

The following oral history interview is with Ralph W. Raines, a long-time resident of Washington County who has grown up around the lumber industry for his entire life. The entire interview is over three hours in length in which time a great many topics are discussed or touched upon. The conversation generally follows a chronological order beginning with his grandparents coming across The Plains and eventually settling in Oregon. Ralph's Father, Waldo, began logging in Washington County around 1915. After Ralph was born in 1920, the older Raines began a sawmill in the old milk condensary at the town of Carnation. Included in this section is a synopsis of the history of the town of Carnation.

Mr. Raines continues the story of the sawmill as it and the Raines family struggled through the hard times of the Great Depression. Carnation Lumber Mill is significant in the fact that only a few mills in the entire county were able to withstand the economic standstill of the 1930's. After World War II, Ralph Raines came home from the war and took over the mill. As the narrative continues, Ralph Raines outlines the history of the mill until which time he sold it and went into logging and then the tree-farming business.

The story is spiced along the way with logging anecdotes, hilariously funny stories, and personal experiences that loggers, men of the woods, are famous for. The interview is a valuable resource tool in the respect that it covers the logging industry and its different aspects from the small lumber mill, to more ^{the} mechanized and efficient operations, to the new field of tree-farming, all told in a human, personal way. The user is encouraged to listen to the tapes and read the transcript for maximum benefit and enjoyment.

The interview takes place on February 27th, 1978, at Mr. Raines's home up in the mountains outside of the town of Cherry Grove.

3-6-18

(4 Tape 4 Side 1) had was shoveling mud out of the rollers on the
mill. And then checker-setting and on up the line. As a matter of fact

RR: Well, I'll take off from Carnation Lumber Company about 1952.
Some of the other corporate members of Carnation Lbr. Co. were getting
older and kind of wanted to retire, and step out of ~~mi~~ the mill business.
Of course, I was younger and I wanted to go right ahead on her. I
was full of steam and young. So, we found a fellow that by the name of
Axel Erickson. ~~xxxx~~ He was one of our local people. A very successful
logger. A good logger and a man of the last generation of logging.
A tough breed. He bought out their interests and he and I became
partners in Carnation Lbr. Co. He took care of the logging and I run
the sawmill. Then, about 1954, it become advantageous for both of us
to liquidate our interests and liquidate the mill and the timber.
Axel Erickson had most of his interests and holdings by this time, he
had changed his interests from the Salmonberry country over on the
Wilson River and down to northern California. He was substantially
interested in that country down there. Around Smith River and
Garberville and Happy Camp, and in that area. So, it was advantageous
for me tax⁴wise to liquidate my interests there. So, what we did
we found a buyer for the sawmill and he didn't particularly care for
the timber. That was just fine, so we kept the timber and sold the
mill. Then we logged together. I went to the woods then. That was
my first exposure, really exposure to logging. Of course, I had been
around it here in the country all my life. I could well remember
back to the locomotive, logging railroading days. The days of the
steam donkeys, So, I went to the woods then with my partner Axel.
So, he was going to teach me how to log.

RR: The first job I had was shoveling mud out of the rollers on the cat. And then choker-setting and on up the line. As a matter of fact I think Axel and I rigged the last tree for high-lead logging in the Forest Grove area anyplace up and down here for quite some time, for quite some distance. (10 Tape 4 Side 1)

I remember the last tree we rigged, why, we limbed a pretty fair-sized tree, old-growth tree. Topped her at 140 feet and hung the rigging block, main block, and all the rest of the blocks, right on down the line, including the top guys and the buckle guys and all the rest of the rigging that goes with it. I remember we had a BX140 for a yarding machine with a Cummings 200 engine on it. Then, of course, we had a gas loading pot. After we logged together for about two years, why, Axel wanted to go on down to California entirely. So, then it come to splitting up our assets. We owned half and half. So, between the two of us and in just real short order, why, I picked out what I would need to log with and what I wouldn't need to log with. Between the two us, why, we split the thing up and sold a little of the machinery. I bought all of the timber and the timberland that I could afford to buy. I started out from there. Axel was a good partner. Very shrewd man. I learned alot from him about business. Of course, it's just like anything else, as you go through life, you learn the good things and what not to do. I started out logging from there. I took cutting contract, one of the things was a cutting contract for the city of McMinnville for their watershed. That turned out to be extrememly successful for me. After some several years on that cutting contract, why, I began to realize that there was so many contract cutters, loggers running around the country.

