some other names.

BP: (cont.) There wasn't too many of them. Burgers . / It was mostly those three; the Wabington's, Smith and Oxford's, and Tacoma's and the Seattles' were predominant. They had been making donkeys for a way back in the 1800's. All of them outfits had. Before the turn of the century they was all ~~xx~~ making donkeys.

LM: We were talking a little bit before about the camps and the working conditions. What was it like working at the camp with that many men living together in one place?

BP: I think we got along real good. I really do. I think we got along real good. Of course we had our problems, but I think we ironed them out. Like I told you before, no group of men ever worked , to my knowledge, anywhere that was as open to view and one thing or another than what a bunch of loggers would be. They just didn't keep...just more open than the average group. ~~X~~ We ~~x~~ said what we thought. Sometime into a big ^{wed get} argument or something but it didn't amount to nothing. It would be over in a few minutes.

LM: I imagine that life could get quite robust in the camps? Was there any fracasas?

BP:
The hooktender , well, he was the fellow that kind of pushed the deal, you know. I guess I was no ~~different~~ different from the rest of them. They all wanted to accomplish a little more. We were never quite ~~x~~ satisfied. That kind of holds true to any industry. They ~~always~~ always try to get a little bit more done. We were the ones that pushed it. The hooktender, he was the guy that ~~that~~ was at that end. So he always got kind of a bad reputation or a good one, one or the other. (laughs)

LM: So, you had to keep order then, pretty much?

BP: Yes, that's what it amounted to. He had to keep ~~them~~ things moving.
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LM: Was there a camp up at Consolidated when you worked there?

BP: Yes. When at first we went there we stayed at the old headquarters camp there at Glenwood. Then they finally moved the camp at the foot of Saddle Mountain. This Saddle mountain up here you know. They moved it up there. And we logged out of there then.

LM: How many people were living in this camp and at what time of the year?

BP: Well, I think up there at that Consolidated camp there I don't suppose there was over, the most they might have had maybe 125 men.

LM: Did you live in the camps?

BP: I did. Yes, I stayed up there. What happened there, it got so hard to get men. You just couldn't get men to stay in the camp during the War, ^(wwII) you know, the war came on. You just couldn't get no help. So, we started ~~run~~ running a crew bus to Forest Grove. At first we'd haul them on a "speeder" We'd take the speeder from up at Glenwood ^{and} hauled men ~~from~~ where we logged at the foot of Saddle Mountain where we happened to be logging.

LM: Did the railroad line run?

BP: Yes. We had ^{one} up there. That's where the logs were hauled out at that time. We'd run the speeder and hauled ^{the crew} back and forth on it. Some of our men stayed in the ~~camp~~ camp, but alot of them had to transport back to ~~the~~ town.

LM: That would be quite a trip between Forest Grove and the camp.

BP: Yes, it took quite a while. It would take a good hour and a half or better to make it.

LM: How many hours were spent out working in the woods then?

BP: Well, we worked eight hours...normally. Sometimes we ~~would~~ worked a little longer. Sometimes ~~we~~ we put in about 12 hours at least for ^{the} round trip.

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BP: Sometimes more.

LM: I would imagine you were pretty tired by the time you got back to Forest Grove then?

BP: Yes. Fellows put in a long day particularly in hot weather. I was real fortunate, I guess, and I think alot of the loggers was too. Just like anything, you get adjusted to things like that. They might get tired but they recovered fast. Just like in the Army, when your meals are all regular, you eat good and you sleep good, you go to bed at the same time, that's the most healthy thing you can possibly do.

LM: So, the food was pretty good that they served in the camps?

BP: Oh yes, real good. They had lots of good food.

LM: ~~Was~~ What was some of the types and quality that you had?

BP: Oh, had lots of different kinds of meats on the table especially the evening; you had steak, roast. Usually at least three different kinds of meats. We had all kinds of good ~~stews~~ stews. Everything in general. Our breakfast always consisted of eggs bacon and ham, and hotcakes. They always had hotcakes. That was a must in the logging camps. If you didn't have hotcakes, why, you never made it.

LM: The cooks must have been fairly good then?

