

Art Clark

12/97, T1, S1

JG: This is an interview with Art Clark of La Grande, Oregon on December 6th, 1997. [tape pause] If I can...maybe just go through just a little basic information of when you're born, your place of birth and then relationship...just a brief history of your residence here within Union County and background and that type of thing.

AC: Mm-hmm. Okay. I was born February 2nd, 1934 in La Grande.

JG: And you lived here all your life then?

AC: Lived here...lived here all the time, uh-huh. I believe I was born down on Birch, North Birch. Then we moved on up just a short distance from there up on Y, then back down onto 'Z' Avenue and then about 19...hmm...'42, '43, '44...somewhere along in there...we moved to on the corner right here and then I got married after that and we lived three or four places and then a built a couple of houses and this is the second one we built here.

JG: Oh yeah. Mm-hmm. What about as far as after school, high school, there or schooling days as far as your occupation and...?

AC: I quit school in my junior year and started working in a saw mill. [laughs]

JG: Which one was that?

AC: Morgan and Jim Pudwell.

JG: Oh. Whereabouts was that?

AC: Okay. The only way I can explain it to you...you do know...are you familiar with what we call Peebler Hill, or used to call Peebler Hill?

JG: No.

AC: Goin' up...goin' up past...when you get up to the rest area goin' up the high way here that bald hill on the right-hand side...

JG: Oh yeah, okay.

AC: You come back around in toward George Simonis, you're familiar where he lives in there?

JG: Yeah.

AC: And there was a lane went up there than it just wound up around the hill and got up on top. There was a mill up in there that they had. And they...I believe they acquired that from, uh,...it'll come to me here in a minute. Oh dear. [laugh] Mila...Emo Muilenburg and another fellow by the name of Green. Muilenburg lives on Pierce Lane...or used to, he's dead now...and Green lived over on by DeLongs when that road comes from the airport that goes up here east and west. You're familiar where I'm talkin' about?

JG: Yeah, I think...

AC: Right off...just right off the freeway there by the truck stop, cross the tracks and go down.

JG: Oh yeah. Okay. Do you know about what the capacity was up there and what they were cutting?

AC: We didn't cut any white fir and they didn't want to cut anything except red fir and pine, but basically pine's what they were after at that time.

JG: Yeah. It's still pretty much the market.
AC: Oh yes.
JG: Do you remember about what year that would've been?
AC: '51.
JG: '51.
AC: '52. '51 and '52. Uh-huh/
JG: Yeah. 'Cause of course what we ran into with the forest there the white fir is still weed species at that time. You couldn't give it away.
AC: That's right.
JG: It was the '60s before they actually developed a market for the chips and all...and that.
AC: That's right.
JG: Each go for a dollar a thousand just to, you know, try to move it.
AC: Yeah. Just to get rid of it, yeah.
JG: Do you remember about how long that mill was in there?
AC: It was there after they...well, no, wait. They moved the mill from there down to Lone Pine just across the tracks there. I think there's a saw mill in there again right now of some type.
JG: There's a pole... They're making poles down there right now __ that airport road.
AC: Yeah. Okay. That's where they moved it to and I imagine it was there for '51, '52 when Marvin and Jim had it under running. Marvin's still alive and he's probably a real good source of information. Do you know Marvin Toodwell?
JG: No. I know I've heard the name, but I don't know him. Yeah.
AC: He lives at...you can find him real easy if you wanted to.
JG: Do you remember about what the capacity was of the mill of how much they're cutting a day or annually?
AC: I'm gonna gestimate if they had a good day they'd get ten thousand, perhaps more.
JG: Was that just lumber that they were cutting?
AC: Rough lumber and then they shipped it out on...hailed it out on truck and I think it may have went to Elgin at that time to a planer mill over there.
JG: Oh yeah. Mm-hmm. How long did you work there?
AC: Oh, off and on for two...two and a half years. In the wintertime they didn't work too much there. And then I...then after...somewhere along in that period of I went to work for Jack Eckstein on Fox Hill. Do you remember where that was up there?
JG: No. I'm not familiar with that one at all.
AC: Okay. Jack Eckstein had a real good mill and I think that that fellow must've cut...he cut everything, though, he cut even the white fir and the spruce and everything and it all sold to the Adventist church in Pendleton. Harris Pine Mill, I believe they called it.
JG: Oh yeah. Harris Pine, yeah.
AC: Everything he cut was into five quarter and six quarter lumber. A real efficient mill. A good one.
JG: Was it way down on the hill was it?

AC: No, no. It's...when you go up...go up the hill about five miles you get up where the roads fork and you got that new smooth one goin' around to go up Mt. Emily or...

JG: No, I haven't been up there at all.

AC: You haven't been up there?

JG: Yeah.

AC: Heck, I'd be happy to take you up there some of these times. I'll show you two or three more up there.

JG: Oh yeah. I know there's a bunch of mills around ____

AC: ____ [laughs]

JG: ____ Some of the old publications like __ like on Elgin...just the Elgin country alone like thirty-five mills, you know, around the turn of the century.

AC: I was amazed what you told me was up there in this area. Did you say there was two hundred and fifty in the...

JG: I think all together, you know, over the years. Of course a lot of mill you wouldn't last too long, but then they'd be bought out and names changed and, you know, and like that. So there's a...really a slug of 'em when you start lookin' now from back in about 18... I think Ordell was the first mill in 1862 when...right there at the foot of Fox Hill...when they put the mill in there.

AC: Are you familiar with Fox? Fox had a mill on Fox Hill.

JG: Yeah. That was the one... That was the original.

AC: That's up on top. That's on top.

JG: Oh, is there one on top? 'Cause originally there's one right at the mouth of the canyon. They might have moved that.

AC: Maybe it is. Maybe that...you're referrin' to the mouth of the canyon, are you talkin' about goin' up above the dump into the timber?

JG: No. Right...right there on the Grande Ronde River.

AC: Right on the river.

JG: Yeah. That was the original one where they first came in and I think it's 1862...

AC: I wasn't aware of that one.

JG: ...when... Where as they got...finally...I think... I had a picture picked up the college showed a dam in there and I think that might have been for electricity, you know, when they first started. 'Cause that was, I think, 1906 or somewhere around there, when that picture was taken. But the original information I could find is that about... actually the first saw mill that was put in the mill that was put in the valley then another Summerville was about the same time, '63 I think, you know, right in there where, you know, people startin' movin' in they needed lumber for their houses.

AC: Food and lumber.

JG: Oh yeah. That and heat and cord wood. [laughs]

AC: Oh yeah. Yeah. You bettcha. Right on top of the hill there when you get up on top of the hill just back into timber a half a mile... I can still remember seeing parts of buildings and aluminum and metal siding and stuff, maybe part of a burner or something there. And the other day at work I asked Gary Keller...has a cabin up on Fox Hill there right below the old Eckstein mill...who that was and

he said, "Oh, that was Fox. He had that saw mill up there." And then it kind of run the bill with me and I kind of remembered part of it then.

JG: Then after you left the Fox Hill mill then your...is that when you went to Mt. Emily, or...?

AC: No. I went to Baker, worked at the Baker Lumber Company and then I...oh dear... I worked for Ray McFarlund when he had his mill down underneath...below the dump hill there by the...just above the fair grounds. It was 19...April the 28th, 1955 is when I went to work for Mt. Emily.