RR: At the end of the Tillamook Burn, the salvage of the Burn was going to come to an end. There was going to have to be, the thing was going to have to boil down to a few successful contractors and cutters and the rest of them were going to have to go by the wayside. There just wasn't room for that many loggers around the country. I thought to myself that if a fellow liked this business and he wanted to stay in it that he'd better start buying some timber and some timber land. He'd better have something like that to secure his future. So, I started out in the last half of the fifties buying all the timber and the timber land that I could afford to buy along the way.

LM: How expensive was the land?

RR: Well, you could buy it 25-\$30 an acre. Of course, about the going rate on second growth stumpage at that time or second growth trees was about 25-30 dollars per thousand board feet. Of course, through the fifties and on through the sixties and seventies it has done nothing but appreciate now second growth now is probably in the neighborhood 150, dollars a thousand. So, it's had quite an appreciation. Then, of course the logging of the old-growth forests, harvesting the old-growth forests boil down the second growth forests. Forestry has come heavily into the picture since the fifties. In the fifties, why, we were talking about the concept of tree farming. To a lot of loggers tree farming, that's is just like reducing them down to being a farmer down on the flat lands. Shit on your shoes and everything else. That doesn't appeal to a logger at all. (20 Tape 4 Side 1)

The name tree farming didn't appeal to me either. I thought that that was kind of degrading. Time has proven that tree farming is the proper name for it.

RR: What I bought was not only private purchase of land but the private purchases comprized of mainly three old ownerships of Donation Land. It was the Lee land place claim and then some people by the name of Stompenbeck, The foundation of their hourse still a stands down here in the brush. As a matter of fact we was falling some timber we cut into some ~~t~~ of theri old square nails with our power saws. ^hhen, the third Donation Land Claim was the old Davis Land Claim. Those people took their land claims up here in the foothills of the Coast Range. Of course this land was in timber. It was cleared by the people. During that time, why, cleared land was actually wotht more that timbered land. Because we had so much timber land at that time and so few people that timber was a drug on the market. Anyhow, they cleared the land. The land's best use was for trees. They tried to farm here and they did for a few years when you could take a sack of flour or a sack of wheat to town and come back with a sack of flour on Saturday afternoon. You could take a half a hog or a hog down to cure. Or they did it themselves. Most of them had their own curing smoke houses. You could get along that way. During these days of high yield agriculture you can't live like that anymore. If you could, why, their heirs would probably still be here. When I first bought the place, why, I realized what I thought was the situation. After completing the purchase of the place, why, professional foresters come in to take soil samples and other ~~xi~~ calculations to determine what the best use of the land was. After they made up timber type maps of what was on the place and compiled their soil samples and so forth, why, of course it come out that its best use was timber.

RR: So, then we started planting trees. I think about the first five years (30 Tape 4 Side 1) we planted approximately, oh, two million plus trees. Of course, we didn't know too much about planting trees in those days. A lot of these fields were full of grass which was a tough kind of competition for these trees. It's hard to get them started unless you destroy the grass first. But, we didn't understand a lot of those things. Matter of fact, right off to right here, that's a 10,000 tree planting that took a 9,999 tree flop. Only one tree grown out of the first 10,000. So, then I plowed up all those fields I had a local farmer come up here and disk it all down. I planted again and they all grew. We were kind of poking and jabbing and learning during those years, last of the fifties. Of course, forestry and tree farming has progressed a long ways. We not only have learned better methods, better techniques of planting these and getting them to grow. And that's a problem too because that little seedling which is about two years old when it comes out of the nursery, most of them. When you plant them, why, they got to make it on their own. They suffer the shock of transplanting, and they suffer the shock of trying to get their roots squared around in the ground and get going. They have to suffer the summer heat. Usually, when we first used to plant, why, we figured about , by and large, the average survival at the end of the summer in those early days of tree planting was probably about between 50 and 60% per cent. Of course, the rest were all casualties. But now, why, with better planting, we don't plant them with tree hoes for some time, we auger plant altogether right now. We auger plant now. We take one of our power saws with a gear head on it about a four inch auger \times and we bore a hole and it assures a more correct plant, each time.

