

HAROLD SEIFFERT

September 5, 1996

TAPE 1, Side 1

M.O'R.: This is Michael O'Rourke with the Washington County Historical Society beginning an interview on September 5th with Harold Seiffert. Today's interview is taking place in his home in Cherry Grove.

First of all, when were you born and where?

H.S.: I was born June 28th, 1916 at Goble, Oregon, which is downriver from Rainier - no, excuse me - downriver from Scappoose, the St. Helens area. Highway 30.

M.O'R.: It's right on Highway 30, then?

H.S.: Right. It's right on Highway 30. And the house I was born in is still standing. I can see it from - they changed the road a little bit, but I can see it up on the hill.

M.O'R.: Do you get by there every now and then to take a look?

H.S.: Yes, quite often.

M.O'R.: And what were your parents' names?

H.S.: Adolph Seiffert, and Ruby Seiffert was my mother's name.

M.O'R.: What did they do?

H.S.: Well, they were more or less farmers. Well, originally, of course, they worked in the woods, and then when the Columbia Timber Company folded down at Rainier - or at Goble, mostly there, they went to farming and dairying, they had dairy cattle.

M.O'R.: But both of them worked for the timber company before?

H.S.: Well, just my dad, yeah. He rafted on the Columbia River, rafted logs for the Columbia Timber Company.

M.O'R.: So he didn't actually work in the woods, then?

H.S.: No, not at that time.

M.O'R.: And then how long was the family at that location?
Or how long were you there?

H.S.: I would say about three years, but I don't know exactly
how much. Probably there four or five years at this place.

M.O'R.: Your parents were there for a couple of years before
you were born?

H.S.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: And did you have brothers and sisters, also?

H.S.: Yes. There's three brothers and two sisters.

M.O'R.: And what were your brothers' names?

H.S.: Well, the one just under me, we'll start with the
oldest, was Waldo Seiffert, and then comes Dora Seiffert, a sister.

M.O'R.: So you were the oldest?

H.S.: I'm the oldest of six. And then of course there's
Vaden and Ovid and Neoma. Neoma's the youngest sister.

M.O'R.: And so after your parents moved from the Goble area,
they came out here?

H.S.: No, they came to Newberg first. Well, actually it was
a Newberg address, Chehalem Mountain.

M.O'R.: And they farmed there, is that right?

H.S.: Yes. They had quite a large farm; 476 acres they
farmed.

M.O'R.: Boy, that is a big area.

H.S.: Big at that era of time.

M.O'R.: Right. Definitely. And that was a dairy farm?

H.S.: He milked cows. He always had around - up to 15 cows
and separated the milk, mostly, and sold cream because there was no
milk route that would take the milk every day then.

M.O'R.: So this would have been in the 20's?

H.S.: Yeah, '29. Well, up to '33.

M.O'R.: And do you remember the Newberg farm at all?

H.S.: Oh, yeah.

M.O'R.: Do you remember living at Goble?

H.S.: No, not really. I was pretty young then. I was probably about three or four years old.

M.O'R.: But you do remember the farm there at Chehalem Mountain?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. Matter of fact, I even remember helping plow with the tractor.

M.O'R.: So your father grew crops as well, then?

H.S.: Yeah, hay and grain.

M.O'R.: Mostly to feed the cows?

H.S.: Well, no, they sold a lot of grain. Sold whatever, you know, wheat and oats, you know.

M.O'R.: Did he sell it to other farmers for feed?

H.S.: No. No, it went to Chehalem Valley Mills in Newberg. I remember we'd take down a wagon load of wheat and put it on credit for flour, you know. In other words, the wheat paid for flour, and instead of bringing it all at once home, why, we'd go down every week or so and get a sack of flour, see, or couple weeks, you know, and credit it, you know. In other words, it was paid for from the wheat you took in.

M.O'R.: Right. And they milled the wheat there into flour, right?

H.S.: Mm-hmm. Called Chehalem Valley Mills, the place.

M.O'R.: And you said you remember driving the tractor and plowing the fields there?

H.S.: Yeah. Had an old two-ton Cat, they called it. You know, Caterpillar make. Oh, yeah, I run that thing quite a bit.

M.O'R.: What other chores did you do on the farm at that time?

H.S.: We, we had to milk - each one of us had to milk a cow or two, you know. We had certain cows we milked every night and morning, you know.

M.O'R.: Got up early in the morning to milk them?

H.S.: Yeah. They had such-and-such a time set, you know, to milk the cows.

M.O'R.: Well, in between chores on the farm, what did you do for entertainment?

H.S.: Well, you know, that's a good question because there wasn't much entertainment going on at that time. We were five miles from Newberg, and then after I started to school, well, once in a while we'd walk to Newberg, that five miles, and go down and get an ice cream shake or a soda or something, you know, and back. That was a 10-mile hike, and we never thought nothing of it.

M.O'R.: You weren't anywhere near the river, the Tualatin, at that point, right?

