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Legend of Paul Bunyan Still Lives in Land of High Timber and Snow

BY BILL MURPHY

High in the snow-capped Sierra Nevada, which forms California's northern barrier, the legendary lumberjack of superhuman strength, Paul Bunyan, is once more swinging a mighty ax.

Giant stands of ponderosa pine topple like matchsticks and a huge blue ox named Babe snakes the trees down the mountains to a mill which hums with activity.

Of course this is all imaginary, for Paul Bunyan is a myth of American folklore, just as was Babe, the ox who measured 42 axhandles and a tobacco plug between the eyes.

Very Much Alive

But to William B. Laughead, 75, of Susanville, a town which lies in the heart of California timber country 600 miles northeast of Los Angeles, Paul Bunyan is still very much alive.

For it was from Bill Laughead's inkwell and his recollections of lumbering in the Minnesota north woods that the Paul Bunyan legend spread across the continent and into the far corners of the world.

the fire. Outside, the rain drummed a soft tattoo against the window.

windows.

"Be snowing up here in this country soon," he observed, reaching for his pipe. "Sort of like the winter of the blue snow when Paul found Babe. She was just a calf then."

He paused to strike a match and grinned over his pipe.

"But let's start at the beginning. Who knows where Paul Bunyan really originated? It's said that stories about him date back to the early 1800s in Canada. In those days logging was real labor. Loggers lived on beans, salt pork and sourdough.

POPULARIZED — William B. Laughead, 75, first to popularize legends of Logger Paul Bunyan. Times photo

"At night they would sit around the shanty stove and spin their stories. Bunyan and his fantastic feats began to develop then. From Canada Paul soon was branching out, operating logging camps in New Brunswick, Me., and the Great Lakes.

Hero in 1900

"As a young man I worked in the lumber camps of Minnesota. That was around 1900. At night I would sit around and listen to other loggers swapping yarns about Paul. I never did dream he would go commercial, but that's what happened when they decided ol' Paul was moving to California."

Laughead was working as advertising manager for the Red River Lumber Co. in Minnesota in 1914. The firm had exhausted its timberlands in that State and was about to begin operations in California.

Archie Walker, secretary of the concern, called him into his office.

"We're moving to Califor-

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nia," he announced. "We need a new advertising gimmick to let our customers know about it. We've both worked in the logging camps. What about this mythical Paul Bunyan? Let's make him a slogan."

Bill Laughead went back to his desk. He began to sketch, and a jovial-looking lumberjack sporting a wide mustache and possessing the confident air of a man who accepts no challenge as impossible suddenly appeared.

Paul Bunyan, as he would be known to thousands, was born.

Laughead began jotting down some of the tall tales he had heard in the woods about this famous logger. The Red River Lumber Co. printed a booklet which was distributed to its customers. It was greeted with apathy. Few of the people in the industry knew who Paul Bunyan was and cared less.

Paul belonged to the men who worked in the woods. He was the hero of every logging camp. No one else was interested. Then some of the booklets began to fall into the hands of the public.

Here was Paul Bunyan, not only a master logger, but an organizer who kept his lumberjacks happy by catering to their mammoth appetites. At the camp on the Big Onion, for instance, cooks skated around the skillet with hams on their feet to grease it for the pancakes. Boys rode bicycles up and down the tables, dropping the cakes off when called for. Paul fed his men pea soup that came out of a giant pipeline.

Four-Horse Sleds

A visitor at one of Paul's camps was astonished to see a crew of men unloading four-horse logging sleds at the cook shanty. They appeared to be rolling logs into a trap door from which poured clouds of steam.

"That's a heck of a place to land logs," he remarked.

"Them ain't logs," grinned a cook. "Them's sausages for the teamsters' breakfast."

Bunyan was also a thinker. Once his timekeeper, Johnny Inkslinger, was running out of ink.

"I only have two barrels left, Mr. Bunyan," he lamented. "How am I to get through the winter?"

"Just leave off dotting the i's and crossing the t's and you'll save ink for the necessary writing and figuring. When the spring ink supply comes in, you can go over your books again."

It worked.

"It was then that the storm broke," Laughead explained. "Requests for the booklets poured in from all over the United States. And not just from children. There were plenty from adults.

"Soon we had distributed over 100,000 of them, and we still couldn't keep up with the demand. Franklin D. Roosevelt became a fan of Paul Bunyan. Why back in 1931 some Russian commissar wrote us for details about Paul. Said they were interested in the tales from a propaganda standpoint. I sent him a book."

In 1951, a Vladivostok newspaper claimed that Russian loggers first made up the stories of a giant woodsman. His name was Paulski Bunyanovitch.

Collector of Legends

James Stevens of Seattle, a veteran of many years in the logging business, and the author of a collection of Bunyan legends himself, sums up the story like this:

"It is a true American legend now, for Paul Bunyan as he stands today is absolutely American from head to foot. He visualizes the American love of tall tales and tall doings. He has become the creation of whole generations of men. Thousands of narrators by far-flung campfires have contributed their mites to the classical picture of him, and he at least will live as long as there is a forest for his refuge, as long as there are shadows and whispers of trees.'

Laughead gazed into the fire.

"Ol' Paul's probably up in the high timber nearby right now, chopping away," he reflected, rapping his pipe against the hearth. Then he winked.

This was filed under "Need more work" - C.L.

Forest History Foundation, Inc.
St. Paul, Minnesota

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

W. B. Laughead
Susanville, California
September 17 and 18, 1957

by W. H. Hutchinson

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(Well, Bill, suppose you just start in and tell us why a boy from Ohio got into the Minnesota woods at the turn of the century.)

Well, I was born in Xenia, Ohio, in 1882, and I was one of these boys that never liked to go to school. I don't think I ever went to school a day in my life except under protest. By the time I got to the junior year of high school I was pretty well fed up. And like all other kids I'd been reading stories of the West and Northwest and everything, and I wanted to get out and see some of that action. So I finally got my mother's consent to quit school, and in the early spring of 1900 I headed for the Northwest and went to Minneapolis and I got a job with the Red River people to go up and work in the sawmill. But I didn't stay in the sawmill long because I saw these lumberjacks walking around with their caulked boots and all that stuff -- that was right down my alley for what I was looking for for western adventure -- so I wanted to go to work out in the logging woods. So then I went to work for the Walker and Akeley Company and got a job in the camp. Part of the time I'd be working for the company and part of the time I'd be working for the contractor and doing whatever a green seventeen, eighteen year old kid that didn't know anything could do, helping the bull cook, and splitting wood and stuff like that -- maybe keeping time for the contractor, and chores of that kind.

(Now that was up in Akeley, Minnesota, was it?)

The sawmill of the Red River Lumber Company was at Akeley. This was more up around the Bemidji country where the logging was going on. I chored around in the camps there and I got a chance to learn to run a compass and worked for the cruisers and things like that. I was in pretty close contact with the logging men, river driving and stuff like that. That lasted until 1908 and then I quit the woods. When I was working in the woods I wanted to be in the city, and when I was in the city I wanted to be in the woods. So I tried my hand down in the city, getting jobs as a surveyor and one thing and another. That was in 1908. Then after that, I had an experience up in Canada selling machinery. In 1913 their capital commenced to dry up in Canada. They got most of their money from England and they weren't sending any to Canada, so a lot of our business started to dry up too, selling machinery. Then in 1914 when the war broke, I had to get back to the States -- nothing doing over there. And I was trying to get some eating money by selling advertising.

(Well, Bill, how did you make the transition from working in the woods to being a cartoonist and an artist and an advertising man?)

Well, I don't know. I was one of these kids who always liked to doodle with a pencil, draw little pictures, and it came out of that. I never had any art education, so that's still a handicap to me.

(I wouldn't say that. I've seen what you've done.)

It just came from doodling around, and then I got into the advertising largely through this experience of selling machinery and sales work of that kind. I didn't know a hell of a lot about the advertising business, but there were no survey jobs to get and I had to eat. So I'd draw up a brochure or a folder or something and try to sell it to somebody, and if I sold it to him, I'd make a deal with the printer and get a scrape out of it. And it was on that basis that I went in and saw Archie Walker.* I'd known him, of course, for a long time; he was an officer of the Red River. They were starting in to sell cut-over timber lands at that time in Minnesota and I had a promotional idea there, a folder, for selling these timberlands to him. It was a kind of a little booklet folder, postcard size, and then there was a double fold over to the back for a reply card, and I thought he might use something like that in his land sale. He said no, he wasn't ready for anything like that, but he did have a problem on his hands. They were opening their new mill out in California and they had to make that known to the trade, and they might use something like that.

(Well, we might as well put it in here that as closely as I can peg it, the first cut on the big headrig at Westwood officially dates August 1, 1914.)

Yes, it was right around that time, and it might have been shortly before that this thing came up. And Archie said, "We've got two problems. We've been operating here in the Mississippi Valley and our sales have all gone Mississippi Valley and eastward -- the white pine business -- and now we're coming in from California." And he said, "Most of our sales will be in the East, factory lumber. There are two things we've got to get known to the trade. One, it's the same kind of pine that they've been using -- basically the same thing as soft white they've been using, will be used the same way. But they don't know much about this west coast timber. And another idea we want to get over is that we're operating in a big way out there so we have a big production, and it will be a reliable source of supply for wholesalers and buyers to hook up with. That's the idea that we've got to sell -- not only to our old customers in the Mississippi Valley but the new territory we've got to break into, east on the Atlantic seaboard, that we've never had contact with before. We want them to know it's the same kind of pine that they've been using, and that we can handle business in a big way with a big manufacturing capacity out there." So I said to him, "That's kind of

*Note by W. H. Hutchinson: They were cousins - second cousins as nearly as could be determined.

a big message to get over in a short time. Maybe we could get ahold of some kind of a slogan or some tie-up that would tie us up with the old traditions of the eastern white pine and carry them right over into the West. They're getting the same thing." And we cast around for ideas and didn't seem to be getting anywhere and finally Archie says, "Say, you've heard a lot of this Paul Bunyan stuff in the camps, haven't you?" I said I'd heard some of it, yes. "Well," he said, "there must be an angle there." "Well," I said, "yes. So far, Paul has come, as far as we know, from the old white pine camps in New England out to the Lake States so he's a white pine figure. And he always did things in a big way, so no matter how big a story we tell, we can say Paul Bunyan did it." So Archie said, "You go ahead, and you take this dummy you've got here, this announcement -- that looks like a pretty good form -- and write up something and let me see it." So that was our first Paul Bunyan book.

(Now, Bill, how big was that book?)

It was postcard size. I don't remember -- it ran about thirty-two pages or something like that.

(And you illustrated that one yourself, didn't you?)

Yes. It was a very crude affair. We didn't have very much in the way of photographs to show of the operation and ...

(The California operation?)

The California operation. It was a crude affair. In the front of it, it said, "Introducing Mr. Paul Bunyan from Westwood, California." And then we started out with a statement in there that what we told them about Paul Bunyan was fiction based on old lumber camp traditions, but what we told them about lumber would be the gospel truth. And that was the spirit in which it was written. And that was mailed out to whatever mailing list they had available to cover the eastern trade from the Mississippi Valley on east.

(That first book, then, was sent out only actually to the lumber trade?)

That's right. And then at the same time we had salesmen going through that eastern territory to spread the news and make them acquainted with the Red River Lumber Company.

(Did they have copies of the booklet for distribution, Bill?)

Yes. And then they reported back from people who had received this card. Well, the thing wasn't going over very well, and we thought no one had ever heard of Paul Bunyan. So the Paul Bunyan figure didn't carry any significance.

(He belonged to the woods, the camps, and not to the trade.)

That's right. There were even a lot of people in the logging business who had never heard of Paul Bunyan, but when it got to the sawmill and then to the wholesaler and the lumber dealer and the manufacturer who was buying the lumber for factory purposes, they didn't know anything about Paul Bunyan and there was all kinds of confusion. The salesmen were getting inquiries, "Who is this man Paul Bunyan? I thought the Walker people were running the Red River Valley Company." And the letters that came in.

(Well, what did you do then?)

Well, I talked the thing over with Archie. They had never run any systematic trade journal advertising, and I said, "We'd better start some trade journal advertising to back this thing up and tell them what it's all about." So I think the first publication of Paul Bunyan advertisement was in THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY LUMBERMAN. That was a weekly that was published right in Minneapolis. Then we got in touch with THE AMERICAN LUMBERMAN in Chicago. At that time that was the big shot in national coverage from coast to coast. And we signed up for a full-page schedule. At that time they were publishing weekly. Later on they changed to their present system of two issues a month, but at that time they were a weekly so we could use the same copy in THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY LUMBERMAN. Then later on we expanded into other trade journals, regional and national journals, to carry the Paul Bunyan message.

(With that first booklet of yours you found that Paul Bunyan -- outside of the camps and maybe in some of the sawmills -- was not a known figure in the lumber business.)

No, they didn't know who we were talking about.

