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MICHAEL BERGAZZI

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LUMBERING

An Interview Conducted By
Elizabeth Spedding Calciano

Santa Cruz
1964



Michael Bergazzi At his home May 4, 1964

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INTRODUCTION

Santa Cruz County was one of the earliest centers of the redwood lumbering industry in the country. When white men arrived here they found the virgin stands of Sequoia sempervirens stretching all the way from the south-east edge of the county to beyond its north-west boundary. The band of trees hugged the slopes of the coastal mountains and varied in width from two to twenty miles. Although the redwood trees in this county never approached the size or magnificence of those in northern California, they had the immense advantage of being relatively accessible. Hence most of the early redwood lumber was shipped from here. Between 1865 and 1920 lumber camps and sawmills were scattered along the uplands and gulches of our county. The industry provided jobs for hundreds of men and was almost the sole economic support for a number of small towns and villages.

In its early phase, the Regional History Project of the University of California, Santa Cruz, is concentrating on the growth and development of this area's major industries. Since the redwood lumbering industry was, in many ways, the cornerstone of the county's economic life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was felt to be a logical subject.

Although some lumbering is still being done in this county, most of the virgin timber available for commercial sawing was cut by 1920. Mill after mill shut down or moved elsewhere as the timber was depleted in its territory. Perhaps the man most familiar with this story is Michael Bergazzi. He began working in the sawmills as a young man of 15 in 1901, and his father had been lumbering from 1884. During his career he "finished up" (sawed the last log) at four mills: the Newell Creek Mill of the Santa Clara Valley Mill and Lumber Company in 1913, the Southern Lumber Company Mill in 1915 (he was a carriage setter there), the Aptos Mill of the Loma Prieta Lumber Company in 1921, and the Liberty Mill of the Slade Lumber Company in Sonoma County in 1922. Other mills he worked at during this period were the San Vicente Mill on the edge of Santa Cruz and the Hartman and Peery Mill in the Butano forest.

Mr. Bergazzi is also in an exceptional position to help us for, unlike most men, he has worked in almost every phase of lumbering, both in the mills and in the woods. For the major portion of his career he was a sawyer, but he also worked as a lumber faller, peeler, buckler, and donkey rigger. He started in the mill with the most menial of tasks and gradually worked up as a log dogger, carriage setter, and

finally, head sawer.

Mr. Bergazzi talked easily about the life of a lumberman, the wages, the hours, the working conditions. One is able to visualize the lumber camps of a past era, the day of the gas lantern and the Saturday night trips to town. He also talks about Santa Cruz at the turn of the century, Chinatown, the powder works, the local dances and picnics. Mr. Bergazzi also worked for the Coast Counties Gas and Electric for 28 years (1922-1950). He briefly describes a few of the old-time methods that electric linemen had to contend with. Our interviews were held in the living room of his house on Pine Street. The room was quiet and comfortable and pictures of his grandchildren were hung on the wall. His wife sat in an adjoining room to listen to the conversation and occasionally add a helpful comment. As a child she lived in the lumbering village of Loma Prieta.

The recording sessions were held on October 9 and November 13, 1963, and a follow-up conversation was held on March 19, 1964. A portion of the tape is preserved in the Regional History Project Office for those who might wish to listen to the conversation.

The manuscript was edited by the interviewer and returned to Mr. Bergazzi for his corrections and approval.

He kindly loaned us the picture of the Newell Creek Mill which is reproduced in the appendix.

This manuscript is part of a collection of interviews on the history of Santa Cruz County which have been conducted by, the Regional History Project. The Project is under the administrative supervision of Donald T. Clark, University Librarian.

Elizabeth Spedding Calciano

July 13, 1964
Regional History Project
University Library
University of California, Santa Cruz

FROM MILL TO MILL

Family Origin

Calciano: Your parents came over from Italy, didn't they?

Bergazzi Yes, they did.

Calciano: Were you born here or there?

Bergazzi: I was born here in 1886.

Calciano: What year did your parents come from Italy?

Bergazzi: My father came in '84, and my mother came in the spring
of 1885.

Calciano: They were married before they came over?

Bergazzi: Yes. He came over and then sent for her.

Calciano: How did they happen to choose Santa Cruz?

Bergazzi: Well, there were quite a few people here ahead of
them, see, that were from their part of the country,
that worked at the logging industry for Grover's --
Grover's Logging Company out Glen Haven way where I
was born. So they wrote back and told my parents there
were better opportunities here in California, which
there was. There was a lot of hard work, though, to
do, but they were willing to do it.

Calciano: How did they come?

Bergazzi: They came by boat.

Calciano: Boat to San Francisco?

Bergazzi: No, they landed in New York and then came across by rail. They had to land there at Castle Garden, at the immigration station. They had to go through a lot of rigamarole there too, to get cleared up.

Calciano: Did they know any English at all?

Bergazzi: No, not when they came here. My father could speak French because he was in France when he was a youngster. He worked there, I guess, and traveled. I can hear him yet. There was a young little Frenchman who worked for my Dad after Dad got to clearing a little land in the winter time. They cleared a little in the winter when the mill wasn't running and then set out fruit trees, see, and established an orchard little by little. So my Dad and him used to talk French to beat the band. I can hear them yet. It sounded so funny to me. I wondered what was going on.
(Laughter) French Henri was his name.

Calciano: How many children were there in your family?

Bergazzi: There were six children.

Calciano: What number were you?

Bergazzi: I was the oldest one in the family.

First Mill Job

Calciano: How old were you when you went to work?

Bergazzi: I went to work in the lumber mill at Hinckley Basin when I was fifteen.

Calciano: Had you worked elsewhere before, or was that your first job?

Bergazzi: Well, I just worked at picking apples, you know, in neighbor's orchards. When I went to work over in Hinckley Basin, I had to go right in with the tough men.

Calciano: Oh, boy! You learned a lot?

Bergazzi: I did. (Laughter) I felt kind of funny, you know, working with those men, grown men. Of course I was determined to work, too. I wanted to make good, and they helped me a little in my work and all. They were good men, all of them.

Calciano: What was your first job?

Bergazzi: Well, I was taking the edgings from the lumber behind the gang edger as the boards came through. That was after they come from the big saw, you know. They laid over on the roller, and then they were run through the edger. That's the machine where they can shift the saws and cut the different widths of boards, you know,

when the boards went through. So the edgings, the rough edges of the boards, were thrown out on one side of the edger, and I took care of them. I piled them up and put them on the line rollers. Then they went down to the slab sawyer. He cut them up in four foot lengths and loaded them on the slab wagons.

Calciano: For firewood?

Bergazzi: Yes, they hauled them down to the old paper mill. It was at Soquel. In the early days we all went down there for firewood.

Calciano: This was the Loma Prieta Company?

Bergazzi: The Loma Prieta Lumber Company. You folks live in Aptos? Well have you ever been up the Aptos Creek?

Calciano: Yes, I saw the ruins of that mill.

Bergazzi: Well, I sawed the last log in that mill July, 1921, and my wife went to school up there when she was about six years old.

Calciano: Oh really?

Bergazzi: Yes, the old mill, though. The one before...

Calciano: Oh, the one that was there before the one that's in ruins now.

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: They had a village there the first time they logged up

behind Aptos, didn't they? ...the Loma Prieta Company

Bergazzi: Oh yes, they did. Yes, several families lived there.

There was a village all up above the mill, up north of it, too. That's where the store, and the church, and the tavern were, and I think they had a bank up there. Well, the store carried groceries, and dry goods too, I think. I'm pretty sure they did. I know Mr. Kent was the storekeeper then.

Calciano: What did Mr. Kent do when the village stopped?

Bergazzi: Oh, he just left; everybody left. They had to go because there was nothing more to do. That was quite a place in its day.

Calciano: Was your wife one of the children of ...

Bergazzi: She was a youngster there because her father worked there at the mill.

Calciano: Oh, what was he?

