

Forest History Foundation, Inc.
St. Paul, Minnesota

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Walter Russell
Springston, Idaho
August 25, 1953

by John Larson

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My grandfather was born in 1800, in Massachusetts, I think. But he wasn't in the lumber business; he was in the starch business. At one time he had a starch mill that he started in Vermont, and he made potato starch. Some company there had a store and bought his starch. The only difficulty, I guess, was that they didn't pay for it. The result was that they got to where they owed him about \$400 and then they went broke. You know people didn't travel as far and wide as they do now. Well, the man got down into Massachusetts, but ultimately grandfather found out that he was down there and where he was and that he had made a little money and was doing all right, so grandfather got a few dollars together and he was going down there to see if he could collect. He took great pains figuring the compound interest which was considerable of a chore for him to do. The company tried to dissuade him from going down there, but he was going.

"Oh", they said, "you won't collect any of it. You're just wasting your time and your money, and we need the money."

"No", he said, "I'm going down there and I'll get it all right."

So this man, Lang, had joined a church down there, was quite active in church. So grandfather went to the house, and he told that when Lang was having family devotions, he went right in and knelt down beside Lang while he was praying. When Lang got through with his prayer, grandfather started in and told the Lord how Lang had treated him and what a bad effect it had had on his family. So anyway after the prayer he talked to Lang and the upshot of it all was that Lang agreed to pay, and did pay half of it which was \$600. \$400 with interest - it had run 30 years or something like that, and it came to \$1,200, and Lang paid him the \$600. But then he contended that his partner should pay the balance and grandfather had some kind of a hearing on it, referee or arbitrator or something, but he never got anything out of it. He didn't present his case good enough, evidently. He did put it in a status where if he had gone back to him instead of writing he would probably have collected it. Figured that payment of that half of it would have renewed the debt and either partner was responsible for it.

I was born in East Concord, Vermont. Father or grandfather had a mill there. Near as I can recollect he had it in about 1830. And he and the boys handled it from there on. I guess he sold out some way his interest, and the

boys took it over later. Several of father's brothers were older than he was. I remember one story that they used to tell about my father's oldest brother, Frank. He was in the sawmill and got caught in the grindstone belt. It injured him, broke some ribs or a leg and they had a doctor for him. I don't know just what happened, if they gave him too many sleeping tablets or what, but he died shortly afterward. And then his wife -- her name was Severina, by the way, rather an odd name -- she came over to try and settle up and I remember reading in my father's diary -- he was keeping it day by day -- and he said,

"Severina has come with a lawyer to settle up on Frank's share in the sawmill." And he goes on from day to day writing in his diary, how they were wrangling. Finally there came a day Father had written,

"Oliver" -- that's the brother next younger than Frank -- "has settled with Frank's wife, Severina, and she has packed her things and gone, and we can rest this night in peace."

I don't remember when my grandfather came to Minnesota but father came first, and then later of course he brought the family. My uncle came, and I don't know exactly when my grandfather came, but he came not very long afterwards. He was an old man then -- he was 80-some. They got a little sawmill together and built it along Toad River -- it's just a small stream. And the first year that they were there at this place on Toad River, after they built their mill, there was a drive of logs came down the river. I think Clark and McClure were driving down and I think that's the last drive they ever had down the river. I think the Toad either empties into some of those lakes there or into the Ottertail River, I don't know which. The country was pretty well cut over; there wasn't a lot there, maybe a section of pine that was left standing. But most of it was cut over, and grown up with raspberry bushes. The first thing they did was get themselves a house. This mill burned down one night; they had a fire. They used to have fires, they were so careless; the mill burned down a couple of times. But I guess that's the usual lot of a sawmill if it isn't pretty well protected.

(You were too young to remember much about life there in Minnesota?)

Oh, no. I remember quite a little about it. We had that first mill at Toad River. I remember about that. We had a comet there about that time. I think that must have been in '82. There was a comet that we could see early in the morning. I don't know what comet it was. I remember we got up early in the morning to see it. You could get up any morning and see it for a few mornings, as long as it was within range.