JG: And what was your job there?

AC: I pulled on the slick chain. That was my starting job. Then went to car loadin' and eventually through the years I've done everything in the planer department.

JG: Oh yeah. So you've always been in the mill then and not in the woods.

AC: In the planer. Yeah. There was other places I worked, Albert's...I just remembered a couple more. I worked for Ramsey Chadwick had a mill farther up above Fox Hill up towards Mt. Emily, the top of Mt. Emily. Mike Ness had a mill up there and that. And then another...again, Mike Ness moved his mill down by the...used to be right behind Valley Sausage.

JG: Oh yeah.

AC: Or River Products, it was.

JG: That was River Products.

AC: River Products. I worked for him. And it was easy to get a job in those days 'cause there was lots of employment back then, you know.

JG: What were they doing, trucking most of that lumber out...

AC: Uh-huh.

JG: ...to planers or just cuttin' their own?

AC: Sawin' it and shippin' it out. I don't remember where Mike sent his lumber to, but I think it went to Pendleton and Elgin. Seemed like the planer mill in Elgin might've been a Calder. Does that sound familiar to you?

JG: Sounds...yeah.

AC: Calder. I think they had just a planer mill set up there that buyin' timber.

JG: I'd like to maybe, Art, if we could, go through a few things there starting with Grande Ronde River system. If you recall just vegetative types and conditions, especially from Hilgard to Oradell along, you know, along the river area there, changes that you can remember over, you know, your experience going up and down the river there.

AC: It's nearly all gone, really, what it was. It was...I...I can't remember the dam at Perry, but I can remember the footings and the stuff from the dam.

JG: I think the dam was either... Of course, see, they shut that sawmill down in 1926 and they had a picture in the La Grande history that John Turner and Dick Hermanns had...

AC: I got that book.

JG: And that one they had on there date of the early 1930s when they blew the dam. But I don't know...you know, never seen anything else of whether it was then or even, you know, maybe before. But they ran that, I know, up to '26 when they took the sawmill over to Pondosa. That's how they just picked up...

AC: Okay. I remember readin' about those things that occurred then. I've... Dad told me that he rode his bicycle up the river to watch 'em blow the dam. Said it was the most disappointing thing he ever saw in this life. Said it just a little tiny hole and a spurt of water in the air.

JG: Yeah. It was __ [laughs]

AC: And then about thirty years later I see a picture in the book you're referring to, Hermann's and Turner's, yeah.

JG: Do you remember...have any idea about when that might've been that your Dad talked...when, you know, when he went on up there to see that?

AC: It's gonna be right close to 1925 is all I can say, some___. Dad was born in 1913. Would he been '26...1926, '27, '28, somewhere along in there, I would guess because he never did really tell me, but he said he rode his bicycle up there.

JG: Oh yeah. That's what I was wonderin' about when I saw the 1930s of why it would've, you know, waited that long to blow it, you know, after everything was shut down in 1926, you know. That was... Seems like they wouldn't have waited that long __

AC: No, I don't think they would've either, personally.

JG: There wasn't any particular reason to, you know, hang onto it there.

AC: No use for it at all then, was there?

JG: No. And of course your highway was goin' up through there at that time, too.

AC: The highway is what destroyed the river, or whatever you want to call about it, you know. They had to...had the railroad and stuff like that. I can remember what it was like. I can remember goin' up on the old highway and above Perry and drive around the hill and gettin' out and walk down over the hill and gettin' on a cable and goin' across to that cabin that used to sit across from...Pete's cabin over there. And I think that cabin may have been owned by our...one of our English teachers in...or social teachers in junior high school, a Ticklebeck or a Sneider or something like that. I don't recall who really owned it. I remember hearin' that.

JG: Do you recall, Art, of the...like the vegetation, what was up through there in the early days or any change from all that there is now?

AC: As far as bein' able to remember any...what kind of vegetation there was I couldn't say for sure, but there was lots of it, lots of cottonwood. And there was lots of...lots of brush and stuff 'cause...

JG: Were the cottonwood pretty much mature trees like...I mean large trees, or...?

AC: No. I don't think they were... I don't think they were large, as I can remember it. Some of 'em may have been in the two or three foot stage, but it seems like most of 'em were down to...bigger than a beaver's gonna chop down. Maybe not thought 'cause the whole Grande Ronde River all down through here used to be cottonwoods all the way through there.

JG: Yeah. 'Cause you still see quite a lot of them that's there, you know, down below the fairgrounds there's quite a few stands. And then, of course, there's still a lot up...

AC: That's about the sizes I remembered, except I do know that there were some huge ones in there, there had to've been, but I couldn't say definitely how...how much any of 'em were.

JG: Oh yeah.

AC: Lots of brush, lots of birds. Lots of everything.

JG: Yeah. [laughs] Was the... What type of brush was the... Do you recall what was in there for brush?

AC: You know, I'm think that we had a vine type stuff and I remember tryin' to smoke it, we did, we called it dogwood. No, it was horrible tasting stuff. [laugh] And rose...lots of rose bushes, as I remember, 'cause I can remember the rose hips. Lots and lots of that kind of stuff everywhere throughout the river system. It seemed like that was still there. As far as willows go, golly, I don't...I don't remember too much about willows and stuff. Mostly cottonwood.

JG: Mostly cottonwood and some of the other...rose and that type thing.

AC: And then up through the river we had the firs and a few pine trees and stuff growin' right down into the edge of the river.

JG: Did you get up into...or remember any beaver along that stretch in there, any beaver activity, or...?

AC: Yep. I remember beaver activity everywhere I went in the Grande Ronde River or any of the creeks, all the way clear on down through the valley down in through the big ditch, even, there was beavers. If you were down there fishing you'd see 'em swimmin' or you'd see where trees has been fallen and all the little stick had washed down above or they'd settle down through the valley. There must've been lot of beaver up here 'cause there was little limbs everywhere with the bark chewed off of 'em.

JG: About when was... What years were that or what periods, do you recall?

AC: Oh, I would say it was from 1947 to '57. I don't even remember when they straightened the river up, made that channel down in there.

JG: The...see the state ditch portion of it was 1870. That was long before our time.

AC: Oh yeah. Way down below.

JG: Way down below. But even a lot of the other...from what I gathered...when the railroad went in 1884 they straightened a lot of that to keep it from flooding the depot from here towards Island City. And then a little later on they went down and hit it between there and the state ditch. So all that's been worked over. If you got an aerial photograph you can see it.

AC: And more than...more than one time. As I remember it was...I'll say forty years ago...they went through here and straightened this all out, channeled out down through here 'cause it was washin' out all the high banks and stuff that used to been there stuff. I don't remember what year that was, but that...even at that period of time we'd go to the river and dive off the bank two feet above the river in the summertime and swim in those holes. Now you dive out there you better go way out there 'cause its about twenty, thirty feet down the river.

JG: ___ [laughs]

AC: They've mined a lot of...lot of rock out of there.

JG: They did all through this area in here ___. Do you remember who that was that...who would've been doin' that? 'Cause I think know the only thing they take is pretty much down in Island City, don't they?

AC: Yes.

JG: They got the big plants down there.