BP: Oh yes. We had real good cooks. I've seen alot of bum cooks, but they didn't last long. If a bum cook showed up on the job, why, it wasn't too long until the crew would start complaining then he'd be gone. They wanted to keep good men and the best way to keep them was to feed them good and they did.

LM: Did it cost to live in the camps?

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BP: Oh yes. When I first started working in the camps it was real reasonable. Of course, our wages was real poor then that it didn't mean much.

When I first started we paid two bits a meal. Twenty-five cents a meal for our board. It went on up. I think the last time I stayed in a logging camp I paid, I believe, the meals were about a dollar and a quarter apiece. Now, you couldn't even feed the men for that. The companies went behind on it. You couldn't feed them for that.

Beginning of Side 2- Tape 1

LM: I think we were cut off ~~in~~ on my last question. I'll rephrase it. ~~I was asking~~ We were talking about the cooks and the food in the camps.

BP: They had real good food, plenty of food, really. A lot of the cases more that was justified.

LM: You were mentioning the McDonald Brothers?

BP: The McDonalds'. His father, he was a cook. Then he had two sons who both became cooks. They was excellent cooks. They was expensive cooks for the company no doubt because they bought the best supplies. At Consolidated, I can't think of the names right now, but they were real good cooks. ~~Exx~~ Excellent cooks.

LM: Where would they come from? Were they foreigners?

BP: No, ~~they were~~ most of them had been fellows that had started...well, they might be cooks too, you know. Had restaurants or something like that and decided to go into the woods in the logging camps.

LM: In any of these camps you worked in, was there any women cooks?

BP: Oh yes. One of the best cooks I ever did meet, almost, was a women cook down in Coos County. Up in the Alleghenys. Mrs. Bower her name was. She was an excellent cook. That was a real big camp, oh 350 men in camp. She was an excellent cook.

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IM: Did that create any problems with 350 men and 1 women?

BP: Well, she had lots of help. There would always be a second cook; a pastry maker or a baker made the bread, and then we had dishwashers, flunkies, hashers, you know.

BP: The men lived up in the camp. We talked about gambling. What were some of the other activities during your spare time?

Reading or talking?

BP: Lots of reading. Lots of fellows did lots of reading. There was just alot of idle talk went on too, you know. Just a bunch of men. We'd visit around from one bunkhouse to another. In my days I made two stays of six months stretch. Quite a few of us did in the old days. But not as many as you'd think. We'd go in right after Christmas and come out the 4th of July. I made two stays of six months.

IM: What about the women? Did they bring in women into the camps at all?

BP: Oh yes. Lots of the camps lots of families lived in there. Lots of camps had the women flunkies there.

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BP: Lots of them had men. The majority of them had women and that's ~~really~~ really where most of the loggers acquired their wives. They married the flunkies.

LM: Who were the flunkies?

BP: They was the waiters. They was known as the flunkies. (laughs to himself)

LM: ~~They was the waiters.~~ We talked about the food in the camps. What about the other living conditions as far as bugs and places to sleep.

BP: Of course they've changed better as time went by. When I first started working there most all of the outfits had double-deck bunks. One bunk was up over the other one. A bunkhouse where you could put four beds in there they would be men stayed in there. They'd be four of these ...they'd be eight men in these bunkhouses. That went on for several years. When I started work for Hammond Lbr Co. in Humbolt County they was really behind what they was up here. All they furnished was this here bunk, double^{one} decked bunk. And slept on the bottom and you slept on the top, depending on who got there first. Everybody wanted to sleep on the bottom. Nobody wanted to sleep on the top. There, you had to buy your own mattress. You could buy one at the ^{Commissary.} ~~Commissary.~~ They had them there to sell so you bought a mattress. Then you had to, of course, furnish your own bedding. Up here, in camps I worked in up here, I never did work in a camp up here, in my time, where we had to buy mattresses. I worked in a camp in Gray's Harbor, well, that was in 1918 I think, they had straw ticks there. They filled them with straw. They furnished them anyhow.

LM: But it wasn't always so good was it? The mattresses? Didn't the workers get together?

BP: Well, these mattresses that you bought consisted of excelsior; which is just ground-up wood, you know. Wood shavings is what they amounted to (laughs). That was your mattress. You had your own bedding.