(And you did your advertising to try to tie up ... ?)

That was the year that the Panama Canal was opened. And I think the first thing I did was show Paul Bunyan straddling the Panama Canal, and there was a tie-up with the old stories, you know.

(That's about right. I picked up, I think, the first vessel to transit the Canal eastbound with lumber. It was in August sometime, 1914, and it was a Dollar ship. I think it was a Dollar with five million feet northwest fir.)

Well, at that time, as Archie said, "We don't know just how our lumber's going to move. It's a new deal." He says, "Maybe we'll be shipping a lot through the Panama Canal." Which later they did, but the bulk of the shipments were by rail. But they did use the Canal to some extent.

(What did you do after that first booklet sort of backfired in your face?)

Well, we started this trade journal advertising to educate the public to it and then I provided some stuff for the salesmen that were travelling. I gave them an advance card that they would call on the dealers at a certain date -- "The Paul Bunyan man is coming." And some handouts for them to hand out, little folders and things of that kind like a salesman would need with his customers when he's breaking the ice and first getting acquainted. Provided them with that, and they wrote in and told me this was a big help. Before they would just go in and nobody'd heard of them. They'd look at these cards -- "Oh, Red River. Are you a wholesaler?" or something like that. They had never heard of it although the Red River had been a big operation. Their trade territory was up and down the Mississippi Valley and the big sash and door mills in Iowa and so on. And their reputation and acquaintance hadn't gone out of that territory. But when we started running these trade journal ads and we gave the salesmen some handouts, advance appointment cards and things of that sort, called him the Paul Bunyan man from Red River, why chances are the customer had seen some of these advertisements, identified him as a manufacturer's representative without breaking a lot of ice before he started to talk.

(Well, now in this first booklet in 1914, isn't that the first time that Paul Bunyan was ever drawn?)

As far as I know.

(And how about the Blue Ox?)

Yes. I had never seen anything in print about Paul Bunyan up to that time. There had some appeared but I hadn't seen them and I don't think they were illustrated. There was a story of the Round River Drive. Later on researchers dug that up that had appeared first about 1910, and then Douglas Malloch wrote it in verse in THE AMERICAN LUMBERMAN. I don't know just what year that came out.

(That was 1914.)

I think Gartenberg states there that it came out in 1914.

(It did. The first, as nearly as these professional folklorists have been able to determine, the first appearance of Paul Bunyan -- and it was actually just the use of his name -- was in that Round River Drive, which MacGillivray published in the Detroit NEWS TRIBUNE in 1910.)

Now, there was a man named Sheppard -- he was no relation to the Esther Sheppard that later wrote the Paul Bunyans. He lived in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, and he was a noted wit and was quite a character, and he had told quite a lot of Paul Bunyan stories, and I think some of them were probably

printed in Wisconsin papers, and had gotten into print that way, but they hadnt reached beyond that territory. I had never seen any, and I don't know that any of them were ever illustrated. So probably that picture was the first picture of Paul Bunyan.

(And that first picture that you used in that first booklet was the one that you later registered as your copyright?)

Yes, with some modifications. You know, the thing went through periods of evolution and then in making the drawing for the trademark I tried to simplify it and conventionalize it as much as I could because it would have to be reproduced in so many different ways, something that would be legible in all kinds of reproductions. It might be made as a stamp iron on something, or reproduced very small, we'll say, so I conventionalized it, and used that face as the trademark.

(Where'd you get that face, Bill?)

Oh, Lord, ask me! The general expression of it was a memory of a face of a logging contractor in Minnesota, Pete Dick, one of the greatest fellows that ever lived. The general expression ... and the mustache that stuck out sideways ... I knew a loud-mouthed French cook in the camps by the name of Charlie Revoir and he had a mustache like that and I kind of stuck the two of them together. It gave me an idea to start with. And the rest of it was just fixed up like you do those things.

(And then you put the first drawing of Babe, the Blue Ox, and named him in there. Where'd you get the name Babe?)

I don't know. I was riding along and I had never heard the names of any characters in connection with Paul Bunyan, except Paul Bunyan himself. And I was making a picture of this big ox, and I thought he ought to have a name, and I thought about as cute a name as you could get for a great big ox would be "Babe", and that's where he got his name.

(Well, you named virtually all of the most prominent characters in the Paul Bunyan legend that we have today, Bill. Those names are yours from that first booklet, aren't they?)

Yes, they're the same names. Now, whether it's a matter of coincidence or whether they read my book or what, I don't know. But it's a matter of coincidence that everybody ever since in writing the stories has used John Inkslinger, and Big Ole and Chris CrossHaul and those names ...

(Shot Gunderson, Sourdough Sam, the cook ...)

Yes. Well, these were fragmentary memories of people, characters I'd known in the woods that had those names. The name Shot Gunderson and

Chris CrossHaul were just kind of gags they used in the woods, you know. That was where those names came from. I had to call them something.

(Yes, because you were working then, you were trying actually to lift these fragmentary anecdotes you'd heard and put them into a readable shape.)

As a matter of fact, I never heard anyone in the camps or anywhere else mention Paul Bunyan in a narrative form, that is, start out to tell you a story, something that Paul did.

(Howhad you heard them then?)

Well, they would just be gags as though they were referring to something that everybody knew all about -- like Columbus crossing the Atlantic. They wouldn't have to start out and tell you the story of Columbus, you know. They'd just mention him and you'd know who he was. And the way they'd mention that -- it would be just in a gag about something that came up, some job they were doing -- the big Blue Ox or something. Or else it would be in the presence of some tenderfoot that they'd be trying to put something over on, maybe some green kid in the crew. Or where a lot of it happened was in the barrooms where a couple of the loggers had gone broke and were trying to spear some drinks, get somebody to buy them some drinks. They'd start a great big argument about Paul Bunyan or something like that, you know, just to get themselves into the picture. That's the way you'd hear them -- just as gags. Or they'd mention the big griddle with the men skating around with hams tied to their feet, and then pulling the crooks out of the logging roads. But nobody ever started out to tell you a story just to impress the audience that they were working on -- it was something that everybody knew all about.

(Well, that to me is very interesting because people gained the impression through some of the popularizers who've taken your material, Bill, that in every logging camp there was some master storyteller who, after the work was done and the socks were hung over the stove, he would sit in the deacon seat and spin these long connected narrative epic stories.)

Well, now you could conceive of that as a possibility in the very early primitive days of the camps.

(Well, that must have been back about the time of the American Revolution.)

Way back in there someplace because any crews that I ever came in contact with in the woods, or any place else, they wouldn't let any one man monopolize the conversation very long. Even if he was telling them something they were interested in, they'd be interrupting him with questions and arguments all the time. He didn't just sit there and put in the evening just talking and everybody else in camp listening to him.

(You mean there wasn't any Homer in the logging camps?)

No, if there had been I don't think anybody would have listened to him.

(Well, that ties in with my own experience in the mining camps and in cow camps, Bill. And with sailors. I've had experience with those three particular occupational types. I've never found in those -- they're the same breed as loggers -- they were working out of doors. It was a hard dangerous life. They never sat around after work and let one man monopolize the interval between supper and bed.)

I've heard a lot of interesting things developed in the camps, but there'd never a man told a continuous story -- even if he had had an outstanding experience or been present at some big disaster or something of the kind, something that you'd tell. He didn't have a chance to tell that straight through as a story or never attempted to. But somebody would say, "Shorty, wasn't you at such and such a place at the time of the big flood?" or something like that. "Yeah, I was there." And then they'd ask him some more questions and he'd tell them some more. And then maybe somebody'd have an argument and say, "Well, I heard it this way." And he'd straighten it out according to his experience, but it proceeded along that way, and he was part of the general conversation instead of some outstanding figure dominating the rest of them by telling them something they'd never heard before. And as the men travelled around, of course, they were picking up this stuff everywhere. The thing would be -- if there was a discussion on Paul Bunyan -- it would wind up as an argument with each fellow trying to spring a gag that was a little bit bigger than the other one. I tell this, now you beat that, you know. And, that's where so many discrepancies come in that puzzle the folklorists. They say, well, this is not authentic because it disagrees with the other version here, and they have Paul Bunyan using the concrete mixer for his pancake dough and the concrete mixer wasn't invented until such and such a year so it couldn't have been, you see. Well, that was something somebody stuck in later on. It was just an exchange of gags.

(Well, yes. Then, of course, Bunyan being the loggers' national hero, or whatever he was, he was keeping pace. Now, I don't know whether Paul kept pace or whether you're the one who made him keep pace with the technology and so forth.)

Well, after he got into general circulation, everybody was writing about him in all sorts of ways, and a lot of it was just -- well, you might call it Baron Munchausen stuff -- which had nothing to do with the woods character. They had him doing all kinds of things, moving mountains, straightening out oceans, and things of that kind that had nothing to do with the lumber industry.

(Well, Bill, what I wanted to ask you -- you did hear these anecdotes about Paul Bunyan in the Minnesota woods before 1914 -- the war period?)

Oh, yes. Definitely.

(Well, Bill, during this period 1900 to 1908 when you were working up in Minnesota, you also came out to California, didn't you, for one summer?)

Yes.

(What were you doing out here then?)

Well, that was when the Walkers were buying up timber in this country and they had cruising parties out and I had a job running compass for the cruisers. I was out here that summer and then in the fall -- they had to stop in the fall because they were snowed in -- and that fall I went back to Minnesota.

(Now, where did you work that summer?)

Mostly up around in Modoc and Siskiyou counties -- on the north rim. I started in around in the Burney district. I was working for cruiser Dick Hovey. His father was the big land man in San Francisco that was buying up the timber for Red River. I worked for him for a short time and then Clint Walker came out to start a cruising party of his own up in the Modoc country and I went and worked for him the rest of the time.

(That was in 1901, was it?)

Yes, 1901.

(Well, Bill, did you pick up any Paul Bunyan stories out here in California in 1901?)

I had one contact. There were three brothers named Eastman that had come out from Michigan in 1884, from the Saginaw River country, and one of them was working for the party that I was working with as a cook and a pack train man and all that sort of stuff. He was a mountain man; he'd lived and been raised in the mountains there, and he had some of these Paul Bunyan gags.

(Never been back to Michigan since 1884?)

Never been back to Michigan, and Lord, where they lived it was a three or four day trip to the nearest railroad by the horses, and there was no lumber operations in the country. It was just a virgin forest, so I don't see how he would have contacted any loggers in that time.

(Well, that must have been up around the Lookout country.)

Yes, he lived up near Fall River Mills. There's a crossroad there with a store ...

(Glenburn?)

Yeah, right in that neighborhood there. Lord, that was a three, four day trip out to the nearest railroad from there. It was pretty near as virgin a forest as you could get into. Well, that's where he lived all the time with his three brothers.

(But as far as you were concerned, they had brought the Paul Bunyan stories, gags, with them from Michigan?)

Yes. I never went into it very deep with them because I wasn't interested in Paul Bunyan particularly at that time, but I know he'd every once in a while make a crack about Paul Bunyan. So evidently the only place he could have heard them was back in that Saginaw country.

(Well, I was most interested in that simply because it added confirmation to your other hearings there in Minnesota that there were these anecdotes existing in the camps about the turn of the century, and evidently they were much older than that. They were in existence before any printed material began to appear.)

I had other contacts with Michigan. Particularly one family that worked for Red River at Westwood. They were third or fourth generation loggers and they had come from Michigan. And I understand that they had heard some of that stuff from their grandfather who had come from Maine. So, if that is true, it would establish a connection clear back to Maine.

(Well, as you know, some of the folklorists have begun to say now that Paul Bunyan is entirely a manufactured product of Mr. W. B. Laughead's imagination.)

Yes, I know.

(I wanted to get it down for the record that as far as you were concerned, you were actually started from an old tradition that you had heard, not only in Minnesota, but here in California as early as 1901.)

Oh, yes. And that afterwards developed after Paul Bunyan became known to the public. We developed quite a fan mail to Paul Bunyan, and a lot of old-timers would write in saying they'd seen the story or something, and here's one that I heard. In crude lead pencil, often hard to read, but some old-timer had written it. He'd heard it in Michigan or Pennsylvania or some damn place back there. So it was pretty well confirmed that way, too. And then there's a lot in the stories themselves -- those old original stories -- that have an eastern atmosphere to them. Maine-ite and New Brunswick country and probably in eastern Canada, the French Canadians. I know there's one folklore

writer who has pretty well traced the stories back to French Canadian sources -- Max Gartenberg. He's written for the folklore journals on that.

(Well, my great interest in this was simply in the origin of Bunyan stories or anecdotes, gags, as you call them, that you first used. But actually they were an oral tradition that you had heard in the woods as early as 1900 when you first went up above Akeley in the Bemidji country?)

That's right.

(And then in 1901 that you had heard them in Modoc County in California from a Michigan family?)

That's right.

(Well, that's what I wanted to get established.)

Yes, that would take them back in the Saginaw country in 1884 so they had them on or before -- when Saginaw was booming.

