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ACCESSION NO.	TAPE NO.
WCT75-13mr 2mr	
INTERVIEWEE'S NAME	
GEORGE HUNSBY	

RELEASE

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to the tape recording of conversations given in connection with the Washington State Oral/Aural History Program on APRIL 30, 1975 (Date(s)) and to the divulging of said tape recordings and/or transcripts made therefrom.

INTERVIEWER	DATE
Michael A. Runestrand	5/6/75
COMMUNITY ADVISOR	DATE
Don Eklund	5/20/75
PROGRAM COORDINATOR	DATE
Timothy Frederick	5/22/75

George Hunsby
SIGNATURE (INTERVIEWEE)

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WASHINGTON STATE ORAL/AURAL HISTORY PROGRAM
State Archives

Accession No. WCT 75 - 11mr

TAPE ARCHIVE SHEET

INTERVIEWEE'S NAME George Hunsby BIRTH DATE 1898

HOME ADDRESS

INTERVIEWER Michael A. Runestrand

INTERVIEW TITLE EARLY LOGGING AND MILL DAYS IN WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

INTERVIEW DATE April 30, 1975 TIME

INTERVIEW SUMMARY Family Background; Childhood; Work experience, logging and mills; the I.W.W., better work conditions, attitudes towards; Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen; World War I, Spruce Division of U.S.Army; Ethnic groups in Whatcom; Women in the logging camps; Memories

RESTRICTIONS None

PROPER NAMES OR COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS USED Burke Hendricks, McCoy's camp, A.C.Manning, Pacific American Fisheries, International Workers of the World; Loyal Legion of Loggers & Lumbermen; Larson Mill; Cleveland's Panic; U.S.Army, Spruce Division Chinn's camp

INTERVIEW AND RECORDING QUALITY

DOCUMENTATION Photgraphs by Darius Kinsey

Mr. George Hunsby

April 30, 1975

"EARLY LOGGING AND MILL DAYS IN WHATCOM COUNTY"

Interviewed by: Michael A. Runestrand

Washington State Oral/Aural History Program
Washington State Archives, Olympia, WAshington

Accession No. WCT 75-11mr, Tape No. 5&6, Tape Side 1&2, 3&4, No. of Pgs: 38

Mr. George Hunsby
April 30, 1975

Accession No. WCT 75-11mr, Tape No. 1, Tape Side No. 1

Mr. Runestrand: This is an interview with George Hunsby. Date of the interview is, April 30, 1975. The interviewer's name is Michael Runestrand. This is tape no. 1, in the interview series. This is a tape original. Well, we're here today with George Hunsby. George, what's your full name? Is it, George, what? George.....

Mr. Hunsby: George Hunsby.

Mr. Runestrand: No middle name?

Mr. Hunsby: No middle initial.

Mr. Runestrand: What year were you born?

Mr. Hunsby: I was born June the sixth, 1898.

Mr. Runestrand: In this town or in this County?

Mr. Hunsby: In Lawrence, Whatcom County, Washington.

Mr. Runestrand: Where you were born, now, that's out in the sticks. Did you have a mid-wife that helped your mom deliver you?

Mr. Hunsby: Yes. And, her name was Mrs. Williams.

Mr. Runestrand: What did she...what did you do? Did your dad run over and said, "Well, the Missus is gonna have a kid now, you better come and help the wife deliver? How'd they get word to her?

Mr. Hunsby: (Chuckles) Well, I wouldn't have any knowledge of that because I wasn't even born yet.

Mr. Runestrand: No, no, I mean, but no one told you how ya got there?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, Mrs. Williams was a neighbor of my folks at that time. She only lived a short ways away and she had taken care of most of the births in the Lawrence Valley up to that time. So, I presume that my mother and father

got a hold of her in advance of my birth and made the arrangements. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: What were the names of your folks?

Mr. Hunsby: Christian and Hannah Hunsby.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, were they...did they come over fron Norway? Or did their folks come over from Norway?

Mr. Hunsby: No, my father, he came from Norway to Manestake, Michigan, in 1884. He had a brother living in Manestake and I have an idea he was engaged in woods work too. It was great timber country then. So, my father went to work in the timber; and of course, over there they do most of their logging in the wintertime. That is the timber is brought out on ice roads. But, his particular forte' in the woods was riding the rafts down the rivers. The log rafts and that sort of thing, see. He was a river runner.....river runner, you might call him.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, why did he want to come out to Washington?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, he made another stop before that. He went to...he moved on to Minnesota, which was also a logging country. And, he went to work in the woods there in the logging camps up around Duluth and through that country. And, then they were building the Northern Pacific to the Pacific Coast, and he thought that...he'd heard all about the Pacific Coast, what a great logging country that was, and that it was a country a good deal similar to Norway. So, he thought that he would come out here and see what the country was like. He had friends that had already come here ahead of him that had come to the Hood Canal country and he came almost to landing in the Hood Canal country. But, he came out on one of the first...one of the very first trains of the Northern Pacific. And, the Northern Pacific at that time went in to Portland, Oregon. And, then you had to come from Portland up to Tacoma. And, that was his first stopping place in Washington, was the Tacoma country. So, he worked around Tacoma on the rivers floatin' logs. And, he kept moving northward.

He moved into...to King County. I dunno how much work he did in King County, but anyway, when he was there, the city was still smoldering from the great fire. Now, you could have bought two or three lots right in the heart of Seattle, which are now owned by the University of Washington, and he could have gotten those lots for a song. But, he didn't have the song. (Chuckles) And, he told me that he thought he probably never would have been able to hang on to 'em even if he had of bought 'em. On account of the increasing taxation, you know. But, then he kept...then he went into...into Snohomish County. And, he worked on the Snohomish River. And, he worked on the Pilchuck. And, he worked on the Stillaguamish. And, at that time, they were either floatin' shingle bolts or logs down these rivers to the mills in Everett. They were just establishing mills along the waterfront at taht time. And, then eventually, he...well, he worked on the Skagit too, came up a little further north all the time. Worked on the Skagit and I don't know what possessed him to come into Whatcom County, but he evidently had people up here that he knew, that probably came from the same part of the old country. So, he came in...he came in to Fairhaven in 1887.

Mr. Runestrand: Just after the depression?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I dunno whether that was...whether there was a depression at that time or not, but there was a panic that caused...

Mr. Runestrand: That's right, a panic.

Mr. Hunsby: Cleveland...Cleveland's panic, but I dunno what the years of this ...when that panic was, see.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, maybe it was a little bit earlier than than. I mean, a little bit later than that. How did he finally get out to his...how did he finally land that land out there? Did he buy it or did he...where you were born?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, let's see now. He worked around Bellingham, or around Fairhaven for awhile. And, he helped put in the Fairhaven water system. The very first water system they had in Fairhaven. And, some way or another, he

got into a business deal over on the other side of town, in old Whatcom. And, it involved a small cafe and a two-bit flophouse upstairs, it was a two-story building and an emplyment office. See, in the early days, the country was full of employment offices. Course, they was no such thing as they have today, you know, where they're...but, they were private employment offices where you could...where for a dollar, you could buy a job. You could even buy a job cheaper than that. But, anyway, he had this little business and he operated that for awhile. And, then he got together with another man and got to doing some logging for a man that had a small mill out on the Smith road, and his name was, Green.

Mr. Runestrand: Green?