RR: We've been auger planting for about the last six years now.
Of course I'm speaking of the last six years. I'm speaking of 1978
on back. We

We're now getting on south hill slopes which are some of your
toughest slopes, because it gets the hottest part of the sun and the
hottest exposure to the sun. Your ground temperature is the hottest there.
We'er now getting around 80 per cent survival the first year and
maybe take a five per cent casuality the second year and maybe 11/2
per cent casualty the third years. And the rest of them generally go.
We're having much better luck these days and also we've come in to the
nursery practices where we can grow the seedlings from germination.
They do a lot better job now. They understand a lot better about
keeping their beds clean and keeping desease out of their beds, and
rotating the soil in the nursery, and fertilizing, and probably several
other things to grow a healthè er seedling. Also, we're paying more
attention now to the seed source. That is whether it's low elevation,
medium elevation, or high. What coubty in come from and maybe several
more. (40 Tape 4 Side 10

We've tree planting for the last 22 years. Our oldest plantings
are getting up around 20-21 years old. Instead of a lot of vacent
fields now of land which k would be low production land as far as
agrèculture is concerned, why, we have a nice new, young, healthy forest
coming back now. After you plant your trees and get your forest
growing and coming back, why, proper forest management figures heavily
from there on out. Your forest has to managed from now on. We can no
longer afford the luxury of sitting down and just watching our trees
just grow as thick as we plant them or too thick or crowding each
other.

RR: We have to keep them spaced out and practice all of the good attributes of forest management. This involves a lot of things which I'll touch on from time to time.

Now, we had not too much wild game and wildlife with all of these bare fields but now that we have timber coming back, why, we're realizing and seeing much more abundance of wildlife activity. The one thing that was very, which caused me great concern, was during the years when ~~insecticides~~ insecticides and chemicals first started coming in. The common thought at that time was "Gee, this is the answer to everything. But, it certainly wasn't. Because the first thing we knew we didn't have so many birds. I keep reflecting back on that book The ~~XX~~ Silent Spring, by Rachel Carson. Nobody believed it. She was called all kinds of things. But she was so right. She was very visionary. She was exactly right. I saw it happen up here. It was alarming to go by day after day and not hardly see a bird for around three or four years. Then, we started realizing what was happening. In a way it's too bad that mortal human beings have to be so much in error all the time, poking and jabbing all the time. But, that's the way it is. So, then the federal government and other people started taking a real second ~~look~~ look at the use of chemicals and insecticides. When we did that we had more coyotes back in the country. The coyotes always have been termed some kind of a villain and a dirty bird, but up here in the mountains, why, the coyote may be of some concern to the sheep men and the cattle men, but up here in the mountain the coyote is our best friend. He keeps the game and ~~herds~~ herds healthy. Keeps them in size. The hunters don't do a very good job at it. Most of them hardly know when to pull the trigger.

RR: The coyote is really quite an animal. He figures heavily in the scheme of wildlife. Now, we have birds back again in abundance. We have all kinds of birds. As a matter of fact, I know this first and warm weather week of March that Spring is just around the corner because one of these Red-headed Double Breasted Red-Thrashers just showed up on the front porch just the other day, so I know that Spring is just here (laughs)

We have deer now, which are back in the country. More now in numbers like they should be. That is, the number of deer per acre of graze. We have elk coming down now into the lower elevation. I really believe that forestry is probably one reason for it. Elk is a funny animal. He changes his habits. He's a traveler. He'll browse wherever the feed is, according to what the winter is. If it's a hard winter, why, he's clear down on the farmers. We have them come through here all the time. As a matter of fact, there's a group of elk in close to here right now. They were last seen here last week down on the Alex Scott property, now the property, who are the heirs of Scott. We have elk come by. I built a house just recently a new home recently up here on my tree farm. We have elk standing in the front yard. Coyote come by here last year. Why, we had one old mother coyote teaching her pups to hunt up and down the road. They used to take their afternoon siesta right out in front of the house. It's nice to see those things.