AC: The one that I worked at was at the end of Third or Fourth Street and it was owned by Ed and Jack Hart.

JG: Do you remember about what year that would've been?

AC: Oh, let's see. '52. I worked for 'em for a couple weeks there one time. They had a rock crusher and set up there and everything right on...right on the river. I'm thinkin' it might've been Fourth Street, is what I'm thinkin' it might've been.

JG: Yeah. But right in that area there.

AC: Yeah. Uh-huh.

JG: Do you remember as far as how they...what they were doing with all that rock?

AC: No, I do not know. I don't know. There is a person that would know exactly. He worked there, he was a few years older than I am, Jay Bess.

JG: Do you recall, Art, of any other obstacles...of course there was the Perry dam was gone, you know, before your time, but were there any other things, dams, or other obstructions in the river you can recall up through the Grande Ronde or other places that you fished, or...?

AC: Manmade barriers?

JG: Yeah.

AC: I don't... At the moment I'll have to say right now I don't recall of any. That was even before they were dredgin' it out for the irrigation canals goin' down through there. So I don't...I don't recall of any other barriers.

JG: What about out in the valley itself? You'd mentioned a little bit about, you know, there was cottonwood goin' out towards the state ditch along the Grande Ronde, was that pretty solid with trees all the way through, or was it pretty spotty?

AC: Trees everywhere except where somebody had a pasture or some kind of development goin' on. Yes, there was trees all the way... Now, of course, what I'm referring to is the old river channels that went through there before they straightened it out where all the main parts of the cottonwood the last time they straightened it out was basically on the old river channels. That's where it really grew the most 'cause the new one they never had time to get established or anything there yet.

JG: Right.

AC: But before they straightened out the last time to where it's the same channel it is now there was...there was trees clear at the waterline, everywhere. Oh heck, yeah, all the time.

JG: Now do you recall about the last time when they straightened...when that last straightening was done?

AC: I would say 1960.

JG: 'Cause the flood...

AC: It must've been... '65 was a horrible flood.

JG: See, the horrible flood was as the December '64 and of course lasted into '65. That was the, you know, the real high water. In there and took the bridge out, Spruce Street and Island City.

AC: You know, I've stand and look at that bridge and said it'll never wash that out and I turn around and look at Walt Lovely and look back up there and it was layin' in the river. I missed it in that length of time. [laughs] I was standin' there when Walk Lovely's house was getting' ready to wash off down the river. I think you

may have asked me another question and I probably interrupted you. I'm bad about interrupting or not listening.

JG: Oh, that's no...no problem. It was mainly...it was just the straightening of that...

AC: Oh, that's what we were referring to, wasn't it?

JG: Yeah.

AC: I was thinking it was before 1965 that they had been in there with Cats and stuff and was dredgin' it up, but perhaps it wasn't. Perhaps it was the year that they...after the flood. Maybe that's when they went ahead, Corps Engineers, or whoever did that.

JG: A lot of times it seems like that's what triggers all the action when they, you know, have a big flood then they'll go in and try to, you know, do the work, you know.

AC: I can...I can see at that point in time I thought I could see why it was necessary because it was really taking out lots of...lots of bank. [telephone ringing] Excuse me a minute. [tape pause] Where were we?

JG: Just the...as for the...you know, straighten that river out of how much work they did, you know, down through there. Like you said, it might've been after...right after that flood there in '65.

AC: Mm-hmm. Above Riverside Park there used to be huge high banks, big clay banks...I called 'em clay, perhaps they weren't. Probably good farm ground, silt, you know, come down for how many ever years. They were too high for me to jump off of to jump in the river. And then on down through this area here below Riverside Park in there it's washin' out some big huge...removin' fields and stuff. So I can see why they probably thought it was necessary to do it and I kind of agree. I'd like to see it'd be run in all it's channels, but... Be somethin' to see. I would love to see a picture...an aerial picture of this valley before they dug everything up.

JG: Mm-hmm.

AC: 'Cause everywhere you look out there you see these cottonwood trees as part as the Grand Ronde River, or Catherine Creek, or...

JG: That's it. Look at an aerial photo you can start tracing a lot of those even though they're takin'...a lot of places they've taken the trees out of there, but you still see the old channels.

AC: Like most of 'em they're gone, but you can still see where, oh yeah, it... God, it really wound around out through there.

JG: Yeah. Even in...oh, Corps of Engineers flew in the airport in 1970 after, you know, high water that winter and it shows a lot of those where those old channels flooded back in again. You could see that water standin' in 'em.

AC: It still tries to go there.

JG: Oh yeah, it does! [laughs] It's still the lowest spot so when you get the high water it'll go in.

AC: Yeah, when you can see... I know a... I want to say that I don't remember a barrier, but want... Bear with me a moment here we'll go to the Riverside Park and right down below there we'll say quarter of a mile or less than that they got that ditch that they take the water out and it comes in there right now. You know, right below the park bridge it comes around here, irrigation ditch.

JG: Oh, okay. Yeah.

AC: Then right below there if...which would be out on May Lane over here...there's another little slough of water that come out and it ran down and went clear on through down into the flour mill at Island City. So apparently they had some kind of...

JG: Diversion or take-off from there.

AC: Because Auggie Stangg had a pump house that was built out over that canal that come off the river and then he pumped it in and it run into the millpond over here. Plus there was a ditch comin' through from up here by Ordell Bridge. I don't remember exactly where it come in at. Come down right down 'X' Avenue here and run into that little pond.

JG: Oh yeah. ___ the pond there.

AC: Yeah.

JG: As far as fishing do you recall both, you know, the Grande Ronde or Catherine Creek, any places that you fished of the runs, you know, of salmon or other...other species or eels and that?

AC: Oh yeah. The things you don't even see anymore is eels. Used to be in the irrigation ditch. You'd go down to the river anywhere and pick up little tiny ones and then there's great big huge ones about a foot and a half long or so. Lamprey.

JG: Yeah.

AC: Oh yes. I can remember standin' on the old pilings the first time I saw a salmon in Catherine Creek...or Grande Ronde River. I didn't realize what it was, but as I was standing on those little piling for that dam a log layin' there and I saw a tail and a fish move out in there. At that time I just knew it was a big fish, but now I know what it was. It was a Chinook salmon. There was four or five of 'em layin' in there. And then when you get up on the river you'd see 'em and stuff.

JG: Was that up on Perry? You mentioned___

AC: Yeah.

JG: The dam.

AC: The Perry dam. That was the first time I ever saw one was there.

JG: Do you remember about what year that would've been?

AC: Oh, it probably '48. Maybe even...maybe even '46. I've just...

JG: Yeah, but it was about that time in the middle...

AC: Yeah.

JG: ...'40s.

AC: Just learnin' to swim and bein' able to sneak away to get to the river. [laughs]

JG: Do you recall like how many salmon were...were going up the river at that time?

AC: On the Grande Ronde River I'm not familiar with how many went up. I never was up there enough to know that much about what was up in the head waters of it. But on Catherine Creek everywhere I went on Catherine Creek it was full of salmon. I remember my grandmother said, "Oh, that isn't a lot of salmon. You should've saw it when I was younger." I can imagine 'cause it was salmon everywhere. Lots of 'em.

JG: What part of Catherine Creek was that, Art, that you were...?