Mr. Hunsby: Green, yeah, I dunno what his first name was, but he had this small sawmill. So, my father and this other man whose name was Burke Hendricks or Burka Hendrickson, the two of 'em went to work logging for this small lumber mill. And, well they was horses of course, and this little mill became indebted to them for this logging business to such an extent that they were not able to pay up. So, my father made a deal with this feller, with this man, Green, someway or another and he got the employment office down in Oldtown or Old Whatcom, what they called it, and my father and Burke Hendrickson got the sawmill. That was back about...somewheres about 1900. When they started operations in this sawmill...that mill must have run two or three years before that time, during the late '80's, you see. But, that's when they started operations. And, Hendrickson was...he was a pretty well-schooled person, so he was the bookkeeper for the business. Then they took in another partner by the name of Charlie Johnson, and he was a machinist of the old country, from Sweden. And, he was the owner of a...of a thrashing machine engine mounted on wheels you know, and where he entered into the picture was the fact that he brought this thrashing machine engine over to the mill site and his thrashing

machine boiler furnished steam to run the planer. There wasn't enough boilers to run the mill, didn't have sufficient capacity to run the planer too, see. So, that's where he fit into the picture. And, then he was a good machinist on top of that, so he was able to keep the machinery running, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: Well then your dad had the mill up the hill a ways where you told me, you know, you and your sis would go out and where Darius Kinsey came in with his photographs.

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, well they...this particular mill on the Smith road operated from about the 1900's and on up to early 1910. Then they ran out of timber.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, this was the same mill that they'd have to go out and yard the lumber into the mill? Is that correct?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, this particular...this mill...this first original mill, it went out of existence then. After about ten years of operation because they run out of timber, or run out of material to work with. So, then they had to locate a new body of timber so they got in touch with Mr. Larrabee, and he had a piece of timber out on the Everson-Goshen road. On the west side of the road and it would...this piece of timber run all the way from the Giarde road, G-I-A-R-D-E road to the Central road. On the west side of the Everson-Goshen road, it was a huge body of timber, beautiful timber. And, my father bought that tract of timber from Mr. Larrabee. And, they set up a mill right at the intersection of the Everson-Goshen and the Central road. And, that was called Excelsior Mill, No. 2. And, that mill operated only a...only two years or so. And then bad times came and they lost the whole business.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, then did your dad...did.....Now, how old were you when the Excelsior No. 2 went belly up?

Mr. Hunsby: What's that?

Mr. Runestrand: HOw old were you when the Excelsior No. 2 went belly up?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I was...I was probably twelve years old, somewheres around there.

Mr. Runestrand: What do you remember of the days of the mill? You were tellin' me about the steam donkeys and when he'd shoot the sparks up in the air when he'd put the throttle up...?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, that was...that was when we were at the old mill site. We'd been logging with horses up til that time and then somebody around there had gotten a hold of a couple of steam donkeys and those konkeys were...they weren't up to snuff like the modern steam donkey you see much later. They didn't even ...they had one single drum and the cable had to be pulled up by horse. The horse had to pull the cable out into the woods, see. And, then they would attach the cable to the logs and then pull it in with the donkey, see.

Mr. Runestrand: (Tape trouble) We're startin' again.

Mr. Hunsby: This was really the commencement of the ground lead operations. Now, the ground lead operation was one where the log was...the log was a turn as it was called later on.

Mr. Runestrand: Turn? T-U-R-N-E?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. Several logs were hooked together, they called that a turn, see. but, in the ground lead operation, there was generally only one log. Sometimes they might want to hook one behind the other with a swamphook, see. Bring two of 'em in, but they came in on a trench. The first couple of logs that were hauled in formed a trench. And, as time went on, more logs were brought in, the trench got deeper and deeper. And, eventually, it might get even deeper as about probably six foot deep. Why, of course when the trench reached that depth, there was no chances of the logs ever coming...getting out of that ditch, you know, as they were being pulled in. Well, then they...when they finished operations in one particular given area, then they'd move over into another belt of timber and they'd do the same thing over again until they logged that out. So, that a good many of these trenches lay around the county right today. If you go back into the woods, you'll probably run on to some of 'em.

Mr. Runestrand: They didn't ...when your dad was loggin' and when you were a kid and you were watchin' this stuff, they didn't have corderoy roads then, they just pulled it out through the brush? That's how these trenches would be developed, is that right?

Mr. Hunsby: They used to build...they built these corderoy roads, that's for horse logging. Yeah, they built those corderoy logs...er roads, skidroads, they called 'em and they used to probably haul one single log at a time, and they'd have to snipe the end of it. You know, they'd have to kind of snipe it...

Mr. Runestrand: Make it sort of to a point?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. Well, not to a point, but they had to cut the corners off of the log all the way around see, so it wouldn't hang up on the skids and split. And, then they'd grease the skids and then they had a...sometimes they had a apparatus that they would...really would horse one end of a log up on a sort of a sled and pull that sled and the back end of the log would drag. See, that way they'd get better traction then if they were draggin' just the dead weight of the log itself, see. Now, that was just one oper...one way of doing things. And, of course, years before, they had a enormous two-wheeled cart and the wheels themselves was about eight, nine feet tall. And, an enormous axle that run across between the wheels and then they would hoist the end of the log up against the axle so it was free of the ground. And, then they would pull this apparatus with oxen. And of course, that would reduce the friction too, see.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when did you start loggin'?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I went out in the woods the first time before World War I. I'd say it was about 1915 or thereabouts. '15 or close to '16, and that was my very first woods work.

Mr. Runestrand: Did you work a long time in the woods? What were you doin' up there? Were you buckin' or chokin' or what?

Mr. Hunsby: No, I didn't work a long time in the woods, but I worked at the various stages of loggin'. I worked in the kitchens as a flunkey in the wintertime, because it was nicer to be in the kitchen then. (Chuckles) In the summertime, I'd fire donkey, which was an interesting experience, and I thought it was a very fine job.

Mr. Runestrand: Were they usin' coal or were they usin' wood or what?

Mr. Hunsby: Wood.

Mr. Runestrand: Wood.

Mr. Hunsby: Fire it with wood. This was before oil was being used. And, I worked on the rigging, set chokers, I fell timber and I bucked timber. And, I worked in the blacksmith shop where they took care of all the...you know, the different...

Mr. Runestrand: Machinery and stuff?

Mr. Hunsby: Cables and, you know, chokers and stuff, that they needed in the work.

Mr. Runestrand: Well a...

Mr. Hunsby: I helped make those chokers.

Mr. Runestrand: What camps were you...was this just all around Whatcom County that you were doin' your loggin'?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, some in Skagit County.

Mr. Runestrand: What were some of the counties...or what were some of the camps you worked for?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I worked the Chin's camp up at Maple Falls.

Mr. Runestrand: Shinn's?

Mr. Hunsby: Chin, C-H-I-N, C-H-I-N-N, I think. Chinn's. That was quite an operation. They had operated several sites at one time.

Mr. Runestrand: How many men were in the camp? Just guess. Fifty?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, fifty, fifty was just a drop in the bucket. (Laughter) No, I wouldn't say...it's pretty hard to say how many it would be. I'd say a 150.

Mr. Runestrand: Was that right?

Mr. Hunsby: At least, yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: That was a pretty good sized camp.