H.S.: No. The Chehalem Creek down in Newberg was our main little stream, and of course the Willamette River. But at that time we didn't have no boats or anything.

M.O'R.: Did you go swimming at all?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. I went down to what's called Hoover's Hole there in Newberg, went swimming in that many, many times. That was on Chehalem Creek.

M.O'R.: And then your parents were there until when?

H.S.: Well, then 1934 is when we come to Cherry Grove, and they rented a farm up here which Brigetta Nixon finally bought. And they were there about six years and had brought cows up and everything and milked them, but it was a poor place for dairy. And then they went to Tillamook from here, and I stayed. I got married in the meantime, there, in 1937, and so I stayed here in Cherry Grove.

M.O'R.: Now, the place that your folks had in Newberg, did they own that farm?

H.S.: Yeah. They had one there, uh-huh, they owned.

M.O'R.: But was that the 450 acres?

H.S.: That was leased, the 450 acres.

M.O'R.: Okay. I see. But they had a home that they owned there, then?

H.S.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: And so you moved here to Cherry Grove, and they were still dairy farming?

H.S.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: Now, you said that they made the move in 1934. This would have been right in the middle of the Depression.

H.S.: Yes, it was tough times.

M.O'R.: What kind of impact did it have on either your family or other farmers around?

H.S.: What do you mean, money-wise?

M.O'R.: Well, yeah. You say it was tough times.

H.S.: Yeah. Well, the impact was you didn't - you had plenty to eat because you raised everything you needed, your meats - we had to butcher beef now and then, and then we always had a couple of pigs to put down in a barrel salted down, you know - and then when it got so salty you couldn't eat it, you soaked it and smoked it.

M.O'R.: So food wasn't a problem?

H.S.: No, we had lots to eat, but no money.

M.O'R.: And you said that you got married in the 30's sometime?

H.S.: June of 1937.

M.O'R.: And how did you meet your wife?

H.S.: Well, through a neighbor fellow; we called him Skeeter White, his actual name was Evan White. And he had met this girl up Williams Canyon, and oh, you know, when you're that age - I was about 18, I suppose, 19, maybe - you know, you're always looking for something. So anyway, he says, "I know a nice girl," he says, "up Williams Canyon." So he was going with somebody else at the time, and so anyway, we went up there and met her, and I asked her for a date. And "Sure," you know. And I went with her for a year or so.

And so when I was 21, I married her. That's when - she was 19 when she graduated out of Yamhill High School, and we waited till she graduated, and then we got married.

M.O'R.: And what was her name?

H.S.: Jane Lucy Berger.

M.O'R.: And what did her parents do? Were they farmers as well?

H.S.: Well, he was originally a miner, and he come out here - mined coal, back in the Pennsylvania area. And they come out here, things got pretty tough back there at that time, 1929, you know, when the big Depression, and so they come out here and they found this place up here in Williams Canyon which they could buy, and they raised turkeys to pay for it. They had a lot of turkeys.

So anyway, when we were married - well, even before when I was going with her, we'd go up there and help butcher turkeys and done the butchering and plucking the feathers and everything.

M.O'R.: Did you get along well with her parents?

H.S.: Yes, very well. They liked me real well.

M.O'R.: And did you get married here in Cherry Grove, then?

H.S.: Well, we went to Vancouver, Washington to get married.

M.O'R.: How come Vancouver?

H.S.: Well, it was cheaper, and you didn't have to have blood tests or anything. At that time you'd go up there and get married, do it all in one day.

M.O'R.: Easier regulations than here, eh?

H.S.: Yeah. And at that time you didn't have that much money, either, you know. So we went up there and took her folks with us, and we got married.

M.O'R.: And then your folks decided to move to Tillamook?

H.S.: Yeah. This was no place for a dairy up here. The pasture was no good. So then he bought a place down in Tillamook.

M.O'R.: And sold this place up here, then?

H.S.: Well, no, he rented this one. Then he was down there till he retired, and then he had an auction sale and sold everything off, and then he decided Social Security wasn't quite enough, and so he worked in a feed mill there for about a year. And that built up his quarters, so he got more money on his Social Security. And then they bought a house in Tillamook, right in town, right close to the hospital, about a block this side and across the street.

M.O'R.: And their farm there was also dairy, I assume?

H.S.: Yes.

M.O'R.: What did you do here in Cherry Grove, then, for a living?

H.S.: I worked in the woods. When I was 21, when I got married, we did odd jobs, you know, around. Picked up prunes, and done everything like that, you know. And then the following year I went to work for Flora Logging Company - or Flora Corporation, I guess they called it, and I worked up there for three or four years. And that was back in more or less the Trask area and on back - the headquarters was towards the Nestucca River, over there.

That's where I went first was headquarters, and then I went to Camp 3, worked there.

M.O'R.: But lived here in Cherry Grove, though?

H.S.: Lived here in Cherry Grove. Big money back then, \$5.40 a day. A day, not an hour. And you paid \$1.63 a day for your room and board out of that.