Bergazzi: He was a donkey engineer. He ran one of the steam donkeys.

Calciano: Now when the Loma Prieta Company was logging there in '18, '19, '20, and so on, did they have a village up there, or not?

Bergazzi: No. I think about two families was all. You see the old place finished in 1898, the old mill. I was a boy

then; my father was working over there.

Calciano: Oh, he did lumber work too?

Bergazzi: Grover's had finished, see, on Glen Haven Way. The timber was gone, so he just went, over the hill, over at Loma Prieta. He went to work there.

Calciano: Your father did lumbering, then, as his main job for a while?

Bergazzi: Yes, until 1902.

Calciano: And then he started farming?

Bergazzi: Yes, he retired, stayed at home in the orchard, the place there. From 1884 to 1902 he worked at lumbering -that's all there was to do,

Calciano: There was a man that was very important in Santa Cruz lumbering, Mr. Frederick Hihn. Did you ever know him?

Bergazzi: Oh, I didn't know the old gentleman, but I knew of him. As a boy I used to hear about him.

Calciano: He had a lumber company up there too.

Bergazzi: Yes, Hihn's first lumbering was in the Valencia area over above Aptos, and then later up here at Gold Gulch, up this side of Felton, and then at Laurel.

Calciano: Oh, at Laurel Creek?

Bergazzi: That was the last milling he done.

Calciano: Did you ever work for that company?

Bergazzi: Never worked for that company. No, I was busy with the others.

Living at the Mills

Calciano: When you worked for the various lumber companies, did you live in cabins right there, or did you live in Santa Cruz and drive out every day?

Bergazzi: We lived right at the mills. The only place where I was living at home was when I worked for the San Vicente Lumber Mill, out here on the edge of town. It was on Moore's Gulch, right across from the Wrigley gum plant. Do you know where Antonelli's Begonia Gardens are there? Well, it was all lumber yard and mill. The log pond is still down in the hollow; they use it for fishing now.

Calciano: Oh really?

Bergazzi: I went back and forth from here from 1915 until June the first in 1916 when I quit there. I went to work at the powder works for nineteen months, up at Pinole, California, during World War I. I got so I was leery of the powder and I left there. (Laughter)

Calciano: Well now, when you worked up behind Aptos during 1920 and '21, did you live there?

Bergazzi: We stayed up there; they had a cookhouse and had cabins. We lived there all week, and then we would come in on Saturday nights. We used to have a little hand car on the railroad track and would come down on that. You could seat quite a few on one of those little hand cars. One Saturday night, when we were coming pretty fast down about a mile and a half this side of the mill, the thing jumped the track and just spilled us all over.

Calciano: Oh my!

Bergazzi: I got skinned up, that is my hand did. I don't know how I happened to hit on the back of my hand, but I didn't get hurt any, only just that there wasn't an inch of hide left on the back of my hands. So I come in and went to the drugstore over here and got patched up, There was a Mr. Ed West there; he was a logging camp foreman out there and the father of Harvey West that gave the stuff to Santa Cruz here -- the Harvey West Stadium. He got his ankle broke.

Calciano: So that is how you *used* to come in then, on little hand cars?

Bergazzi: That is the way we used to come down to Aptos. From there we took the train to Santa Cruz.

Calciano: Was the little railroad that went up to the mill

standard or narrow gauge?

Bergazzi: Standard.

Calciano: It used to be narrow before, didn't it?

Bergazzi: Well, that might have been, right in the early stages when it first went in there, but it was a standard gauge at the last. When the first railroad went into Newell Creek, that was 1904, they built it where the dam is -- the city pond, Lake Loch Lomond they call it now. Well that was narrow gauge, and then in 1906 they broad gauged it.

Calciano: Just three years later?

Bergazzi: Yes, they went to broad gauge. I sawed the last log in that canyon too, in 1913.

The Loma Prieta Lumber Company

Calciano: Why don't you tell me just what lumber companies you worked for, and what years, and then we will go back and fill in the detail.

Bergazzi: The first one was the Loma Prieta Lumber Company. I went to work there around September 1, 1901. I left there in July, 1904. That's when we went on strike there, you know, for a little more money. First we struck in 1902 for an hour noon, and we got that. Then there were four or five of us who were getting \$2.00 a day and we figured we ought to get two bits a day

more. We held a little conference, four or five of us, and decided to go and ask for it, So we went down one day and asked Mr. Walker. He was mill foreman. He was a good old Scotchman, too. (Laughter) A good old fellow. He wasn't so old, either. He said, "Well, I'll have to wait and see Mr. Bassett who is the Superintendent." (He was up in the City.) We gave him a few days then, and Bassett said, "Well, it can't be done. We can't do it." We had our minds made up that we were going to leave if we didn't get it, which we did!

Calciano: Oh!

Bergazzi: That was their payment.

The Newell Creek Mill

Bergazzi: That was in July, 1904, and in the spring of '05, in February, I knew they were building this new mill up here on Newell Creek. One of my neighbors had worked above Boulder Creek, in the lumber mill up there, and he said, "Why don't you come up to Boulder Creek and see if you can get a job up there? They are building a new mill on Newell Creek. They have got quite a tract of timber in there." (Which they did have for those days.) I said, "Who do you see up there?" "You see Mr.

Ed Langley." (He was going to be mill boss up there.) I said, "Where is he?" "Well, go into Middleton's office." (That was in the north end of Boulder Creek on the right.) And sure enough, I went up and Mr. Langley was there. He had a dark mustache and was a nice looking man, very pleasant. I walked up to the counter, and he stepped over and said, "Well, what can I do for you?" "Well", I says, "are you Mr. Langley?" He said, "Yes, sir." I said, "I understand you are building a new mill over on Newell Creek, and you are going to have charge of it there." He says, "That's right." "Well," I said, "I would like to get a job there." He says, "Have you worked at a mill before?" I said, "Oh yes, I worked in the Hinckley Basin for the Loma Prieta Lumber Company." He said, "What did you do there?" and I told him. I said that I would like to get in the upper end of the mill. (That's in the business end where the big saws are, see, where they load the logs.)

Calciano: The whole time you had been at Loma Prieta you had been carrying the edging stuff?

Bergazzi: Yes, working in those edgings. So he said, "You're just the man we want here. You're a young man. I will put you on the carriages as a log dogger." (That's

where they hooked those logs in those steel dogs, you know, to hold them against the carriage standard so they wouldn't roll when they were sawed.)

Calciano: What is a dog?

Bergazzi: Dogs, they called them. That is a steel hook to hook the logs to the standards with.

Calciano: Two of them, three or four?

Bergazzi: One on each end of the carriage.

Calciano: I see.

Bergazzi: Well, I worked there until 1913.

Calciano: Were you dogging all the time?

Bergazzi: No. I went from a dogger to a carriage setter. He is the man who set the thickness of the boards out for the sawyer when the sawyer signaled him what he wanted. Then in 1911 the sawyer there got sick, or something happened to him, and I finished up. I sawed there the last week the mill run. Then in 1913 he got his shoulder broke there, somehow, in an accident, and then I finished up. I sawed there the last month the mill run.

Calciano: There were about seven months between your job at Loma Prieta and your work for Newell Creek, What did you do

in between?

Bergazzi: I was at home picking apples and working around the place.

The Southern Lumber Company and the San Vicente

Bergazzi: Then from Newell Creek I went to the Southern Lumber Company above Boulder Creek. I went there in March of 1914. The timber was practically gone there, too.

Calciano: Oh, the Newell Creek timber had run out?

Bergazzi: We'd finished it. 1913 -- that was the end of it.

Well, we put in nine summers there. Then the Southern Lumber Company ran out in 1915; the spring of '15 we finished there. Then, let's see, from there ...

Calciano: Were you a sawyer at the Southern Lumber Company?

Bergazzi: No, there was a fellow got the job ahead of me.

Calciano: What did you do?

Bergazzi: I was a carriage setter there. You had to take whatever you could get, next best.