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. They fed good. I went up there with...I went to work with a cook, who I knew real well.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Hunsby: His name was, Cris Andersen. And, he was cook in a National Guard Company here, in a coast artillery company. And, since I knew him personally, that's how I happened to get into this doggoned camp and get to work in the cook house. And, another friend of mine, a schoolmate of mine was workin' in the cook house at the same time. And, the ironic part of it is that both of these fellers lost their lives in World War I, Chris, the cook, was the only man in the coast artillery company from Bellingham that lost his life in World War I, overseas. And, the other man, Hans Kingsley, he died in camp, in training camp.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, besides Chinn's camp, where else did you work? What other camps....?..

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I worked at...at McCoy's camp at Mosquito Lake, and I worked at McCoy's camp up by Hisler's ranch, or up by what you call Clearwater Creek, area.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Hunsby: Later on, and that camp eventually became the St. Paul Tacoma camp.

Mr. Runestrand: How would you get up there? By a speeder? Or would you...?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, we went by...we went by logging train. There was tracks back in there, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: I didn't know if you'd take a little speeder up or...?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, sometimes, sometimes you could ride the speeder, yeah, oh yes.

Mr. Runestrand: Was it tough? Oh, what type of ties did you have with your family then? You weren't married at that time, were you?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, no, no. I was just single, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: So, it wasn't so bad gettin' into town all the time?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh well, sometimes we wouldn't go into town only once a month maybe.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. What were the camp stores like? Did they have everything you needed there, up there at these camps?

Mr. Hunsby: They had what?

Mr. Runestrand: The stores, they'd have, where you could buy your....

Mr. Hunsby: They had the commissaries. They called that the cock shop.

Mr. Runestrand: The cock shop?

Mr. Hunsby: Cock shop, C-O-C-K, cock shop. And, there you could buy stag shirts, tin pants, tin coats, tin hats, soap.

Mr. Runestrand: Could you get Hudson's Bay blankets at these different commissaries, or did you have to...?..

Mr. Hunsby: You could buy blankets, yeah, but you couldn't buy no Hudson's Bay blankets. But, you could buy blankets of a sort. You could buy comforters. Hudson's Bay blankets, you had to buy them in town. Right Front Merchantile Company.

Mr. Runestrand: Ah. Why were they so much better, because they wore so much better and kept the heat in and stuff?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, they were all-wool blankets. They were all-wool. They were really something. You could buy comforters in these cock shops, you know. Two dollars a piece for a comforter and they were good. So.....

Mr. Runestrand: Did you have to buy...did you have to buy calk shoes?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh yes.

Mr. Runestrand: What...how would you get 'em fixed after you busted a couple of points off 'em? Did they have guys that would repair shoes up there for you?

Mr. Hunsby: You could buy...you could buy shoes in most of those commissaries. And, a...the shoes were quite expensive. The shoes, loggers shoes, were always expensive because they were well made. Some of 'em were hand sewn. And, sometimes, you could buy 'em with the calks already installed. At other times, you'd have to take 'em downtown to a shoemaker to put the calks in, see, because that's quite a project, puttin' those calks in. They have to be screwed in. The average pair of calk shoes in 19...well, let's see, 1920 or so, after World War I, the average pair of calk shoes were $27.00 a pair, then.

Mr. Runestrand: That's pretty steep.

Mr. Hunsby: And, wages were small. But, I don't know what they were back in 1915 and 1916. I forget. But, sometimes, if a fella couldn't afford to buy a pair of new shoes, he'd buy a pair of second-hand shoes, you know, down here in some secondhand store.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, what type of holidays did you get off? When you were,, you always got the 4th off didn't you? The 4th of July?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, the 4th of July and Christmas.

Mr. Runestrand: Those were the two big holidays.

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Would everyone just go?

Mr. Hunsby: There wasn't...there was no shutdowns in the logging camps like there was in the mills. The logging camps run all the time, see.

Mr. George Hunsby
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Mr. Runestrand: Well, the logging camps ran all the time, not like the mills.

Mr. Hunsby: Aw..the only thing that might shut 'em down would be an extremely deep snow.

Mr. Runestrand: What about fires?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, if a fire come up they might come and corral about.....a part of the crew to go out and help fight the fire, you know. And, a..but, you know if...only if the forest fire affected a particular logging camp that we were working in, why everybody would get out and fight fire, you know. They didn't have big crews like they have today, you know that come out from all over the country to fight fire. Drop 'em from airplanes, you know, and such stuff as that. One time the whole county was on fire here and half of British Columbia, lower British Columbia. It was such a big fire that you couldn't hardly see your hands in front of your face here, for smoke. The whole country almost burned up. And, everybody was out fightin' fire.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, these different camps you worked at, were these privately owned or were ...did larger corporations own 'em or mills like Bloedel-Donovan?

Mr. Hunsby: No, these were men...these were men that were engaged in logging, and nothing but. And, there was quite a bunch of these people.. There was the Christy Brothers. They were loggers. There was Pat McCoy and his son, Wade, and there was the...Christy, there was Jess Heaton, he was an old logger. There was so many of 'em and they were all individual businessmen and they were in the logging business, nothing but.

Mr. Runestrand: They'd sell their timber to somebody else. Sell their timber to..

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, their logs? Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, the logs. How would they get 'em down off the hills?

Mr. Hunsby: A lot of 'em were logging their own timber. And, of course, many of them were logging for the sawmill owners that owned timber. In fact, Bloedel-Donovan, for instance, they had timber holdings all over. And, Hugh Galbraith and Bill, his brother, they logged mostly for Bloedel-Donovan. And, they logged for 'em on several different locations. They logged here out at Alger, for instance. That was Bloedel-Donovan timber. The very last body of timber that ever amounted to anything was right between Lake Samish and Bellingham. It was right out here on this old Samish highway. The most beautiful stand of timber you ever saw in your born days. That belonged to Bloedel-Donovan. And, that was logged by...ha...jeez, I can't think of his name right now, but he was a friend of ours. And there was a big effort at that time to save that body of timber because it was beautiful. And, there was a half-hearted attempt made through the newspaper, you know, to bring it to the attention of the interested people to try to save this timber. And, of course, at that time, there was no such a thing as ecology. We'd never heard of ecology. But, anyway, the timber barons got there...got their own way and they...the timber was gone. Oh, the logging operator's name was Byles. What the devil was his first name?.....

Mr. Runestrand: Byles, like?....

Mr. Hunsby: B-Y-L-E-S, Byles. His widow is still living here in Bellingham. Byles was a fine feller and a good logger. I'm trying to think of his first name. My father worked on that job. And, then the timber that joined in with this particular tract was all over the side of this hill here.

Mr. Runestrand: Just up above 30th street, over here?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, it's a Fairhaven hill, they called it Fairhaven hill then. It went on...well, all the way from...almost to the Bellingham...well, almost to the edge of...to Yew street. Well, Yew street now parallels that tract,

and this would be on the north end just about...this tract intersected with Lakeway Drive, and then run south down past Lake Samish, all the way about... And, every stick of that was owned by Bloedel-Donovan. And, that was logged by Hugh and Bill Galbraith. I worked in that camp too.

Mr. Runestrand: What about Byles, now? He was workin' on that too, then?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, Lee, Lee Byles.

Mr. Runestrand: Lee Byles?

Mr. Hunsby: Lee Byles, yeah. Oh, he was a fine fella.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, how did they get the logs out of this area right around here then? Did they...did they run a line up and ship 'em out on a railcar?

Mr. Hunsby: Truck logging.