M.O'R.: So you'd go up there and stay there all week, then?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. You could only get in there by train, and they had locomotives that - and they had regular passenger cars, you know, that they took the crew up. There was 7-, 800 men working there, as high as 900, you know, on that line at one time. So they had Camp 1, and then they had Headquarters. They had Camp Murphy, and then Camp 3, and then they ended up down here at Camp 5; that was on the Trask River. And all those camps was operating at the same time.

M.O'R.: And where did the train run?

H.S.: Carlton. The headquarters was Carlton, for the train, where they picked up the crews.

M.O'R.: Okay. So to get up there you would go to Carlton and then catch the train?

H.S.: Yes. Right. And that was a four- to five-hour ride on those old locomotives.

M.O'R.: And would you typically go up for the week and then come back on the weekends?

H.S.: Yeah, generally came back on Friday night, get home eight, nine o'clock at night and leave up there about 3:30 or 4:00. Most of the time in the summertime they're what you call hoot owl: you went to work at daylight and quit, you know, in mid afternoon.

M.O'R.: And then you'd head back to the woods on Monday morning or ...

H.S.: Yeah. Sunday. We'd have to go up Sunday night. A lot of people stayed in camp all summer, you know, especially the bushlers - that's the timber cutters; they called them bushlers then.

M.O'R.: Why would they stay in camp more?

H.S.: Oh, I don't know. It's just most of those were single guys, didn't have nothing to do, and they'd go out about once a month, payday, and sometimes some of them would come back broke and drunk.

M.O'R.: And your wife stayed here in Cherry Grove and took care of the place?

H.S.: Yeah. Well, in those first years we rented a house here right in town, and then in '42 - I moved in this one in '42.

M.O'R.: And Carlton is just up the road here?

H.S.: It's going towards the coast here, southwest from Gaston. You come to Yamhill first, then you come to Carlton.

M.O'R.: Okay. And so how would you get from here to there?

H.S.: My wife generally drove me. We'd go up, and then she'd bring the car back, and then she'd come and meet me on Friday night.

M.O'R.: So you owned a car in those days?

H.S.: Yes, had a car.

M.O'R.: And can you describe what the camps were like?

H.S.: Well, things were pretty rough and tough, you know. They had bunkhouses you stayed in. There was four people to a bunkhouse. They had two beds on each end and a great big round stove in the middle. They had what they called a [indiscernible] that kept the wood in there for you, you know, and then they had a bed-maker that would make the beds. And then they had - we called it a gut hammer, when it rang you all went to the cookhouse, and

then they had flunkies, they called them flunkies, that served the meals.

But they served good meals. They had their own bakery, you know, that they baked their own bread and everything, and all the pastries and goodies, and then they had a first and second cook, you know, to do that. And these flunkies would serve the tables. Big, long tables. There was around 300 men at one time worked there at the Headquarters Camp when I was there.

M.O'R.: So 300 in that camp, is that - there would be hundreds of people in each of these camps?

H.S.: Well, it varied, you know. It just depends how many sides the camp was running. By "sides," that means how many spurs went out, groups working, you know.

Everything was railroad. There was no cars, no trucks, no nothing. They had what they called disconnected trucks with - they had what's called shay locomotives that pulled these disconnected trucks, and then - well, I went up there was a whistle punk to start with, and then I got onto loading because it paid a little more money. I got \$6.20 a day instead of 5.40. You know, I was looking for more.

I'll have to tell you a story on the whistle punk one.

M.O'R.: Sure. What is a whistle punk?

H.S.: A whistle punk is - he punks the whistle that's a signal, see, for what the rigging crew - you've got a hook tender - rigging slingers, you call him, too, and he gives the haulers these signals, and you put it in, and then that lets the engineer know what to do, whether to go ahead on the main line or to come back on the haul-back, or slack or whatever, you know. One was to stop and to go. And two and one was the haul-back, slack the haul-back, and two was to come back on it, you know, in the haul-back - in other words, pull the rigging back.

M.O'R.: And the rigging is what pulls the logs out of the forests?

H.S.: Mm-hmm. You have what they call a spar tree rigged up, and of course that was all steam, by the way, too, steam donkeys.

But anyway, when I first went up there, I had never been in the woods before, but I'd heard all the natives around here talk about it, you know, and so I thought, "Well, I'll punk whistle." We had a little hook tender, Tory Watts was his name, a little Indian. I mean, he was a small guy, and he wore his pants cut off about his knees, and the shoes went about that high. And when he come out there to meet me after I got off the train, he wanted to know what I was going to do, and I told him I had come up to punk whistle.

"Well, did you ever punk whistle before?"

"No, but I've had people tell me about it."

He threw his hat off on the ground, and he stomped that thing to pieces with his cork boots. You can imagine how you felt, you know.

And then to initiate you, you had to sit on a bench, and that bench was hot wired with a dry cell coil, see, and it had nails in it, you know. You sat on that, and I tell you, you got the shock of your life.