(I'm trying to develop here, or get into the record, the background of that first booklet. Now, what happened to you after that first booklet in 1914? We discussed that it fell flat. You had gone into this program of advertising in the trade journals in order really to build up the trademark and the legend that you had started in the booklet.)

Well, prior to 1914 I was still working as a free lancer and handling this Paul Bunyan stuff and then made arrangements with Archie where I worked in the office where I'd be in direct contact with him. I worked half a day for him and half a day for myself on this other promotion business, and that kept up until about 1916. I know we got out a book in 1916.

(Was that your second book then on Paul Bunyan?)

Yes, in 1916. In the meantime we were getting out, as I say, stuff -- a little printed matter for the salesmen to use, and I got out some other promotional literature for them that was not connected with Paul Bunyan. I got out some factual books and brochures about the western operation, and that kept me busy up until about 1916.

(Well, what happened to your second booklet in 1916?)

Well, I don't know. That had a small circulation. I didn't have much material to go on and I couldn't tell very much in that book that I hadn't used in other ways. And I put some other lumberjack stuff in it to make a book out of it, but it did have some Paul Bunyan stuff in it.

(Was it about the same size as the first book?)

That was about a 6 by 9, as I remember it. I don't know, it might have run 24, 32 pages, something like that. It wasn't a very big book.

(It was again designed for the lumber trade?)

That's all. We never sent books to anybody that wasn't connected with the lumber industry until after this Paul Bunyan thing developed from other sources and people got interested and commenced asking for books. I would say that our first edition of that "Paul Bunyan and His Big Blue Ox" in 1922 -- the first printing was 10,000 and that took care of all the lumber people we knew. Then these requests started coming in and we ran another 5,000 that year.

(In 1922? That was your third book?)

It was just a reprint of the '22 edition. They just put the plates on the press and run us 5,000 more.

(Your edition in '22 was an expansion of your 1916 book?)

Yes. I gathered more material and we had enough for a bigger book, and we got that out. But some of the writers have said that when we got that book out we sent it out to editors and other people all over the country. We did not. We never conceived of that thing as any more than an advertising piece to lumbermen. And it was written in lumbermen's language. We never anticipated any other audience, but strangely enough, that book, written the way it was, made a big hit with kids. Kids devoured it, and we began to get all kinds of requests from kids. Then the big break came that gave Paul Bunyan publicity outside of the industry. It was a review that was written in the KANSAS CITY STAR.

(In 1922?)

No. That was along in -- let's see when was it. That must have been late '22 or '23. But they gave us a five column review on their editorial page, which was a pretty hard place to break into. At that time the standards of the KANSAS CITY STAR were pretty strict and they didn't permit any advertising, direct or indirect, on their editorial page. But they couldn't review this book without giving the Red River Lumber Company mention. It was the circulation of the KANSAS CITY STAR that brought it to the attention of outsiders and then we began to get requests from everybody. But after that first general mailing we never made a broadcast mailing of the book.

(Not after 1922?)

And we never broadcast it to anyone but lumbermen. We never conceived of it as anything but a piece of advertising literature to lumbermen. This outside

interest we had never anticipated. But it commenced to come in and from then on the books were sent out on individual request. We even got requests from book dealers who wanted to stock the book and sell -- a piece of advertising as a book. But we never filled any orders like that. We weren't in the publishing business; we were selling lumber. After the 1922 edition we printed the books in our own print shop at the Westwood office.

(The first two books were printed in Minneapolis?)

Yes, in Minneapolis.

(And how about the first printing and the second printing of the 1922 book?)

That was printed in Minneapolis.

(But after the second printing you did it all at Westwood?)

Let's see. We may have had one more or so printed in Minneapolis, but after that we printed them in Westwood. By the time we quit, when Red River liquidated the manufacturing end of their business at the end of 1934, we had reprinted the book -- let's see -- it was the 13th edition and it had gone through I think 110,000 or 125,000 copies that were sent out on these individual requests.

(With the 1922 booklet you only made two broadcast mailings to the lumber industry?)

We only made one, that first 10,000. After we used up what mailing lists we had we still had some books left. And, of course, there were some you sent out to your friends, and Red River people were sending out to their friends, but that would add up to a very small number. But we commenced to get requests. A lot of people who had gotten the original book wanted another one to give to their friend, or some customer would write, "Could I have a dozen of these to send to my friends", and we'd take care of any inquiry like that. So we had to print another 5,000 in 1922. And from then on we were printing in Westwood. And it went through -- counting the very first one -- I think the total was 13 editions, and it ran to about 110,000 or 125,000.

(Good Lord! All in response, except for that first mailing, all in response to individual requests!)

Yes. They came from all kinds of people all over the world. In fact, an inquiry came in after Red River was out of business. Somebody had heard that the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company was carrying on in Susanville. This lady wrote a letter and said, "Have you any of the Red River Paul Bunyan books? We'd like to get one to replace the one we have which is all worn out, which we got in Manchuria in 1927."

(That's a long way from Westwood.)

There were Paul Bunyan books that went with the Byrd expedition. Everybody was donating stuff to the Byrd expedition -- the second expedition that went down there. When was that, in the late '20s? And we sent a bunch of Paul Bunyan books, and we had very interesting correspondence with some of the boys down there in Little America. Particularly with two fellows who kept on writing long after the expedition was over. Some of those fellows would be stationed back at the base points in Australia and New Zealand and before long we got requests from practically every public library in Australia and New Zealand for copies of that book to put in their library.

(Did you get one from the Kremlin, too -- from Moscow?)

Yes.

(When was that, do you remember?)

Well, it must have been, let's see. We recognized Russia along about '33 or something like that and after that correspondence was opened up and sometime after that we got a letter with the letterhead of the Kremlin, and it was written in English by some fellow. His title was typed under his name, commissar of this or that or something. And he asked for samples of our literature that they wished to use in the study of propaganda.

(You'll never get a finer compliment, Bill, than that -- propaganda.)

I sent him a pile of literature and I told him that if he published anything along those lines I would be glad to have some copies, but never heard from him again. Yeah, that was kind of interesting. Let's see, that book was translated into Czechoslavakian, and I think there was one or two editions in Scandinavian countries, Norway or Sweden or Denmark, that the book was just literally translated and used. I don't know how they used it because I never got any copies back, but I know that was the basis of their original request and the correspondence that followed. Yes, we got from China an old Chinese print a missionary sent us that showed a fellow that looked just like our Paul Bunyan, and he was standing alongside of a log with an ax, one of those great big broad-faced axes. And this missionary wrote and he said that the Chinese had preceeded us on everything, paper and printing and everything else, and he said it looked like they had beat us to Paul Bunyan. He says, "This is a picture of Pan Koo, the god who made the world with his axe!" Then he went on and he told me quite a lot about the legend of Pan Koo, and I had that print framed and have it yet.

(Bill, I want to ask one question before I retrogress a little bit. What ever happened to all of that correspondence that you collected through the years about Paul Bunyan and the effect of your ... ?)

It went into the regular office files. At the start it just got mixed in with the rest of it, but pretty soon I isolated it and run a set of Paul Bunyan files. Then a lot of it Archie Walker had in his files back in Minneapolis. Now, how systematic Archie kept Paul Bunyan files from the start I don't know, but later on he did. I suppose a lot of the early stuff just got into the general files and who the devil could ever find it afterwards? I don't know. And our stuff there at Westwood when we liquidated, all the files of course were boxed up and put in storage. I boxed everything separately that contained the Paul Bunyan correspondence, and there were a few letters that I retained personally. But the bulk of it went into those files. Then, of course, the Red River went through this reorganization into the Shasta Forests Company, and anything the magnitude of that, what became of those boxes with that correspondence, I don't know.

(I suppose we'd have to get hold of Dick Cogan at Shasta Forests and ask him if he knows anything about it.)

Yes. I don't know whether they would salvage anything like that. There was such a terrific volume of that stuff, and starting their own files and stuff, I'd imagine they'd eliminate everything that wasn't absolutely essential, so I don't know if any of that stuff was saved or not.

(Well, if the Forest History Foundation wish to get hold of the files in Minneapolis, they can probably contact Archie Walker and find out if he retained any of it.)

Yes, that would be the thing to do.

(Now, Bill, I wanted to go back just a little bit. The second booklet, of course, was published in 1916. Then there's a hiatus there from 1916 to 1922. What happened to Paul Bunyan after the 1916 booklet? Did you carry on your advertising campaign for him?)

No. I didn't. Early in 1917 I left and went back into that machinery business for a while, and the managing of the advertising was transferred to Westwood. They were just, of course, building up their own organization out there because they had only started cutting in 1914, but they were building up their office organization. They wanted to get everything under one hand. And there was nobody to handle it as a Paul Bunyan proposition. Archie was in Minneapolis, and the rest of them weren't acquainted with it, to handle the copy and so on, so they didn't use Paul Bunyan.

(Well, actually after the 1916 booklet, Paul Bunyan then, as far as Red River was concerned, died for a while.)

Yes. Then it must have been about 1919 or very early 1920 Archie got the deal back again to Minneapolis. Then he contacted me -- I was working in

the engineering department of the Northern Pacific Railroad in St. Paul -- to put Paul Bunyan back into the advertising. I did that, working nights and Sundays and holding down my job at the Northern Pacific, commuting back and forth. I lived in Minneapolis and worked in St. Paul. Then I moved to St. Paul and right after that Archie said, "You'd better come in and work in the office here." Well, I quit the St. Paul job and then I was commuting from St. Paul to Minneapolis, but that's incidental. But it was about 1920 that we picked it up again.

(In advertising only?)

Advertising only. Between that time and 1922 Archie had patented the Paul Bunyan trademark and he did that in this way -- as a trademark to be applied to wood products. So we left the thing wide open for everybody else who wanted to use Paul Bunyan could do it. Because as I say, at the start nobody knew anything about Paul Bunyan, and we wanted as much free advertising of Paul Bunyan as we could get. If anybody wanted to write a book about Paul Bunyan or use it in his advertising, as long as he wasn't putting in on a lumber product he was welcome to it and we'd give him all the help we could. But we retained the right to use it as a trademark on lumber products. Now, of course, Paul Bunyan was in the public domain, as far as the law was concerned. It was just like Little Red Riding Hood or Cinderella or something like that. He was a mythical character that anybody could write about. You could copyright your particular version that you wrote about him. You could write a story about Cinderella and copyright it right today but you couldn't hold any exclusive rights on the exclusive use of Cinderella -- just that one copy. That may be digressing. But our policy was to get as many people to talk about Paul Bunyan or write books about him or use him in advertising as we could, as long as he wasn't using him for wood products. And we couldn't prevent any other lumber advertiser from talking about Paul Bunyan in connection with his product, which some of them did. But that soon died out because we were carrying on this continuous trade journal advertising and Paul Bunyan always appeared some way or other. We only occasionally would run a straight Paul Bunyan advertisement. But when we were running regular commercial advertising there was always a little imprint of Paul Bunyan down in the corner, and then, of course, our Paul Bunyan trademark in the signature, and maybe a little quotation or something in a box. Tied the Paul Bunyan idea so closely to the Red River in carrying on this consistent trade journal advertising that it practically froze anybody else from any extensive use of Paul Bunyan in their straight lumber advertising. He was used by other industries and we encouraged rather than discouraged that.

(Well, then starting early in 1920 you reinstituted the campaign of advertising in the lumber trade journals using Paul Bunyan as a trademark and Archie Walker copyrighted it. Then in 1922 you brought out the third booklet.)

Yes.

(And then as you tell me, the roof fell in.)

Yes.

(Well, Bill, what further use did you make of Paul Bunyan from 1922 on? Did you continue to use it in your advertising?)

Oh, yes, consistently. And we carried on a very consistent trade journal advertising. We had whole pages in some of the journals and half pages in the others. When we quit in 1934 I don't think we had missed one issue in any advertising journal in that time, which is a pretty consistent campaign for one advertiser in the trade journals.

(Let's correct that, Bill. That's 1944.)

1944 when they went out of business. There was a thirty year period there.

(From '14 to '44?)

Yes. Not all of those accounts started in 1914. Some of them didn't start until the 1920s, but counting the original 1914 set-up, they had run for 30 years without missing an issue.

(Actually, your advertising seems to have been about as important in implanting Paul Bunyan in the lumber trade and probably in the public consciousness as your booklet. Or do you think that's a fair statement?)

Yes. The thing that kept him identified -- I never treated Paul Bunyan as an historical figure. We always wrote about him as though he was carrying on business there in Westwood.

(As though he were actually on the ground.)

Absolutely. And it finally permeated all of the other departments of the company and their correspondence and their customers all got into the humor of it, and correspondence of the sales department with people who were buying equipment or everything, it was always on the basis that they were corresponding with Paul Bunyan. It was the darndest thing you ever yeard of. Yes, our salesmen would bring in customers to visit the plant, you know. A big buyer would come to Westwood to visit the plant and they all came out to see the home of Paul Bunyan. The people there talked about they were working for Paul Bunyan. I got the payoff one day when I passed a group of kids on the sidewalk. I got there just in time to hear one little kid say, "My grandpa works for Paul Bunyan in the 'chine shop." And I thought then ...!