AC: From just above Union right all the way up through there. But when you get up in the areas of the parks and up through there and stuff that's where we saw most of

the fish 'cause it seemed like that's where the family liked to go have a picnics up on Catherine Creek.

JG: Oh yeah.

AC: See...and I think part of the reason Dad and Grandpa and Grandma liked to go up there is 'cause they used to take the buckboard when they lived at Cricket Flat, put their cook stove on it and go over and camp right below the lower park. There's a bluff in there, a little bit of a turnout.

JG: Oh yeah. Right.

AC: They camped there and then they'd go out and gig salmon and can 'em. Stay there for a couple of weeks.

JG: Do you remember about what year that would've been?

AC: I... I don't... I don't have any idea what year it may have been. Maybe in the...maybe even in the '30s.

JG: But around the '30s?

AC: Yeah. I would...and sooner.

JG: '20s and '30s.

AC: My granddad...Grandpa and Grandpa Fark were homesteaders at North Powder.

JG: _____

AC: I had a picture here a while ago, but that isn't it, the old homestead. Look at the truck and then you tell me what year it was. [laughs] They were takin' a buckboard when they were goin' to campin' out so it would've been more than the '30s, I'm sure of that. I said a buckboard 'cause that's how I remember Dad tellin' me ___ and they'd go and camp.

JG: That was their mode of transportation at that time.

AC: Yeah. Take all day to get from Union...or Elgin to Union, you know. [laughs] I've been up on the Minam River a couple of times saw salmon just like I did on Catherine Creek. Everywhere you'd look you'd see salmon. The Lostine River, the Imanaha, all those. And even in later years when people didn't think there was any salmon...oh, in the '60s goin' up the...up the Grande Ronde River... By then I was goin' up in Tony Bays and stuff.

JG: Yeah.

AC: He'd be up in those holes and sneak along and look and pay attention there was...there was salmon in all the holes.

JG: That was in the '60s?

AC: Oh yeah.

JG: Do you remember about what time of year that would've been?

AC: In midsummer. A lot of 'em were startin' to... We camped out...or picnicked earlier than that so... A lot of 'em were in good shape, but most of the time...like it was in August they might be startin' to get a little white spots on 'em and stuff. They didn't... Pretty close to spawnin' time, I'd imagine. After the water'd go down they'd get up in there'd be the last of...the middle of June would probably be about the end of a run. So July and August that would be the time that I think that I saw 'em.

JG: Do you recall over the years of changin' like water levels of...whether there's anything, you know, significant as far as, you know... Of course, that changes year for year or somethin', but...

AC: It sure does.

JG: ...whether there's any major trend at all compared to, you know, what you can remember?

AC: I...I don't think I remember any difference in the waters. I really don't, you know. I have different types of water to look at when I was a kid. Most of my life was...young, real young, was down in the lower river here and it was kind of a...almost like a...one pool after another. Good salmon water!

JG: Yeah.

AC: But as far as I can recall thinkin' about what was up the river and stuff for an average I think we still got the same amount of water. I don't know that to be a fact, but I...I've always felt that way.

JG: Do you remember when you're going up there on the upper Grande Ronde as far as beaver activity up above Hilgard for, you know, either the dams or seein' beaver in there?

AC: I've seen beavers, yes, all the way up through there. My most favorite place to watch beavers is up on Five Points Creek. Used to go up hike back in walk up Fox Hill and go back and fish back down to Hilgard. There was lots of beaver dams and stuff. Its presentine, if that's the right word. I'll bet there's still beaver in there.

JG: Yeah, they're workin' right now right behind the schoolhouse this last year.

AC: Really?

JG: Oh yeah. Yeah, they're in there. Just dropped a bunch of trees then that high water came through and took 'em all out and they're back in there eatin' down...chew on 'em again. They felled quite a few cottonwoods in there.

AC: They do. You bet.

JG: ...do that. But that was this last spring and summer. I got some pictures. I never did see the beaver, but they're sure workin' the trees.

AC: They can be secretive.

JG: Oh yeah. I spent quite a bit to be lucky.

AC: I think so.

JG: Do you recall, Art, on the...towards the upper Grande Ronde above Hilgard, you know, goin' on up as far as wetland marshes or, you know, changes over the years from what there is now?

AC: I remember there was a lot more marshy stuff go out through. As we'd walk along the river we went through little bits of sloughs and probably little feeder creeks like Jordan Creek or Dry Jordan or stuff like that through there. Oh dear. And on...in the back in that big curve here at, oh, the first ranch house up the river on your left up there above Whiskey Creek near the big hay field in there. Back over in through that area in there there was...there was marshy bogs and stuff along in there. There was a railroad track in there, too. Maybe they had it kind of dammed up, I don't know. They had a bridge built across there, though, so... But it was definitely different because river had more swings to it. And then there was...and then...even then though a lot of the river had been changed when I started going up there. Just little cutoffs where they'd block off part of it. But they were still...yeah, there were sloughs and cattails and frog ponds [laugh] and marshes. All those... All those little draws that come down through there

had water in 'em at one time, so there's bogs of...little ponds of water sittin' in all those places. They's as far up as you want to go.

JG: Yeah. 'Cause I remember some...oh, that was...had to be '55 when I came out here...some beaver dams someplace up there on the Grande Ronde towards where it split between, you know, goin' towards Sly Creek and the other, you know, the other direction towards...

AC: Tony Bays. Limberdy.

JG: The experiment station up there at Starkey. That... I can never... You know that's changed so much in there it seemed like where the road forked that there's, you know, timber all through there. Now, of course, right there at Starkey it's all open meadow.

AC: Right.

JG: Do you recall as far as the timber how much timber was in there in comparison to today? Or how that had changed?

AC: No, I can't.

JG: 'Cause that was all... You know, right now it's all pretty much open, you know, marsh land, you know.

AC: That's all been logged off, yeah.

JG: And I've forgotten...try to pinpoint exactly where it was. I remember fallin' in a beaver dam. [laugh]

AC: Oh boy. I...I had fished through there when I was about fifteen years old all the way down through there, but I don't recall timber bein' in there. But I'm sure there was timber, but I don't recall it as being so much. One place where I do remember beaver dams on the Grande Ronde River was at this...this ranch I was just tellin' you about. Right below the mouth of...between Spring Creek and Whiskey Creek, across the river. Part of the river channel ran along over next to the railroad tracks and they had the big channel out here. And there was a beaver dam back in here by that one. I do remember that one. Oh, well, then too they had the little dams on the little tributaries like... When was it okay...1955 can you remember drivin' across the old bridge goin' down to Riverside Park there? Right down Spruce Street?

JG: I don't think I ever... I wasn't here that long. I don't remember going across that one. I remember goin' up Hilgard, you know, that way, but not...not this other direction Spruce Street.

AC: Okay, when you...when you cross it there the Grande Ronde River run right under the main bridge and then there was a big irrigation ditch come down and run into that pond at the park there. There was also an island above the bridge there with a pretty good channel of water run around behind it. I remember beaver dams on that. Anywhere that they weren't gettin' washed out in the floods I believe there probably was a beaver dam if I'd a paid attention.

JG: They see all time and, you know, never think too much about it.

AC: My greatest delight was to sneak off the river and go fishin'. [laughs]

JG: What about as far as do you remember as far as numbers of like eel or salmon or anything else?