Calciano: Was sawyer the best job of all?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, the best paying job. It was the best job, too.

Calciano: What would be next, the edger?

Bergazzi: Well the next job was the engineer, I guess. Well, the

edgerman too, but it was harder work there. He had more work.

Calciano: Was the trimmer also pretty well paid?

Bergazzi: Yes, he was fairly well paid. Of course the sawyer got the best pay then, by far the best. Then in 1915 we moved back to town here, and I went to work here at the San Vicente Lumber Mill.

Calciano: Were they logging around there too, or was the mill bringing its logs in from elsewhere?

Bergazzi: You mean the San Vicente? They were logging way up the coast on the old San Vicente Grant. Yes, it was up near Swanton, up in those hills there. It was in that Big Creek country.

Calciano: Well how did they bring the logs all the way down?

Bergazzi: They had an old shay engine, and they had a railroad, see, up in the woods. They logged them out with big donkeys, steam donkeys. They pulled the logs over to the landing and then loaded them onto cars. They built railroads right up to the woods. Then this shay engine, it had side engines that worked up and down, you know

Calciano: Oh, that's a small kind of railroad engine, isn't it?

Bergazzi: Yes, they called them shay engines. The engine worked

up and down on one side and was geared so it turned the wheels. They hauled the carloads of logs down to the mill pond over here and dumped them off into the pond. I left there in 1916 and went to the powder works.

The Powder Works

Calciano: You left because of the war?

Bergazzi: Yes. I worked up there about nineteen months. I went to work up there June the first, 1916, and left there in February, 1918.

Calciano: Where was that?

Bergazzi: Pinole, California. The Hercules Powder Works. That's north of Richmond.

Calciano: I see.

Bergazzi: Well, from there I went to Pescadero. There was a lumber mill up the coast here. That didn't pan out too well there for the man that was operating the mill. Lets see, I went there in February, 1918, and ended up there the first of April, 1919.

The Loma Prieta Again

Calciano: Why didn't you go back to San Vicente?

Bergazzi: Well, another job come up. This one out on the Aptos Creek. The Loma Prieta Company built that mill there because they bought a new tract of timber from the Hihn Company, up on what they call Bridge Creek. That's a tributary of the Aptos, right north of where the mill is.

Calciano: Oh, yes.

Bergazzi: There was, quite a canyon, and then the lumber business picked up during the war so they rebuilt. They put that mill in there, bought the timber from Hihn, and went to lumbering it.

Calciano: They put the new mill on the same site where the old mill had been?

Bergazzi: Right on the same site. You know we used the old original log pond that was built in the eighties and it was still there, made out of cribbed up logs.

Calciano: It is all gone now, isn't it?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. There was a fellow later on that used one saw, a bottom saw, in the mill there. He used the same mill frame and pulled the logs with an old donkey engine that he rigged up. He pulled those logs out of the old dam and sawed them up into mill ends. That was the end of Loma Prieta. That was in '21 that I finished. It was Ed West who told them to send for me to do the

sawing there. He was logging camp boss. He is gone now. That was Harvey's father. He and my father worked in Porter Gulch together then, and my wife's father did too, in the eighties when they were sawing out by Cabrillo College there. They logged the gully just this side of the college. It goes up north there.

Calciano: Was there lumber where Cabrillo stands right now, or was that always sort of meadow?

Bergazzi: That was always meadow -- just a field all the time. That's where Grover's Mill first let out. Then they went over Glen Haven way.

Calciano: Did you go to Sonoma from the Loma Prieta?

Bergazzi: In 1921 I went to Sonoma. The timber was gone there, too, by 1922. Then when I come home I went and finished the rest of that season, after the Fourth of July, for Hartmen and Peery over here in the Butano Forest. Then that fall, after they got done there, I went to work for Coast Counties Gas and Electric.

Coast Counties Gas and Electric

Calciano: Why did you decide to work for the Gas and Electric rather than moving up to the Humboldt and Mendocino County area?

Bergazzi: Well, this was a steady job, and the youngsters were small. And it was a mess to move then. It would get to be quite an undertaking. The job here was steady, and the climate was pretty good here, so I worked 28 years for them, until 1950.

Calciano: You were telling me yesterday about putting lines up on the poles.

Bergazzi: Yes, we did everything. We built transmission lines, the heavy ones, up in the hills and the mountains. And through town we put the distribution lines, and all the poles they had in town, transformers, wires. We set meters, we run the wires to the houses, surface drops, all that kind of stuff. For 28 years. August 31, 1950, well, I jumped off the truck up here that morning and that was it.

Calciano: That was it! (Laughter) You said the sound of a saw was music to your ears.

Bergazzi: It was.

Calciano: You really have lumbering in your blood. What was the thing you liked best about the saw mill?

Bergazzi: I don't know ... I was raised up in the hills and the first mill that I saw running was when I was only five years old. 1891. French Henri took me down. He was off that day. He came in and said, "I'll take you down to

the mill." I'll never forget that day; it is just like it happened yesterday. I got fascinated there with it and then, of course, I went to work in the lumber mill at Hinckley Basin. I don't know, it was just born in me, see? I love to saw lumber; it's interesting -- an interesting craft.

IN THE WOODS

The Falling

Calciano: Could you describe the job to job process involved in getting a log sawed? After the land is bought with the logs on it, does a crew go out to see what logs should be cut or ...

Bergazzi: What they did in those days ... well, now they do what they call selective logging. They have to leave so many trees. In other words, they don't destroy the forest. They are supposed to leave some for seed and to be careful not to bust the little ones that are growing up. But back then they just went out and felled the timber.

Calciano: Did they fell all the timber?

Bergazzi: They used to fell all that was any good and that was worthwhile. They cleaned the country, then.

Calciano: Did they leave the broken trees, or the little ones

that were too small?

Bergazzi: Probably, if they were small, if they weren't big enough. Some leaned too bad. Others they left where they had fallen.

Calciano: I understand that you have to be pretty careful when you fell a redwood tree.

Bergazzi: You do! They made it a point to fell them all uphill.

Calciano: Uphill?

Bergazzi: If they leaned back too far, so they couldn't fell them uphill, they'd rather leave them stand. They wouldn't fell them downhill because they lost the time spent in felling them, and they lost the tree because it would bust all to pieces. It fell, a long ways downhill. Uphill it was a short fall, and if there was a hollow or something they'd always bed it up. They'd fell a small tree across and kind of level it from the stump. That way the tree wouldn't go down and break when it hit the ground.

Calciano: If a tree splintered, could they save any part of it?

Bergazzi: I saw trees come to the mill sometimes -- the ends of the logs looked solid, but when you sawed into them, the board crumpled and split. Redwood, you know, is straight grain, and it would just fall into a heap of strips. Not too often, but once in a while it did.

Calciano: How many men worked on the falling crew.

Bergazzi: Two men. There was the head faller and the other faller, helper.

Calciano: They just picked whatever tree they wanted?

Bergazzi: Yes, they had certain sectors, and they just went right down the line.

Calciano: Was this felling done in the winter?

Bergazzi: They did most of the felling in the winter.

Calciano: Did they work on rainy days, too?

Bergazzi: No, they never worked in the rain, unless it was just a light rain that didn't bother too much.

Calciano: How many trees could a crew fell in one day?

Bergazzi: It all depended on the size of them and how much wedging you had to do to fell them uphill, because if they were leaning back a little ways you know those steel wedges, about that long? They were an inch thick on the heavy end and tapered down to a thin edge. Well, after they sawed in a little ways with a saw, the tree would start tipping back. They'd slap those wedges in the saw cut, and they'd both drive them in with ten-pound sledge hammers. They had tremendous lifting power -- and it was tremendous work, too, swinging those sledges.

Calciano: I'll bet it would be. If they wanted the tree to fall

north, would they start cutting on the south side?

Bergazzi: They sawed in the front, on the north side. Then they would chip it out with axes, two men, one right and one left, and cut the undercut out.