LM: Was that comfortable at all?

BP: Well, I guess they was alright to some extent. We didn't never have no sheets you know. Nobody had no sheets. Most of us, alot of us would have a cotten blanket which we used as a sheet and we'd wash that once in ^{a while} ~~while~~. / But the rest of the bedding never got washed. You'd hang it out ~~maybe~~ on a Sunday, hang it, you know, if we could on the line. ~~That~~ That went on until, ..they didn't start furnishing beds until '24.

In '23 they had kind of a strike, the loggers did. And all the ~~xxxx~~ companies started furnishing.

LM: The companies furnished them ^{gradually} ~~gradually~~ then?

BP: Yes, they started furnishing them bedding. Of course they charged them. But you got your sheets changed once a week. You got ~~xxx~~ changed sheets.

LM: Who organized this strike?

BP: Well, it was just kind of a haphazard thing. Actually the I.W.W. got the blame for it. It was an awful slipshod layout. Alot of the fellows maybe working in the camps maybe didn't belong to the I.W.W. Actually, very ~~di~~ few did, you know. But they was kind of sympathizers. They quit their jobs and went to ~~town~~ ^{town}. They kind of got the message, the comapanies did.

LM: So the I.W.W. was the one the that provided the incentive?

BP: Well, that's right, ~~it kind of got there~~ There was no other unions in ~~xxxxxxx~~ the woods. That was the one they only had up to that time.

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LM: ~~Was it~~ Could you tell me a little about the I.W.W. back in its heyday?

BP: Well, it was always ~~it was~~ different organizers ^{who} made the rounds of the camps, these organizers, ^{and} ~~and~~ kept things kind of stirred up.

LM: Were they frowned on by, I would imagine, the owners?

BP: Oh yes, by the management, definitely. That would go against the grain. That's just human nature, to be opposed to something like that. But, I don't think, and I've been around a long time, and I don't think they was ever, the I.W.W., was ever as strong as what a lot of the companies really thought they was. Because they had so many sympathizers nobody knew ~~with~~ whether you belonged the I.W.W. or not. So many sympathizers that the companies figured they was alot stronger than what they was.

LM: Was there a fear of joining the I.W.W. or why was it so ...

BP: Well, I suppose alot of people had, you know, fear of it. Just like you find everyplace you go. People are kind of ^{revolutionaries} ~~revolutionarys~~ and there are people that aren't. Now, George Washington was a real revolutionist. And his followers was all revolutionists too. They might look like real heroes today, but to the English they didn't look like ^{heroes,} ~~herios.~~ They was real revolutionists. /

LM: What was your personal feelings toward the I.W.W. ?

BP: Well I sympathized with them ^{because} I could see that we needed something different. We needed some representation which we never did have in the woods. Our best representation in the woods was a guy that could ~~up~~ put out the most in a day's work. So that constituted more of a highball system.

BP: I kind of started out that way when I started working in logging camps. I never got over it. You could talk to fellows that worked with me and they would all say, you know, we'd push you right to the limit. Which we did! That was the way we was brought up. And that's what goes on today in any mill or factory or anything, goes on. The most efficient ones in there are favored the most. You're bound to be. That's just human nature. That's one of them ^{things} there's no getting around.

LM: You're saying that as the workers were being pushed as much as they could and they needed representation for their side?

BP: Well, we definitely did because there was so many outfits. It was different individuals what it mostly amounted to. It ^{wasn't} ~~wasn't~~ most of the companies. It ^{was} the individuals that just went overboard, you know got too reckless. There was too many men getting hurt! Too many men getting killed! Now, I might have pushed the deal as much as I could, but there's one thing I will say in my own defense! There was very few men that ever got hurt working under me. Very few. I never had only very few men killed working under me. Very few got hurt.

LM: Did you belong to the I.W.W. at all?

BP: Well, no, I guess I wouldn't want to say. That's a long time ago and really frowned on so I wouldn't want to state whether I did or not. And like I say, there was a lot of people, and I think the companies in particular, didn't realize how ~~big~~ ^{big} the weak the actual membership was in the I.W.W. But they had so many ~~exp~~ sympathizers that it confused the companies. They thought there was more belonged that what actually did.