Then they built a mill at New York Mills. The timber was pretty well cut out before we went there. There was a little hardwood, and there was a little pine there, not a lot. That mill burned too. It was about eight miles away from New York Mills. I remember we used to drive from the mill to New York

Mills and we used to see a lot of those Finn women carrying big water pails full of raspberries that they'd picked out of those old timber patches. They'd walk eight miles there and back, sold the berries. I don't know what they got but I suppose they got something. Better than nothing - eggs or something.

Yes, that's where I did my first sawmilling. I worked their tail planer - a little old planer that father had gotten - dressing 1x6's, four sides, to make lath siding out of it for houses. And I was tailing the planer, taking lumber away from it. I'd pile it up in a pile there, and when I'd get it piled up to dry and I didn't get it too straight, then it slumped down and caught my leg and skinned it. I made the most of it. I was kind of tired of the job anyway. I got a layoff. I was nine years old. Father carried me up to the house. I could have walked, but I wanted to make a case of it so I wouldn't have to work.

We came to Spokane in the fall of '87. We went up north of Spokane and settled on a creek there and made a deal for some timber there, land grant timber. And they shipped the mill machinery out from Minnesota and set it up there. One rather interesting thing - they shipped a kind of settler's car. You could put most anything in it and they put some of that oak lumber in. It got into Spokane right after the fire there and they sold the better grade of it, but they had some of the culls left, you know. And there was some fellow finishing one of those new blocks that they'd built, and he wanted some oak but he couldn't find any in town. And he wanted that lumber and he wanted it bad. Father said,

"Well, I don't know whether it'd do you any good or not, but I've got a little jag of it down there, kind of poor stuff that we had left. If you want to come down and look it over maybe you could use it."

So he went down. He took hold of one end of the board, and they laid them over, and he kind of sized them up as they went along. Finally he said,

"Well, I believe I could make what I want out of what you have. What do you want for it?"

Oh, Father didn't know what to say. He thought if he got \$10 or \$15 for it, why he'd be doing fine. The fellow scratched his head a little bit, and said,

"Well, look, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you \$85 for it."

So father said, "We won't quarrel about that at all. It's yours."

That came in pretty handy after just moving from Minnesota. But oak lumber wasn't so very valuable to us, and as I say, he'd sold the best part of it.

Father set up his mill on Deadwood Creek, about nine or ten miles from Spokane. When the railroad company, B. C. Corbin, built the Spokane and Northern, from Spokane up into British Columbia, father had spur No. 1 on that track when they built it in there.

We used to run the mill two ways. We didn't cut very much; we cut nine or ten thousand. Sometimes we would run with a short crew. We'd have a sawyer, and an edgerman, and a cut-off saw man, and an engineer -- he had to fire, was the fireman. We'd run with that kind of a crew. The filer would saw and set, the sawyer did his own setting. And one of us boys would run the edger and somebody else would take away the lumber from the edger, and load it on the dolly or tractor and haul it down to the company we were sawing it for. Well then, when we sawed a deck-load of logs, then the sawyer -- that was my father -- would go down and he'd pull up another deck-load of logs. And the other fellows, they'd cut up the slabs, make them four feet long. They'd throw the slabs back that they'd set up; they'd throw them back a little farther to get them out of their way, and one fellow would go down, the edgerman. If I was edging, I'd get down and wheel sawdust. You know one of the big products of the circular saw mill is sawdust. It's big but not important -- only just important to get rid of. It gets in your way if you don't. So that's the way the machines went.

Two or three years and then the brother had typhoid fever and died. They were at Deadwood Creek so they sold the mill to a man by the name of Wheatley, Barton Wheatley. He had come out into that country -- the old man, his father, had, rather, and he had \$80,000 in cash. There were lots of chances to use up the \$80,000. He only paid a part of the mill, I forget how much. He moved it up to Wilfert Bay and partially set it up. They hewed out timbers and put up round posts and had the carriage tracks put down, and the carriage so they could saw a little. They did saw a little lumber to roof it over finally, and when he got it back, they didn't have a floor, just had a board or two for the sawyer to stand on and another two or three boards for the edgerman to stand on. That's about all they had.