Calciano: They made a big wedge there?

Bergazzi: They made a big undercutting, chipped it off.

Calciano: About how many inches in, or how wide?

Bergazzi: Well, it all depended on the size of the tree. They would saw in far enough so they would get a pretty good face on it, so it would hold, the tree in line. The wood you left, you know, kept the tree from going sideways when it fell.

Calciano: Would they saw half way through?

Bergazzi: Well, the only time they went in deep on the tree was if it was a heavy leaner. Then they would saw in that far so they could pull it around quite a ways, if they wanted to. They might have a chance to save it. They would leave a lot more wood on one side, the side they wanted to pull on, than they would on the other. When that tree fell it would naturally, with thick wood on one side, pull that way quite a few feet, and you could save some of them that way.

Calciano: Then they made the cut on the other side? The final

cut?

Bergazzi: They sawed on the back, yes.

Calciano: And they put wedges in there to push the tree along?

Bergazzi: That's right; they drove them in.

Calciano: Now was this second cut above ...

Bergazzi: Just above where the undercut was.

Calciano: The end of the log was always jagged when you got
done?

Bergazzi: Yes.

The Redwoods: Size and Quality

Calciano: How tall were most of the redwoods you worked with? I
know they are smaller than the ones up north.

Bergazzi: Oh, I would say that in this country, here in Santa
Cruz, there have been some trees that were close to
300 feet high. Not too many, though, not in this part
of the country. If you go in the northern country,
there are a lot of them.

Calciano: How tall were most of the ones that came into your
mill? How tall were they to start with?

Bergazzi: Well, to start with, I'd say they would run all the
way from a hundred feet to a hundred and fifty feet in
height. Once in a while you would get one a little

higher.

Calciano: How many feet at the top weren't used?

Bergazzi: Well, after they got down to a certain size, down to about fourteen or fifteen inches, from there on they didn't use the top. It wasn't much good at all. All full of limbs and knots. It just wouldn't be good for anything much.

Calciano: Well, would that be about a quarter of the length of the tree?

Bergazzi: No, it would be less than that.

Calciano: So they got most of the wood out of a tree?

Bergazzi: Oh, they got most of it.

Calciano: What would be about the smallest base size tree they would cut?

Bergazzi: Well, they didn't fell anything much under two feet at the base. That was about the smallest they would take. And very few of that size. Most of them ran a bit bigger than that. A two-foot tree was just considered a sapling, which they were, that is in the redwood.

Calciano: Did the wood quality vary much from valley to valley?

Bergazzi: Well, not too much. There were certain patches of it that were a little older, perhaps, than the other, a little overripe. You know when your trees get so old

they start to deteriorate. Some of the wood went black and, well, that was number three lumber. It was still pretty solid, but it was just dark from old age, from being overripe. They could use it for building sheds, or something straight up and down, or old barns, stuff like that.

Calciano: You mentioned that the wood in the Glen Haven area was awfully good and soft.

Bergazzi: Yes. That was nice timber.

Calciano: Was that about the best?

Bergazzi: I would say that it was, for a small tract of timber, because it is only a short canyon, not too long, a small stream. But there were a lot of trees in there for this part of the country, this far south in the redwood belt. Why that was one of the best. Nice soft timber as I remember. One of the men I was raised with, I was just a boy and he was a grown man (he's been gone for years), was our neighbor up there, and he worked in Grover's last mill up Glen Haven Way that closed down. By the way, that was the first mill I saw in operation. You know, there was one gulch that went off to the right above the mill. They had a name for it, but I can't remember what they called it. The main

creek went a little to the left, and he told me one time that in the gulch to the right, the timber ran fifty percent clear, and that is terrific for this part of California.

Calciano: What exactly do you mean by fifty percent clear?

Bergazzi: That is the boards were absolutely clear, half of it. The lumber was clear without knots or anything else. That's a board without any flaws, just the pure red wood. It's hard to believe, but he told me, and I know he wasn't lying because he was lumber clerk there at the counter at the mill. He was a young man then.

Calciano: So he knew what he was talking about?

Bergazzi: Yes, he did. My father worked in the mill too.

Calciano: How much was clear in the average patch of lumber?

Bergazzi: Oh, in this part of the country, I never paid much attention to it, but real clear I don't think would go over perhaps ten percent.

The Hazards

Calciano: Did the logging crew have a dangerous job? Did a tree ever fall backwards?

Bergazzi: All that was hazardous. Felling the trees was dangerous, you know, up on those side hills. Sometimes they would fell one of the trees against another standing tree and bend it over. The limbs would catch it a little, or something, and pull it over. When it would come back, the brittle limbs would snap off, maybe, and come back where you were. You had to watch all that stuff; look out for that.

Calciano: Did they wear helmets or anything?

Bergazzi: No. Just the old fuzzy hats.

Calciano: Fuzzy hats?

Bergazzi: Well, felt hats, you know. There were no helmets like they have now. They wouldn't do you much good anyway, *if* you got hit with one of those limbs. They helped in small stuff. They were wonderful things. Another thing they looked out for, when they were falling timber, was dead limbs up in the trees. When the limb was just barely hanging there and they were driving those wedges, the jar of that wedge would sometimes cause one of the dead, dry ones to break off. It would come

down on you without any sound.

Calciano: Really! Would they hear them and jump back, or did a lot of men just get hit?

Bergazzi: No. They'd always look first and figure all those things. You could figure out what could happen, what might happen. You were always looking for it. You watched for loose limbs, too. Sometimes a windstorm would break a limb crossways, and some of them might be out there where they might slide off when you were wedging that tree. Every jolt with those hammers would give them a little jolt up there, see. You might slip that over there where it might eventually come down on you, but you watched for all that. You looked up there and walked around and looked those things over carefully.

Bears

Calciano: Were there a lot of animals in the woods?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, there were then; it was primitive.

Calciano: Were there any bears or grizzlies?

Bergazzi: The last bear here was killed by Oren Blodgett. He is gone now. His son Carlyle, that used to be in the Land and Title Company there on Cooper Street, passed away here just about five years ago, I guess. He killed the

last one. I think it was in the eighties, up on the old Blodgett ranch, up on Empire Grade.

Calciano: The fallers didn't have to worry much about animals?

Bergazzi: Oh no, they never bothered. A bear, you know, isn't bad unless it is a grizzly. These common black bears are scared to death of a person, unless you find a female that has young ones. Then look out. There were mountain lions in there too, a lot of bobcats, coon, coyotes, everything. There are still plenty of them, not the mountain lions, though.

Calciano: My father once told me a story about how to tell a black bear from a grizzly. You go up to the bear and give it a good kick. If it is a black bear, it goes up the tree, and if it is a grizzly, you go up the tree.
(Laughter)

Bergazzi: Well, I knew a fellow that hunted grizzlies up north, in fact he killed one up there a few years ago, Mr. Harris, here in town. You know Harris, of Harris Brothers Clothes? He is a big game hunter. He said, "You know the grizzly is the most even tempered animal on earth. He is mad all the time." (Laughter) That's about right, too.

Calciano: Yes, they are treacherous.

Bergazzi: Well, you know in 1875 Mr. Waddell, did you ever hear of him? He was a mill man, too. He had a mill on Waddell Creek there, on the Hoover Ranch. What they call Hoover Ranch now. Theodore Hoover passed away a few years ago. Mrs. Hulda McLean is his daughter. She was a supervisor. I think she still has the place, although she lives here in town. I worked with a man by the name of George Bowes; he was a lumber sawyer. In 1910 he was at Half Moon Bay when I went to work in a mill there for a while. That is where I met George. He was telling me about the deal there, when Waddell was killed. He was a young man working for Waddell then, in '75, when Waddell was killed. Mr. Waddell had bull teams of ten oxen. The drivers used to turn them loose on the weekends, and let them just forage around, you know. Then Sunday the bull drivers generally would go out and round them up and bring them back in.

Calciano: Those were oxen, weren't they?