(It was after 1922 when that third booklet you put out really went over. You've mentioned several times the impact it seemed to have on children.)

Yes, that's funny.

(Can you elaborate on that a little, some of the things that happened to you with it?)

Yes. We continually got letters from children. Maybe the children had seen the Paul Bunyan book some place, or some other kid's family had one, or something, and they wanted one, and they wanted one for their school. Apparently the kids from all parts of the United States were interested in forestry. A lot of them had forest projects at school and the like. And we very soon learned that we shouldn't send a book to one kid that asked for it, or every other kid in the schoolroom wanted it. There was as many requests for books as there were children in the class. So what I did on that, I generally wrote the writer a letter thanking him for his inquiry and telling him that if he'd send the name of his teacher, I'd send three or four, half a dozen books for the use of the whole class. And they'd sit down and write me another letter so they'd get their books.

(If you hadn't done that, the circulation of that book might have been 250,000.)

Lord, I don't know where it would have gone because the interest in forestry didn't seem to be confined to the parts of the country, in the forest belt, or any place where there was activity along that line. I think every state in the Union was represented. From coast to coast and border to border, they all seemed interested. And they'd write and ask you the darndest questions. They were smart questions. They'd want to know why they did this or did that in lumbering.

(What about your friend from Sacramento?)

Say, that was funny. I got a letter from a lady, her name was Bunyan. She said her husband was of English extraction, and she had a little boy about seven or eight years old whose name was Paul, Paul Bunyan. Somehow or other he'd heard of this Paul Bunyan lumber activity that had his name on it and he thought it was his sawmill. And she said she had an awful time explaining it to him. So I wrote to her and told her to bring the little boy and his brother and come up and see the sawmill as a guest of the company. So they came up, these two little boys. They were lively little boys. I arranged for somebody to take them down through the various plant operations and then the logging superintendent personally took them out to the logging camps and they saw things out there and had a meal or two there in the camp with the loggers. That was a big thrill to them. They were around there two or three days. It was a miracle that they weren't killed because how they kept them out of the machinery or from under falling trees I don't know. The men all said they'd never experienced anything like it; they were lively, smart little kids.

(I think your statements about the impact your book had on the children who had heard of them is interesting because, as you know, some of the folklorists now have pointed out in tracing the literary evolution of Bunyan that he

has become almost a child's national figure. Apparently this was started, there was something in that original stuff that had the basic appeal to children.)

Yes. When we'd get letters from adults, their first contact with the book was a boy who'd bring home one he'd got at school and they would read them. We'd get letters from parents and the teachers.

(All these years, Bill, from 1922 until the Red River was liquidated in 1944 you kept that Paul Bunyan book going, didn't you?)

Oh, yes.

(Could you ever measure directly, Bill, any direct results to Red River out of this Paul Bunyan campaign?)

No. It would be very indirect. I don't know that we ever got any orders for lumber as a direct result, but there was a sort of a friendly atmosphere in the correspondence. So many of the correspondents would catch the Paul Bunyan spirit and write that way. That was especially true in the sales department because they had more correspondence with the customers and it provided more of a friendly atmosphere. They seemed to feel that they were dealing with human beings. Even if they were writing in a complaint and wanted a rescale or an adjustment on something, it might have a Paul Bunyan reference in it, and the reply would be along the same line. And there was more or less of a friendly atmosphere even in the case of complaints or adjustments -- to the credit department and all of them. The men in charge, the credit manager and the sales manager, caught the spirit of it. I know from my representatives the feeling with the trade, with the customers. And it certainly didn't hurt any as a matter of public relations.

(Well, its value then was that of good public relations. It humanized the company's relations with the customers.)

Yes. I think before very long a lot of the people in management realized that. It gave them an avenue to carry on correspondence, the contacts, on a friendly basis. They'd start with a joke anyway for a laugh.

(Well, it built good will and as has been said before by many authorities, the lumber industry needs all the good will it can get.)

Yes, I think so. It may in the future ... Lord knows what legislation and things we're going to have that affect the industry and forest policies and the attitude of the public toward the industry is going to have a large bearing on what form those things will take. It certainly don't hurt to have a few friends.

(Well, that's what Paul Bunyan actually did. Besides giving the legends to the American people, it also had that benefit for the lumber trade.)

But, as I said, all those things grew out afterwards. As I said before, our first idea in setting up the book was a piece of sales literature. But these other effects appeared along afterward.

(Did you use Paul Bunyan at all in any way during the second World War?)

Yes. He was quite a factor at our place.

(How?)

Well, like other industries that had all their product sold on high priority to the government, there wasn't much use in writing and telling the trade that we had some good lumber for sale. But, you notice that all industries, their advertising was along the lines what they and their employees were doing for the war effort. And it seemed as if the lumber industry was more or less left out of a lot of the helpful publicity posters, war posters and things that were given -- at the beginning anyway. A lot of the people that were working in the plants felt that, from seeing all these posters, that maybe they ought to be out building airplanes and tanks and stuff like that instead of getting out lumber, the same old job they'd always had. And we had to sell them on the idea that lumber was a very vital thing in the war effort and very badly needed, and they couldn't fight the war without lumber, and they were doing the war effort right where they stood. And we had bulletin boards all through the plant and copies of our advertising and publicity that we and everybody else was advertising to the public that we were doing a war job too we put on bulletin boards all through the plant. I think it had a very good reaction.

(I'll never forget that one ad that you ran of Paul picking up the telephone and the caption under it was, "Has anybody seen a big blue ox?" Babe had gone AWOL from Red River to help the war effort. That was the way you used Paul then, simply to ...?)

Yes, we were advertising to our own employees as well as to the public, selling the idea that lumber was a very vital product and Red River was doing all they could to get out all they could and ship it. It was almost automatically just consumed on high priorities. Even if it went to a wholesaler, for instance, the wholesaler would have to show us his priority before he could place the order.

(Well, you were placed then, as nearly as I can sum it up, in the first few years of the second World War, you were placed in the position where the federal information and propaganda agencies were not glamorizing the lumber industry.)

That's right.

(You had to do that yourself.)

Yes. I was a member of the promotion committee of the Western Pine Association, and all the members of the Association were up against the same thing that their employees had not been sold on the idea that lumber was a war weapon, and a lot of them were leaving for no other reason than that they were patriotic and wanted to get into the war effort. And we didn't have any posters or anything glamorizing us like these other industries. We didn't have any appropriation to cover it, but Roy Cary, at that time advertising manager of the Western Pine Association, and I went down to San Francisco and we contacted a lot of our friends in the printing and engraving industries and they helped us at very low cost to get some plates and work out some two-color posters with just a few tint blocks here and there and photographs that didn't cost us very much and still would get over the idea -- photographs of lumber being used in aircraft and tank mock-ups and in crates and packing and all that where lumber was being used so extensively, and then a little copy to tie it in with the war effort. The Western Pine member mills used those in large quantities in their mills until we commenced to get the more glamorous posters that the government was putting out.

(Well, Bill, did you use Paul Bunyan in any specific sense in these Western Pine industry posters?)

Not in the industry posters but we did in the Red River posters. And we made up some in our own plant -- as big as we could make them -- showing Paul Bunyan doing something and then a little slogan underneath that he was using a lot of box lumber. Those posters would go down through the plant and in the smoking rooms they had, all through the plant, smoking rooms where they could go and take a smoke without setting fire to the plant, and take a coffee break. And we put a lot of stuff up there. And I know from personal contacts I had with the employees and in working with the unions -- the unions were doing a wonderful job on bond drives and all that sort of effort, and I always worked very closely with those fellows. I'd get the lowdown from them whether this was going over or that was going over or not. They knew pretty much what was going on, and I know that it helped.

(Well, now, Bill, if I didn't smoke such cheap tobacco in that pipe, you wouldn't have to cough so. Bill, you used a rubber stamp with that Bunyan trademark, didn't you, that went on all the packaged material you sent out?)

Yes. Anything that could be packaged -- we had packing materials. For instance, our adhesive tape was made with the Paul Bunyan trademark repeated on it so you couldn't tear a piece off without having the Paul Bunyan trademark and that went on all the packaged stuff like plywood, and Venetian blind slats and stuff that had to be packed.

(Did you ever mark your surfaced lumber with a rubber stamp with Paul Bunyan?)

Yes, we marked on the edge, and during the war you had to have a mill number and a grade stamp on there. We had never trademarked bulk lumber but that gave us an opportunity. We had our stamps especially made to carry that information that was required by law and in addition a Paul Bunyan trademark. And then when we were manufacturing sash and doors at Westwood we had an electrically heated brand that we could burn into the edge of the door without touching the surface that carried the Paul Bunyan trademark and then our advertising slogan for the pine door. We could mark doors. We marked everything we could because the law required that you must use a trademark on your product if you're going to use it as a trademark. We marked everything we could, packaged goods and the doors that we could brand or anything that was trademarked, we always had Paul Bunyan on it.

(Well, I want to stress again that that trademark is derived from that original caricature that you made of Paul.)

Yes, it was all a reproduction of that. As I said at the start, the thing was conventionalized so that it would reproduce in all these various methods that we might have to use.

(Bill, was Peter Dick dead by the time you worked on Paul Bunyan?)

No, he lived for quite a time, and he had a son that came to the Red River and stayed there at Westwood for quite a while and now he's quite a big shot in the lumber industry down in the south, down in Alabama.

(Did Pete ever know that you'd used his likeness?)

Yes. Pete and I were mightly good friends. I had worked for him and then I had worked on railroad construction and logging work where they were contracting. He was a big contractor and a wonderful guy. Oh yes, he knew it.

(Well, Bill, that trademark is still alive, I guess.)

Yes. It came up after the expiration that it had to be renewed and I know that it was renewed and the new patents taken out. I think those run 17 years. Then it was bought by Kenneth Walker and his brother Theodore, Ted, when they bought the Red River sawmill in Susanville and the retail plant. They had a retail yard and a service factory in Reno; that was part of the package, and they've since expanded and bought another mill over at Anderson that's cutting timber. It started as Red River timber but it was not included in the Shasta Forests deal. It was personally owned by Kenneth and his brother and father and mother. They owned quite a tract, and then of course they're buying Forest Service timber and getting timber from other sources. They've got quite an operation. And they own the Paul Bunyan trademark and call their company the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company.

(And the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company is still using the trademark?)

It's the same. Kenneth is the one that actively manages it. His brother is a stockholder and is active in other lines of business.

(Have they carried on with this Paul Bunyan Lumber Company any of the advertising that you used to do for Red River?)

Not to any extent. They've been doing business under a pressure where mostly the sales manager was writing and saying, "Sorry, I can't do anything for you for ninety days," so they haven't felt the necessity of advertising lumber. But they have carried the usual company ads in the trade journals with their address and they carried the Paul Bunyan trademark. They use the Paul Bunyan head in painting their name on all their equipment and trucks and everything like that. They all carry a Paul Bunyan face.

(I've seen it on the trucks. I've been scared to death by Paul as he passed me on a narrow road.)

All their tractors and everything in the woods -- they have to paint the name on there anyway -- so I made them up some drawings for stencils and other things for the sign painters to use. So they have to carry the Paul Bunyan head and the company name on all their equipment.

(Now, Bill, there's another point. I keep saying one other and I come up with half a dozen. Between 1922 when you brought out your third Paul Bunyan book and 1944 which was your 30th year anniversary and final goodbye issue, you did another book on Paul Bunyan, didn't you, for -- was it Bemidji or Brainerd, Minnesota?)

Yes. I remember that. They had a big Paul Bunyan show at Brainerd and we gave them a book, a folder like. It wasn't a bound book, just a folder, and adapted some Paul Bunyan stuff to the hunting and fishing in the lake region and placed him at Brainerd and placed him with those books, and we also sent them a number of other advertising novelties. We used to get out a bread board in the shape of a pig that was very popular, made out of plywood, and it carried a little slogan, "There is no squeal when you use Paul Bunyan's pine." Oh, Lord, we printed those by the hundreds of thousands and sold a lot of them to other industries that were using them without the Paul Bunyan trademark. But anyway, we gave them those pig bread boards and some these big long sugar pine cones and other things. Some of our salesmen were up there. As a matter of fact, northern Minnesota is not an active market for California pines. They deal more with the Northwest and then they get, or used to at least, get a lot of pine from the South, southern yellow pine. And they use the fir and Idaho pine. There's something in the set-up of the freight rates or something of the kind that makes that a natural market. It was largely public relations and good will

and some of those things -- not only at Brainerd but we used to -- other activities in Minnesota, if we could print up something for them. But it was indirect good will, largely.

(Well, Bill, you also had a big statue of Paul that you used to send around.)

Yes. That was made in Chicago.