Mr. Runestrand: Truck...it moved into truck logging?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, they started in with truck logging then. And, a...this.. when Galbraith started in here, they were using neumatic tires then.

Mr. Runestrand: They were?

Mr. Hunsby: On the trucks, yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Not the hard...hard tires anymore?

Mr. Hunsby: Naw...but, over here on...the Hog...the Holton Logging Company, here on the Old Samish Road, they used hard tires. And, the Lake Padden Logging Company used hard tires. And, A. C. Manning used hard tires.

Mr. Runestrand: Where was A. C. Manning at? Was he down the way apiece?

Mr. Hunsby: Right down here on Chuckanut Creek.

Mr. Runestrand: Chuckanut Creek? Now, was that where you and your dad worked to get pilings out for the fish traps?

Mr. Hunsby: No, that was...that was around on the other side of Chuckanut Mountain, running up from Chuckanut Bay, up the side of the mountain. That was a piling camp.

Mr. Runestrand: There was...okay, that.....

Mr. Hunsby: Fish trap piling.

Mr. Runestrand: Okay, that was a special camp then?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, would you select cut then for timber like that?

Mr. Hunsby: That was...that was fish trap piling. Run from a 110 to 130 feet in length. It had to meet those specifications.

Mr. Runestrand: What type of trees would you go for?

Mr. Hunsby: What?

Mr. Runestrand: What type of trees would you go for?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, that was Douglas Fir.

Mr. Runestrand: Always fir, huh?

Mr. Hunsby: Fir, yeah fir, yeah. The fir would stand up to the pounding that they get from the pile driver hammers.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, how would you bring 'em down off the hill?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, they had what they called a fore-and-aft road that was built out of logs. A sort of dish-shaped apparatus, and it run clear up to the top of the mountain.

Mr. Runestrand: You mean logs putted in together to make sort of a ditch? That they'd come down?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, yeah, it made sort of a ditch, you know. And, up at the top of the mountain they had a donkey engine for yarding the logs to the end of this ditch, see. This here fore-and-aft road. And, then they were rolled in to this fore-and-aft road and they'd hook on to a bunch of 'em with a cable and pull 'em down to where the State Park is now. There was another donkey.

Mr. Runestrand: Was this high lead logging? Or was this just...just towin' 'em down?

Mr. Hunsby: I dunno what you'd call it...ground lead or what you'd...it was ground leading. Up on top was ground leading, you know, and I dunno what you would call it.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Well, didn't the logs get hung up in this ditch?

Mr. Hunsby: Nope.

Mr. Runestrand: It was smoothed out enough, huh?

Mr. Hunsby: Come down the ditch pretty good.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, what would you do? What was your job when you were getting this fish trap piling?

Mr. Hunsby: I was peeling the bark off of them.

Mr. Runestrand: You'd...before they'd go out and get driven, huh?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. Well, they had to..we had a man workin' down there at the water's edge, a boom man. And his duties was to corral these logs after they were kicked over the end by a donkey that sat just about where the State Park is now. Right where the...where the workshops are there, you know. The truck shops. Well, they had a landing there and that's where that camp was located too, cookhouses and bunkhouses. And, this donkey sat on the edge. They'd take a swamphook and hook into the end of a piling. They had a short length of cable from the drum of the donkey, and the engineer would give the throttle a reef and that would force the logs out of the shoot and over the edge, over the brink, down into the water, see. And, the boom man down below, he had a little boat, you know, and he would get that log right now and he would bring 'em in towards the beach and corral 'em in a boom. He had a bunch of boom sticks around there and when he'd pick up a log or two, he'd just open up the boom and bring his logs in there and corral 'em, see. My father and I, we worked on the beach. We had a capstan or windlass, whatever you want to call it. It was a home made affair. It was just a big drumlike affair. It had two pivots and that was for the cable to go on, you know. Then, we had a sweep that we'd that...you know, a pole that stuck up from the capstan and we'd hook up our piling down there in the water with a sort of...what we called a bridle. Then, we had a cable that had forked out like this in two directions.

We'd tie one end on to the piling, one end of the piling, and the other one on the other end of the piling. And, then we had skids sunk in the beach. And we'd take a hold of the sweep and we'd walk around and around. And, that would draw the piling up on those skids. We'd draw the piling up as close to the capstan as we could and then we'd put some blocks in to keep it from gettin' away from us, see. Then, we'd start peeling. And, we had an apparatus called a spud.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, I've worked spuds before.

Mr. Hunsby: My sister got the spud up there at the house yet. The spud that we used. It was only an inverted axe blade, generally a single-bitted axe blade, mounted on a steel handle, and on one end they had a wooden knob so that you wouldn't hurt your hand. And, you'd go around and get the bark started, you know. You had to peel the bark you know, when the sap started to run cause it come off easy then, you see. And, we got one cent a foot for that.

Mr. Runestrand: One cent a foot. Who would measure it? Would you guys measure it?

Mr. Hunsby: No, the boom man.

Mr. Runestrand: He'd come out and say, "Well, you've done that much today?"

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, when we peeled the piling, why he would measure it. Either it would be a 90 foot piling or a 110 foot piling or a 130 foot piling, you see. We'd get one cent a foot. And, he..we... and he'd snipe the ends. The sniping was just to put a...you know...to cut an angle on the ends, I guess. With an axe, with a swamping axe. And, then bore a hole through that end for the lines to go through when they'd tow these pilings, see.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, who were the pilings going to? Do you know who they were being sold to?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, the pilings belonged to Ambrose, that owned the camp, but he was selling 'em to the P. A. F. and to any other cannery that wanted to buy 'em. See, all the canneries had fish traps at that time, you know. And, they

had to have these long pilings.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, how much a...how many months of the year did you work this piling job: Did you work there very long? Or, did you find another deal?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, no. I worked there a few months, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, just some money for the time bein'?

Mr. Hunsby: Worked down there a few months. Then, we got another piling contract over here with the...well, just about where the municiple dock sits now. That was all beach then, you know. There was a whole bunch of piling laying in there. I don't know who in the heck owned them, but my dad got the contract peeling that piling. So, we went over there and went to work and just about that time, he got a notice from the Canadian government that he had to... see, he was proving up on a piece of timberland up in Graham Island in the Queen Charlottes, and he had to go back and do some assessment work and in the meanwhile, he left me to finish this contract. I finished it by myself. I thought that was pretty easy money. (Chuckles) One cent a foot.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you finished workin' the piling, you also worked in a bunch of mills around here, isn't that right?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Loggin' mills, where they actually did the shapin' up of the wood and stuff? Didn't you work in a shingle mill?

Mr. Hunsby: One time, I worked in a...I worked in a Bloedel-Donovan shingle mill for a short time, piling blocks. That was out here at Lake Whatcom.

Mr. Runestrand: To make shingles out of?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. Yeah, they had a big shingle mill, they had a ten machine mill.

Mr. Runestrand: Ten different machines for cuttin' the shingles?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, they had six machines on one end and four machines on the other end. And, I worked on the four machine end. I had to pile blocks for the four shingle weavers, see. Four machines. And, on the other end, they

had six machines and they had two block pilers there.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, how big were these blocks? I was lookin' through one of these ...I was lookin' through your Coast Magazine, and they show a bunch of shingle blocks comin' down a river. But, those blocks look pretty big!

Mr. Hunsby: Why, those are bolts. Those were shingle bolts.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh, shingle bolts. Now, what's the difference?