Deer, in the wintertime, a lot of people who don't really understand the deer, they think that he's terribly tame because he stands right up around the house and so forth and in the front yard.. his isn't the truth. This isn't the way it is. The deer is a wild animal.

RR: He's just as wild in the wintertime as he is in the winter summer-time. The deer knows that the browse is thin in the wintertime and he must conserve his strenght to make it through the winter. He's got a hard pull. So, they don't move anymore than they just have to. It's a matter of consefvation, of energy and strengh. He doesn't get any tamer at one time of the year as he does the other.

(50 Tape 4 Side 1)

Of course, in tree farming, there are other hazards besides just natural casualties. of trees. Such as in the x young plantings we not only have weather that the tree has got to suffer through the first few years in order to get his roots down in the ground and get growing. But the deer do extensive damage to young tree plantings. In the wintertime when the browse is ~~thexx~~ thin and the deer is weak, he's no different from any of the rest of us. He wants to fill up his middle three times a day just like the rest of us. So he comes along, you plant a nice young tree, it's doing fine, and the next day you come back and the thing is ate clear into the ground. The deer will come along and he'll take the gwoth buds, nip the growth buds out of the top of the tree. The rabbits come along and they nip the growth buds on the lower limbs, the lower laterals. And then the mouse, he's hungry. He comes along and he stripps the bark off the tree right around the base of it. Between all three of them mainly, why, there goes your tree. That's why we love the coyote. He comes through and he keeps things x all in balance and generally keeps things in order. That's why the coyote we count him as our friend and we ask the hunters when they come up from town in the Fall to go hunting please don t shoot any of the coyoties.

RR: He's our buddy up here. We have to have him.

Now, in our new young seedling trees that we get from the nursery when we plant them out, why, nearly all those trees are dipped in a deer repellent when we get them from the nursery. But, that repellent, it does a good job and it keeps the deer off of them for the first year of course. But, the second year the repellent, of course, is gone, its effects. That's when we have the most trouble with the deer, is the second year of planting. (52 Tape # 4 Side 10)

The deer are really murderous at times. And especially during a hard winter. Now, this last winter, which was fairly mild in the winter of 1976 we had a mild winter, a very mild winter. It was like Spring all year. We had very little deer damage. More normal amount. The toughest winters, why, then we have extensive deer damage and have lots of trouble with them. On the nursery trees that come out of the nursery, why, after the repellent wears off, of course, there still the effects of the fertilizer inside the tree system itself. It's a proven fact by tests and experimentation that the deer will browse a nursery tree that he will than a wild grown forest tree, not naturally germinated.

Used to be years ago when we had our old-growth forests, large volumes of old growth forests that old times thought we never run out of timber. But, we found out that wasn't true. We soon began to harvest and take-off all of our old-growth forests. We have very little left. The only old growth forests now that remain of any volume and size is owned by the federal government. Some minor amount is in the hands of private industry. So, now we're looking at our second-growth tree. These young trees that we're planting, these are our future forests. These are our healthiest, best trees.

RR: We watch these trees more closely now. We watch their growth by measurements with various instruments. One of which is the tree auger. Sometimes we go through our own forests and take a tree auger and bore into the tree and extract a core sample from it. About the size of a pencil. Then we can see lots of things. We can see the color of the wood and tell pretty much about what the internal health of the tree is. We can see the ring count and how fast that tree is growing. Then we have another instrument that we call a relascope that measures the height and the diameter of the tree. We set up growth plots, five acre growth plots. We try to set them so we get a comparison plots. (60 Tape 4 Side 1) in an unmanaged part of the forest. And make the measurements and then over on another part of the forests right close by which will have similar exposure, roughly that's the way it goes. In a thinned forest, in a managed forest, and in this way we can tell what exactly we're doing in the way of growth. This all helps. Now, two years ago we aerially fertilized. That's another aspect of growing a faster forest, growing faster wood fiber. We have to do this with our young trees. Now, the older trees, they were probably running several hundred years old. Their growth cycle. A tree is something like a human being. Your born and the tree is germinated. A human being grows up and he gets to be a teenager and he's growing fast in his early teens. and then along about 17 and 18 in there someplace, why, human being begins to peak out. Well, a young tree is just same way. A tree comes along for about the first ten years there is practically no growth. Then all of a sudden the growth curve starts up real steep. That tree is in its maximum growth age. And it will stay in that maximum growth age.