AC: Oh, I can remember the river bein' full of eels. The Grande Ronde River, the Imanaha River, the Wenaha River. I remember eels in those, oh yeah, all the time

in the spring of the year or early summer. Oh yeah, you can see 'em just... And the...used to have tremendous runs of suckers and squaremouths and chubs, different species of what we called trash fish, but there was lots and lots of 'em go up here. You go down there and fish for 'em and catch a hundred of 'em, I guess, maybe, I don't know. Nothin' to bring home to eat, or so we thought anyway.

JG: Do you recall the...as far as the Indians fishing or working any of the area, Art, did you ever experience any of that or see 'em out there?

AC: The only time I ever saw some Indians fishing...the only time...was about 1958 or '59 and they were just above Union on Catherine Creek. At one time...I just recalled another time. One time, probably in 1965, there was two Indians way on up to Camp Carson, maybe they called it, on the upper Grande Ronde. There was some up there. They went down below us and they didn't even bother our hole and they said they could see a couple of salmon in there. Obviously there were. But when they come back the eighteen head on their stringer they were draggin' they took two more of 'em out of that hole.

JG: Oh gee!

AC: That was... They were cleanin' the creek out at that time.

JG: Do you know how they were fishin' or what they were using?

AC: Gig. Gig hook. Had a big long pole about eighteen feet long. When they got those... When they came back by us where we were eatin' dinner there there was...and that amount of fish that was more fish than I thought was in the river. [laughs] 'Cause I wasn't seein' 'em all, but they sure were.

JG: Do you remember about what size they were?

AC: Oh, they were good twelve to eighteen pounds. They had a couple of eighteen pounders there. Most of 'em probably around twelve, fifteen pounds.

JG: Do your remember when they were doin' with 'em? Were they tryin' to prepare 'em, you know, up there while they were there or how...?

AC: These two guys got in a pickup and went back down to Tony Bays meadow. And when we left we saw the same rig and maybe three or four more rigs with a lot of poles stickin' out of the back of. Obviously they'd been down... In my opinion, they were down at Tony Bays meadows giggin' down in there too and we never did talk to 'em again.

JG: Of course in the early days, you know, couldn't transport fast so they're...like Hazzler Creek I know some of the people there usually dry 'em up...you know, put 'em on racks and dry 'em while they're up there. But then, you know, once the better roads and the pickups things could move faster.

AC: Yeah, that's right. I remember bein' at Salila Falls many moons ago I could see Salila Falls before we ever got there. It looked like a black cloud. There was millions of flies. Then I was told flies won't even eat...what do you call it...lay their eggs on salmon meat. I don't know that's true or not, but whatever it was there was a bunch of 'em there. [laughs]

JG: Question come up about logging of cottonwoods. Do you recall anybody cutting cottonwood or what it was used for?

AC: The only time I saw one cut up we cut it up at the Twoodwell sawmill at Lone Pine. I don't even know where it came from. Somebody brought it in, they cut it up and we stacked it and it twisted and warped and turned. It was a real beautiful

wood. Later on I was told it was a seventh ranked hardwood [phone ring] [tape interruption]

JG: Oh, they're talking about the redbtail in there the Tony Bays Meadow there where the Indians were...

AC: The Indians were.

JG: ...you know, working that area in there. Do recall, Art, as far as the time, you know, when you're up in that area change or...along those stream bottoms of the timber that was up in those areas?

AC: It's definitely different now, especially up above Tony Bays there was trees runnin' out in the upper into that pasture clear across the river. Lots of trees. And they...I don't remember whether they just went in and cut 'em down or what they were. It didn't seem like they were too awful...awfully large. But it used to be lots of trees. But in the upper part of the river I remember there was trees everywhere.

JG: Remember what species?

AC: Mostly pine.

JG: Mostly pine along the bottoms there.

AC: Mm-hmm.

JG: Did you ever get into...or that upper Grande Ronde where...around Camp Carson country where they were...had done the dredging and all?

AC: Mm-hmm.

JG: Do you remember anything about when that was done, or...?

AC: No, I don't. I don't recall any of that, the time it was done.

JG: 'Cause original Camp Carson, of course, was way back in, you know, the 1800s like that. And they were sporadic from then on, you know, different mining.

AC: Golly, it looks like a person'd come up with a date on that real easy, you'd think.

JG: Picked up the dredging... I was up at the geology department there in Baker and it was in... I always thought the dredging was way back turn of the century, but I guess it wasn't till late thirties when they actually dredged along that river in there. So it was, you know, kind of a little surprise to me. Compared to like the ___ country a lot of that dredging was, you know, way, you know early.

AC: Way before. I can remember old mine shaft right across the river and stuff. I went over there and looked in a ways.

JG: Yeah. 'Cause you had the Indiana Mine and the Rainbow Mine on ___ and then Camp Carson. Of course Camp Carson mostly hydraulic where they washed the country compared to, you know, the tunnel type of mining.

AC: Yes.

JG: Do you remember the...as far as the water quality it was clear, whether there was still silt comin' down from that upper Grande Ronde when you're in there?

AC: There wasn't the silt as I recall in my youth what we see today. No where as close to it.

JG: You know, of course the hydraulic mining when they're doin' that at turn of century they're washing a lot of material down the river at that time, but then, you know, they stopped that by...I think it was, oh, early 1900s by the time that quit.

AC: I'm glad they did.

JG: Yeah.

AC: I remember what the Powder River looked like out of Baker. You couldn't... I don't know how anything could possibly live in that thing as filthy as it was. A lot of silt. I knew... Were you familiar with the story of the...I think it was Billy Spears and maybe his brother were up Camp Carson?

JG: No.

AC: And they found a cylinder of mercury.

JG: I'll be darned.

AC: I don't know how big it was or stuff, but they...just a short time ago when it was mentioned, oh yeah. They sold it to somebody. A cylinder of mercury, however big a cylinder would be, he said it was heavier than heck, so... [laughs] That'd be somebody that... Those kids played around, but they're ten years younger than I am or so.

JG: That's a lot of mercury.

AC: Oh it is, yeah. And I have no idea even where they found it at. I __ know it was at Camp Carson, that's all I know. That's all they ever said. I think they wanted to go back and look for more. [laughs]

JG: Do you remember as far as...of course you had the flood here in '64...of other times as far as the...a lot of silt coming down the Grande Ronde, of any __ high water or flooding times?

AC: They, you know... As my youth... Saying that I grew up on the river is almost the truth 'cause I was there from when it froze up through the good ice skating, where we had to chop holes in the ice to get the snow wet where'd freeze over and have ice skating again. And the only time I really paid much attention to the river's during the ice...ice out here. It just went out and then it would be high and stuff, but I don't remember any flash floods and stuff like that. There could've been, but I don't remember any of that kind of stuff. I remember the one that came down up here how many ever years ago, it was fifteen or so, that really a bad one come off the burn this side of Anthony Lakes.

JG: Oh yeah.

AC: I don't remember what year that was, but that was a horrible... I think killed everything in the river pretty near. If it didn't it could have. It was bad. You know, when I was a kid...kids are more foolish...I think I would drink water anywhere out of...[end tape]

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JG: ...__ you used to drink out of all the creeks. I may never paid any attention to it.