But it worked out real good. They had a good engineer there on the donkey that helped me, you know - tell me how the jerk wire's set up. You just jerk your signals, see, on this wire, and it transferred all the way to the donkey, and it told him to stop or go ahead or back up or whatever you wanted, or slack the main line was four toots, you know.

But anyway, I worked out real good there, and I got to be a pretty good punk, I guess, because they didn't want me to quit. Then I went onto loading. I started out as a third loader, and

that paid more money, see. I was always wanting more money. When you're married, you know, you wanted to get all you can get, and so then I worked up the second loader. I never did get to be a head loader there, but I was second loader, and that's shaking the tongs - in other words, the head loader would sit out on the pile, and he'd pick the logs to make the load, and then you stayed on the load and took the tongs off.

M.O'R.: So these are logs that are just lying on the ground, and you've got to get them on the ...

H.S.: Yeah. Well, they're pulled in with the donkey up there, and then you have what they call a heel boom or a hayrack boom, depends on whatever they have - they had both - and so you put them on the railroad trucks. These were called disconnected trucks. So you had one of them, and then they had a car lying on it, and you let it down to a fifth of the length of the log, see, and then you had your bunk load that was that certain length, and then you could fill in the top with shorter stuff.

M.O'R.: I see. So you put the long ones down first?

H.S.: Yeah. The long ones down first, because that's what held the cars together was the logs. There was nothing in between.

[Interruption]

M.O'R.: So they'd lay the logs down over - the cars then were just flatbeds or something?

H.S.: No, they were just four wheels with a bunk in the middle.

M.O'R.: So just sort of the bare bones?

H.S.: So one of them is anchored here, and then the other one's on a car line, as they called it, so the donkey lets this down to the length for the log to fit it, and then they put on there. But then they could always pull it back, the whole thing, or let it down so that it wouldn't overhang.

M.O'R.: So you'd adjust the distance between the wheels depending on the logs?

H.S.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: I see. And you said you started off as, what, the third loader?

H.S.: Yeah. The third loader would run the car line a little bit and let the log down to a spot, and then you have to set up what they call the cheese blocks, that's the blocks that hold the logs from rolling off, you have to set that up and everything. In other words, you was kind of a bull cook for that.

And then the second loader, you get on the load and handle the tongs. And lots of times you'll tell the head loader or signal to him about what size log you want to fill in or something because you're up there where you look at it, and he's down here sometimes in the hole where you can't see it.

M.O'R.: And was this work at all dangerous?

H.S.: Yes, it was. It's a dangerous operation. Everything in the woods in those days was pretty high-ball. And those old two-speeds, we had Willamette two-speeds up there, and they were fast and powerful. As a matter of fact, I got to run them up there. I broke in - after I got on what's called the rig-up crew, and then I run those donkeys myself.

M.O'R.: Now, these are steam engines?

H.S.: They're all big steam engines. Eighth and three-eighths oversize chokers - that's a big cable - and they could walk through them and break them just like nothing if the rig-layer didn't holler his signal quick enough to stop. A lot of your hangups is fought with signals, you know. See, you can run back on your haul-back, and if you got hung up on a big stump or something, and then you tight line it, you tell them to tight line. Well, two and two means tight line or three and two is a tight line. And that will

pick the rigging up and maybe it will pass over the stump. If it couldn't, then your riggings-layer, he had to go and fight that hangup and you know pass the choker one side or the other.

M.O'R.: And I imagine that could be a little dangerous?

H.S.: Well, yeah. There's a lot of people got killed up in the woods up there.

M.O'R.: Yeah. Were you around when there were any fatal accidents?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. Powder monkeys sometimes would get hurt. They had a powder monkey to shoot the choker holds.

M.O'R.: And what's a powder monkey, exactly? They worked with blasting powder?

H.S.: Yeah. If a log - he works ahead of the - it's all laid out in roads, you know, with the lines. In other words, they'll log this road out here, and then when it's logged out, then they have to move the blocks over and take another strip. Well, the powder monkey works ahead, and he makes sure there's a hole under each log. If there's not, he has to shoot a hole.

M.O'R.: A hole under ...

H.S.: So they can get the choker under the log.

M.O'R.: Oh, I see what you mean. So you can get the line around it?

H.S.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: And occasionally you'd have to blow a hole there?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. They'd use lots of powder. He had a pack sack on his back full of powder and caps, you know. And sometimes they had the fuse pretty short. But there was a lot of them got hurt, you know.

M.O'R.: I imagine the ones that actually felled the trees, that would be kind of a dangerous job, too.

H.S.: Yeah, although at that time they had what was called bushlers, it was all hand - no power saws in those days. Now, of course, everything is done with a chain saw, but no, there was a lot of buckers that bucked the logs that would sometimes roll over them and squash them, you know.

M.O'R.: Did they have any sort of medical facilities up there?

H.S.: Yeah, they had a nurse that they called Chappie - that's at Flora's there, at Headquarters.