Mr. Hunsby: They were fifty four inches long. The idea of the fifty four inches was to give the operator some extra timber to trim on. Because the shingle was actually...let's see, what was it? Think I got that...got three blocks..yeah. Shingles were sixteen inches long. They cut three sets of blocks out of one bolt.

Mr. Runestrand: Aww. So, the bolts weren't, I mean, the blocks weren't that heavy?

Mr. Hunsby: No, the blocks weren't..the blocks were about so high, you know, and, of course, some of 'em might be pretty big around. It was pretty hard to tell.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, but they'd only be about three feet high, two and a half, three feet high?

Mr. Hunsby: Sixteen inches.

Mr. Runestrand; Sixteen inches, that's all?

Mr. Hunsby: More or less, yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: So...and you had to supply the cutters with all the blocks?

Mr. Hunsby: That's right. They have a table in front of each saw you see, and that table had to be full, kept full all the time.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Well, how much did you get paid for that job?

Mr. Hunsby: I haven't the least idea. It was probably about...possibly about four dollars a day at that time. I don't even remember what year it was. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Well, do you remember bein' pushed hard at that job? Do you remember bein' told to work fast? Or what?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh no, they never...nobody ever pushed ya. Everybody worked then. Everybody worked...of course, they knew doggoned well if they didn't work they'd get canned. And, if they got canned, there was no place...no union to go back on to help you out. There was no unemployment compensation. There was no nothing, period. Your next move would be to get another job. So, everybody worked. And, there was no..it was no shame to get fired, you know. Everybody laughed about that. (Chuckles) If they got canned, they just laughed about it, see.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, speakin' of, you know, strikes and unions and things like that. What are your reminisences of the I. W. W? What do you remember of that group of people up in the woods?

Mr. Hunsby: (Chuckles) Well, I never was involved with 'em. They never bothered me any, but I worked a good many places where the I. W. W.'s were working, and I'll never forget one particular place. And, that had nothing to do with logging, but it was in 1917, over in eastern Washington. On a big wheat ranch. And, a friend of mine and myself went over there to work for relatives of his in the wheat fields, and this particular summer it was the, you know, the beginning of the war as far as the United States was concerned, and men were leaving pretty fast. And, it was a tight labor market. And, this old man that we were workin' for, he was farming a whole township. Can you imagine that!?

Mr. Runestrand: One man?

Mr. Hunsby: One man! He farmed an entire township. And, we worked on the home place. Of course, the home place was right close to this particular little elevator town, and my friend's father and mother lived in this little elevator town. In fact, they had lived in Bellingham. My friend and his sisters all went to the college up here. And, so we...him and I, we went to work for this man, and he was havin' a hard time gettin' help, and he sent 'em a bunch of

help from Seattle. Bums that they picked up on the skidroad, see. He wasn't very well pleased, you know. (Chuckles) But, these men that he got, they were pretty good guys, you know. Well, anyway, he finally got so desperate for help that he had to go down to Harrington where they had a whole bunch of I. W. W.'s in jail. Anybody ever come into a farming town and announce the fact that he was an I. W. W., he was a candidate for jail, right now. (Laughter) So, they had a whole bunch of 'em in jail and this man went down there and he sprung the whole bunch of 'em out of jail. You know, paid their bail in order to get them to come to work for him. So, I worked with these fellas, I couldn't see anything different between these fellows and anybody else that I ever worked with.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, do you remember their gripes up in the woods?

Mr. Hunsby: Their gripes?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, what was their...what was their main gripes when they were around the mills and up in the woods?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, their big gripe in the woods, that the I. W. W.'s put out was the ... was the sleeping conditions. That was number one gripe. Well, we had to carry our own blankets and where we had to go up into the strawpile and fill the straw tick full of straw to put in our bunks. And, the vermin in the camps was terrible. And that was their number one gripe. Wasn't so much wages, nobody said anything about wages then. And so, they were instrumental in starting this...this big movement to get better living conditions in the logging camps. So, they set one particular day as the blanket burning day. (May Day) And, that was supposed to be a national deal all over the country, wherever there were logging camps. And, they put it over in grand style. And, there was hundreds of 'em came with their bundle rolls, you know, their dirty blankets and they had great big bonfires and they burned 'em all up. And, from then on, they started to get beds in the camps, cots and better

...much better conditions all the way around. More of a dormitory setup from then on.

Mr. Runestrand: Do you remember what year they had this big blanket burning day?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, that was...that was, I think in 1917. I'm not quite so sure about it, but I believe it was about 1917.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, well did you pack a red card when you were in the woods?

Mr. Hunsby: No, I didn't have a red card, but my dad had one.

Mr. Runestrand: Why...I heard a lot of old loggers...they didn't have to be I. W. W., but they'd get one of these red cards; just to have one, just to...

Mr. Hunsby: Oh yeah, yeah, sure; it was quite an honor to have a red card.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. (Laughter)

Mr. Hunsby: No, they had...the operators, you see, they took means to counteract the I. W. W., see; and they organized what they called the "Loyal Legions of Loggers and Lumbermen" and, they also issued a card.. When I was workin' down here at Blanchard in the sawmill, that was a big outfit down there at Blanchard; they had quite a crummy conditions in that...they had a big three story boarding house down there, it was a very drab place. No paint or nothing, just like a barracks, see. Just like the barracks that came afterwards in World War I. I think that those barracks must have been patterned after that Blanchard outfit. (Laughter) Holy smokes! But, anyway, down there...that was my first experience with the "Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen". We all had to join, see. If you didn't join that boy, your name was "Mud". So, I joined the damn thing. I had one of those cards. It said, "The L. L. L. L." (Laughter)

Mr. Runestrand: What about the Spruce division, George?

Mr. Hunsby: I dunno much about the Spruce division, but there's a lot of the boys here in Bellingham that were in the Spruce division during World War I.

And, we even had a contingent of 'em down here at the P. A. F. They set aside one building down there to house soldiers from the Spruce division and right where the Medcalf Dairy is now, there was a great big old hotel. It was called, the Sehome Hotel. A great big red building, you know, with towers on it. And, that building housed members of the Spruce division. But where they worked, I don't know. Probably down in the sawmills, see. But, the Spruce division was mostly down in the Clallam Bay country and the penninsula country and their headquarters was in Vancouver, Washington. That was the headquarters of the Spruce division. And, the Spruce division was an element of the signal corps of the Army.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh, is that right?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. So, these fellers that were in the Spruce division were actually Army members.

Mr. Runestrand: I heard they got drafted, just like anyone else, but they worked in the woods.

Mr. Hunsby: Oh yeah. And, they wore a...they wore a uniform, see. And, they worked all day in the woods down there in the Clallam country and then.....

Mr. George Hunsby
April 30, 1975

Accession No. WTC 75-03mr, Tape No. 2, Tape Side No. 1.

Mr. Runestrand: We were talking about the Spruce division and I'm...during the days when they were loggin' they'd wear their uniforms and then on week-ends they could what? Change into their dress clothes or something'? Or they'd keep their uniform on or what?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, no, they didn't use their uniform while they were working.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh! But, they put 'em on after work?

Mr. Hunsby: Put 'em on after work, yeah. Either off duty or on week-ends, you know. But, they built a railroad down in Clallam country in order to tap this vast body of Spruce back there. A thirty mile railroad which never was used for any other purpose except to bring that Spruce out. And, I think, as a result of this whole doggoned thing that only one airplane reached the Western Front ever built out of that material.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right?