Bergazzi: Yes, oxen. Mr. Waddell said this Sunday, "I think I'll go out and gather up the oxen." He had a rifle with him, one of the little low-powered Winchesters they had in those days. They knew the bear was in that area

because the tracks were there, and he was a grizzly, too. They told him, "If I were you I'd leave that gun home. Don't take that with you, because if you do run on to him and shoot him you will wound him, and then you're going to be in trouble." "Well," he said, "maybe my little dog" (he had a terrier dog) "might keep him away long enough so I can put several bullets into him." But that didn't happen. I believe he shot the bear and just stunned him a little bit, hit him somewhere where it didn't hurt him much. It was a low velocity rifle. The bear went over and grabbed him; it was right in the skid road which was along the creek bottom. The dog got scared and ran over behind his heels instead of nipping the bear's heels to distract him, so the bear grabbed Mr. Waddell by the hip, crushed his hip, and left him for dead. He tumbled down in the creek bottom there and the bear went on, I guess. When he didn't come in that evening, the fellows went out looking for him and found him there. He was still alive, but he died from blood poisoning in a day or two. Infection they call it now, but it was blood poisoning then. There was a fellow named George Bowes, I think he was a carriage setter then, for he wasn't sawing for Waddell. All they had was a

cow trail between here and Waddell Creek then, that was in 1875, eighty-eight years ago. So George went down when Mr. Waddell passed away and brought the measurements down for his casket.

Calciano: My, but it was rough living then.

Peeling

Calciano: To return to lumbering, what happened after the logs had been felled?

Bergazzi: Well, next the peelers came along. The redwoods, you know, have that heavy bark, and you can't saw it. You can't saw redwood bark and make lumber because it is like sawing cloth, fuzz. That bark gets chewed up and lodged between the saw and the wood on the side of the log. It would heat the saw, and when the saw would get warm, hot, well it would just go like a snake through the log. It tore up the lumber, so they peeled them.

Calciano: Did they peel them the next day, or did they wait quite a while?

Bergazzi: The peelers worked right along behind the fallers.

Calciano: How did they peel them?

Bergazzi: With bars.

Calciano: Crow bars?

Bergazzi: Five-foot bars with a bit in the bottom. In the winter time that bark sets awfully tight on the trees. If it was a good sized log, the bark could be inches thick, you know.

Calciano: How did the peelers work?

Bergazzi: They had a steel bar, five or five and a half feet long. They were hexagon steel and were, I would say, maybe an inch or an inch and an eighth in diameter. Then they put a good flat metal bit on it and made it pretty sharp. The bit came down to a feather edge to give it just a little bit of a hook, and the two peelers ... there were two peelers and two fellers in the winter, because one man couldn't ever begin to keep up, since the bark was so tight. They would ring it with an ax, cut a ring around it, maybe a few feet, whatever they decided according to the thickness of the bark and how tough it was stuck. They would start with their bars. First one fellow would get under it and they just kept working along. When they got the top over, they could work the sides down pretty good.

Calciano: How did they get the bark off the side on which it rested?

Bergazzi: Well, they couldn't do a thing about that. They peeled

it down as far as they could on the sides. After they got it down to the mill, they usually peeled the bottom bark off. Some places they peeled it on the landings, when they pulled the logs in, before they loaded them on the car. They peeled it there and burned it back away from there. That's the way they got rid of that.

Calciano: How thick was the bark of a good sized tree?

Bergazzi: Well I have seen it six inches thick, that is down towards the base. That is where it is the heaviest, right on the base of the tree. From there on up it thins out as it gets further up. I guess there have been cases of where it has been seven or eight inches thick on real big trees.

Calciano: Was it pliable, or was it real hard stuff to get off?

Bergazzi: It is not very pliable; it was real solid in those strips there. It was a funny color. There was a lining where it laid right against the tree, just a thin line -- that was the sap, where the sap went up through there. The rest of the bark was dry brown. I do know that now they chew up the redwood bark, up north in the bigger mills, and bale it. They use it for insulation in walls.

Calciano: Oh?

Bergazzi: Yes, they do, and they have been doing it for the last number of years. It's wonderful insulation. Redwood lasts forever, never rots, never deteriorates, no termites would ever go in it. Just marvelous.

Calciano: The peelers had to be pretty strong men, I guess, to get that bark off.

Bergazzi: You had to be a man to do that. Of course they peeled it with the bars, like I said before. Five-foot bars, and the bit was widened out by the blacksmith you know, with just a little hook in it. It was tapered down pretty sharp, too. They socked that down there; there were seams in the bark, you know, where the ridges come together, and they started in there. The first peeler took that bar and drove that bit in underneath and lifted a little bit, what he could, and then the other fellow, he got ahold under it too, and they worked down the line. One of them would hold the bark up a little while the other one got his bar under it a little ways back. That way they got to working it off. When they got it started down the sides, then it got easier.

Calciano: Did it come off in one piece, or did it splinter?

Bergazzi: Well, it stayed in one piece pretty well. Once in a

while there'd be a piece break off where those seams were, when it flopped over, but it most always stayed in wide strips.

The Burn-Off

Calciano: How many falling crews did a mill usually have during the winter?

Bergazzi: Well, it all depended. They fell in the summer sometimes, but they'd generally have only one crew then, because they felled enough timber during the winter, put on enough crews, to fell practically enough to last all summer. All summer's sawing. That's the way they figured. Once in a while some of them would have a crew falling during the summer.

Calciano: How many crews would they have in the winter?

Bergazzi: It all depended on the size of the mill. They'd have three, four crews.

Calciano: That consisted of the fallers, the buckers and the peelers?

Bergazzi: The peelers, yes. They didn't do much of the bucking until after they got the timber all down and burned, because they couldn't get in there with their tools. It was just a jumble of brush, broken down stuff, you know, and the bark peeled from some of the trees, and

the limbs off the trees, and the stuff they knocked down from other trees. They burned it all, and then the backers went in and cut the logs in lengths for the mill.

Calciano: When did they do the burning?

Bergazzi: It was in the spring that they set it afire, burned all those hills, burned all that bark, the brush and limbs, everything there.

Calciano: That would kill the little ones too, wouldn't it?

Bergazzi: Well, it kinds scorched some of the little stuff. They burned so the loggers could get in there; otherwise they never could have worked in that jungle and mess. It was maybe five and six feet deep with broken limbs and small trees knocked down around there.

Calciano: When they burned off the timber, did the fires ever get out of control?

Bergazzi: They did once in a while. They'd get away now and then.

Calciano: How did they stop them then?

Bergazzi: Well, I don't know. They did in the early days. Now they've got everything on earth to fight fires with. In those days they had nothing but brawn. Those fellows went out and fought those fires, and somehow or other they got them stopped. I don't know how they

did it. I fought a little of it myself.

Calciano: You mean you fought some of the fires?

Bergazzi: A little bit, yes.

Calciano: About how many fires got away in the twenty some years that you were doing lumbering?

Bergazzi: I don't think there was three or four in that time that got away from burning, logging burning. Some started from other causes. Somebody might have broken a bottle up in the hills, you know, and a certain type of glass with that sun shining through and hitting it just right will start a fire. I know it would, because when we were kids we tried it one time. I still believe a lot of these forest fires are started by glass. Lightning too, of course, is responsible.

Calciano: Were the peelers the ones who cut the limbs off too?

Bergazzi: Yes, they limbed the trees, too. Most of the limbs on the redwood, though, broke when the tree hit. The jolt would snap them. They were brittle.

Calciano: The limbs on redwood trees never get too big, do they?

Bergazzi: Once in a while they would have big limbs and you had to chop them.

Calciano: You could never make a board out of them though?

Bergazzi: Not a limb, no. They were just like flint, like glass,
hard, brittle.

Calciano: Could they have used them for firewood?

Bergazzi: They would make dandy firewood, but they were too far
out in the woods; no one could go out to get them.
They would have made wonderful wood. Well, they had
plenty of wood anyway, closer in.