[end of side one]

HAROLD SEIFFERT

September 5, 1996

TAPE 1, Side 2

H.S.: Yeah, this nurse they called Chappie, she took care of what they could. If it was hurt real bad, they had what they call a speeder; they would run them down to Carlton, and it was a lot faster than, of course, the old locomotives, and you know, they'd take them in. But lots of people got killed up there, especially brakemen on the trains hauling logs. That was probably the biggest fatalities.

M.O'R.: And why was that?

H.S.: Well, because there's no air brakes on those trucks. It's all hand brake, and it's all done on the fly. And they're riding - they've got a little foot board and a hand crank, you know - they call it a hickey that they tighten the wheel up with to put the brakes on, and then of course when they get down to where it's a little level, they have to release all those brakes, too. And if the thing jumped the track, which happens a lot of times, and if you're riding in the wrong spot, you've got to be pretty active to stay on top of those logs if they roll off.

M.O'R.: Now, you were taking probably some pretty logs out of there, too?

H.S.: The biggest log that I helped load was 10 foot 1 inch inside the bark on the scale end, and that was about a - if I remember right, about 48 feet long. That was green timber at that time back in Headquarters Camp, and there was lots of big yellow fir.

M.O'R.: Old growth fir?

H.S.: Yeah, yellow fir. Matter of fact, it was all old growth. There was no second growth, as they call it now. And that

was before the burn hit that. See, we had a burn in 1933, and then the other one was in '45.

M.O'R.: That was the Tillamook burn?

H.S.: Well, excuse me, '39 was the next one, and then the one in '45. And that's when they burnt out the logging camps up there, the fire destroyed them in 1939, right at the end of the year. It got dry and hot and they got a big fire come through.

M.O'R.: Now, you're talking about the camps that you used to work in?

H.S.: Yes. That was the end of my career at Flora Logging Company.

M.O'R.: Now, that was in '39, you said?

H.S.: Yes, '39.

M.O'R.: So you only worked for them for a couple of years, then, before that happened?

H.S.: About three years, altogether. Three - you can't say years; it's seasons because the snow used to fly up there, and it was generally about April, May before you went to work.

M.O'R.: And then you'd have to quit in October or something?

H.S.: Yeah. But anyway, I worked up till January the 15th in 1939, and then the fire come - I don't remember exactly the dates, but it was early, so we never went back to work after that. It burnt up all the donkeys they had, and two or three locomotives got burnt up, and the whole camp burnt up.

M.O'R.: So that fire was then in the summer of '39?

H.S.: You know, it had to be early spring because I worked up till January the 15th, I remember that real plain, and then the fire got them before we went back to work again. So it had to be early spring. Now, it must have been a dry spring.

M.O'R.: That's kind of an odd time for a forest fire, in a way, isn't it?

H.S.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: So you'd work as late as January, then?

H.S.: Yeah. That was there at Camp 5, which was lower down.

M.O'R.: Okay. And were all the camps pretty much like one another in terms of the way they were laid out and everything?

H.S.: Yeah. They was pretty much the same. There's the old remains of Camp 5 back here now where the Trask Reservoir is being enlarged. Camp 5 was right where the water crosses over into the Tualatin?

H.S.: Right where they pump it over the hill there?

H.S.: No, it's gravity. No pumps.

M.O'R.: Oh, they don't even have to pump it a short distance?

H.S.: No, it's - in other words, the Trask River there is a little bit higher than the Tualatin, and so they dug underneath, tunneled under the old road there, which used to be the railroad grade, and it's gravity feed into the Tualatin.

M.O'R.: That makes it trouble free.

H.S.: Yeah, there's no problem there. It's a 60-inch line that gravities over.

M.O'R.: So the '39 fire ...

H.S.: You know, I might be a little wrong on that. It maybe was in the fall there, and it got the green timber. See at Camp 5, it burned in '33. And Headquarters and Camp 3 up there was - that was all green timber in '39. It must have been in the fall of '39 when that fire - because they called it the '39 fire. I didn't fight on that fire.

M.O'R.: Had you fought other fires?

H.S.: I fought the '45 fire, but that fire was way back out of our area, more or less, from here.

M.O'R.: And so the '39 fire, though, ended your career with Flora?

H.S.: That ended my career because it burned everything up back there.

M.O'R.: And then what did you do after that?

H.S.: Well, then I come here in '41 - well, I did odd jobs. I worked for little contract loggers scattered around, you know.

And then in 1941 I went to work for Alder Creek Lumber Company, in June of '41, and I worked there 17- $\frac{1}{2}$ years for them. There I loaded logs, head loaded, in fact. Was second load at first, then head loaded, I would say around seven and a half, eight years, and then I went to driving log truck.

Well, in the meantime I run the steam donkeys, too, off and on. When the engineer would quit or get mad or something and leave, then I would run the donkey because I had a little experience up there at Flora's. So I run [indiscernible] two-speed, he had a Willamette two-speed, and also a Willamette high-speed, they called it. I've run them both and pulled logs in.