Mr. Hunsby: I doubt whether any ever got into combat. But, they spent millions of dollars building this thirty mile railroad. I have an idea that there was some political influences that entered into this doggoned thing, see, most likely.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, were there ever any ethnic groups that worked up in the camps? Black?

Mr. Hunsby: Any what?

Mr. Runestrand: Ethnic groups, like Blacks or Indians or Hindus or Slavs, you know...any...any immigrants that couldn't speak the language or anything?

Mr. Hunsby: The only ethnic group that I ever knew of that worked...they worked for Bloedel-Donovan at the Delvin Logging Company up above Sedro Woolley, about five, six miles north of Sedro Woolley. That was a wonderful big camp, fine camp. And, there they had a whole bunch of Belgians, and I have an idea that

these Belgians were...had someway or another, spirited themselves away from Belgium at the beginning of World War I, rather than to get caught in the draft, see. Well, they had gotten away someway or another and come to the United States and Bloedel had a whole bunch of 'em workin' and boy, I'm tellin' you, they were really workers. But, they didn't know anything about logging. But, they were willing. They were tough, tough characters.

Mr. Runestrand: But, they didn't have any Blacks up in the woods or anything? Any Black fellers?

Mr. Hunsby: I've only saw one Black feller...I saw two Blacks in Bellingham up to the time I was about twenty years old. And, one of 'em...the first one I saw...was on the city dump back by Unity street, up against Whatcom Creek in 1907, the day that the United States fleet was here. I was...I went...walked back on that dump because we...my father had an office and a lumberyard frontin' on Magnolia street, and we had slept in that office that night, and that morning I got up early and I went back on that dump to see what was goin' on back there, and I saw this great big enormous Black woman. It was the first Black woman I'd ever seen and she had a red bandana handkerchief around her head, and for many years afterwards, I thought that that was Aunt Jemima herself, (Laughter) that I saw back there on that dump, see. But, that just gives you an idea that there was no colored people here at that time. There was one lived here on the southside, his name was Ben Linier. And, I worked with him in the sawmill. He was a fine man and he raised a fine family. He raised one boy that became a great athlete or fighter of something. And, I never saw any more colored people. In fact, there's never been very many colored people up in this country. I don't know why. Just haven't been here.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Did the Indians work in the loggin' mills at all?

Mr. Hunsby: Oh yeah, the Indians...the Indians worked both in the sawmills and in the logging camps. More so in the logging camps. Yeah, I had a number

of Indian friends, you know, worked out here at the Larson mill, you know. In fact, some of 'em weren't full-blooded Indians, but, you know, there is no such thing out here as a full-blooded Indian. They're all mixed now, you know. You point out the Indian to me out here that has a pure-blooded Indian, I'd like to know who he is, because I know a lot of those guys. There's no such thing.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you were workin' in loggin' and in some of the early mills, what were some of the hazards you had to watch out for? Were guys always gettin' their arms cut up or... And, when somebody would get hurt, was there compensation for 'em? Would they get taken care of by the mills and stuff?

Mr. Hunsby: There was no such thing as workman's compensation. If you got hurt, it was just your bad luck. And, as a general rule, the logging camp operator would supply something. He probably would pay the person's hospital expenses, you know, and probably would help the family. I know one particular incident, and that was in later years where the industrial insurance had already gone into effect. And, that was right up here on the side hill at Galbraith's camp.

Mr. Runestrand: Right off I-5, up on the hill?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, right up...right up here a little ways, you know, on the old highway. I saw a widow-maker go down. It was a snag that had been left close to the roadway that shouldn't have been left there. It was just carelessness of the part of the operator to leave that snag there. And, I was firing up on top of the hill, just a little bit above, and I looked down, it was in the early morning, I looked down at the trucks that were assembling down there. I saw three or four trucks, one behind the other, that were waiting for the whistle to blow so they could go up to the spar tree, up to the loading platform and start loading. And, when these three logs...three trucks rather, stopped, the drivers all got out except in one truck. The drivers in the lead truck stayed in their cab. The other drivers, they all come and milled around and some of

'em even come up to number one truck to talk. And, I was lookin' down there and the wind was blowin' real strong, a gale; and I heard a crack and I looked down there and I saw this...saw this tree break, and she come down like this and she came right straight across that cab of the lead truck. And, the two men sittin' inside and one man on each running board, and one of these men on the running board facing the snag, he saw it coming so he just let go and fell off, see. The other guy on the other side, he wasn't quite as fast. But, the snag hit the cab and smashed it down and it caught this other guy that was standing on the running board, it caught him on the shoulder and I don't think it broke his shoulder, but it hurt 'em, anyway, it knocked him down of course. And, it killed the other two guys instantly. Now, that was an unavoidable accident, see; and after that accident, of course, whenever there was a death in the camp or even in the sawmill sometimes, the mill shut down like that and it didn't run anymore that day. And, that's what happened up here. They shut her down right then. So, somebody came around with a petition list and each one of us donated five dollars, and Bill and Hugh Galbraith, they donated twenty-five dollars apiece. They were the operators, to the widows. There was two widows involved. But, there were many other accidents and I don't remember what the outcome of those were. There ... I saw one man, this was in the sawmill, I saw one man go head first into a machine. Into a saw, what you call a edger. It's a machine that you run a piece of timber through this machine and then reduce the timber down into smaller components, see. And, he was feeding this here edger, and I was workin' on a caught-all saw, just a little ways away and the whistle had blown to shut down the machinery..... shut down the engines, see, because they were gonna change saws. They always blew that whistle to warn everybody that the steam was going off. That's what had happened. But, just in this little interval, this man that was operating the edger, had stooped down to pick some slivers out from his machine, and he

was wearing an apron made out of gunny sack and tied around his waist with buckskin thongs, and he had been warned, right at noon-time, I was sittin' alongside of him at the table eating, and he was warned then, not to wear that apron. But, he did wear the apron and he had reached down there to pick out some slivers and the machine was then operating just by it's own mementum, and a machine running fast like that, you know, creates a certain amount of wind. A big bull wheel, you know, that operates a machine, why, it creates quite a bit of...quite a breeze. And, that breeze was just sufficient to lift this apron up and drop it against the feed rolls and these feed rolls were great big enormous rolls with spiked teeth to pull the lumber in. And, that apron hit them rolls and it pulled him in and it pulled him in kinda sideways, and he...when he could feel himself going in, he reached up with his right hand and up above him were two small rolls, and he put his hand right into those rolls. So, his hand was pulled in between those rolls and his head went in between the main feed rolls. And, then the machine stopped. But, when the machine stopped, it had stripped all his clothes off except his shoes. His shoes and socks was on, but, all the rest of his clothes had disappeared and he was stark naked. And, there he was wedged in between these two great rolls. So, I heard the scream when he went in, you know, and we all come running, you know, to the machine, and we could see right away, that the only thing we could do was to wind the bull wheel backwards, the main drive wheel. We wound that backwards to wind him out, see, and, we did wind him out. And, you know that he had lost both his ears, it had just plucked his ears right out. They were layin' at the foot of the machine, and I picked 'em up and threw 'em out through the window afterwards. And, he had...his jaw was wide open and all you could see was teeth and jawbone. He had a big...a big hole gouged in his chest, and the arm that went into these small rolls was broken in several places. And, I didn't figure that that fellow had a chance. And, we got him out of there

and made him as comfortable as possible, and we got our first aid outfits... started workin' on him, and they phoned in to Bellingham for the ambulance. And, in the meanwhile, why we rigged up an old model "T" ford, and we got him on a litter and got him astraddle of this ford, and they started out and they met the ambulance about halfways. And, he went to the hospital. And, the man lived! Huh! I wouldn't have believed it!