Well, then, we went up to Buckheim, north of Spokane about 25 miles, and father went into a sawmill there with Dan Hoch. Dan was a railroad man; he didn't know anything about lumber business. But he had that mill up at Wild Rose Prairie and he didn't have any way to get rid of the lumber, only to haul it out by team. They'd haul it down to the railroad five or six miles and load it on the cars. So father went in with Hoch and they bought railroad timber, I think this was, and they had the mill set up on the railroad, a spur in there, and shipped the stuff wherever they wanted to ship it from there. They called it the Buckeye Lumber Company. So they got that mill running a while. Then Hoch, he was a railroader, well, he got a chance to sell his interest to another fellow, so he sold out. Kept some share of the lumber, sold his interest in the mill. I worked there filing slabs and so forth. That was 1891 or '92, somewhere around there. The family lived in Spokane. I went to school there. Went to the Bryant School the first year it was opened in the fall of '88. Before that I went to what is now the Bancroft School, a two room building. The next year we went in to a Lutheran church the school board rented. Used to have some great teachers and great times. Had one woman there that taught us down there in the Swedish church. There was a little fellow by the name of McLean, Clarence McLean, a doctor's son. He had done something, and she had him stand up in the aisle, and she

grabbed him by the collar and yanked him back and let him fall on the floor. She did it three or four times. I wanted to get up and kick her, but of course I didn't do it. Then they gave us another teacher. She was a honey, she was a wonderful teacher. Then the next year they had this Bryant School built.

In 1893 I went to business college there. Northwest Business College, run by John R. Casson and H. C. Black in a building on Riverside, upstairs. I did chores for my tuition. And I was supposed to pay them, I think it was about \$55 for books and supplies. I never was a very good writer and Blair, he was a fellow that could really make you write. He gave me a little more muscular movement, put me to work. Everybody took penmanship at the same time. He'd walk up and down and watch everybody, and he'd come along when you weren't looking and take ahold of your pen and try to pull it out of your hand. And when he tried to pull it out of your hand, if he didn't get the pen, why he'd say,

"Now, now, now that's not right. Don't grip the pen that tight, just hold it loosely in the fingers and make these circles, the way I tell you."

When you could make them good enough then you could write a few letters. He really taught me how to write a lot better than I ever would have if I had gone to public school. So finally he undertook to work the schoolroom over. They got some new flattop desks. King and Smith built the desks for him. They replaced all the old ones with these new desks. King and Smith owed father money, and I owed the school for the tuition. So they brought me an order on King and Smith for \$65. And that's the way I paid my tuition.

My father took me out of business college because he had to run a retail lumber yard down in Oakdale. He had a fellow there and he was paying him \$2.00 a day and he wasn't selling a dollar's worth of lumber. So he sent me down there to look after that. I had the office, a little office to stay in, and I batched there and it only cost about 25¢ a day for what I ate. You could buy two sacks of the best flour on the market for a dollar. Everything was cheap. There was no business, but I did accumulate a few dollars. I didn't sell hardly anything but he didn't have to pay out anything. Then later he came down and I went home with him. He left somebody else to look after the yard.

The family was at Reddington Lake. That was before we had this mill here. That was in, I think, '94. I think we had that high water in the river then, awful high; we never had it so high. Father ran a planing mill in Spokane for a while. I think probably that was after he sold the Buckeye. Then anyways we went on up here to look for a claim. He ran that planing mill two or three years. Along in '95, spring of '95, why we moved here to Harrison. A fellow had a box factory here at Harrison, Northwest Box and Lumber Company. It was two Colbys and a brother-in-law, Small, that owned the box factory. And they were making fruit and berry boxes and crates. They had a veneer machine and were selling them wherever they could. They needed some lumber sawed for them to make crates out of and other boxes. So they sent some men down and moved the