M.O'R.: So the Alder Creek operation was similar to Flora's?

H.S.: Yes. Very similar. They had a little camp down there on the Tualatin River, but I lived here in this house.

M.O'R.: So you didn't have to commute via train?

H.S.: No, I could walk to work. It was only about 1500 feet and I was on the job.

M.O'R.: So they were logging forests right here, then?

H.S.: Well, we went back to the Trask, but they had what they call a crummy to haul the people back.

M.O'R.: Was that a truck?

H.S.: Well, yeah, it's a truck with a house built on it to haul the crew.

M.O'R.: I see.

H.S.: We called it a crummy.

M.O'R.: But you were a loader and the head loader and sometimes drove the steam donkeys up there?

H.S.: Right.

M.O'R.: And was it also old growth?

H.S.: Yes. There was a lot of old growth to start with. In the Trask area it was all old growth. We logged that first. And then up here on what they call Haggerty Ridge, there was a lot of second growth, actually, in with the old growth.

M.O'R.: So you were taking both older and younger trees, then?

H.S.: Yeah. Fred Kenneke was the owner of the mill down here, which was called Alder Creek Lumber Company, and he bought a bunch of timber from the County and State, both, back in the Trask area, burnt timber. So that was hauled in here.

M.O'R.: And was it dangerous, also, in the Alder Creek operation?

H.S.: Yeah. There was two or three guys got killed in the years I worked there, but in those days they forgot the high-ball like they did back in the earlier days. Do you know what I mean? The high-ball is when they heard the choker bell click, the rigger hollered "Aye," and you'd better run.

M.O'R.: And they forgot it, you said?

H.S.: Well, yeah, they quieted down, you know, and weren't quite as - in other words, they taught safety more. At that time they was getting more safety-minded. Now, you hardly ever here - oh, once in a while some log will roll off on somebody, but not very often.

M.O'R.: So it's gotten to be safer over the years?

H.S.: Yes. They're more safety-minded. In other words, it's safety first now, where before they didn't want safety, they wanted production.

M.O'R.: Did you have any trouble with the management of either company?

H.S.: No, not really. Nothing outside of when I first went up to the Flora Log Company when the guy stomped his hat in. I didn't know what to think. I mean, he just took his cork - he had his cork boots, you know, and man, he just stomped that hat and threw it around there. Mad that they sent a kid up to do work like that that didn't know anything.

M.O'R.: Did you feel a little intimidated by not knowing anything, or did you manage to adapt quickly?

H.S.: Well, it makes you feel kind of funny, you know what I mean. You didn't know whether to get on the speeder the next day and go to town or what.

M.O'R.: I imagine another thing that this changed in the logging industry also is the environmental side of things in terms of what they do or don't do?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. It's altogether different now. I don't know - there's no logging camps in the area at all now, you know. But at that time they had a lot of camps scattered around. Big Creek, and Stimson's Lumber up here. There was all camps, you know. All from Washington on down the coast, all down the coast, you know.

M.O'R.: You described those bunks there, those places that you stayed in, the bunkhouses. You said there was a stove in the middle; that was wood-fired, probably?

H.S.: Right.

M.O'R.: I imagine it would get kind of cold up there during the winter?

H.S.: Oh, yeah, but then - oh, they had the cracks all battened, you know, and you had this stove roaring hot during the night to keep you warm. And all four corners of this house - these houses were built so they could load them on a moving car, as they

called it. In other words, that was a flat car with a steel top on it, you know, where they hauled some of the heavy equipment, and when they moved camp, they would slide these bunkhouses on, they were 40-foot lengths and probably nine, ten feet wide - because these cars, I think, are nine feet wide. They'd move them, and then they'd slide them off on some logs. There was no Cats or anything, you know, to do that. It was all done with - they had shovels, steam shovels and even gas shovels at last, and they used those to make a new camp with. But the Caterpillar tractors was nothing. I mean, they didn't even exist up there.

And then when they built the railroad grade, they had these iron mules, as they called them - it was a tractor with a little box on the back, and then they had a shovel loader, which was steam operated. But later years they got diesel, you know, in them. But they would load on the little tractor - it would hold about two wheelbarrow loads. A very small box. And they'd run out of the cut, you know, and dump it over the bank, and that's the way they built the road.

Then they'd have a pile driver; there was lots of trestles, and so it would have a pile driver working with, you know, when they couldn't make their grade like they wanted it for the railroad, they'd have to put up a trestle then to keep it - because you can't go too steep with a locomotive - although the Shays engine, that was a three cylinder deal, they would climb pretty steep, actually. But the rod engines, they've got to stay pretty much on the flat ground.

M.O'R.: Well, it sounds like a different era. If you encountered like a stream or, you know, body of water with a bunch of timber around it, how would they handle that?

H.S.: They just went right through there and anything that was good was cut. They didn't have no environmentalists in those days to come up and tell you this or that.