Mr. Runestrand: About what year was that, George?

Mr. Hunsby: I dunno, I can't remember what year that mill was running in. This mill was just below Acme, between Acme and Wickersham, right where the Mirror Lake road intersects there. That's where this big mill was. And, the mill was run by the Bank of California.

Mr. Runestrand: What the heck was the Bank of California doin' up here? Was it just a hold...?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, they evidently had foreclosed on a mortgage, see.

Mr. Runestrand: That's it, yeah.

Mr. Hunsby: And, these people were...they were logging, and logging their own timber. The timber was on the opposite side of the road, up on the mountain, there. I can't even...I called...I think, in my book, I called it the Forest Lumber Company. It seemed to me, like that was the name of it. But, the boss in the logging camp end of it, lives up here on Grant street yet. He's an old man, about 90.

Mr. Runestrand: What's his name? Do you remember his name?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, he's a good friend of mine. Charlie Stang.

Mr. Runestrand: Charlie Stang?

Mr. Hunsby: Stang.

Mr. Runestrand: S-T-A-N-G?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. He's in the book. He's in the phone book.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, I'll.....I'll look him up when I.....

Mr. Hunsby: He....he...he, I worked with him other places too, afterwards, you know. At the Larsen mill..

Mr. Runestrand; Um hum. Well, how much were you at...when you were workin' in these mills? What was your...?..

Mr. Hunsby: Pay?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah; four dollars a...four dollars a day? Five dollars a day? A...?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, when I worked in the sawmill out here at Bloedel-Donovan, I worked piece work all the time. I had somebody else workin' for me, and I was loading cars or tallying, or doing both. And, I had one man workin' on the car and another man in the yard. And, all I did was to go around and pick out the lumber that was going to go into the car. We shipped an awful lot of house orders. We would ship lumber to fit an entire house or an entire building, so we would be given a ticket each day, and I'd go out and look up the source of supply, you know, whatever we needed and I'd put my man there to load it. It was up to him then to load it and get it to the car. And, the other feller in the car, it was up to him to put it in such a fashion that we could get it all in, you know. It had to be woven in sometimes.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you were shippin' this stuff, did you ever ship any of ...you know, when you were working in the mills, getting lumber set, or shingles, did you ever have anything to do with the loading of the lumber schooners down at the docks, down here?

Mr. Hunsby: The schooners?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, the schooners down at the...

Mr. Hunsby: Naw, I never worked at longshoring, but, I did work as a boy down there, stamping lumber. We...the kids...those were jobs for the kids, you know. And, you'd go down there and they'd give you a sort of a tray made out of wood, and a mixture of lamp black and oil in this tray, and then a brass

stencil and a brush. And, the kids would mark the lumber according to the way they wanted it marked, you know. We'd apply a stencil to the lumber and then work the brush on it, see. We got a little pay for that. I dunno how much it was, but it was money anyway. That's as near as I got to longshoring.

Mr. Runestrand: But, a....let's see....?

Mr. Hunsby: Some of those were sailing vessels, of course, you know. They weren't all steam vessels.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, what do you see...how long...well, you've been involved with the disabled American veterans, and you were in the...World War II. Were you involved in World War I?

Mr. Hunsby: I was a.....I was in the Army in World War, I, yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: So, when you came back out of World War I, did you go back into the logging business? Working in the mills and stuff?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. Yes, I worked in...I worked in Bloedel-Donovan. I don't know just where I did work after World War I, but I worked in some of the mills. Yeah, I even worked down here at the Puget Sound Saw and Timber Company.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, a....did you notice a lot of changes after World War I? You mentioned the changes with the conditions for people to stay in, you know, the housing conditions, and the....?..

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I noticed right away that they...that the sleeping accomodations were much better. And, the dining rooms in some of these camps had women employed in 'em after World War I. Which is something they never had before World War....before World War I.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right? Were these a.....

Mr. Hunsby: That was the commencement of women workin' around these logging camps.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, didn't they have women in the camps before that time, but, they'd be like, women of a...like a married guy, and he'd bring his family with him into camp?

Mr. Hunsby: No, no. There was no women around the camps at all. But, a... no women in the cookhouse at all. In fact, they wouldn't have a woman in the cookhouse. But, after World War II, they had women waitin' on tables.

Mr. Runestrand: After World War II, or after World War I?

Mr. Hunsby: World War I, I mean, yeah. But, a....let's see now, what else was I going to say. The only time that a woman ever worked in a logging camp kitchen as a cook would be in a small camp. You know, in a small operation. There sometimes, they had a woman cook, but they'd never have a woman cook in one of the big camps.

Mr. Runestrand: Why? They'd...why was that just the way it went?

Mr. Hunsby: I dunno. I guess they figured a woman couldn't handle a deal like that. I dunno.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, what about the equipment? With the a....with the passage of the war and the development of technology with it, did you notice a lot of equipment in the camp? And, in the mills? They different types of machinery that had been developed?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, after World War I, they started in with the high lead logging, and of course, high lead logging called for more equipment, better equipment than they ever used before, and stronger equipment. Because they were highballing then, see.

Mr. Runestrand: What about moonshine? These camps around here, now, I've heard stories told, that there were a lot of rough and tumble loggers up in that area.

Mr. Hunsby: Where's that?

Mr. Runestrand: Just around this area of Whatcom County, and up into Concrete and stuff. There were some...you know, some fellas that were pretty darn strong and you know, worked hard, but then they enjoyed themselves, you know, off hours.

Mr. Hunsby: Every camp had it's complement of tough guys that thought they were a little bit tougher than anybody else. You could find them in any camp.

Mr. Runestrand: Was there rulings about drinking in camps and things like that?

Mr. Hunsby: No.

Mr. Runestrand: There was no a.....alcohol prohibition up there because a couple of fellas I've talked to, said they could get moonshine and they'd keep it at their bunk rooms and stuff, but this was somethin', you know, they'd have after work. You know, they'd...you know...you had to be able to work your job...

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, well, I never knew of a logger yet, that didn't take a drink. (Laughter) Never knew of one yet that didn't take a drink.

Mr. Runestrand: No, but the camp didn't....frown on it?

Mr. Hunsby: Not a problem in the camp. There was no problem at all because on Saturday aft....evening, when they took off for Bellingham or wherever they went, they would do their carrousing over the weekend. And, if they got back to camp on Monday morning, you were mighty lucky. And, if they did get back to camp, they were generally stone broke. But, they'd done their carrousing in town here, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: How did the people get paid? Once a month?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, it was generally once a month, but you could draw in between.

Mr. Runestrand: Draw half the check at the midpoint or something?

Mr. Hunsby: Aw....you could draw a portion of what you had coming, you know. And, that was all accomplished in the cock shop, see. That's were they kept.. did the bookkeeping and where you could buy whatever you needed, you know. Tobacco and stuff like that.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you finally gave up logging, George, and workin' in the mills, did you miss it? Did you miss that type of work? WAs it a good ...did you enjoy the work?