(Do you remember about when that was built, when you started to use it?)

It was in the late '30s some time. These people had specialized on the moving figures, you know, and they made it. They didn't miss Paul Bunyan's face very far, and they made the figure about seven or eight feet high. It had a loud speaker system inside. You could either run records or an announcer could talk through it. We sent that around to lumber conventions in lieu of the usual exhibits that you have in a booth. And then, if there'd be a bond drive or anything like that, they'd lend them the Paul Bunyan statue and the speaker could talk through Paul Bunyan with that big amplifier, and that was used until it was lost in a fire.

(Isn't there another lumber company, a hardwood lumber lumber company in the Lake States, now that's using the Paul Bunyan name too?)

I don't know whether they're using the name. They use it in the copy in their advertising. I've seen it. I haven't had such close contact with the trade journals in late years but for a while they were running quite strong. They didn't use the trademark or anything like that, but they used it in their copy which is perfectly legitimate because Paul is in the public domain.

(Well, I was coming down the Oregon coast, coming down from Oregon, just a month or six weeks ago, and I stopped in the California redwoods just above the mouth of the Klamath at this Trees of Mystery. Of course, if you drive the highways in California in the summer time practically every tourist's car has one of those big bumper strips, "Trees of Mystery - Shrine of the Redwoods - U. S. 101," so I took my two sons up there to see it. And lo and behold, as you come in the gate and park your car, there are two enormous statues of Babe, the Blue Ox, and the other one of Paul -- monstrous things, and each one has a loud speaker and an amplifier.)

I've seen pictures. I've heard a lot about it but I've never been over there since those statues were built. I've never seen them. I've got to get over there some day.

(Well, they use them up in Oregon, and from what I understand there are at least three communities in Minnesota that argue over which is Paul Bunyan's native town.)

Yes. Wisconsin is very bitter about Minnesota trying to claim Paul Bunyan. But I think Minnesota has used it more extensively than any place else. It advertises the lake regions as Paul Bunyan's playground, and the federal forest, national forest, is officially called the Paul Bunyan Forest. There's three regions back there -- one at Brainerd and the one up around Bemidji and the Arrowhead region around Duluth and the Iron Range -- and they're more or less competitive but they all join up on the use of Paul Bunyan and the Paul Bunyan playground.

(You mean, Minnesota stands united there against Wisconsin?)

They got a start on them anyway.

(Well, that to me is a most amazing thing that this venture which you started and, as you say, the folklorists to the contrary, was based on the fragments that you heard in the camps in Minnesota and clear out here in California at the turn of the century. It started out strictly as an advertising idea to sell lumber and has become a national figure and has been appropriated and is used throughout the country with the sure knowledge -- just as you said about the early Paul Bunyan anecdotes -- they didn't tell a story; everybody knew Paul. Now, no matter where you see Paul Bunyan, or the figure of him or of Babe, you know immediately what it means.)

Haven't you noticed this, too, that even in such things as war dispatches from the war, every once in a while they'll mention it was a "Paul Bunyan effort" or something of that kind. They evidently -- the writers and the copy editors in the newspapers -- assume that everybody will know what they mean when they mention Paul Bunyan on a war front -- an editor wouldn't let anything like that go by unless he was of the opinion that the average reader would know what he meant.

(That's right, Bill. It seems to me that to the best of our ability we've fixed the origin of Paul Bunyan and why he was created and what he was intended to do. It's like so many things. It seems to me that you built it a lot better than you knew when you started.)

Well, I don't think it surprised anybody more than it did Archie Walker or me.

(This is after dinner and our stomachs are full so maybe our conversation will be kind of logey. I know the contribution that it seems to me you've made to this Paul Bunyan mythology or whatever it is -- and that in the years since 1914 anyone who has worked seriously in the field has generally come in time to write to you and ask you about it. Now, what can you recall about the people that have written to you about it?)

Gartenberg, and Esther Sheppard, and Gladys Heeney, and I've had some correspondence with - oh, what's her name who's head of the English

department of the University of Nebraska?

(Just a minute, we'll look for it. Well, we found it. That was Louise Pound. Now, there was Fishwick with that article in the YALE REVIEW, Bill, and what about Daniel Hoffman?)

Yes, I remember I exchanged quite a number of letters with Dan Hoffman.

(Almost all of these people, except Esther Sheppard, were folklorists, weren't they?)

No, Esther Sheppard wasn't a folklorist. I met her personally. She stopped off here in Susanville and we had dinner together and a very pleasant friendship, and she sent me an autographed copy of the edition of her book that was illustrated by Rockwell Kent. It was a beautiful book. And several other of her writings.

(Now, she was no relation to the Sheppards from Rhinelander, Wisconsin?)

No. She and her husband lived up in Washington in the summer time and she's head of the English Department at San Jose State College. No, she had done a lot of work for a long time. She said that she and her husband had for years travelled around in the camps, logging camps up there in the Northwest, trying to interview old-timers and dig up a lot of material, which she did.

(Well, Bill, there was one chap, Carleton Ames, who I think did his master's or his doctor's thesis who was trying to prove that there was nothing to Paul Bunyan except a manufactured legend.)

Yes.

(Now, did Ames ever contact you about that, Bill?)

No. The first I heard of it, Heinie Mitchell, the publisher of the BEMIDJI PIONEER, wrote to me and told me about this thing and sent me a copy of it. Ames had gone out and interviewed as many people as he could find that had worked in the logging woods -- that was fifteen years or so after the big show was over -- and he hadn't found anybody that had ever heard anything of Paul Bunyan and he said that his grandfather had worked in the logging camps and he had never heard the stories in the camps. Heinie wrote to me and I told Heinie maybe it was a good thing for our literature that Grandpa Ames had never found anybody that had never heard of Shakespeare. It was negative evidence and Ames had come along after the big show was over and all the actors were gone. The live-wire lumberjacks had all come out to the coast and other places, and it was negative evidence, but we had definite evidence that there was a connection with the old camp versions.

(Well, that was one reason, Bill, that in the course of these interviews I kept coming back to your positive recollections or oral stories in the woods because it seems to me that a lot of the present attitude toward Paul Bunyan on the part of the professional scholars, like the letter to the editor of the Answer Column you mentioned in TRUE magazine last spring -- the letter about Paul Bunyan and how he was created -- was answered by TRUE and Robert Pinkerton usually answers those letters in TRUE, and Pinkerton is supposed to know his Northwest, at least its western country. The letter was answered that Paul Bunyan was fake-lore, not folklore. He was the creation of a highly paid press agent -- that's you, Bill. Well, of all the people who have started to mine the lode that you uncovered I suppose the most prominent of them in the popular mind is Jim Stevens.)

Yes. And Jim got out the books, you know, the hard-covered books that had a wide circulation, and he's the one that the editors and people of that kind know about and look to for Paul Bunyan. In a number of cases Jim has spoken very kindly about me. He wrote the foreword of Harold Filton's book, that collection of stories from all sources, and I've had quite a bit of correspondence with Filton. Jim wrote that foreword and he gave me a very nice paragraph there. No, Jim's always been very generous towards me in that way.

(Well, Jim's two hard-covered books -- the first one, the Paul Bunyan book, was published by Albert Knopf in 1925, and then the Saginaw Paul Bunyan came out in 1932. Well, now Bill, Jim was writing stories in the Paul Bunyan vein several years before that first book, wasn't he?)

Yes, as I say, the first Paul Bunyan thing that he sold was that Mencken MERCURY story, "The Blackduck Dinner" that afterwards was a story in his book, and that had been some time in 1922 because he wrote and told me that he had sold it and then he sent me a copy of the MERCURY with the story in it.

(That was after you had come out to Westwood, wasn't it?)

Yes.

(That would place at least his correspondence with you and his sending you the MERCURY after the third edition of your Paul Bunyan book had come out, in 1922, but there was nothing in that "Blackduck Dinner" as I recall that could have been attributed to you.)

It was a highly original story as I remember.

(Jim hadn't corresponded with you before that first story, had he?)

No. Unless he'd seen a book of mine or a review or something, I don't know where he'd ever heard of me. He was working up at Bend, Oregon, for the Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company at the time.

(Well, evidently Jim had been collecting ...)

Yeah. Oh, I don't know how long he'd been at it, and he probably had been around, worked in the camps for I don't know how long -- all his life, I suppose. And he probably heard a lot of that stuff in the camps.

(Well, Bill, in any of his correspondence -- as you say, Jim has corresponded with you now for 35 years -- in any of his correspondence has Jim ever mentioned or intimated that he had read any of your Paul Bunyan stuff before he broke into print himself with it?)

No. I don't recall that he did. Really, I don't know why he wrote to me in the first place, where he'd heard of me, because it was shortly after, it was so close to the appearance of that book, the 1922 Red River Bunyan, that I had no doubt that he'd written his story before that book came out. It was something that he might have been working at for a long time before he got it into shape to sell.

(Yes. Well, of course as you know, Jim in that first book made some very positive statements which I guess the critics more or less dared him to prove about Paul's Canadian ancestry. I don't know where Jim got it and I don't think anyone else does but Jim.)

Well, I've always had a hunch there was some Canadian source in it. As I mentioned in the introduction to that book I gave you, that first paragraph, the oral gags had a flavor, a kind of habitant flavor to them, that without any direct evidence I thought they did come from Canada. They always had something of the same flavor as the Canadian's way of telling things.

(There's another point, too, Bill. In one of these esoteric folklore journals somebody was commenting on this story of yours about the French Canadian who, as the folklorist said, didn't have any more initiative than to blindly obey orders - Mike Sullivan's -- and throw the anchor off the batteau when it had no rope on it. Well, of course, as we know, that story has popped up again and again. Actually, that wasn't what you had in mind, was it?)

No. I actually knew Mike Sullivan and knew Bouton and they were both telling the story. I don't know where the story first came from, but Bouton never denied it. And afterwards, as I say, he worked in crews, camp construction crews where I was, driving a team there. The fellows used to kid him about it and he'd always shrug and say, "Well, Mike she's get the big wage. She's the boss. She say throw the ank. If she say throw the horse, by God I'd throw the horse."

(Well, I think that's one case where a folklorist just didn't believe what he had read or had heard. As I told you, I've heard that "throw out the ank"

story in a different setting, but it was always a French Canadian. "Throw out the ank. Throw out the ank." "But the ank she got no rope." "Well, throw him out anyway. Might do some good.")

"No string on the hank, no string on the hank," he said.

(Now how about Joe Muffraw?)

Well, I don't know. That was just a name that was going around in the woods. "You know Joe Muffraw?" "Yes, two Joe Muffraw, one named Pete." That's how I knew about him. I don't know where I heard about Joe Muffraw wearing out six pairs of shoe pacs looking for Paul Bunyan to fight him. And then he came along and Paul picked up the ox and turned her around in the plow and he walked down the road saying, "Hox and all, hox and all," instead of challenging Paul to a fight. And then I have read since that there actually was a Muffraw who was a noted fighting character in the old times back East somewhere. That was a story that I had heard just in that form, and it was a Paul Bunyan. "Joe Muffraw, two Joe Muffraw, yes, one named Pete."

(That's one way of making fun of habitants. Now Big Ole was your own creation -- the blacksmith -- wasn't he, Bill?)

Yes, all I had to go on that was a saying around the camps that, "Cook, she's make the doughnuts, but the blacksmith, she's punch the hole." I don't know whether it was told in connection with Paul Bunyan or not, but it was just a saying in the camps. So I appropriated it and gave him the name "Big Ole", and then afterwards I used Big Ole in other stories as being a machinist who made the downcutter and the other machines for Paul. Paul would get the idea but it was always Big Ole that had the equipment that did it. But whether that original saying had anything to do with Paul Bunyan, I don't know. There were so many of those gags going around, you know, and a fellow'd kid at the table, you know, pick up a doughnut and drop it on the plate and say, "Cook, she's make the doughnut but the blacksmith she's punch the hole." When you're doing a job like that and you're coming up to a deadline, it's just like a fellow running a daily column or drawing a comic strip. He's got to produce right now. He's got no time to dig into folklore or anything else. He's sitting down at that typewriter and he's got to get something out today.

(Sure. Anybody who works under pressure of a deadline has to do the best he can with what he's got and generally it's himself, but I don't think, and I don't want the impression to get into these interviews, that the fact that you had to meet a deadline ...)

No, we'd better leave that angle out.

(No, but that meeting the deadline did not apply to that first booklet really, and that first book is where the genesis on this Paul Bunyan thing got

started. Sure, after '22 when you were running that heavy advertising schedule and had to meet the deadline, yes I can understand that. But I don't want to have anyone get the idea that the meeting of a deadline had anything to do with that first booklet which is where the whole story started. Although in later years I think you created almost everything you needed as you had to have it. Well, there are a couple of other questions, Bill. I've got a lot of them. Here in Susanville at the Lassen Junior College they have an annual celebration which they call Paul Bunyan Day.)