mill machinery up to Harrison from Blue Creek Bay. It was about 23 or 24 miles. They moved it up and picked up driftwood and stuff for posts, and set the mill up. I came up with a barge of lumber; we had a little barge-load of lumber. That was the first time I had ever been to Harrison. I think it was about June 5, 1895. And they landed us on the beach. We had a little batchin' outfit, dishes and range and we just set it off on the ground there on the beach and rocks and cooked our meals. When we got a little time we put a few boards over the top to keep the sun and the rain off. Then we'd put a few boards along the wind side and we slept in there on the floor. Later we built a little bit of a box of a place down the track just a little way from the mill and we slept in that. Then we made a 14 x 18 building off the end of that, board roof. Fellow came long in a rowboat with his wife and little girl about three years old. Must have come up the river fishing, and they didn't have anything; he wanted a job. And father told him, "I could give you a job, but I'm sawing lumber for the box company and if you want to work for him, why I'll pay you 15¢ an hour. You'll have to take an order on the box company for your pay; you'll have to do your own collecting." So he took it. He didn't have anything else to do, didn't have any money or any place to stay. His wife cooked; we gave her \$3.50 a week to cook and she cooked for father and me and perhaps another man and her husband, and charged him for his board about \$3.50 a week. And so we didn't have to cook our meals anymore. Before that we'd go down and build a little fire on the beach there and put on some potatoes and the coffee pot. That's the way we got our lunch at noon. Then at night, why we'd cook something else, maybe fry a little salt pork. In the morning we'd get up and build the fire and start the coffee, flapjacks. That was the way we went.

There was an old fellow wheeling the lumber from our mill down a tramway to where they were going to pile it. His name was Lou Gardiner, and he said, "You know the fellow who runs a little butcher shop and grocery? He asked me for some money. I owe him \$25 or \$30, and he can't carry me for any more. I really hate to ask those fellows (Colbys) for any money. I know they're so hard up, but I'm going to have to do it, I guess." So pretty soon he comes up the tramway and there's one of the Colbys walking along with him. I asked him what Colby said and he said he'd try and borrow a couple of dollars. And after a few trips I saw him come up the tramway wheeling the dolly and he was jingling a couple of dollars, silver dollars, and the world looked a lot brighter.

This fellow who had gone to work, who had taken orders for his money, the one whose wife was cooking for us, he wanted an order on the lumber company. Father gave him the order for \$20. He went up town and he came back with a big smile on his face and a \$20 gold piece in his pocket. Wasn't much money around then. We'd saw lumber for fellows that would bring us the logs and they'd pay us for the sawing. That was the extent of it. But there was very little milling.

A man by the name of Buell undertook to build a sawmill in Coeur d'Alene City. And he got the mill just about up -- of course, he was like everybody else, he didn't have very little money -- and there came a severe windstorm

and it blew a lot of his framework down. He had logs bought around the lake. The Idaho Mercantile or some of those stores had advanced supplies to these loggers, ranchers along the lake. Timber was right down to the water's edge, then when the mill burned, why they didn't have any market for the logs. So the Idaho Mercantile sold my father these logs that they had money in, supplies, and they told him they'd let him have the logs. I don't remember if there was a million or two of them, nice logs, awfully nice logs. If he wanted to cut any timber they'd advance him supplies up to a dollar a thousand on what he cut. And they had a mortgage on the sawmill. They gave him the supplies. But business was scarce, there wasn't no business, couldn't sell anything, hardly.

A rancher up at the lake saw my father at Coeur d'Alene and wanted to know if he'd trade lumber for logs. And father said he would. And so he says, "I got some clear logs there ain't any knots in them at all I'll give you." So he says, "All right." Father told me about it when he came home. Then the fellow brought the logs by rowboat a few days later, a little bit of a boom, and father sent me out to scale the logs. I scaled them, then I told my father, "There's knots in them. I saw them."

Father said, "They're good logs, aren't they?"

"Yes," I said, "They're good logs."

"Oh, well," he said, "I guess they're all right. We'll take them." Then he got the lumber out for the fellow and he added up the scale. It wasn't enough to pay off the lumber and the fellow owed him about \$5.00. He hated to tell the fellow that because he knew the fellow wouldn't have any money; nobody had any, and this fellow was just a poor old rancher, with a pair of dirty, greasy overalls and a cheap shirt on. But finally he told him. He said, "Well, it just lacks \$5.00 of being enough to pay for the lumber." Fellow reached right down in his pocket, pulled out a \$5.00 bill. Father, you could have knocked him over with a feather. The last place he'd ever looked in the world would have been from that fellow. But the fellow gave him the money, and took the lumber and away he went. Nobody had any money. Nobody.