Bucking

Bergazzi: The loggers who went out after the peelers -- they
called them crosscutters or log backers -- they cut
the logs in whatever lengths were wanted. They cut
them in 14, 16, 18, 20 or 24 foot lengths in those
days. Now they cut them long and then cut them in the
dry kiln in the mill.

Calciano: How did they decide how long to cut them? Did they
just look at the tree ...

Bergazzi: Well, they just figured whatever was the most popular
length of lumber that was selling and sawed most of
the logs in that length.

Calciano: I see.

Bergazzi: The standard log length was about 16 feet. That was
the most popular one. Also 18's, 20's and sometimes
24's. They used to saw a lot of telephone poles in the

early days too, and they made them 24 feet long. They were tapered too; they made a nine by nine inch butt on them and a six by six top. It looked funny. You wondered how they done it, but they done it, and they were perfectly tapered.

Ox Teams

Calciano: In order to get the logs down to the mill, I understand they used to use oxen and then later on they used little railroads, donkey railroads. Did they use oxen and skid roads when you were working?

Bergazzi: Yes. I saw the last of the oxtteams. In 19 I can't remember if it was 1901 or '02. It might have been in 1902. They had an oxtteam in Hinckley Basin. That was the last one, I think, in this county -- that is in the logging department. The last logging done with an oxtteam -- it was where the road went up a hill in Hinckley Canyon. They used to grease those skids, you know, with blackjack grease.

Calciano: A skid road was a row of logs laid down?

Bergazzi: Yes, the skids were put three feet apart, and the skids were five feet wide. A man with an ax which looked like a mattock with a sharp blade hewed a hollow in them, you know, so they'd be slippery. Then the skid greaser went along and swabbed that. Then on

a grade they wouldn't put grease; they put dirt to hold the log back, to keep it from running downhill. Once, somehow or other, this load got away from them and run down the oxteam and killed three of them, I think, and crippled up two or three more. In fact, it crippled the team up and they had to shut down for two or three days. They got some more oxen from the valley, and I went up in the woods that day and watched them logging up there.

Calciano: The oxen that were used for skid roads, did they have shoes on them like horses?

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. I'm sorry I haven't got one of those shoes. I should have one, but we never thought in those days that ... well, whoever thought that these things were coming up? I'm sorry I haven't got one to show you. They were only half a shoe; they weren't complete. Well, you've seen horseshoes, haven't you?

Calciano: Yes, I've seen horseshoes. (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Well, the oxshoe had just part of an iron rim, like a horseshoe has, and then they had a little blade that came out. In other words, it looked about like a kind of round sided little cleaver.

Calciano: Was it as big as a horseshoe, or were their feet a little smaller?

Bergazzi: Well, no. Smaller. It was just a little smaller. The horse has little wider hoofs, you know, than the ox.

Calciano: Did they have a blacksmith who worked all the time up there?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. They had a blacksmith that worked year around.

Calciano: Oh, year around! What else did he do?

Bergazzi: The blacksmith? Oh, he just did blacksmithing. They kept him busy. They were always breaking something up in the woods.

Calciano: So he did things besides horse and ox shoes?

Bergazzi: Well, there was no horseshoing to be done while I was in the mills myself, because the teamsters generally had their blacksmith work done down in town, like in Soquel, or in Aptos.

Calciano: So what did the blacksmith do, then?

Bergazzi: Well, he fixed bolts in the machinery that would break, and one thing and another. Everything was made by hand, anyway. You didn't buy all these bolts.

Calciano: Did he work a lot with the millwright and engineer, then?

Bergazzi: Well, he would help in the mill, if they required his services. If there was something there that he could do, he would go over to give a hand.

Calciano: But he worked more with the logging crews, then?

Bergazzi: Well, there was more he had to do with the logging camps, because they had more breakage. In other words, it was a little rougher deal on the equipment there, than the mill.

Donkey Engines

Bergazzi: Then the next year, in 1902, that's when they got the first, I think it was one of the first, steam donkeys in this county, in the Hinckley Basin.

Calciano: Did they still use skid roads, even with the donkeys?

Bergazzi: Well they built ... yes, they did. They had a cable run along and around the curb. They put a steel spool in that was hollow, you know. The cable would go around to sheer logs along the bank so as to steer the logs around there. That way they kept them on the skids. Where it was straight away they stayed in the hollow of the skids, but on a curve they wouldn't. They had to have those sheer logs, otherwise they'd run into banks.

Calciano: In later days they had little railroad tracks going back into the woods. Did they do that in the days of

the oxen? Would the oxen pull the logs to the railroad which would take them to the mill, or did the oxen pull them directly to the mill?

Bergazzi: Well the oxen, in some cases, used to pull them clear down to the mill. They did in the gulch that I was raised in, up at Grover's. Pulled them right down to the mill there. All the mills had oxen.

Calciano: What is the name of that gulch now?

Bergazzi: Glen Haven Way they call it.

Calciano: Oh yes.

Bergazzi: That was a nice stand of timber there, for this country here. Nice trees, nice soft timber too, it wasn't tough. It was pretty sound. It wasn't too old or overripe, not too much rotten timber there you know, black timber. There were nice trees in there, for this part of the country. Anyway the steam donkeys came in after 1902, and that was quite an improvement.

Calciano: I'll bet.

Bergazzi: I think I have a picture of one here.

Calciano: Is that the donkey engine? It's big! And look at the shed.

Bergazzi: That's it. See the big drum. The cable ran over the

little spool and used to go up through the woods and pull the main line back up the skid road.

Calciano: The main line was the thing that dragged the logs down?

Bergazzi: The big logs -- it was about an inch cable.

Calciano: And then the little lines pulled the main line back up?

Bergazzi: There was a drum back in behind there, not too visible, well we can see it too.

Calciano: Were the boilers in here? under the shed?

Bergazzi: Yes, and there is the smoke stack and the whistle.

Calciano: Oh yes. I didn't realize they were so big; the drum is about six or eight feet in diameter, isn't it?

Bergazzi: Yes. That is an antique. (Laughter)

Calciano: Did they always build a little shed around the donkey engine?

Bergazzi: Yes, as a rule they did, around the station. That was planted there, see. But the other, smaller donkeys that they used later on in the woods, they went all over the hills, pulled themselves with a block and tackle, so they didn't put a shed over them. I'll never forget a boy by the name of Johnny Sherwood from Mendocino who came down. He was a donkey boss, they

called him. He was a crackerjack -- a good one. I'll never forget old Bill Baird, William Baird, who was the logging contractor there. He was used to the old bull teams, you know, that type of logging. I was up there one day and old Bill had come down. He always used to smoke his little corncob pipe. The bowl of it stuck up through his mustache; it just had a little stem about an inch long. He had something wrong with one eye and was kind of squint-eyed you know; it was closed pretty near shut. He said, Nell you know, we had this ,Johnny Sherwood, you saw him in action over there. I thought I was a pretty good logger, but that boy there is really something!" (Laughter) Bill had kind of a squeaky voice. He was quite a character. Then they went to the bigger donkeys, in later years, like they had for logging up at Santa Cruz Lumber Company. Now they are using caterpillar tractors. There are some spots up in the north where they are using donkey engines yet, where they have big Canyons. They put a skyline across from one ridge to another and pull the logs, with a cat probably, up to the skyline. Then they pick them up there and run them across on that cable and lower them right down those canyons on the cars. Overhead skylines they call them.

Tanbark

Calciano: Did you ever have anything to do with tanbark?

Bergazzi: I never peeled a foot of tanbark. Never did, but I know they peeled it in the woods, because we had a lot of tanbark in the trees. That's the first thing they done before they felled the timber. They peeled that bark. Of course they had felled most of the trees, because they were all good-sized trees you know.

Calciano: They'd fell it and then peel it?

Bergazzi: Yes. Some they would peel up, if it was a small tree, maybe a couple rings up, eight feet, and then, if it was too small, they left the rest of the tree to fall.