AC: Now they even put signs up below Hells Canyon, "Don't drink this water."
[laughs] Oh dear.

JG: __ Remember a few cow tracks I drank out of, I'd be so thirsty, you know.

AC: I... It didn't bother me if I could skim the side if I didn't see any little creatures in there.

JG: That was it, yeah. [laughs] Do you recall as far as out in the valley any other flooding or any change of high water... Like I said, '64 was the big one, '65, where it flooded, you know, __.

AC: I remember many years before that...I'm gonna say back oh, '45 or somewhere along in there...they had the big flood over out at Catherine Creek.

JG: No, it was '48, I think, was the big one and it went right down through town there and flooded, you know, a lot of the town there.

AC: Yeah. And that's when they started dykin' up all the bridges and...or roads out here in the valley along Catherine Creek down through there. I remember that. The real changes I've seen in the Grande Ronde Valley is the farming practices where they... First they pushed the trees in the slough then pretty soon they pushed the dirt in the slough and where the Grande Ronde is what amounts to. And made their farmland more profitable for 'em. I would assume that was the main reason.

JG: 'Cause some of the aerial photos you can see, you know, some of the old sloughs where you can still see the remnants of 'em, but there's no slough anymore. They're completely filled 'em in.

AC: That's right. You can see that between here and Pierce Lane and on out through there. In fact, __ place out there is where we used to go catfishin' in the spring of the year. Everywhere you went there was...

JG: Some of those sloughs, Art, do you know when those were...whether they were natural or they were constructed on some of these...oh, there's the Gekeler slough and, you know, some of the others as you go out through the valley there in addition...besides the Grande Ronde area?

AC: I... The ones I'm think' about I think they were all natural 'cause it was solid brush and trees on 'em and stuff. I don't remember too much off of cottonwood, but I remember a lot of box elder and willow type brush.

JG: Do you recall anything about the Davis Dam as early as you can remember those were in there? I haven't seen any dates exactly when that was...the Davis Dam, you know, was actually constructed.

AC: I can't tell you when it was first constructed, but in 1946 I'm pretty sure it was there 'cause I was about twelve years old the first time I went out Davis Dam salmon fishin'. They'd been there ever since as far as I know.

JG: Yeah.

AC: I really couldn't tell you exactly what year it was, but it was somewhere in the late '40s there. It might've been '48.

JG: Was it... I've never been out there. Is that where they...salmon could get through there pretty well upstream, or...

AC: Yeah. They had...they had a fish ladder. The dam...the dam... There's two dams, there's an upper dam and a lower dam. The lower dam is the new one compared to the ones that that I've just referring to though. The old one it had a...it had a poor fish passages I know it today, but I would see fish usin' it. What a lot...most of the fish doin' they'd jump and they could hit that water and disappear and swim right on up through there. They got a lot of power when they want to move.

JG: Oh yeah. Yeah, I didn't... Like I said, never been there. [phone ringing] [tape interruption] Just wondering as far as the, you know, the passage of salmon if that posed much problem 'cause...or how high that dam was 'cause I've never been in there. Whether that's changed up or it's still about the same.

AC: I think it's still about the same. It may be a little bit higher, but I'm gonna guess it was...I'm gonna guess it was a maybe ten foot tall. They didn't always have it boarded up that much with water. Maybe that high where it come over. Eight foot maybe. The structure of the dam itself it higher than that, but that was...

JG: The water level, yeah.

AC: ___ put their boards in there and block it off. That's...I don't...I... Obviously it had...would be a detrimental to have to go through those fish ladders and stuff. It wasn't the best design anyway, but they did have one in there 'because I can remember from those years right through there way on up into the...I think maybe 1965 is probably the last good run of salmon I remember seein' on Catherine Creek, somewhere along in that period of time.

JG: Yeah, 'cause I know... I got out of the army in '59 and shortly thereafter, I think it was probably around '60, there's still good run, you know, even with the high water and you had a lot of silt comin' down every year, you know, down Catherine and you still had a lot of salmon in there at that time.

AC: Oh yeah. Eagle Creek, all those...all those creeks in...

JG: Oh yeah.

AC: They all had fish in 'em.

JG: But as far as in your experience it was about the mid-'60s about the last, you know, heavy runs that you can recall or you can remember.

AC: I might... I might be a little bit ahead. It may have been 1970, late '60s and early '70s. You know, I hear all these things about logging and roads and farming and everything else bein' the trouble and stuff, but we don't hear quite...we are hearing now quite a bit of mention about the hydropower dams on the Columbia and Snake River. And I... As the years went by as they built the dams I saw the fishin' runs diminishing. Definitely. There's no doubt about it in my mind. In my mind that was the biggest culprit of 'em all, but I did not condone the logging practices that... I don't like clear cutting in pine country and don't like all the trees cut down and land cleared. That...that's just my own personal thing.

JG: Oh yeah. It's a heavy tremendous impact.

AC: Oh yeah.

JG: And that whole thing is so complex with, you know, water holding capacity and ___ holding and...

AC: Oh yes.

JG: You know, and of course the capacity of the vegetation to hold soil back.

AC: That's something that I think is lacking on heck of a lot. I don't know how these people can stand to even live on a creek and go out there and let the cattle chew it all down. To me it's disgusting. [laughs] It doesn't have to be that way.

JG: That's it.

AC: It's detrimental to their sub-irrigation they can get out of the creek and everything else.

JG: A lot of times I don't think they really realize, you know, the ramifications of a lot of those things that are happening. It's like the clear-cutting, of course, is a real easy cheap way to do it so that it's, uh, ___.

AC: That's true. That's really gonna get your mustache there pretty quick. [laughs]

JG: Yeah, I think that's...gets me pretty well filled in. I know things that...like I said, it's like a big puzzle tryin' to put all the pieces together.

AC: You know, in...see...1952, the spring of 1952 Jim Twoowell and I and a couple other guys were logging up Whiskey Creek. And I hate to say this 'cause it's sickening as I can see it right now, we drove the Cats and the logging truck up and down Whiskey Creek for a couple of miles and I think they did that everywhere.

JG: It was, Art. It was... I remember when I can back in 1960 we, oh, were managing all the, you know, the forest over there in Union district and all the sales. And that's where, you know, we started really crackin' down that, you know, Cats were goin' down the draws and, I mean, that was the easy way of doin' it. Pull everything in the draw, go right down the draw. That's where, you know, started really sayin', hey, you know, this is not acceptable. It was just a constant fight to, you know, try to change, you know, the practices at that time.

AC: That's true. You know, oh, many years ago I was up hunting on Long Ridge back up here on the head waters of Five Points Creek. And I came up...walked up to a flume comin' off of Long Ridge goin' down into Five Points Creek. And I remember Uncle Harry talkin' about loggin' up there on top of that ridge. Apparently, they logged 'em out, then decked 'em, then put 'em in that flume and shot 'em down into Five Points Creek so they could get... How ever they got 'em on down the creek, I don't think there's enough water in there to float 'em, but... I'll bet a nickel those things are still standin'. There was two of 'em that I went by. They were huge logs, great big...well, they weren't the whole log, they were slabbed off where they's about that thick, rounded there like that and another one goin' up at an angle on each side. Oh man, it's elaborate! They put in a lot of work tryin' to...