We had an old planer and we did turn out a little rough lumber and ship lap. I often think about that old planer. I remember the first time I saw it back in Minnesota. There was a crank on it, kind of a screw to set your side edge with to keep it the same distance apart. Father told me you had to turn the crank all the time in order to run. And besides that, we lost the screw off there and had no way of adjusting the lumber. We had a little block to go into a kind of groove there; we put that in to hold the guide handle out where it belonged, and put another block between that and the other side of the groove to keep them the right distance apart -- we had different lengths -- father went on the other side and sort of braced himself against the frame to regulate the width. We didn't have any screw to raise and lower the cylinder with the knives on it to plane the lumber. The screw to raise the cylinder was gone so we just loosened

the nut off the bolt that held it and we'd lift it up and put a little block under it to hold it up and we'd just set it wherever we wanted it.

Of course, we didn't run very steadily. We didn't run any in the winter, and we only ran part of the summer. So we didn't have to replace so very much machinery. We'd have things that would break down; we'd have trouble with them.

I remember one spring -- that must have been the first year we were up in there -- we sold King and Smith, an outfit that had a planing mill there in Spokane; we sold them a truck of lumber and we started barging it down. I suppose they had no idea how much lumber they got, and those cars were small -- you didn't put a big load on them -- but they went right to work sawing this lumber, putting it on the cars and sending it down to them. They got five or six carloads down there, and those fellows couldn't even pay the freight on it. It was all there in the railroad yards. It stood there on those cars all summer until it got black. Finally they went over -- the rail company didn't need the cars -- finally father went down there, and had a talk with the railroad company and with King and Smith, the fellows that had bought the lumber, and they agreed to accept the lumber, and the railroad company was going to wait with their mortgage, and they'd accept the lumber and pay for it if and when they sold the lumber. Must have been in horrible shape because it had been sitting there all summer, green lumber.

Well, of course, things picked up. There was a little business, and it kind of struggled along. One thing to another. Opening for Eastern markets helped, stepped up the demand. There was wider territory in which to sell. There wasn't much selling that way then, you know; freight rates were high.

Well, I don't know when we joined the Western Pine Association. We joined it not terribly long after it was organized. We belonged to it for a good many years, still do. When a group in a particular business band together you may have some weight with the railroad. Of course, they were looking for business and as there came to be more railroads -- you see when I came to Spokane there was only one railroad in there. Then later the Union Pacific built into this country. They came in through Chico. It seems to me they built as far as Rockford and that was the end of their line, for a while. That's about 20 miles from Spokane. They built this branch up into the mines that gave them the ore haul. Then the Great Northern built in there too, I don't remember the year. 'Course more railroads brought more competition. Competition meant lower rates. About 1904, '05, '06 the Milwaukee started building through. They got their first trains about 1910. 'Course they went on through and there were more lines. I don't know whether this lowered rates, but they had to get them down somewhere within reach, before they could ship any lumber at all.

I was a little interested in shipping logging. They didn't use to do anything, so father just loaded it on the flatcar, stacked it and it went down just like cordwood. But it was pretty well tied together, and there was some dis-

cussion about how it should be loaded. Later when they began to bundle it, they had a man who worked for the entire railway group who came up here to check on the situation, see how it should be handled. Also they had a man in Wallace who came down, and then I think the UP had a general agent that they must have hired to do that sort of thing. He came up. We told them how we'd been loading, not a stake, nor a tie, nor a thing on them. Well, this fellow that worked for the joint railroads said, "Why, that violates every rule in the book."

"Well," I said, "maybe it does, but we've shipped several hundred million feet of that stuff that way, carloads upon carloads of it, and we've never lost a carload yet. That's a pretty good recommendation, isn't it?"

He said, "Yes, it is."

I told him, "They hit cars of lumber that were loaded that way and slid the lagging three feet down the car - the whole load, never lost a piece. We had to reload one end of one car, but otherwise it was all right." There wasn't much they could say then. But of course, we had to comply, so then we got to tying them and it was a different thing altogether.