(Beginning of Side 2 Tape #4)

RR: Now, a tree reaches its, roughly about 10 years to 12 years old
sometime in there in reaches its maximum growth cycle. It will remain
in that maximum growth cycle. Now, I'm speaking relative to what I
call a site-class three. Which is nothing more than the ability of
the ground to grow a tree, roughly. The Site Class 3 is probably about
the average growth site area throughout the Coast Range in northwestern
Oregon here. Over towards the Coast, of course, we get into site-class
one, which is the very best and a very high site class. That will
grow the fastest timber. It's over there in the rainbelt and the fog
belt. Mainly, site 3 is the average site class. That's what we're
talking about. Second-growth tree or a young tree will begin to
taper off in its growth cycle probably at age 50 years old, something ^{time}
in there. The growth curve begins to flatten off, but it's still
gaining and still growing and probably will for probably several
hundred years old. But, there comes a place in there sometime when its
an optimum time to cut the tree. Now, there is many things that figure
into the optimum time to cut a tree. That's not only the flattening
off of only the growth cycle, which for site class 3 runs say 60 and 70
years. We plant ours on a sustained yield. On a sixty year rotation
Rotation means the final crop. Within the interrum of that, we'll
probably have one pre-commercial thinning and one or two, probably two
commercial thinnings before final rotation. The reason for those thinnings
is to keep those trees more spaced out. More reasonable spacing
so their roots are not intermingling. Which allows and lets in disease,
root rot.

RR: And in any forest you have trouble with disease. It's in the ground too. In order to eliminate and keep down and hold down disease and keep a tree at its maximum good health it requires these thinnings.

Pre-com thinning, commercial thinning which the trees are generally so small that they have no commercial value, not at this time. In commercial thinning, of course, will occur at age 25 years old and perhaps again maybe at 40-45 years old. That's to space them out more so that the crowns are spaced. We look at crown spacing and ground spacing ourselves. We look at both of them when we are thinning. So do other tree farmers. This is just all part of the scheme of good tree farming. (10 Tape 4 Side 2)

Now, after one or two commercial thinnings are formed and we are approaching the age of around 60 to 70 years old, then we're looking pretty hard at a final crop rotation. There are some other ~~xxx~~ economic aspects figure into a 60 or 70 year rotation. That's the cost of administration and ~~x~~ the cost of ~~x~~ generally carrying a forest through from year zero to final harvest. The taxes and all of the other carrying costs. ~~Se~~

Sometimes I feel and others too, feel strongly that our legislators in the state do not really have their fingers on the pulse of forestry and really understand the economics of forestry, and the economic impact of forests in Oregon in the long pull. They're looking only at the short-term tax dollar. In other words, they're tax dollar ~~orizetz~~ oriented, not forest oriented. Nor tax dollar oriented for the long pull. There's much struggle in the legislature about this. Epecially in the last five years. Since 1969, we've had a number of negative reports on timber supply and standing timber inventory.

RR: Culminating here in the state of Oregon recently with the Bueller Report, or Bullitin No. 19, called, "Timber for Oregon's Tommmorrow" This causes some serious concern. There's ~~xx~~ much struggle now between, in legislature and collecting tax dollars to finance the cost of government. (15 TAPE 4 SIDE 2)