JG: Do you know about when that would've been done?

AC: Oh golly, I wish I could answer that for you. Oh.

JG: Just roughly a year.

AC: I was thirteen...fifty...maybe it was seventy years ago, or maybe even more than that.

JG: The '20s or the turn of the century.

AC: Yeah. That could've been. I'm gonna... Somewhere here I had a... If you had any questions just go ahead while I'm tryin' to look. I had a picture of my Uncle Harry's car that he had when they lived next door. They had a __ place here. Oh, I don't see it here at the moment. I think that I was around fifty...it was probably around 1950 or so when Dad moved into this house over here which's my Uncle Harry's house that...he was the one that logged up in there, so it'd been way before that. He was an old man then so I'd say probably the turn of the century. No, it couldn't of been. It would had to been later than that. At least I think Stangg started the sawmill in '26 over here, didn't he?

JG: Yeah. The Mt. Emily started in '26. I think they started building like the year before, but I think the first log was cut, if I remember, November 26th, I believe.

AC: Okay. They used to have a saw over here on the...to split the big pine logs that come in on the railcars before they'd dump 'em into ponds so they could handle 'em in the mill. And as I remember Aunt Inis telling me that they cut those and then hauled 'em up on the railroad line up the...right up Five Points Creek to

Camp One on Five Points and then they...with teams and stuff they got 'em on up the hill there and built those flumes. So maybe it was...maybe it was in the late '20s that this was bein' done, which'd be feasible.

JG: Yeah. See, Mt. Emily they started, you know, major operation there in '26 when they bought out the Grande Ronde Lumber Company __. And then they went clear through...if you recall when they shut down the railroad logging I think '55 then I just... Remember...I think the shays are still parked up here at Hilgard when I came out here. I've had people say that wasn't right, but...

AC: I think you are right.

JG: I sure recall seein' those things. I never took a picture of 'em though. [laugh]

AC: What was it you saw stacked up there along the...?

JG: The two shay engines.

AC: Yeah.

JG: I'm quite sure it was still there in '55, that summer.

AC: Shays.

JG: 'Cause I...

AC: I remember 'em sittin' there.

JG: Yeah. Somebody told me here a while back they were gone by that time, but I said, boy, I don't think I was fantasizin'. [laugh]

AC: I don't think you were. I was told...I'm not even sure of this...that one of those...what about that old engine sittin' over at Walla Walla?

JG: I don't know where that came from.

AC: That wasn't one of Stangg's?

JG: I don't think so. I think these went out someplace else.

AC: Yeah.

JG: You know, I may be wrong, though, Art, on that. But I talkin', oh, to a fella here James Hoover out there at Imbler the other day and he said I guess Bruce Morehead...you know, with Mt. Emily...had a chance to get one of those engines and put down here in the park and the city council refused. [laugh]

AC: Oh dear.

JG: They said it wasn't gonna cost 'em anything at all, you know. What a treasure, you know!

AC: It would've been. Wouldn't that be somethin' to have!

JG: Yeah, he's...you know, he had it all arranged to bring 'em down...bring one of 'em down here and park the thing and they thought it was hazard, you know, the kids play on it or whatever.

AC: Yeah. I remember. I remember also in 1955 and '56 there was a fellow over in the mill by the name of Ralph Coats that worked up there. He was a fireman on that engine. "Does that thing derail a lot?" and he said, "All the time." I said, "How'd you get it back on the tracks?" He said, "Drove it back on." [laughs] All those drivers and stuff they'd dig it in there and they'd get some track laid out for it to get up on it.

JG: Pull they're way right back on.

AC: Yeah. "All the times?" [laughs] It must've happened a lot. He told me some good experiences when he was real young about bein' out there at fifteen years old with a pipe pole, I think on the Minam River and the Grande Ronde, turnin'

the logs off the ___ out there on their log floats or drives, whatever they called those.

JG: They had one picture there where they're takin' the horses and pullin' 'em off, you know, the shoals there and, you know, off those sand bars in the middle there.

AC: That was comin' down to Perry, wasn't it?

JG: Yeah, comin' into Perry there. It was up on the...someplace on the, oh, the big...looked like it's pretty open probably just above Hilgard there away, you know, lookin' in pictures. I never traced that down exactly location, but it...just the background it had the bare ridges up behind it looks likes he's up there, you know, around Jordan Creek.

AC: Oh yeah. I'm sure it was. Have you ever noticed the old dam on Five...Minam? The budding is still there just before you...

JG: I think the footing still there.

AC: You can see where it's banked up on the other side right across the river from...just before you get to Minam down there a little ways.

JG: Do you recall when...anything about it? 'Cause they had the splash dam that was way up the Minam... Of when that might've been put in?

AC: I have no idea about that.

JG: No?

AC: Uh-huh. I don't even know what a splash dam'd be for.

JG: Evidently, they logged up the Minam and, again, just like the Grande Ronde to float those logs down there that they contained the water and then turned it loose.

AC: Oh, that's what it was...purpose was, just to give it that scoot of water.

JG: Yeah, give the...scoot the water, yeah. That was the way they did...

AC: I'm glad to know that because that'd be a hell of a long wait waitin' for that much raise to scoot the logs, wouldn't it?

JG: Yeah. You have your snowmelt all time 'cause up there in the Perry country that's the way...you see, there's five splash dams all together, one right at the mouth of Tony Bay meadow...

AC: Okay, I remember that. I remember that.

JG: That's still in there. There are remnants of it and all the rock. And then there's one, oh, the mouth...or towards the mouth...of Fly Creek where it comes in the Grande Ronde. Another one up Meadow Creek and up Dark Canyon and then someplace around the mouth of Beaver Creek where they used to pond that water and then read the other day where they would just... They wouldn't let the whole the thing out. They let enough water out with the spring melt where they had about, oh, maybe eight, ten feet of water goin' down that river and kick the logs in. And then the next day they do the same thing all over again till they had that drive finished, where they had all those logs piled on the river then start pushin' 'em in the river and scoot 'em on down to Perry. So it was quite an operation. But they...___ I guess from April through June of whenever that snowmelt, you know, they'd try to work there over a couple month period to move all that timber. They were cutting about twenty million feet a year comin' down at Perry there. So there's a lot of...awful lot of logs went down that river.

AC: They cut a lot of timber, you bettcha. Big ones too.

JG: Oh yeah. But it went from there...progressed from there to where they started doin' the railroad logging and, you know, and still bringin' up...usin' horse to skid with and then eventually the tractors came in I think in about 1925 was the first use of the tractor up there skiddin' down there were it's better ground ___ from the horses and on down to the ___. Everything kind of progressed from the Mechanical Age.

AC: Oh yeah. Industrial Revolution.

JG: Same way the trucks. They first started usin'... I had a picture of Mt. Emily I think 1932 when they had the ___ trucks was the first big thing that was ___ converting that to using that.

AC: I can remember when they did away with that sawmill. I never saw so many... or that railroad. I never saw so many logging trucks in my life! They'd back clear up Jackson and gone up past Ken's Grocery clear up the railroad tracks practically. Oh, it was a... It was really something. And that was just one mill.

JG: Do you recall anything about the Bowman Hicks Mill? You were talkin' a little bit between that and the Palmer out here at the fairgrounds.