I think they have those in a lot of colleges. The University of Wisconsin features it in their annual homecoming, and I've heard of it in connection with a lot of schools and colleges that they have a Paul Bunyan Day.

(Well, I just wondered whether here in Susanville, in your native stamping ground, whether they'd ever asked you to crown the queen of Paul Bunyan Day or be a Grand Marshal?)

No. Sometimes they've asked me for material. And the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company in exhibiting at the Lassen County Fair, they've had some big figures of Paul Bunyan made, you know -- painted on plywood and cut out and I think they the college borrowed them several times. That's where they've gotten such material as that.

(Probably the Paul Bunyan Days here at Lassen Junior College came from the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company's prominence in Susanville.)

Yes, this is a Paul Bunyan territory. The Chamber of Commerce got out a brochure here one time, had me write it, and they used the title that this was the Paul Bunyan country, and I made a three-color cover for them to show Paul Bunyan, but they more or less got into the act as being in part of the Paul Bunyan country, being so close to Westwood. But that Paul Bunyan Day, I think you'll find that a lot of places. I've seen it and heard, seen news pictures of it around various places. They gag it up themselves.

(Yes. Now there was a point that I wanted to ask. In view of all of the prominence that Paul Bunyan had in the advertising and, as you pointed out, actually in the corporate life, particularly in the sales life of Red River Lumber and in the community life of Westwood where you had that gate coming into town with the statue of Paul Bunyan ...)

It was the plant gate.

(Bill, did Paul Bunyan ever in any way enter into your industrial relations, your labor relations there at Westwood? Did you use him or try to use him in labor relations there?)

Not directly. As I say, all the personnel there was pretty well sold on the Paul Bunyan idea. It was quite a gag amongst the men to say they were working for Paul Bunyan. Did I say that the payoff was when that little kid said it? It was prevalent that they were working for Paul Bunyan. As I say, I told you about the movie director telling about workmen in the crews there coming up and giving him ideas for his movie and everything like that? Well, they were just used to that. I was in and out and around the plant all the time and every once in a while a fellow'd come to me with a Paul Bunyan gag or something of the kind. Everybody there seemed to enter into the spirit of it. It may have indirectly affected the attitude of the men toward the management. I think on a whole it was a very friendly relation towards the Walkers and the management, and a lot of things came up in that time that were lousy and rotten as they would in any community, but everybody there had a very high regard for Fletcher Walker and Mrs. Walker. I think most of them had the thought, "Well, yes, it's a lousy deal, but I don't think it's intentional on the part of Fletcher. He just wasn't properly informed." More or less that attitude, especially among the older hands. So many of them were Minnesota people, Akeley people, that came out here in the early days, and their sons and grandsons that were working for the company. They'd formed more or less of a core for the others that came in. I'm pretty sure that was all their attitude, even after the liquidation and then after Fletcher had to give up his house. You know, Fruit Growers Supply put all the old Red River people out of their houses. Of course, they wanted their own employees in them. And Fletcher went down to Menlo Park. They came up every summer and spent quite a lot of time out at Lake Almanor, and their house was always just crowded with old Westwood people who'd gone out to see them. They were always glad to see them. There was a kind of absence of snobbishness in Westwood. In the early days before we had the automobiles to go every place, you know, we had our home entertainments and dances and things like that that were pretty largely attended and everybody would dance with everybody else. Mrs. Dr. Davis said that "One dance we're dancing with the manager of the company and the next one with the blacksmith or a green chain puller, but we always have the same fun together." Of course, there always is some snobbish element, but that was the general ... They had a Westwood reunion out at Clear Creek this year and I think it was attended by over 3,000. Of course, a lot of those were free loaders that had never heard of Westwood who came into the barbecue but there was the damndest gathering of old Westwood people from all over. And they had another one up at Redding just a couple of weeks ago. I didn't get to see either one. I intended to go out to Clear Creek but I had to wait here in town to meet some people, but they all told me, my Lord, there was Westwood people from all over. It was a peculiar community.

(One thing that can't be overlooked and that is, of course, that at Westwood there was no absentee ownership.)

The absolute owners were right there on the job and made the final decisions.

(And they were living in the community.)

And they belonged to everything and went every place, and if somebody was sick, Mrs. Walker was sitting there by the bed with them, you know. She was quite a hand in the church there. They just had one church -- one Protestant church and a Catholic church. It was a non-denomination church. And afterwards there were some other churches but at the start there that's the way it was. She had a Sunday school class of teen-age boys. And they were active in everything around the town. And in the fire department. Fletcher and Ted lived right across the street, and they always at night slept with that fireman's rig -- you know, the pants and the boots -- and could get out fast. And Fletcher was driving a truck when he was way up in his seventies. Active in the fire department -- everything like that, you know. More or less on a level with the people and everybody'd call them by their first names. As I say, if a fellow'd get an idea, he'd just as apt to stop Ted Walker on the street and spring it on him or talk to him about it. It was the same way with the Paul Bunyan stuff. I'd be going to the plant and a fellow'd call me and say, "Did you see such and such a story? Make a pretty good Paul Bunyan gag, wouldn't it?" And when we were out photographing in the woods, those fellows were always so cooperative and we always tried to arrange it so it wouldn't interfere with the operations if it was possible. Yeah, they were all so cooperative.

(Well, there was no effort, as far as you can remember, Bill, no conscious effort made to utilize it in your industrial or personnel or labor relations at Westwood? It was indirect?)

Yes, it was indirect.

(Now, you just mentioned something that is dear to the heart of everyone looking and working for historical records -- photographs. Now, you must have had a fine photographic record of the whole history of that Westwood operation.)

Yes, we did. It was a marvelous thing.

(What happened to them, do you know?)

Well, I had those records indexed and I packed them up and made an inventory of them and had the boxes all numbered and everything like that and they went into the warehouse. None of them ever came out so you can imagine the condition of those negatives now.

(And if they did exist, we'd probably have to find out through Shasta Forests, wouldn't we?)

I'll tell you. A proposition came up a number of times and was put up to Kenneth to get in there and work on those negatives and I think Kenneth was personally in favor of it, but there was a very touchy situation there with the other heirs and Kenneth leaned over backwards ... Well, we had some colored plates

made for calendars. We got out big calendars that were very successful, and there was a great demand for the pictures, and we had those color plates made and those color plates were in the old print shop over there after the Fruit Growers took over. They didn't want them and the printer didn't want them. I should have just swiped them out of there but I didn't and I put it up to Kent, the manager of the Paul Bunyan Lumber Company, to get them and Kenneth to get them, but they never did it. I think the negatives were junked. There was a five color-plate set-up and I had bought them at a cost that was permissible because I got them from some people that were just starting up in the color process business in San Francisco and they wanted to make them for prestige and gave us a price. Lord, you couldn't get them for ten times that now to replace them.

(Well as far as you know the photographic record of Westwood that was kept by Red River is in storage and if it can be found, it's probably not too good now?)

Yeah. Rognon had a lot and Eastman had a lot of photographs, and we had a lot of them in file, and there was a lot that Eastman retained in his file.

(That's Eastman here in Susanville?)

Yes. And Rognon had a lot of them.

(Well, Rognon's files were burned.)

Yeah. He burned up pretty near all of his negatives. He did a lot of beautiful work for the Western Pine Association and for Collins Pine and others. *

(Were you doodling and drawing in the camps when you were chore boy and cookee and cruiser and surveyor in Minnesota between 1900 and 1908?)

I must have been because I've been doing it all my life everywhere I was where I could find something to put a mark on with a pencil or a crayon.

(Well, did you actually do drawings there in the camps and leave them around of the guys you knew and the work that was going on?)

Well, I may have done that but I'd just draw it on the side of the wall or something. Somebody told me that they had been up there in that country after we'd been operating and saw a sign that I had put up. I was marking one of the roads into a place called "Squaw Lake" and it had a big crayon drawing on a board there of what might have been a squaw -- an arrowhead pointing to Squaw Lake. That was long afterwards, the one that remained.

* Western Pine Association has hundreds of Rognon's negatives. E. L. Kolbe to W. H. Hutchinson.

(Do you think you did any drawings of Paul while you were up there?)

I doubt it. I don't think so. I may have made a face that looked something like what Paul turned out to look like but it wasn't that I remember any picture of Paul Bunyan.

(But you were drawing in the camps and doodling around?)

I've been drawing long before I can remember.

(Well, the mustache that you put on Paul. Somebody, I think, said once -- maybe Clara Nelson -- that that mustache came from a camp cook named Joe Brule. But actually the mustache came from another cook, didn't it?)

A big fellow named Charlie Revoie, or something like that -- a French pronunciation.

(R-e-v-o-i-r, I think.)
Yeah.

(That's where you got the mustache? The face from Peter Dick and the mustache from Charlie Revoir? Well, I wanted to find out in your own mind, Bill, whether you thought that the early drawings that you did on the side of the bunkhouses and the cook shacks and the signs you made up there in the woods, whether they were the forerunners of the later drawings you made of Paul?)

Not consciously a picture of Paul Bunyan that I can remember. But probably the same elements and the caricature was there for some other idea at the time.

(Did you ever do any drawing of Babe, the Blue Ox, up in the woods that you remember?)

No. I might have drawn an ox or something.

(But as far as you can remember, in the drawing that you did in the woods you weren't consciously thinking of Paul Bunyan?)

No.

(Well, I just wanted to get that cleared up. And also the ownership of that mustache. Bill, when you came out to Westwood in 1922 how were they logging there then?)

They were using horses and high wheels. And I think at Westwood at that time they had about 400 head of horses and they had a couple of hundred

head of mules, and they had big stables there at Westwood and a veterinary hospital and that sort of thing. And they had some very good horses. The first horses they had out here they shipped out from Minnesota. They were just the ordinary run of draft horses that the contractors would have. They bought up carloads of those and sent them out. And then afterwards they bred their own horses. They sent buyers over to Europe and bought stallions and draft horses in Belgium and those places, you know, and bred their own horses. Oh, they had beautiful horses. And they would run these horses with these high wheels, you know, swamping the trails for the high wheels. At that time they were experimenting with tractors, Caterpillar tractors. But the tractors that were built at that time were just the lightweight tractors that were built for road work and grading and things of that kind. They weren't heavy enough to stand the grief in the woods. So they had their own shops where they would remodel and strengthen them up. The first thing they had to do was put a plate underneath those tractors to keep them from being "jill-poked", as the loggers say, by rocks and stumps and things at the bottom. And there were a lot of other things they had to do, and then they couldn't get hard steel treads. They were those soft things that were soon cut up on the rocks. So they put in a foundry of their own at Westwood and made up these alloy steel treads. They had a lot of furnaces there and they got this hard steel and had their own patterns and cast their own treads that they put on there. They were doing a lot of things like that. I can remember they'd have a side of maybe half a dozen Cats running and maybe two of them would be bringing in logs and three of them that the Cat doctors would be working on to get them to go.

(Well, when they were using the horses and high wheels in '22, that was for yarding and then roading into the landings?)

It was railroad logging at that time. Of course, they didn't have any trucks then and they were building spurs all over the country close enough together so that a logging side could bring in the logs with the horses. But it took an awful lot of logging spurs and they were putting them down and tearing them up all the time.

(Did they salvage their rails and ties?)

Yes, they'd use them over again. They'd leave the ties right in the ballast, of course, but they'd gather up the rails and put them on the next spur that they were using.

(Well, that was pretty common, to leave your ties in the road bed. Do you remember those high wheels, Bill? Were those the slip-tongue high wheels or the rigid tongue?)

I think -- I wouldn't say for sure -- but I think they were the slip-tongue.

(And then the use of tractors -- they were experimenting with Cats, weren't they?)

Oh, yes. I don't know how long they had been doing it but in 1922 they were using a lot of them, trying to keep them going. Their work there was sort of a proving ground for the tractor people. There was always representatives of the tractor people; some of them just lived there in Westwood watching the thing. They were using that as a sort of proving ground to develop a type that could be used.

(Well, Bill, did you know Camille Frizzie?)

Yes. I knew him quite well.

(He was logging superintendent for the Lassen Lumber and Box here.)

Yes, and afterwards he had a small mill of his own down in Indian Valley near Crescent Mills.

(Well, I picked up a reference in some of the research I did for Diamond Match that Camille Frizzie in 1913 had experimented or tried to use a Cat logging for the old L., L. & B.)

Well, I don't know.

(I don't know either and I haven't been able to document it in any other way except this passing reference and I just wondered if you'd heard anything about it.)

No. I never heard him mention it.

(The reason I was interested in that was because if Frizzie did use that Cat successfully in 1913 to log, he antedates by several years the first definite use you can find which was by Potlatch at Lewiston, Idaho.)

You know this first Caterpillar tread? We never heard anything about it until along about World War I, but back in the days when I was in Minnesota they were experimenting with something to replace the horses for hauling log sleds on the iced roads, and the H. C. Akeley Company made a rig like a small locomotive and it had a Caterpillar tread on it. That would be back between 1900 and 1908 when I went into the woods. I never saw it but I heard about it and I saw photographs of it afterwards. They had this thing and were ganging-up log sleds and pulling on the iced roads with this tractor and it was working.