This last year we're hearing alot now about protectionism. At first it was just a little ripple. Now, it's growing into kind of a wave. This causes me concern too. At first I had concern about the volume of exports flowing out of this country without any seeming aggregate plan as to determine what is surplus and what our needs are going to be. Now, with the wave of protectionism coming on. It's developed into a wave more than a ripple. I fear that protectionists, die-hard protectionists will close the door of export logs and I don't think we outh to do that. We have to be b very careful. This effects are national poligy. If we close the door completey to the exporting of timber, then we've locked ourselves out of a world market, perhaps. It will be hard to ~~x~~ regain that position. There certainly should be some plan, some policy, by our federal government as to what ig going to be surplus. We all know what happened in 1973 when our grain bins were oversold and Russia bought a substantial amount of grain from us. We oversold our grain bins and the price of bread went up sky-high. All you have to do is ask our housewife about that. This was nothing more than a lack of policy on the part of our federal government. I fear our timber might suffer the same. Timber is our number one economy here in the state of Oregon. Over a billion doblars a year, in this year of 1978.

RR: While agriculture is second largest economy which is probably 50 to 60 per cent of that amount, that dollar amount. I think we should be very careful with our resources. What we're doing. Timber is a 60 year crop. Sometimes it is very hard to impress people that this is not like a wheat crop or a barley crop or some agriculture crop. Timber is a 60 year crop and a 60 year cycle and we should make sure that we harvest our timber for our own needs, construction. Why, you want to build a shelf in your garage and other things like that. Our forests certainly have to be managed. We can no longer afford our forests to grow wild and unmanaged. Have a waste of timber that is falling down from disease, over-crowding. It has to be farmed in a workmanship-like manner.

(Gap in the tape until 30 Tape 4 Side 2)
Due to Battery failure in Recorder)

I think there's one thing to mention that's very significant as far as the growing of a forest is concerned. In the early thirties we had a disastrous forest fire known as the Tillamook Burn, which covered, I don't think anybody knows for sure exactly the acreage but it falls around a quarter million acres or more of prime timber that was devastated by fire. It was very hard to control because at that time we didn't have the network of roads. We didn't know about fire-fighting and we didn't have aerial suppression and lot of other things and methods. Trained fire-fighting crews, we didn't have those. So, the fire just kind of burned out of control until it started to rain and up put it out. Then come the salvage of the Tillamook Burn. Then after the salvage which ended in the early part of the fifties.

RR: Realizing that we had a lot of land which was doing nothing, which was producing nothing, adding nothing to the economy of the state and the nation. The people ~~begin~~ of Oregon decided even in Depression times to float bond issues, to rehabilitate and replant the Tillamook Burn. In about the 1973, we ~~was~~ changed the terminology of the devastated area from the Tillamook Burn. The Tillamook Burn was rededicated. It was completely planted back. We had a beautiful, young green forest coming back, all over the Tillamook Burn. It's just a sight to see to get on a high mountain and look out over all the green power coming back to the country, now. About 1973 we had a rededication of the Tillamook Burn. It was renamed by Governor Tom McCall. It was called the Tillamook Forest. So, now we have the Tillamook Forest. At this time, we're just now beginning to reap the harvest of those efforts which went on for years and years. The tree-planting crews and the trees no one can imagine unless you're right out here in the industry and saw it yourself.

(35 Tape 4 Side 2)

Now we're seeing some of the harvest off of that forest. It's added significant amounts of tax-dollars back into our economy. For instance, this year in 1978 there's been the largest amount of tax-dollars from timber back to the general funds, education, schools, highways, whatever. All the other facets of government. We've had more tax dollars come back to the counties than ever before in the history of Oregon. It's my thinking that this trend is going to continue for some time and then of course it will gradually peak out. There's one thing that's upsetting about it. While state Forests are coming back, even so, our timber supply at this time is forecast to diminish until the year 2000.

RR: This is upsetting in itself. If our legislature and our State will wake up ~~xx~~ and become more familiar and get their fingers on the pulse of forest management and what it takes and the length of time it takes to grow a forest and what has to be done, I think that the impact of short-timber inventory, it will be diminished by some significant amount. Goodness know, no one ~~is~~ really knows how much. But try and try we will.

LM: Thank¹/_{you} Mr. Raines. I~~x~~ think you've answered all of the ~~x~~ questions that I have prepared for you. Thank¹/_{you} very much.

(End of Interview circa 40 Tape 4 Side 2)