Calciano: That killed the tree when they took the bark, didn't it?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, you ring a tree and it's dead, it's gone, it's done. That's like cutting a person's arteries, the same thing. They felled those trees and peeled them, and then they felled the timber afterwards.

Calciano: They used that for firewood, didn't they? Tan oak?

Bergazzi: They cut a lot of it for firewood, yes. That made wonderful wood, if anyone had fireplaces, and a lot of them burned it in stoves. They'd cut it in short lengths, twelve, thirteen inch lengths. It was mostly

for fireplaces. It was marvelous wood because oak is a hard wood. Wonderful fireplace wood. A good old fireplace is nice; you sit there in the evenings, especially when it is cool, and you have your feet up, and a flame flickering there and throwing that heat out. Wonderful.

Calciano: My that sounds nice. But getting back to, the regular logging, what did you do with the logs when you got them to the mill?

The Log Pond and the Monitor

Bergazzi: They were put into the log pond. We always had a stream dammed up by the mill.

Calciano: How long were the logs in the pond?

Bergazzi: Some of them in the upper ends of the pond, where they didn't catch up to them, might be there all summer.

Calciano: It didn't hurt them any, did it?

Bergazzi: No, it preserved them. Redwood in water, you know, is one of the most wonderful woods you ever saw. You could take a redwood log and sink it in a pond, and would say that thing would last for eternity. It would.

Calciano: Whereas other kinds of wood gets all funny, doesn't it?

Bergazzi: I imagine most any wood in water would be preserved almost indefinitely. You know I sawed some sinker logs when they finished up in 1921. The heavy logs used to go to the bottom once in a while. Redwoods. They had what they called the monitor. It was made of two logs and they built a frame up on it with a windlass on it and a little cable where they turned a crank by hand. They would reach down with a pike pole and feel those logs, where the sinkers were. They would find out which way they were running. Then they would straddle them with this thing, and, they would put a pipe they had down into those logs. There was a point and barbs on it and they would pound that down into the logs. It had a little cable with a rig fastened on the top of that pipe. They'd wind it up and lift the logs right up under the monitor. It would bring them up between the two logs that the framework was set on. They would go right up over to the log chute, which generally had an endless chain on it with hooks on the chain. They would drop them in there, and they went way down into the water. The hooks, buckets they called them, would catch the log and bring up the sinkers. They finished at the old mill in 1898 because they had cut up the whole main canyon up Aptos Creek. They didn't have

Hihn's timber, then, up in Bridge Creek, because that still belonged to Hihn. There were quite a few of the old sinkers from 1898 left in that old pond. They picked them up, and I sawed them in that mill. They were so old they were blue. The wood was blue, blue as this book cover. That wood was hard as flint. Like I say, they would have lasted for eternity, as long as they were down in that water.

Calciano: And the lumber was grade one and two?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. You know the bottom log, that is the part they call the butt log, is your best lumber. It is the most durable.

Calciano: The part near the ground?

Bergazzi: As you go up the tree, the top is a little softer than the other. It is not quite as durable as what the logs are farther down the tree.

Calciano: It was always the part farther down that sank, if any sank?

Bergazzi: Generally the butt logs, and sometimes the log up above. There were some trees that were just naturally heavy. It was due to the density of the grain in the tree, I guess. Some trees you know, beautiful trees, were soft. They had nice soft wood that sawed just like cutting mush. Some of them were hard -- hard wood

in redwood, too. Those old saws would grind. They took the corners off the teeth quicker, too, than soft logs would. You'd have to change saws oftener.

Calciano: Did you ever run out of logs in the pond, or did the fallers always fell enough?

Bergazzi: No, they always had plenty of timber down. They always made it a point to keep enough down so you'd never run short. Which, of course, was a good thing to do. Well, they were pretty sharp, the fellows that run that. They knew about what it would take. The superintendents they had were used to that. That was a great deal for the fallers in wintertime, as it kept them pretty well occupied.

Calciano: There was a logging foreman as well as the mill foreman. Were they separate?

Bergazzi: Yes, the logging foreman had charge of the woods, the logging woods.

Calciano: Did he have a higher or lower position than the mill foreman?

Bergazzi: They were about on the same level.

Calciano: Did he go out in the woods a lot?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. He was right there every day, around his men, seeing that everything was going all right. If

anything went wrong it was up to him to try to right it. If the machinery broke down, or anything, they always had somebody there who could fix it. Once in a while they had to send the part out to get fixed, but they generally had an extra machine or two, and if one broke down they would get along as best they could with the other till they got the part back for the other. But there wasn't much they had to send away at any time. It never got that bad. There was always some way of repairing it there. You know there were some pretty good mechanics in those days. They were just rough and tumble fellows, but I'm telling you, some of the things they did were marvelous. They were smart. They weren't near as well educated as now, but they still had something up under their caps, some of those fellows. You pretty nearly had to have, if you were going to survive. Survival of the fittest.

IN THE MILL

Onto the Carriage Stand

Calciano: Once the logs were in the pond, how did they get them onto the carriage stand?

Bergazzi: With a power machine there. They had what they called a bull wheel, and they had a chain with a cable up on the head, rolled up. The sawyer just pushed a lever there and it tightened the belt up to run the cable overhead. The cable had a big rope (that is, years ago, then it went to a cable) and it was thrown around and hooked over the log and then turned.

Calciano: This was the special job for a couple of men?

Bergazzi: Yes, they had regular log deck men. The logs came up the chute first and into the mill. Then they rolled them down this same thing, and they lined them up there, four or five of them on the log deck, and from there clear back to the log slip. It all depended on the size of them, how many they had up there. One man just handled that cable, the log deck man did, and turned them over. The carriage man picked it up and hooked it up over the sawed top of the log where the sawyer wanted it.

Dogging

Calciano: Would you describe "dogging" the logs?

Bergazzi: In the early days it was different from now. Now they have practically all automatic dogs. Most of them are,

on the bigger mills. Back then they had a steel bar about an inch through, and the bars hooked in a ring in the back end of the carriage standard. The log laid against the standard which was straight up and down.

Calciano: The carriage was the machine that moved the log against the saw, wasn't it?

Bergazzi: Yes, and the logs had to be held firm on it. Those dogs were about thirty inches long. Then there was a piece that went down about three and one-half inches. It was a long tube of steel that pointed out at right angles from the stem as it was passed on. And that dog, of course, you could move it around. It was right in that swivel thing on the back of the carriage stand where it was hooked in. It had just a semi-circular hook there, at the bottom of the stem, the steel rod, and it hooked in that ring and that ring moved around. You could turn it any way. There was one standard here and one over there about eight feet. They took that dog and drove it into the log over here in this one and on that side, and they had just a little bit of off-set in them -- that is they weren't exactly square, and it was pointed away just so it would draw, see, when it was driven into the log. It would sort of pull in and hold it tight against those standards,

because you didn't want that log to roll any way when it was going through the saw.

Calciano: Did they pound these in by hand?

Bergazzi: They did in the early days, yes. That's the way I started in, driving them in by hand with a mallet. You had to work fast too, because those sawyers didn't want to lose any time there, and you had to turn each log down several times.

Calciano: When you turned the log down to cut the next face, you had to dog them each time, didn't you?

Bergazzi: Yes, every time. And the last time you dogged the log they most always sawed down to a two-inch plank for the last piece, unless they were cutting some special order where they left a three-inch back, or four, or six, or whatever. But when you got down to a two-inch piece, why you had to drive that dog in carefully. You only had two inches on top of that little point. Of course you got used to it so you never ... in all my years in the mills I think I only saw a saw hit a dog not over three or four times, just the little tip of it. It was driven just a little too far in.

Calciano: Now, once the log was dogged, you took several slices off it, as many as you wanted?

Bergazzi: That's right,

Calciano: Well now, the log would be placed up against the carriage standard, and how did ...