M.O'R.: And they probably just dumped the refuse in the water?

H.S.: Everything. I mean, it didn't make no difference. Whatever, you know.

M.O'R.: Did that begin to change at all while you were working there?

H.S.: Not really. No, they didn't get that way until - well, probably in about 1960 when they started to think about some of that stuff.

M.O'R.: Right. You mentioned that you fought the 1945 fire. Now, is that the one that's known as the Tillamook burn?

H.S.: No, the Tillamook burn originally was 1933.

M.O'R.: Okay. I see.

H.S.: That's the original.

M.O'R.: That's the original one. And then the '45 fire, that was still up here in the coast range, right?

H.S.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Whereabouts was that?

H.S.: Well, it burnt areas that wasn't burnt before.

M.O'R.: I see.

H.S.: And it come down over here in the Scoggins Valley area. That's where I worked mostly. I was working at Alder Creek at the time here, and they more or less drafted us, you know. They made us set down and had to go over and fight fire over in Stimson's area. Alder Creek and Stimson's were kind of rivals at the time, but we had to go over there.

M.O'R.: And did they still pay your wages?

H.S.: We got our regular wages, uh-huh.

M.O'R.: And what did you do in the firefighting operation?

H.S.: Well, they made me a sector foreman over here on Forest Grove watershed, as they called it. And that was something else, too. They sent out a bunch of - they called them "tar heels" back in Arkansas and places you know, Army guys. And that's who I had. And then I had a guy named Curly Trout - I hope he's not listening - but anyway, he brought up the idea there was bear in there, and I tell you, those guys wouldn't do anything.

M.O'R.: The folks from Arkansas?

H.S.: Oh, I tell you, they were all Negro people, you know, and when they mentioned bear, there was no way they was going out on a fire line. No way.

M.O'R.: So what did you do then?

H.S.: Well, I'd get a different bunch, you know. They'd put them out someplace else, and they got more or less local civilian guys that went in there and helped on the fire line.

M.O'R.: So they sent the black crew to another area where there weren't any bear?

H.S.: Yeah, right. Uh-huh. No, that was a bad thing for him to do.

M.O'R.: Did you encounter much wildlife in the woods in those days?

H.S.: Not too much. You know, when the big fires come they run most all the deer out, and they didn't really come back - they didn't open up hunting season for 10 years. They had it closed, no hunting.

But you'd always see wildlife. It was just like around here now, you know. Two deer I run out of the garden this morning.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah? And did you see bear?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. I've seen bear and cougar. There was a lot of cougar. When I stayed at Camp 3, they had what they'd call a

night watchman: they'd have to go up and build a fire in those donkeys in the middle of the night practically to keep them hot, you know, and one time this old watchman, there was a cougar followed him all the way up, and he got so scared he never even got no fire built. We went up to work there and the donkeys were cold one morning. And it was a cougar was following him, right behind in his footsteps, and he just packed a little kerosene lantern, you know, and the cougar was following him.

M.O'R.: Did he have any kind of gun or -?

H.S.: No, no. No guns.

M.O'R.: Well, I guess I'd be a little nervous, too, under those conditions.

H.S.: Well, the cougar's kind of a curious animal.

M.O'R.: I guess normally they wouldn't attack a person necessarily.

H.S.: Yeah. There's some cougar around here, in fact, too. Every once in a while they run into one.

M.O'R.: So you worked for Alder Creek until -?

H.S.: 1958. Well, they actually closed a little before that, but I worked for the Kenneke's sons - they had two boys, and I worked for them. They bought little patches of timber here and there, and then the logs come into here. And so it was 1958 when I actually quit. The kids paid me instead of Alder Creek.

M.O'R.: Now, was that the family that owned Alder Creek?

H.S.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And did you know the family, then?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. I knew them all.

M.O'R.: And who were the Kennekes?

H.S.: Well, there was Glen Kenneke. I worked for him. And then Clarence Kenneke, I worked for him. He was the younger boy. He passed away here about a year and a half ago. Then there was

two daughters. I didn't work with them, of course, but I knew them.

M.O'R.: You say you worked for a couple years for the sons. This was after Alder Creek had made the move to Sauvies Island?

H.S.: Yeah. I didn't go down. I could have went down, but it was all mill work, and I wasn't a "sliver picker," as we called them. In other words, I'm not a mill worker; I was a woods worker.

M.O'R.: So they abandoned their logging operation, then?

H.S.: Yeah. They bought logs off the river. You know, that was dumped and floated down or towed down. Oh, they'd go out and buy a little patch now and then someplace, you know, and log or have somebody log it for him, but it would be way off. They bought some up in Washington, I know, and logged it, and they towed them down. But I wanted to be more home.

So then in '59 I went to work for Hillsboro Implement.

M.O'R.: Okay. I want to ask you a couple questions about that, but before I do let me just as you: In this period when you were living here in Cherry Grove, did you do much on the river, on the Tualatin?

H.S.: The Tualatin River?

M.O'R.: Yeah.