The Northwest Box and Lumber Company sold out to somebody else after a while. They went in there -- these other fellows did for a while. Then they quit, didn't make any more boxes. Another outfit came in there and bought them out and a fellow from Bowater bought the place. Well, he had an idea of making white pine clapboards or lath siding out of round logs. He got a mill in there for doing that and he was there a few years. But he had a brother who was running quite a sizeable plant back in West Virginia, and he finally went back there. Father bought the clapboard mill because he was used to them up in Vermont, and we ran it then for a while. When our mill burned, why it burned too. I think it was about 1902 my father died, and I think the mill burned about 1905 or 1906.

First time it burned Danvers put in a band mill. This was at Harrison. Then after it burned the second time -- that was about 1918 -- we figured somebody'd set it and we think we knew who it was too. Then we bought this mill here. It used to be the Springton Lumber Company. They were yardmen back in the East and they didn't know what the mill was doing very much; so we just bought it and went back to work sawing our logs nights and theirs daytimes. We sawed their logs outright. We had the mill and payed them for it, and didn't lose any time; it was terrible expensive to do anything there and we didn't feel that we'd be in a position to build another mill. Of course, we had some insurance, but it didn't provide for full coverage. It was just about the time the war closed. Ever since then, why we've had the mill.

We put in a little heavier machinery, and a derrick, and so forth. And we put a new band mill in there, and a band resaw. We cut nearly twice as much as we used to, maybe a little more.

We would have lost this mill here a couple of times if it hadn't been for our sprinkler system. We had one fire in the blacksmith's shop. Some greasy rags or something caught fire. The shop was locked and for some reason the fire alarm didn't go off. When the wire is tripped it should ring, and we never knew anything about it until morning when we went into the shop and the roof was blacked up and the sprinklers running and they had drowned out the fire. Then about a year ago or a little more, we had another fire. I don't know just how it started, might have been by a spark from the welder or something like that, but it started just after the crew had gone home at night. They blew the whistles and called on the telephone. But by the time we got back up here, the fire had got enough start so that it tripped a lot of the sprinklers at that end of the mill. There was about a foot of water there that had come down from all the sprinklers. It had put the fire out, so there's twice we would have lost it if we hadn't had the sprinklers.

You know when that eight hour day came in, the big cry was that you could do just as much in eight hours as you did in ten. Well, we haven't found it that way. And they keep wiggling, wiggling up -- you know, they want rest periods, and all, and everything else. If they work 15 minutes over a day, why the Labor Board they want to scalp you, if you don't pay them overtime for it, if only one second overtime. Your help, it seems to me, they want to run when the whistle blows at night and noon, but they don't want to hurry a bit when it starts in the morning. There are quite a lot of them that way.

I don't know, of course -- we know we're on kind of a hard spot with the market the way it is, getting tough to make any money, but I guess we won't miss what we don't get. If we'd conform to all the regulations that the unions want, we'd just as well be out in the street one night as the next. No, our efficiency's down and our costs were never so high. In other words, it costs us as much to produce 1,000 feet of lumber from the log and put it on the car ready to ship, today, as I got for that entire carload back there years ago, \$35. Our manufacturing costs are \$35 a thousand. They used to figure back in the old days, way back, that they could saw lumber for a dollar a thousand. And now it costs 35 times that. But of course, we saw and machine and ship it for \$35 a thousand. So you've got to figure on a net basis. You've got to have the price of your logs plus the \$35. We were probably partly responsible for raising those prices, those costs, too. Some of our competitive bidding on special kinds of stumpage was running into the clouds. Well, you could justify it by saying you had to have it. Guess we all did that, but there's going to have to be a shakedown in price.

I said a while ago that I had seen the time when I could have bought a hundred million feet of timber for \$5,000. The Northern Pacific railroad was trying to sell the timberlands that they had for 50¢ an acre - some as low as 25¢. None of it was very high and the highest that I remember in the country back about 1900 was \$3.00 an acre. But this one instance the fellow bought a section of timber. He paid 50¢ an acre and there was 640 acres. That was \$320 for a

section, square mile of timber. He kept it a few years and sold it to the Blackwell Lumber Company for \$25,000. They were at Coeur d'Alene. Well, Blackwell didn't cut it, he sold it to the Milwaukee Land Company for \$90,000. Well, the Milwaukee Land Company sold it to Fred Weyerhaeuser for \$132,000. And there's been some funny things happen. 'Course there were a lot of timber claims then, a lot of them didn't sell very well.