Mr. Hunsby: Well, there was sumpin' fascinating about it. It was a fascinating life because these people that worked in the woods, they...they didn't call them homeguards. People that worked in the sawmills, they called them homeguards because they'd get on a job and stay there. But, the people in logging camps, they weren't...they were more like...they were more nomadic. They were moving. That's how I happened to work in so many different camps, because I'd only work a few months in a camp and then I'd have so much money, I wouldn't know what to do with it. So, I'd have to go off somewhere's and spend it. (Laughter) Well, then I'd have to go to work again. I never thought anything about saving any money. That was the last thing that entered my mind. And, probably it was about the same with the rest of 'em, unless they were...some of these stump ranchers that came out to the camp, and that were trying to develop a little farm at the same time, you see. They had to they had to save their money, you know. Well, take one family for instance, that became leaders in Whatcom County. That was Jurgin Anderson, the owner of the Hillview Dairy, and his brother. Those two boys, they'd work in the logging camps and they had this piece of land up there on the South Pass road that they were trying to develop into a farm, and they would take turn-about. One...one of 'em would work all year in the logging camp and the other one would be developing the farm. And, the next year, they would reverse it. And, after awhile, they'd...through hard work, they developed the Hillview Dairy. And the plant here in Bellingham that they...they were friends of ours, personal friends of ours. And, there was lots of farmers that split the same way, that spent part of their life out in the logging camp. Because there was no money coming in on the farms. That was all outgo, until they got the farm stocked up and got enough land cleared so that they could go in the dairy business or poultry business.

Mr. George Hunsby
April 30, 1975

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Mr. Runestrand: Well, is there anything else, George, that you can think about? Of the camps and the logging industry? Something you'd like to... something you'd like to put down, you know, like the atmosphere of the camp, the type of woods you were loggin' in. What was it like? A lotta wildlife up there that you saw? A lotta wildlife up in the hills?

Mr. Hunsby: Wildlife?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, deer and bear, and things like that. Were you a huntin' man in those days?

Mr. Hunsby: No. I dunno, I never...we saw very little wildlife around the logging camps because it was so much racket going on. All these steam locomotives, you know, and blasting, you know; blasting roadway, and this high lead logging. There was so doggone much racket, you know, that if there was any wildlife around, that they all took off for the tall timber, you know. And, we didn't see any wildlife. But, I can remember when it was more serene and there was wildlife. And, that was before the timber....before they started logging way back in the mountains. And, that was when the timber was standing all the way from Glacier clear into Bellingham. You know, the timber stood two or three hundred feet tall, you know, between here and Glacier on both sides of the road. In fact, there was no road, just two wheel ruts. Well, then, there was game. And, you couldn't go very far with a horse and buggy until a bear would cross your path. And, we saw bears crossing in front of the horses a good many different times. If you didn't have a good horse, why, he'd go plumb nuts. He'd rear up, you know, on his hind legs and almost upset the buggy.

Mr. Runestrand: Tell...tell that little story about when Darius Kinsey came to take the photographs of your folks' mill. Where the photographer, Darius Kinsey, came in and took the photographs and stuff.

Mr. Hunsby: Oh yeah. Yeah, I have the pictures here.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, let's...now, when Darius Kinsey came....?

Mr. Hunsby: What's that?

Mr. Runestrand: When Darius Kinsey came to your farm, you know, what...did your dad invite him to come or sumpin'?

Mr. Hunsby: I dunno how he happened to come there.

Mr. Runestrand: You were tellin' me about...?..

Mr. Hunsby: I think he was just...he just rustled around the whole country, you know, picked up business that way. Where there was a sawmill and of course, when a photographer came...why, it was just the same as a peddler coming.

Mr. Runestrand: It was, huh?

Mr. Hunsby: Peddlers used to come, you know, every so often, you know, the peddlers could come. Wherever there was a little community, a group of people that lived there in this community, why, these peddlers would come. And, of course, they...they carried two bags that were, well, they were kind of a telescoping bag and they were waterproof, and one sitted on top of the other, you know, and he had straps arranged so that...my gosh, I often wondered how he could carry all this stuff. But, they...when those fellas come, it was really a heyday for the kids. We were waiting in great anticipation for him to take the lid off that doggoned bag of his so we could see what was inside. And, he always had something attractive, like highly colored combs, you know, pocket combs. Mouth organs, perfumes, everything you could think of was in these bags. You wondered how they could carry that much stuff. And, there was a whole bunch of these fellers traveling around all the time. They even came to the logging camps. Huh, we had one feller come to the logging camps

that didn't handle anything but watches. And, anybody got tangled up with him would almost invariably figure on gettin' a bad watch. Because that was his forte', was to peddle off some doggone watch on you that wouldn't run only a short time, see. I forget what his name was, but he was red-haired, and I'll never forget that feller. Everybody knew 'em. But, he was the watch man.

Mr. Runestrand: Was his name, 'Red', something'?

Mr. Hunsby: Something' like that.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, I've heard of him.

Mr. Hunsby: Seems to me like it was.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, somebody called him, 'Red'.

Mr. Hunsby: There's guys around here that would know his name, all right.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, cause when you mentioned he had red hair, I'd heard stories about this fella. I heard he finally died goin' up on a speeder up to some camp. He just had a heart attack.

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah, he came up there to Chinn's camp.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. He wasn't a real....I heard he was kind of a big man, but not real tall.

Mr. Hunsby: Oh, he was a stocky built feller.

Mr. Runestrand: Stocky, but not real tall.

Mr. Hunsby: Stocky built, and he was a likable cuss, you know. Had to be, to be a salesman, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, I heard he'd just sort of bring the information from camp to camp on who was doin' things where, and who and where.

Mr. Hunsby: That's right, yeah. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Do you miss the loggin' days? Do you miss bein' out there in the woods at all? They're just good memories now.

Mr. Hunsby: Well, you know, when I think back about those ten hour days, soakin' wet, pouring rain. It wasn't very pleasant. But, I was working behind the

donkey where I can turn my back against the boiler once in awhile, you know. And, I felt pretty darn good thinkin' I had such a good job, see. (Laughter) Oh boy!

Mr. Runestrand: Well, George, I want to thank you for tellin' me these things.

Mr. Hunsby: I have worked on the rigging, though, settin' choker in snow this deep, and that was no fun at all.

Mr. Runestrand: Sounds like a cruddy job to me.

Mr. Hunsby: Oh boy, that was bad; you know your hands are cold and miserable and you have to dig underneath that darn log and get that coker through, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: Chokers aren't any light things to begin with, either.

Mr. Hunsby: A..and that stuff is all heavy, you know; it's all made out of iron and steel. (Laughter) It was a lot of fun. It was no place to make money in, you know. Course, I suppose some fellers were goddam miserly that they could even save money workin' in a place like that, you know. But, I never... that was the last thing I thought about was trying to save money, see. I didn't have no use for it.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, thank you, George.

Mr. Hunsby: My book on here that will come out; it'll tell you about...it's a real deep story about each camp.

Mr. Runestrand: The book you're publishing?

Mr. Hunsby: Yeah. That should be the first one out.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Well, I'll be lookin' foreward to read it.

Mr. Hunsby: Already got three hundred and thirty two dollars in their hands down there, without a receipt, even.

Mr. Runestrand: You're a trusting soul.

Mr. Hunsby: Well, I shook hands with 'em. I thought that was good enough.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, well, I'm sure it is.