H.S.: Used to go fishing quite a bit in the spring. Actually in those days we went before season, more or less, because after season opened, it's too many people.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah? So you'd slip down there before ...

H.S.: Well, yeah. You'd go up what we called Roaring Creek here, went up there and up the Tualatin, up to Lee Falls and around, and when the season open, when the crowd come in, well, that's when we quit. And that was all the natives, you know what I mean? All we had here when I first come here, you know, was tall firs, big oaks and big Swedes. This is a Swedish settlement, you

know. And we did whatever was necessary to survive. We got our fish. We got our sidehill salmon, as they called it, the deer meet.

M.O'R.: So you used to hunt a little bit, too?

H.S.: Oh, I've hunted a lot. There's elk horns right there.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah.

H.S.: That's one of them that I got, but I've killed several elk, quite a few. Lots of deer. I wouldn't even attempt to count them.

M.O'R.: And then you put up the meat?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. Oh, nothing was wasted. Not back in those days, in the 30's and 40's. No, no.

M.O'R.: How would you preserve it?

H.S.: Canned most of it. We didn't have freezers still. It was about '45, I think, when I got my first freezer. 1946, maybe. It was all canned.

M.O'R.: And what creek did you say you fished again?

H.S.: The Tualatin River and Roaring Creek. We used to sneak up Roaring Creek there. That's the old railroad grade used to go up Roaring Creek, you know, and we'd walk up there. Certain areas we'd catch quite a few fish: small trout, what's called mountain brook. Very good eating.

M.O'R.: How small?

H.S.: Oh, they'd be six inches to - eight inch would be a pretty big one. Let's put it between five and eight inches, they run.

M.O'R.: Okay. But they were good eating?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. They were one of the best.

M.O'R.: And how would you avoid the game warden?

H.S.: Well, as a rule, you see, you had to walk from here in, and the game warden would generally come in about once a week or

something, and you generally knew about what day he come in. And then, oh, you'd kind of be a little careful when you come out in the open, you know.

M.O'R.: You'd kind of look around a little bit?

H.S.: Yeah, you looked around a little bit.

M.O'R.: And you say all the locals used to do that; is that right?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. Well, that was the thing.

M.O'R.: Get in there before all the city slickers come out fishing, eh?

H.S.: Oh, yeah. Well, I've caught a hundred trout in one day up at Roaring Creek. Oh, yeah.

M.O'R.: Bait fishing?

H.S.: Yeah. Use mostly worms or single eggs. Those days, you had a little hazel pole with a line tied on it, and you'd reach in and drop it in there, and you'd get one right away, and if anything happened, you broke your line off and threw the pole aside and - you know, what I mean? Throw the whole thing away.

M.O'R.: If someone came up all of a sudden?

H.S.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Did you ever have to do that?

H.S.: Yeah. Yeah, there was one time I pretty near got caught, though. You don't want to hear that, though.

M.O'R.: Well, sure I do.

H.S.: Well, it was up there about the end of the railroad grade. It was a couple miles up the Roaring Creek. And I started to come out, and I saw this Woody - we called him Woody Woodrat. He was the game warden - and I heard he went to Eastern Oregon afterwards, but, you know, he was a guy that wasn't afraid to walk out. And I see him coming up the railroad track, and he hollered, and we ducked down behind a log, and then pretty quick he come out

of sight; then we took over the hill. And that bugger took after us - there was a couple of us. You never went up alone, hardly, you know. So we got over the Haggerty Ridge and started the other side, and you know, he was coming almost faster than we could go, or just as fast, and we hid under a big log. And you know, that bugger crawled over the same log we was hiding under and never found us.

M.O'R.: So were you able to go back and get your fish afterwards?

H.S.: Well, no, we had the fish with us in our little knapsacks.

M.O'R.: So almost but not quite got caught, eh?

H.S.: Yeah. And one time we was up there getting a little game, a little meat, and it happened, too, just about the same area.

[Interruption]

H.S.: So anyway, that was quite an experience.

Roaring Creek, there's a ridge between Roaring Creek and the Tualatin River, and so we'd go over, and then we'd come back down the road from the Tualatin. At that time there was three different bridges across the Tualatin going up. Now it's all on one side, and so you come down it, and you come right on down. So when he got out of sight, and we thought he was all gone, well, then we'd take off and down. But sometimes we'd have to wait till pretty near dark to make sure.

M.O'R.: Who was fishing with you that day; do you remember?

H.S.: I don't really - I think it was Turk Anderson. That's what we called him, Turk. I think he was the one that was with us that day. And he's gone now; he passed away pretty near two years ago now. And he lived right out here at the end of my road, right across by my mailbox, at that time.

Oh, yeah. We did a lot of things like that. And then for our salmon, you know, we used to hike from here back to the Trask, a two-day hike. And we got those salmon - kind of wasn't exactly legal nowadays, but it was legal to us then. And bring home a 50-pound salmon in a pack sack to smoke.

[end of tape]