LM: Well, was it partly because of their revolutionary doctrine that people didn't want to actually state that they were members?

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BP: Well, yes, if ~~was~~ the companies knew that you was a member, why, you wouldn't be around long. You'd be on your way. / These organizers, they still found out about them and it got to be real hard for them to get a job.

LM: There was another organization called the Loyal Legion of Loggers. Maybe that was before your time.

BP: Oh no! Oh no, I was already working in the woods when that was formed ~~was~~ That wasn't formed until 1918. And I already had been working in the woods two years before that.

LM: What kind of organization was that?

BP: Well, it was a thing organized by the companies. Strictly a company dominated thing. Try to keep harmony in the woods so they wouldn't have the strikes. And try to combat the I.W.W. was what it was formed for.

LM: It was partly government sponsored also?

BP: Well, kind of government backed I suppose. The companies really formed it themselves. I belonged the 4 L'S I worked in camps where you had to belong. Just about a must. You belonged to it or you was gone thats all.

LM: Did that have much power in improving the conditions?

BP: No, practically no power at all. None. I happened to be working down at Booth-Kelley lumber Company when the 4 L's were pretty strong there. That was one of the last ones to recognize the 4 L's. I remember they had lots of bed-bugs in the camps. Just loaded with bed bugs. So they had a meeting. You have these meetings, you'd get up and talk a

(40)

BP: One fellow there started complaining about the bed bugs, you know. That they should do something about the bed bugs. He was a good worker. Nothing wrong with the guy at all. But he was getting tired of the bed bugs. So, the next day he was gone. So, the 4 L's didn't have any...

LM: No clout?

BP: No, absolutely none. It was just a hopeless situation.

LM: Was it partly formed just to counteract the I.W.W.?

BP: That was the main purpose of it, yes. That was the main purpose.

LM: So it was sort of illusionary then?

BP: Loyal Legion of Loggers was ~~wax~~ what the real name of it was.

LM: Did it hurt the effectiveness the the I.W.W. then?

BP: Oh, I suppose it did, yes, it really did.

LM: During the '20's the IW.W. just sort of faded away?

BP: It faded away after 1923 really. There was a few organizers around after that but very few. There was a few organizers around the '30's. Around the camps. It wasn't difficult for us ol' loggers. We knew who they was, the organizers. You had to keep it pretty much of a secret or the company would just get rid of you, that's all. They didn't want them around. But us fellows working there, we knew who they was.

LM: It was in the '30's that the AFL-CIO came in? The International Woodworkers union?

BP: Yes, they started forming in '34.

LM: They must have had quite struggle then to get started?

BP: Oh, they had a awful struggle getting going. A real struggle getting going. Of course, I could see the companies part of it. They didn't want them. As long as they could keep them out why it was their advantage, to have them out rather than to have them in.

LM: Was there an actual conscience division between the management and the workers? Was there a class struggle or was it mostly just the workers wanting just better conditions?

BP: That's what it mostly amounted to. A form of some representation is what it amounted to. They wanted some representation. There was alot of outfits that were fair. I worked for alot of good outfits. There was nothing wrong at all with the management and the workers, I think, worked real close together with no problem. There was others that wasn't that way. There was some real rascals. Now most of these would come about with their superintendents rather than the company itself. The problem would arise through the superintendent. He would be the one that would control that end.

LM: I understand part of the reason that's just the nature of loggers in general that they are independent-minded.

BP: Yes, that's right. Most any kind of group you could you could find anywheres you went. I think that still applies to alot of cases.

But now in particular it has changed considerable because they are mostly all gypsos. Alot of it's done by smaller outfits. People that own the outfit are actually working with the men all the time. They are just one of them.

LM: What was the attitudes of the people that worked in the woods about their jobs and working with their fellow loggers?

BP: Oh, it's just like you find with any group of men. Sometimes it was just a job, you know, trying to get the day's work done. Then others, they really took an interest in what they were doing. I guess my days in the woods I was kind of fortunate. I never begrudged one minute of work.

BP: I was always interested in my work.

LM: Was there a joy in seeing a log felled? Did you feel any emotions at all?