AC: No. I can't... I can't recall anything of it. The only thing I can recall about... Which one when to Pondosa? Bowman Hicks?

JG: No, that was the Grande Ronde. It was up at Perry.

AC: Grande Ronde. I did go in that mill one time when I was seventeen years old just for a little while and watched 'em workin' in there. It was really somethin'. That was my first time in a...in a big mill. I thought it was a big mill. It was pretty a big mill.

JG: I guess they at Perry they had two band saws there and it was pretty good. I mean, you looked at the pictures of all the installation they had.

AC: Oh yeah.

JG: Three ice houses and all the...

AC: It was an operation ___ you bettcha.

JG: ___ planer mill up there, too.

AC: Maybe now it'll be a golf course, huh?

JG: Yeah. There's...I guess figure out next year, I guess, that they're...

AC: Is they still...

JG: Still workin' on it, yeah.

AC: ...workin' on it.

JG: Talkin' about goin' ahead with it.

AC: Kind of off the subject a little bit, but the railroad line that used to come in...go right along the pond over here, delivered logs to the pond, also went right straight out across 'X' Avenue and made a turn like that and went in over at the sugar beet factory. Were you aware of that?

JG: No. I knew the sugar beet factory is in here. I didn't know location or that the railroad, you know, went to it.

AC: Yeah. The railroad went to it. Dad's original deed to the property over there there was a picture of it and it showed the line goin' over, it showed the sugar beet factory. You know where the factory is now, don't you?

JG: No, I don't.

AC: It's at brewing company over on 'Z' Avenue, Busch Brewing company. There was one there and then another one across the street. There was another building over there.

JG: I never did know where's at. I've seen pictures of the sugar beet factory, but I never knew exact location.

AC: It's still there, the old...people call it the county shop, but it's the sugar beet factory. [laughs] It was really something. And now I understand that maybe sugar beets are...maybe they will raise 'em here this time.

JG: There's... I've seen a few trucks go through the valley there where I think there's...seemed like somebody...I think that's what they were.

AC: There's... I've seen big piles of 'em out there. They get 'em harvested up out of the ground they put 'em in big huge piles out there. But I've heard a couple guys over at the mill talkin' said they understood there's gonna be several thousand more acres of 'em put in, so...

JG: Get some diversification of crops out there.

AC: Yes.

JG: I think that's... You know, sure appreciate the time here. You filled me in on a few things.

AC: You're more than welcome. Sometime if you'd like to go for a ride up Fox Hill we'll go for a ride.

JG: Oh, okay. [tape interruption]

AC: The head of one of the rock creeks up here, the east fork of Rock Creek, whatever it is in there, just right up here up top of Ladd Canyon. And they'd been in there with a Cat and they'd run back and forth over this ridge knockin' down all the lodge pole and everything that I could see except for the big dead snags. They'd leave a little strip of trees through there.

JG: Yeah, they're just strip...kind of like...

AC: They didn't... They didn't log 'em, they just knocked 'em down.

JG: No, they just stripped them through there, just opened that up. The only trouble with that lodge pole, at least up on the other side...I never got on this. I flew this and got pictures of it when they're doin' that. But the...oh, on the other side there in the Indian Creek country, Clark Creek country, through there I bored tree after tree, you know, through all those stands and all that lodge pole's about 120 years old. And they drilled real fast till it's about thirty-eight years old and then it just tightens right up because of all your trees ____. But the bus are hittin' 'em and everybody, you know, again, we's talkin' about you can't grow lodge pole over sixty years of age. And I said, hey, you know, you get out in the ground and look and actually study that you could see what...if you thinned it and kept it going, you know, you could probably do pretty good.

AC: I've seen big lodge poles right here.

JG: Oh yeah. Up __

AC: In California they're that big.

JG: Around here I think twenty-six inches the biggest one we've measured up there in Indian Creek when we're making those sales and that.

AC: Wow, that would've been an old tree, would it?

JG: Oh, it was, yeah. I never saw the...we...you know, as far as after it's cut. I never measured that one, what the age was, but... 'Cause evidently it opened up, where, you know, it just fast growing. That thing was mixed in, you know, the other species in there. But it was a twenty-six inch lodge pole.

AC: That's a big tree.

JG: It was. I was real surprised.

AC: On this area where they're goin' in and knockin' down those trees and open the area up, were they hoping to get...or just tryin' to see if different species would come back through there?

JG: I think it was more just thinking that, you know, open it up so you get the growth and bugs wouldn't hit it, but I don't know...

AC: It sure didn't work, did it?

JG: I doubt it because of the age. Like I said, I never got on the ground to know how old those trees were. But it had never been back so, you know, there's a lot of those things that'd be interesting to go back and just see what's happened since that time to ___ it out. But they covered...they worked a lot of acres up there. 'Cause I remember... Like I said, I was doin' a lot of aerial photography at that time, you know, just tryin' to track those insects and what the impact was and that. And so I remember photographing that. I've still got that in files. ___ a lot of acres, I know, they were workin'.

AC: You know, I just glanced at somethin' here that says, "Fishing methods on Grande Ronde." And I... I never did get to see it done myself, but they'd take a stove pipe about that long, put a glass in it, called it a peep glass, and they'd look underneath the edge of the bank then reach back underneath those banks and gig salmon out below Davis Dam out there. It was legal that time to do it. Do you know... Are you familiar with Glen Hereford?

JG: I think you'd mentioned...

AC: I had.

JG: ...knowing...I know...

AC: He is a walking dictionary, honest to god. I don't know what he has in pictures, but he's never...all he's ever done is play. He married a woman that was wealthy and stuff so he got to do a lot of things and traveled all over the... Probably fished every creek in Oregon and everything that's ever been possible to do. You should...

JG: I'll give him a call.

AC: He'd sure be a great one to...

JG: I appreciate it.

AC: He would... He knows. [laughs] He's really sharp.

JG: Like I said, it's been kind of a challenge to find people still around that, you know, experienced this and still know or have pictures.

AC: Yeah, that's what I'm hopin' that maybe he'd have pictures, you know. I didn't actually start takin' pictures till after I had my family started, so... [pause, pages turning]

JG: Why don't I leave that with you so, you know, if there's anything that comes up.

AC: Okay. Are you interested in anybody else, maybe, that would...?

JG: Oh sure. If there's anybody, you know, you can think of. I've lost a few good ones that've passed away this last year. There's some in nursing homes now that just don't remember, unfortunately.

AC: I... I'm gonna... That fellow I used to work with in the mill that used to be the fireman on the engine for Auggie Stangg, his name was Ralph Coats and his daughter married Jack Cochran, who's the son of Cliff Cochran. And Cliff and Jack are still alive. I know that...well, Jack's a couple years younger than I am. And I would be willin' to bet that his wife has probably got...Jack Cochran's wife's probably got some pictures of what was goin' on out in the upper river up there.

JG: Are they living in La Grande? Or do you know?

AC: Cliff lives in La Grande. He lives up on 'N'. Jack may live in Tri-Cities. I see him in town quite a bit. His dad's gettin' pretty old so he comes over here quite often I think. Ralph Coats. I'll bet there's... I'll bet there's some terrific pictures through there. After his wife died he married Matilda Chachez, which takes you right back up the Grande Ronde River again. [laughs] [tape stopped]