(They had sled runners in front?)

They had some kind of a steering wheel device on the front there with runners but it was just a miniature locomotive. The drive rods drove the gear

that worked this Caterpillar tread. And I heard this story that in the patent suits for the Caterpillar tread afterwards, the important discovery was made of a similar thing over in Wisconsin. It was on a junk pile and was found there and proved that the Caterpillar tread had been used there at that time. That was, of course, years afterwards. Whether that antedated H. C. Akeley's locomotive I wouldn't know, but you know the story that they found that old rig over in Wisconsin with the Caterpillar tread on it. It had a very important bearing on those patent suits that were running at the time.

(Well, in 1922 when Westwood was railroad logging from the landings, were they using rod engines, Bill, or were they using geared engines?)

No, they were using rod engines. They had some pretty big locomotives.

(They didn't have any grades on the logging roads?)

No. They were using regular locomotives and they'd make up pretty big trains and bring them into Westwood.

(Well, Bill, at Westwood the sidewalks had steam lines under them, didn't they?)

No, some of them did. I tell you. They piped steam to the hospital and the school and the commercial buildings they had -- the theater, stores and so on, and to a few residences. I think about 50 houses were steam heated. Those steam lines ran in the street between the curb of the sidewalk and the middle of the street along one side. And after a snow storm that would be the first place that would thaw. They always got out and plowed the snow off the streets the very first thing -- get the streets clear -- and they'd generally throw the snow over on those pipe lines. So the story got around that their streets were all steam-heated, but it was just where the trunk lines of these service steam lines were and they'd thaw the snow quicker than anything else.

(Bill, what about this "hot pond"? I've read about a hot pond at Westwood.)

Yes, they did. They had a hot pond there. They heated the water; they ran the exhaust steam lines from the carriages and then they had electric heating plates up near where the log slip was and the water would circulate and keep that pond open -- a big enough pond to handle the logs they'd be unloading into the log pond to get to the log slip. The frost would be taken out of the logs before they got up to the saws. You know, a saw will run zigzag and every which way in a frozen log.

(I've never heard of another hot pond operation in California like that. Not to say that there weren't. I've just never heard of another outfit that used a hot pond in the winter time.)

Well, you see, Red River had used a hot pond back in Minnesota.

(Oh, had they?)

Yes, at Akeley. I don't know whether that was the first one or not. But they had a hot pond there. Of course, they had more steam there, exhaust steam. You know, the plant was run with a big Corliss engine and main drive shaft and belts to everything.

(That was at Akeley?)

Yes, at Akeley. And then they had steam coils in the burner that they ran out into the lake to keep the water warm enough to take the frost out of the logs.

(Well, Bill, did they do winter logging at Westwood?)

No. They used to deck up -- build deckways from which they could haul in the winter time.

(I see. Well, did you ever do any winter logging at Westwood for Red River?)

During the war.

(During the second World War?)

During the second World War they operated right straight through the winters.

(That was all Cat logging then?)

Yes. And railroad logging. The big logging operation then was up at Camp Bunyan. They had a camp there. It was a stag camp. There were no families there, but they had around 400 to 450 loggers in that Bunyan camp.

(I knew we'd get Paul Bunyan into this some way.)

Well, they called it Camp Bunyan. It was about 60, 65 miles north of Westwood. They railroaded the logs into Westwood and they sawed up pretty near a million feet of logs a day. Then, as much as they could deck, when it got later on in the summer when they could start decking logs, they'd be hauling in two million feet a day. They wanted to have about 55 to 60 million feet in the deckways when conditions got so bad in the winter that they couldn't log. But the pressure got so great during the War there that they ran the camps all winter. I remember one night they got four feet of snow out there. I've got some photographs of the buckers digging their way down to the logs to buck the snow.

(No high stumps.)

No, they seemed to get the stumps down to the level. No, it was pretty rough there during the War.

(When you came out to Westwood in '22 was the mill a steam mill or an electric mill?)

It was electric. And I don't know but that was one of the first mills ever built where every unit was motor driven instead of having any drive belts or anything like that. I remember when they came to decide to design them. Fletcher Walker and an engineer named Ditbenner designed the mill in Minneapolis long before it was built and they were working on that thing and they were rigging up these motors. The only thing they had was wide drive belts same as was used for steam transmission, but they set the motor up real close to the rig and then put a tightener roller in there also. There was no chain drives or V-belts yet in those days and that's the way the first rig there in the sawmill was. They had these motor drives in the basement and they all had these tighteners on them and then afterwards, of course, when they could get V-belts and stuff of that kind, why that's the way they were rigged. But as far as I know, that was the first mill, or one of the first, that was built with individual drives for all the conveyors and saws and resaws and so on.

(Well, that was a four band mill, wasn't it?)

Four band mill.

(Were those dry kilns in operation when you came out in 1922?)

They had dry kilns in operation when I came out but they were of an early kind. They weren't very efficient, and then when the new dry kilns came out they put in that big battery -- 72 double track tunnels -- and they could dry kiln practically everything they sawed. I think one year I kept the records of the shipments that were around 260 or 270 million feet for that year and it was all kiln dried. You see, the dry kilns had a rated capacity, on the average thickness of lumber cut, of about seven or eight hundred thousand feet per 24 hours. But they ran continuously, you see, while the sawmill was shut down on Sundays so they gained that percentage and the mill would be running close to a million feet a day, sawing. You take 257 million feet shipped -- it's pretty near every working day when you take holidays and Sundays out of it. So they were sawing pretty near a million feet a day. Everything was kiln dried.

(Everything you shipped there?)

Except timbers, and they didn't ship very many of those. It had to be a very special order for a big dimension, you know.

(Where did they develop their fuel in those kilns if it was a steam kiln?)

They used all the waste. They never ran a burner there. They built one in the early days but after a few years they never ran a burner, and everything was cut in these hogs into fuel and then put into that big pile. You've probably seen some photographs. It had a lot of publicity at the time -- that big fuel pile. And then that went through the steam plant, the boiler plant there. And the steam was distributed into the dry kiln and everyplace else where they were using steam. When we'd get a deep snow there, we were using hot water and fire hoses to clean out the transport tracks.

(You may not have utilized everything you cut in the best possible way but you sure didn't waste anything.)

No. There was nothing hauled away or left on the ground.

(Not with that demand for fuel. Did you ever do any snag logging for fuel?)

We had to sometimes. And that came up during the War. We were running a Venetian blind slat factory there and running on a pretty big scale and that was declared unnecessary by the government. They didn't want anybody to cut slats and at the same time they were ordering a lot of them for the buildings they were building. I don't know where they expected us to get them.

(That's consistency in government policy.)

Anyway our steam capacity was so balanced that when they lost the waste fuel from the Venetian blind plant, it threw them so out of balance they had to shut down one head rig out of three and run it on fuel logs. That meant go out and cut snags in the woods and haul them in 65 miles by rail and use one of your head rigs just to saw and chop up these fuel logs. So we made a report on that and took a lot of photographs all the way through from the woods, of the people that were working on fuel, and it was cutting down the supply of high priority lumber that the government was hollering for. So they gave us permission then to start up the Venetian blind slat business in order to get that balance -- put our steam plant back into balance. So we were able through the War, we were one of the very few outfits in the country that had permission to make Venetian blind slats. That was before the metal slats came in. And even what metal slats were being made at that time were -- you know, the government threw them out because they wanted the metal. But everybody was using an awful lot of blind slats.

(Well, that brings up a question there, that log utiliation, which yours all practically went for fuel as you pointed out. When you came out to Westwood in 1922, Bill, what were they doing about reforestation and sustained yield?)

Nothing at that time. I think it was something in the tax set-up; they were either taxed on the standing timber or cleared land. And after they got that modified, and it applied not only to Red River but everybody, then people started on this sustained yield cutting like they did at Westwood. But in the early days they just went in and mowed her down.

(One of the earliest examples of fire protection in California, I think, on a large scale was done by the Walker interests. I guess Clinton Walker was in charge of the land then over in Shingletown-Viola country where they had men at a dollar a day going out with shovels and rakes and piling up rocks and dirt around the base of pine trees that had cat-faces in them.)*

They went all through the woods at that time and raked the pine needles away from the trees.

(Was that out here in the Westwood country, too, Bill?)

Yes. They didn't do it back in Minnesota. Here in California for a long time they did that. And then they had a very elaborate organization for forest fire fighting there. That was before the federal forest service or the state forest service was equipped to handle any fire fighting. It seemed as if the whole burden from the Feather River clear up to the Oregon line fell on Red River. They had the darndest organization you ever saw to handle that stuff. They had a couple of fire trains built. They used a couple of great big oil tank cars for water and they had a pump car that was rigged between them and a lot of monitors and hose and things on it that they could use wherever the fire was close to a railroad track. There was two of those trains made up in Westwood all the time, and they'd get an alarm for it and they'd call out a locomotive. There was a certain fire whistle blown and a big crew started running for the fire train when they heard that whistle, and by the time they got there the locomotive was backing in onto it and away they'd go. Then they had what they called "shotgun squads" that were on duty all the time just like firemen. They had a lot of busses that were grouped around the fire hall there and they'd get a certain call on that fire alarm whistle and they were ready to go and these men would come and go in the backend of one of these -- they'd remodeled some bunkhouse buildings there -- and they had their rig, their canteen and emergency rations and all the stuff that they'd carry, and they'd pick that up and go out to the other end of the door into their busses and were gone. If they needed one hundred or five hundred or a thousand men on a fire, they were moving right now. Started loading bulldozers on a flat car with locomotives on them and anything between the Feather River and the Oregon line they were off to it right now. Of course, they were relieved of a lot of that after the forest service was organized, but that's the way they had to handle it on the start.

(What else can you remember or do you think is worth recalling, Bill, about the early days of Westwood, say around '22? Can you think of anything?)

* A fire scar at the base of standing timber. (W. H. Hutchinson)

No.

(It was a company town, wasn't it?)

It was a company town. The company operated all the mercantile facilities and everything else on the start and then later on they started letting the commercial things out on concession.

(I understand too -- of course, I don't think Red River ever got any credit for it -- that during the depression they treated the people up there pretty well.)

Well, they kept going all through the depression. They didn't shut down but, of course, they had to cut down their crews. If a man was laid off, he didn't pay any more house rent until he went back to work, and they had credit in the stores so that everybody could keep going.

(Well, their schools there were operated by the counties, weren't they, Bill?)

Oh, yes, that was part of the county and state organization. Red River built the buildings. Just how that was handled from a tax standpoint I wouldn't know.

(Well, Bill, what about these coupon books that Red River used at Westwood, mercantile coupon books?)

Well, maybe we'd better say something about that because as a general thing coupon is a dirty word.

(Yeah, I know.)

I think this thing has been abused some places, but it wasn't so at Westwood. It was largely a matter of convenience. They used the coupons. They were in denominations of 5c, 10c and 25c I think and they were bound up in books. I think there was a $2.50 book and a $5.00 book and a $10.00 book. And anybody could go to the window and get a coupon book in between paydays. They were very convenient; everybody carried them from the very top brass down. Everybody carried coupon books.

(Fletcher Walker right on down?)

Yeah, Fletcher Walker carried coupon books. And it was a matter of convenience because the coupon books were worth one hundred cents on the dollar wherever you went in northern California, or Reno or Sacramento or any place. You'd throw down a coupon book and it was worth one hundred cents on the dollar. So it was a matter of convenience. They discontinued it after a while and modified their pay system so that you could go in and make cash withdrawals any time

you wanted to, to your brass check number. As long as your credit was good and you had it coming, why you could go in and draw cash. It kind of complicated their payroll system a little bit but it got away from the coupons.

(That's interesting, Bill, because in many operations the coupon book was as bad a word as fink.)*

Well, it was never so at Westwood. It was a matter of convenience, an accommodation to facilitate the trade in the stores. You could buy in the stores -- on a big deal you know you'd get a contract for payroll deductions, but for small cash and in between paydays there was nobody going around there broke. It facilitated their mercantile business.

(You mentioned the Red River coupon books as being virtually legal tender throughout California. There was another operation in California concurrently with Red River where the company coupon books were good in the local whore house.)

Well, I don't know about that phase of it at Westwood. If there was such a place, the coupon book would be all right.

(There wasn't any red light district in Westwood, was there, Bill?)

No.

(Well, that was unusual for a lumber town. Now, in Minnesota when you went into the woods in 1900 did you have any coupon books there then?)

No. Back there in the logging woods men worked by the month and they got their board free. They didn't have to pay for meals like they do out here in this country. And they didn't have to carry their own blankets. They got paid so much a month.

(Well, when you went into the woods in 1900 as a chore boy or cookee, how much did you get a month, Bill?)