BP: Oh yes, I did. That's right. You accomplished something. Like if you was sawing timber, if you sawed a nice timber out there and didn't break it, why, you really feel you had accomplished something. If you sawed it and it broke all to pieces, why you felt depressed alright, that's for sure. If you got out alot of logs, why, it would give you a good feeling.

LM: Did the loggers back in the '20's and '30's just feel that the timber was unlimitless?

BP: Yes, we did kind of ~~old~~ to some extent. I know myself, it was something that always worried me even when the time when I started working in the woods. It ~~showk~~ just seemed like we should be doing more to try and preserve the country. I could see that we was exploiting it. /

LM: Was there quite a bit of waste involved?

BP: Well yes, someplaces. You read these stories and one thing about the old days that they just took the best logs and all this and that. That did go on to some ~~xxx~~ extent but that didn't apply too much. There was lots of outfits that had lots of rotten timber. Of course, there was an awful lot of logs left on the ground. That stuff today alot of it would be logged. In fact most of it. They didn't have that program so it couldn't go into those (Stimson) It was just more or less left out in the woods. I worked for outfits way back, well, back in 1918, even before that they logged real clean. Took everything. Even the tops and everything We didn't leave nothing.

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BP: (cont.) Have to work for an outfit and they had holdings next to the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company's holdings. We logged right up the line. They got into a mix-up up there. They got over the line. Not intentionally, but the way the lines was...the surveyers had been in there and made an error, you know. We got over on Weyerhaeuser and logged some of their timber. There was some logs there we didn't take. because they was pretty low grade. We had to go back and log those. Weyerhaeuser made us go back in there and log that out again. That was way back. A long time ago. All the outfits...they didn't waste as much timber as what ~~try~~ they try to...a lot of things you read today how they left everything in the woods...^{we} we just didn't do it. Some outfits did, but most of them didn't.

LM: Were the other people that thought like you? Thinking that something should be done about preserving some of the forests?

BP: Yes, we always talked about it, a lot of us did. There was one thing that was wasted to an aw awful extent that was the hemlock. We wasted an ^{awful} ~~awful~~ lot of hemlock. There wasn't too good a market for hemlock. There was always lots of hemlock around. We'd just leave that in the woods. The trees was pulled over and left, or one thing or another. That was one bad thing we done. Exploited that hemlock something terrible.

LM: ~~XXXX~~ You've worked how many years in the woods altogether?

BP: Oh, I suppose it's about 57 years.

LM: You worked in a couple places in Washington County itself. You mentioned Cherry Grove and the Forest Grove Lbr. Co. What years did you work for them?

BP: I went to work at Alder Creek Lbr. Co. in '46. And I worked there until '57.

LM: Cherry Grove was quite a thriving city at that time?

BP: Oh yes. It was...a lot of people lived there. An ^{awful} ~~awful~~ lot worked in the mill~~s~~ and in the woods.

LM: Did you live up there?

BP: No. No, we lived here in Forest Grove.

LM: Were you a hooktender out there also?

BP: No, I was a superintendent~~x~~ of logging.

LM: What did you do out here in Forest Grove then?

BP: I was a timber manager. I bought the timber and I oversaw the logging. Took care of the logging end of it. Bought the timber.

LM: What would that involve, buying the timber? You would go out in the woods?

BP: Well, you know, cruise the timber and decide how much you figured you could pay for it. We bought state timber ~~land~~ and also private timber.

LM: Did that company own any of its own timber land?

BP: No, they didn't own any. Forest Grove Lbr. Co. had no holdings at all.

~~The~~ What time I worked there we bought one little piece of timber. I think it was around eight ^{acres} ~~acres~~ (laughs). That was the extent of our holdings.

LM: You said you worked 57 years. You must have met a lot of different loggers and a lot of different kinds of people. Do you have much contact with the people you worked with? anymore?

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BP: Oh, yes. Yes, I find someone once in awhile, ^{I run on} ~~to~~ to somebody I worked with years and years ago.

LM: There must be alot of memories of some 50 odd years.

BP: Yes, alot of things have changed.

Bert goes on to say that if he had to do it all over again, he would still remain a logger.