Every sawmiller that had the possibility of handling it liked the white pine. But of course we didn't have the dry kiln. Took a lot of money to carry a big stock of lumber until it was dry, and keep your mill going. But we run onto timber that we bought at tax sales. That way we bought all kinds of stuff at tax sale. We owned about 30,000 acres of tax land and other land that we bought different ways. And probably we'll just let it go to the dogs. Maybe never be worth anything to us, might be to our grandchildren sometime, or to their grandchildren. And then on the other hand, we have some fairly good timber. We have some quarter sections that we paid \$100 for that are certainly worth quite a little more than that now, and we have some that aren't worth the taxes on them. Of course, we do own up one side and down the other, oh, 50,000, maybe 60,000 feet of timber. But we've been trying to hold it back against the day when we couldn't get any timber any more from other sources. But we're buying inferior timber, and we're buying forest service timber, and we're buying state timber. We're logging all three kinds right now. And if we started cutting on our own, why it wouldn't last us very long. But of course, if we're driven by market conditions, why we might have to cut our own. But it's kind of nice; I like to see it grow.

But we're fighting a lot of diseases in the forest, that's one thing that we got to remember. Blister rust put in its appearance and for years they've been fighting it; then finally they've given up the fight. We're logging stuff now that's being cut over for the third time. First they cut the mature timber, then they let it go for taxes. Somebody bought it and logged it over again. Then we bought it for a small price, ten years or so ago. And now we find there's blister rust in it. They assured us that it had been worked, that it didn't have blister rust, but it has. So we're cutting everything that we think is big enough to save, to make a log out of. They haven't been able to lick it. A fine kind of dust forms on the blister rust. We've been logging this stuff trying to save it. We've got more up there, other patches that are infested a little bit with blister rust and when they grow why we're going to have to log it. I am satisfied -- now I don't know very much about it -- but I am satisfied that the automobile is one of the big factors that has to do with spreading of that sort of infection in trees. You know, you see an automobile going fast, it creates dust, I know I've seen along the roads that new types of plant life appear, like roadweed, and you'll follow the highway and you'll find that stuff for miles and miles.

These various types of bug infestations that we get, why I think an epidemic of them are due to a great extent to weather conditions. If weather conditions are favorable, there is a good survival of bugs. Like with the yellow

jackets, we get them some years so thick that you think you can't hardly open your mouth in the woods without getting one of them in it. If the spring is cold and damp you don't get so many of them, but on the other hand, if it's dry and favorable and warm, you get a large survival of them.

We didn't own anything here when father came up. We didn't much until within the last few years. We've picked up quite a bit of tax land and stuff that the counties were selling. 'Course a lot of it hasn't any present value even to amount to anything. Once in a while you pick up something real good. Of course the best timber is picked up. I did have some tax pieces a few years ago from the tax sales that I bid on. One piece in particular I remember, I think it started out something less than \$100 in delinquent taxes. I got a reasonable bid on it and they run me up so I paid \$1,000, but it was probably the cheapest piece of land that I ever bought. I knew there was some timber on it, knew there was quite a bit -- only judged by what I could see from half a mile away. A lot of this country may develop more minerals and I think it will, if they can find it, you know. Now they've been fumbling around in the Coeur d'Alene for the past 60 years or more, I guess 70 years. And they find a lot of ore there, where they didn't know there was any before.

While we've had a good deal to fight, and probably made lots of mistakes, yet we in the long run so far have made it pay. And we're as well equipped as we ever were to go ahead. Of course, we have to fight the high stumpage values and the high logging costs, things like that 'till we get in balance again. When your market's going up, why everything favors you, everything is with you. The stumpage you bought last year, if you're selling it this year, why you're getting an appreciation value out of it. While now like this, the thing is depreciating. Logs that cost you \$40 this year, may not be worth a third of that. 'Course you can't sit down and cry, just sell it and go ahead.