Oh, you'd get around twenty bucks a month or something like that. A good man, a top loader or a four-horse skinner, he might get thirty or thirty-five. Times would get tough and wages would go down and they they'd get good and wages would go up a little bit. That was on the monthly basis, but on the river drives and places like that they'd get paid by the day. But a day went from as early as you could see in the morning, and you'd stumble over yourself getting back to camp at night. And the days were pretty long in the summer time and there wasn't any overtime. The rates were much higher; you'd get two and a half, three bucks a day for the river drive.

* Means "scab". (W. H. Hutchinson)

(Did they use the same men that worked in the woods and banked the logs? Did they drive the river, or were there separate crews?)

Oh, it'd be a separate class of men. A man to get around on logs, especially those small logs back there, there'd be three out of four logs in a boom that wouldn't carry your weight and you'd have to step on them pretty quickly and get on the wood that would float you, and it required a lot of gymnastics. In the meantime, you wasn't paid for doing gymnastics; you was paid for doing a day's work. Walking on the logs was just fast reflexes and not everybody could do it. Those fellows were more or less specialists.

(What about Hughie McMullen, Bill?)

There was a character. I knew Hughie pretty well. He and I watched camp together one time. That time he was a man -- oh, I don't know how old he was -- but he was pretty old, couldn't tell. He was one of the old-time lumber jacks. They tell the story of Hughie. He came out to Brainerd one time and he'd put in a pretty long hitch. He'd gone through the logging, and he'd gone through the river drive and he'd gone through the haying. He had $350 or $400 when he cashed his check, and he walked onto the bridge that crossed the Mississippi River and he took that roll and threw it just as far as he could throw into the river. He said, "That's one roll that these so-and-sos aren't going to get away from Hughie." And turned around and went back into the woods. As long as he lived afterwards, which was a good many years, he never took a drink. Up to that time he'd been fighting to keep sober long enough to get on a train and get back home and see his folks, which he'd never been able to do. He just threw that roll away. Yes, I knew old Hughie for years. Quite a character -- little short stocky fellow -- white head. One time in Bemidji they were in there hiring men for the river drive and Hughie went up there, just half kidding, because he had a regular job, and asked if they wanted to hire him for the drive. And they said, "You're too old." In those days, you know, on the sidewalks was a lot of beer kegs piled up in front of the saloons, and he goes over and he kicks over a beer keg, and he jumped on it and he rolled it up the sidewalk a ways and he spun it around and headed back again and he rolled it back in front of this fellow, and then he jumped on the end of it so to up-end it so the thing was standing on the end and Hughie was standing with both feet on the head of the keg. And he says, " Who's too old, you so-and-so?" But he didn't hire him on. He was quite a character.

(He must have been one of the real old-timers.)

Real old-timer. He and I was watching camp there and I was just a kid, you know, and we'd be cooking breakfast. He'd be frying the meat and I'd be frying the potatoes. I remember I had to go out and get another stick of wood to put in the stove and when I came back the potatoes were all burned up -- the same skillet right alongside of Hughie's skillet. And I cussed him out for it, and he said, "Hell, you're cooking the potatoes, not me."

(Well, Bill, you went into the woods in 1900. Can you remember, was there any migration of the real old-time catty lumberjacks starting from Minnesota to come out west?)

Yes, that came along a little later. The river drivers came out. I know there was one fellow named Jack Sullivan there and he had been out into the Palouse country where they were driving and he came back there and was bragging about it. We didn't have much white water in Minnesota like they had back in Maine and the fellows had heard there was a lot of white water out in the West. I said, "Did you have any high water out there, Jack?" "White water," he said. "I put in 56 days on a river that'd tear the guts out of a common man that'd take a drink out of the river."

(When those boys started moving west, what did you get in the camps, Bill -- just rounders?)

No, there wasn't so very many of them that went west until after the big show was pretty well over in Minnesota. The lumberjacks were always travelling around quite a bit. They all went out to the wheat fields, as we called them, during the thrashing season in those days.

(Well, when do you date the big show as being over in Minnesota, Bill?)

Well, it's pretty hard to say. The Red River operation shut down there in 1915 and I don't think -- at that time there was only one mill still running in Minneapolis but there was still some white pine cutting for years up there but on a much smaller scale. Yes, along about 1915 or so it was getting pretty thin. It used to be, you know, the bulk of the cutting was in Minneapolis. The Mississippi drive brought down most of the logs until we got to shipping by rail and that cut out the drive.

(Well, Bill, when did you get to shipping by rail from that Bemidji country?)

They were starting it when I got there in 1900. We were hauling from Bemidji to Grand Forks, North Dakota. There was a mill over there at East Grand Forks, and that was one of the first shipments. And then along about the same time they started hauling from Bemidji. They hauled some of the logs down to Brainerd and dumped them in the river there, to get away from that very crooked river between Bemidji and Brainerd, and then they started hauling some through to Minneapolis. I know of logs that were cut up north of Bemidji and hauled down to Burlington, Iowa, by rail -- about 450 miles by rail. And that did away with the drives.

(Well, did you work on any of that rail hauling or rail loading, Bill?)

Yes, I was a deputized state scaler and I tallied on the hoists there at Bemidji. They had hoists on Bemidji Lake and then Lake Irvine -- just about

a quarter of a mile separates from Lake Bemidji. Bemidji is built right between those two lakes, and there was hoists down there on Lake Irvine, and they hoisted hundreds of millions of feet out of there in the summer time.

(Hoist them out of the lake onto the cars?)

Yes. That's quite an operation, too.

(Well, you were a deputized state scaler. Did they have a tally man too?)

Yes. Every scaler had a tally man. You see, those logs were coming up so fast and you know how it was back there in Minnesota. All the different ownerships of the different companies were mixed up in the same river so they identified their logs by bark marks and end stamps. Not only with the general brands that the companies had but each company would have a whole lot of subsidiary branches to take care of different ownerships and contracts and stuff so there were hundreds of marks. And you'd get probably in a run there at that lake forty, or fifty, or sixty marks, and twenty-five of them would be real active and the rest would be scattered. But every log that'd come up there would have a different end stamp on it which the scaler would call out to the tally man and the number of feet. He never had to put a rule on a log, climb up on the car and put a rule on a log because he knew just as soon as he looked at it, and the tally man did too -- how many feet there was in it. And most of the time the engines would make so much noise the tally man couldn't hear the scaler, and as fast as he could turn pages to find places in his book for the mark -- he was always about five or six logs behind the engine. They averaged about four logs a minute onto those cars. The logs run small, you know.

(They were 16s?)

Yes. We didn't cut double length there so they were 16s. There were two loads on a 40 foot car. They tried to get around 6,000 feet on a car and some of those logs would be running 20 to the thousand and then you'd have a few that would run between 16, 18 inches, big logs, you know. But most of them were small logs so it took a lot of them to fill a car. And they started those hoists at 5:30 in the morning and they ran until 8:30 at night. They had four meals a day.

(Then you had to work up your books?)

We had to work up our books at night and we didn't have any adding machines in those days and I never could add up a column twice and get it alike so I had to go up and down each one. Lord, we'd be working there until after midnight and then we had to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to get over to the hoist in time so there wasn't much use going to bed, which we didn't do most of the time.

We'd work out there and go to sleep right standing on our feet. A fellow'd reach into the ice water bucket with one of the cups that was chained to the rim and throw a bucket of ice water in your face so you could keep awake until the next load started.

(Well, Bill, when you went into the woods in 1900 who was the most expert man in the woods in your opinion. Who was he -- the most skilled craftsman?)

Well, I'll tell you. The Scandinavians were fellows who were fallers and that type and you found very few of them as four-horse skinners or loaders, or fellows of that type. A lot of them were Maine-ites and all sorts of breeds, but there were the two different classes -- the men with fast reactions that were cant hook men and the four-horse skinners and men of that type. A lot of the fallers and people of that kind, they were just as highly skilled but along a little different line, you know. They were mostly Scandinavians.

(Were those four-horse skinners there as independent as the skinners were out here?)

Oh, I'll tell the world! They were wonderful reinsmen and I suppose the western reinsmen were just as skilled, but it was a different basis. In the west, if they were driving these stagecoaches, they were changing horses every once in a while and the man was thinking more of getting over the road than he was of the condition of the horses because they were changed often. But back there a man'd be assigned to four horses all through the winter, and it was his pride as a professional to have those horses in perfect shape. They had to be curried just as slick as the horses of the other teamsters or they would look down on him, see? Or if his horse had any caulk marks from those sharp caulked shoes where he'd cut his ankles or anything like that, that was a disgrace. So the man was responsible for the condition of his team and he didn't let the owner or the boss or anybody else tell him how to take care of those horses. If you owned horses and came along and told the man to drive into a certain place and he thought it wasn't safe, he'd throw the lines on the ground and say, "You drive them in yourself."

(You sled logged there in the winter?)

Yes.

(There's another question, Bill. For years you did wonderful paintings of the operations at Westwood, the woods operations and things of that sort. What ever happened to those paintings?)

Oh, I have a few of them left. I hung a lot of them here in the Mount Lassen Hotel, and sold them.

(There are four of them down in the lobby of the Hotel Mount Lassen now, but those are about all that you've got left, are they, Bill?)

Yes. Oh, I painted afternoons and Sundays and things like that.

(Well, you were in good company with Winston Churchill and Dwight Eisenhower.)

Yeah, maybe I'm not a good artist, but that's what I was. It was a sideline.

(Well, I wanted to know because those paintings were a pretty good record of the woods operations. I can understand why the lumbermen would want to have them because they were true. What are you doing now, Bill?)

Oh, I'm doing some commercial art work and a little writing and stuff to keep out of trouble.

(Are you doing any cartooning?)

Not commercially. Oh, it keeps me busy. I put in six days a week. Got a working room down here at the hotel for convenience. Not much else to do than work, so that's what I'm doing.

(Do you ever go back and redraw Paul and his friends?)

Oh, yes.

(Well, in looking back, Bill, what's it been? Good Lord, 43 years since you first created Paul, as far as the ocular idea of him is concerned. Looking back on those 43 years, what do you think of Paul?)

Well, I'll tell you. Paul to me was more or less of a real person. That was largely due to our policy of keeping him alive there at Westwood. But I always thought of Paul as a super logger. He had the characteristics of a logger, and you read so many writers telling about brute strength of the loggers and how they worked with brute strength. They didn't work with brute strength; they worked with skill. I don't care what kind of a job it was, a man had to know how to do it. Well, I think it's the same with any heavy work. You don't do anything with brute strength. Even if your logs are small, how much brute strength would it take to lift a log up and put it on a sled? The chief characteristic of Paul to me was his inventiveness as a pioneer. The lumbermen and the loggers were on the very forefront of the frontier, you know, and in the old days you didn't have any machinery servicemen you could send for. If anything broke, you fixed it right now yourself. And you're running into different conditions of the country, storms, changes in the weather and all that, and you had to be able

to think. It was Paul's resourcefulness as a pioneer that always impressed me more than his strength. I think this magnifying Paul into a giant as done by so many writers that never had been in the woods was maybe due to the fact that they figured that all this accomplishment was done merely by brute strength. So in order to do a bigger job, he had to be a bigger man. But somehow or other, I never conceived of a huge giant who could move oceans or mountains around. He was probably a pretty big man but nevertheless, he was a logger.

(A man who knew the principles of leverage.)

That's right. You take back in that country where the logs were smaller and they were moving the logs around with cant hooks and peaveys -- you know what they are -- and it was a matter of skill. It wasn't strength. You had to have quick reflexes to get your hook in the right place and apply just the right leverage. They seemed to have an exhaustive knowledge of leverage and the quick, lightning reflexes. You hooked a log on top to move it backwards toward you, you know, and you hooked it on the bottom to move it away from you, and it was done in leverage and movement of the arms. Just like Stan Musial can move a baseball bat. Yeah, you'd St. Croix it -- that was to throw your hook on top of the log. There was a St. Croix and a Saginaw. You'd throw your hook on the other side for that. But it was all done so fast you didn't think what you were doing.

(Well, Bill, of course, for a man who stood, shall we say, as godfather to this national character, certainly for all the national prominence that Paul has gotten you didn't get much out of it financially.)

No. I had a job, a nice job there with Red River and that was it.

(Well, do you ever look back and . . . ?)

Of course, I was doing quite a few other things around Westwood besides Paul Bunyan, but that was the basis of it, and I had a good time, enjoyed life, and had a lot to go on.

(Enjoyed Paul?)

Yeah. I got a great kick out of Paul.

(Well, not many men can look back in satisfaction, at least of knowing --. He may not have come out as you started -- other people have taken your work and distorted it, but he's still quite a character.)

(Well, Bill, I think I've just about run out of questions, but I sure do thank you.)

Well, you're certainly welcome. It was a pleasure.

(It was a pleasure and a privilege for me. The old saying goes, "I hope you winter well.")

As the loggers say, "Take her steady, boy. Hang her tough and take her steady."

(Hang her tough and take her steady. Give her snoose.")