Bergazzi: Well, those dogs pulled it right in tight against the standard so it couldn't move. It set right there solid. There was no movement. Also if the logs on those steel carriage plates they set them on were wet, well they would slip pretty easy. If those steel plates were slippery and the log was slick and they reversed the carriage, why there would be a quick jerk and it would slide out on the bottom a little bit. So they had a steel spud with a lever, and when they went to reverse the carriage they pulled the lever down. That spud went up into the log from underneath and kept it from turning backwards, you see. They had to have that. Otherwise it would have slipped, especially if it was wet. If it slipped, that would make the log drag on the saw, and you'd feel it right away if you were sawing. Your saw would be cutting in there maybe an eighth of an inch of so. And it was bad for the saw too, because it would heat the saws. It was laying right there against the saw blade, and when those saws got warm they wouldn't run straight. You had to be careful with them, because they would just wobble. You had to stop and shut the water off. They had a little

fine stream of water running on the saw, and it threw a little spray on it all the time; otherwise the saw would get hot, especially on the pine. You had to turn it on heavy there, because it would really get warm cutting pine. And when it would get warm it would run crooked and you couldn't do anything with it.

Calciano: What did you do with that two-inch piece of wood that was next to the standard?

Bergazzi: Oh, that was good wood.

Calciano: How did they ever use it?

Bergazzi: Oh, that was a two-inch plank; they made two-by-fours out of it.

Calciano: Oh, the edger took care of it?

Bergazzi: Yes, that was a clean plank. It went right down and went through the edger.

Calciano: What about the holes where the dogs stuck in?

Bergazzi: That didn't amount to anything. It didn't hurt it.

They came right to a long point, that steel point, and it didn't make much of a mark, not enough to hurt anything.

The Carriage Setter

Calciano: The standards were what pushed the log over whatever distance was needed to cut a certain width board,

weren't they?

Bergazzi: Yes. The carriage had two standards.

Calciano: Those are upright metal?

Bergazzi: Yes. One near each end of the log. The standards set against the log and pushed it out. The saw was set stationary.

Calciano: The whole carriage moved?

Bergazzi: It traveled on tracks, like railroad tracks. It had wheels under it and bearings that run under the carriage. The carriage plates were steel plates, They were double plates and each had a long steel shaft with threads on it -- a wormed gear -- which went in between these steel plates. They moved over against the log. The steel plates had to be level, you know, in order for the cut to be square. The dog held the log against the standards so the log wouldn't roll. The carriage setter turned those worm gears (they were in the bearing inside the standard) and the standards pushed that log. They had dials on the carriage with numbers on. You could turn so many numbers to make thicknesses from one inch up to several, or eight, or ten, whatever you wanted to set out on, and then they would saw them off there. The dial we had for the circular saws run from one to twelve figures, The

circular saw would cut one-third of an inch, three cuts to an inch. If you wanted three three-inch boards you figured 3 x 3 is 9 and 1 for the saw cut is 10. That's quite a deal, carriage setting, I'll tell you. Those dials you had to do quick math all the time! After they cut one board or plank off, the sawyer would back the carriage up by the machine, with power. He had a lever there to work by hand, and he could run that carriage back and forth on that track. We had a steam engine at Newell Creek, but some of them in the early days had friction, belt friction. They would tighten the belt pulleys to run that back and forth; that would reverse it.

The Sawing

The Method

Calciano: The saw stays in one place, does it?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. It stays right there, stationary.

Calciano: And the log comes along ...

Bergazzi: The carriage setter signals when he has got the carriage up (he moves it one inch, two inches or so), then the sawyer cuts a board off and it lops over on the rollers. Then the men there will take it and run it through the edger.

Calciano: So they would take a log and cut two or three slices, or boards, off one side and then turn it down on its flat side?

Bergazzi: On its flat side on the carriage plates, and then, of course, the setter would keep setting it out until the sawyer held his hand up that it was far enough in for a thin slab. You didn't want the slab too heavy, because you would waste lumber if you took a big slab off there.

Calciano: The slab is what you just throw away, burn up?

Bergazzi: Yes. They made it into firewood, and where they had a railroad they loaded it on the cars and shipped it. In the early days they hauled it with horse and wagon, but in the later years they built the railroad. They run the cars right along the slab saw and loaded the wood right into cars. The mill had that saw right on the edge of the mill.

Calciano: So you would cut a few slices, turn it down, take a slab, cut some boards, turn it again, and cut it on the third side. Then on the fourth side you just kept going right through to the end of the log?

Bergazzi: Well, sometimes they didn't turn it the fourth time, but when I was sawing I always squared the log. It really did a better job.

Calciano: Your last boards were all ready then; they didn't have to be trimmed or edged?

Bergazzi: They were all clean then. You figured on leaving saw cuts for the edger. Maybe you'd turn them down on 25 inches, or 17 if it was a small one. When you had it sawed way down to a fairly small sized log, you had the sides all cut off and were pretty well in on all sides. Then you would run them through the edger, and there would be no shims from the edger. They would come out even, with no waste. The carriage man turned the little logs back over the carriage, but the big logs, they turned them way off the carriage because it was too hard of a drop; the big ones weighed a couple of tons, maybe, and might break those axles on the carriage underneath. There were big heavy axles underneath -- about three and one-half inches solid steel double axles, two on both ends of the carriage there. You cut in whatever distance you figured to give the log a good face, and then you turned it down. You would cut clear through. Your log would have a good flat face, the full length of it. Then you would go in as far as you wanted, turn it down, saw the other side, then they would turn it again.,

Calciano: Did you stop and measure, or how did you know what you

were going to get?

Bergazzi: The carriage setter had those figures on the carriage, on the dolly.

Calciano: Oh, he figured it out so that the log would be twelve inches square or something?

Bergazzi: Yes. The carriage setter had to set those. He had to allow for the saw cut through, too. When you signaled to him you wanted maybe all two's and leave a three backing or four backing, he was supposed to figure it so that they would come out exact.

Calciano: The carriage setter was the one who was doing all the work, wasn't he?

Bergazzi: Well, he really was. It was more of a job -- more of a physical effort-- than what the sawyer had, that's for sure.

Calciano: Obviously the sawyer was a skilled job; where did his skill come in?

Bergazzi: You had to be a lumber grader and you had to manipulate that carriage, too. You also had to keep those saws in line. If one cut in front of the other, and if one run out a little ways, it spoiled the log where they didn't run true. If it was a good log you'd spoil the part of the log where the saws come together.

The Saws

Calciano: There is something else I was wondering. If you had a ten- or twelve-foot log, could one saw do it? Did you have several five foot or sixty-inch saws?

Bergazzi: You mean logs ten feet in diameter? You couldn't saw them; you had to blast them.

Calciano: Blast them?

Bergazzi: Blast them, break them open.

Calciano: What did they do to blast them?

Bergazzi: Well, they drilled down in them and then loaded them with powder. They blasted, sometimes, right on the landing on the mill.

Calciano: Would they lose some of the lumber that way?

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. It spoiled some; it shattered the logs right in the spot where the powder charge was -- just mashed the wood around in there. But there was nothing else they could do. You couldn't leave a big log out in the woods. There were very few ten-foot logs in this country here. It was very seldom that we ever hit a tree of that size.

Calciano: What were most of them?

Bergazzi: Oh they would run along all the way from -- well, up towards the tree tops the logs would be down to

sixteen or eighteen inches in diameter. That's where the trees tapered down. The majority of the timber here in Santa Cruz, I would say, would run from about three feet maybe, that is down on the butts of the trees where they were cut. We didn't even have too many six-foot trees here. A six-foot tree is a pretty good sized tree.

Calciano: That's talking about the diameter across?

Bergazzi: That's what I mean by six feet. A six-foot tree is a nice tree. We used to get seven- and eight-foot trees occasionally, not too many.

Calciano: The big saw was a sixty-inch saw, is that right?

Bergazzi: Sixty-inch. They were set one above the other.

Calciano: There were two sixty-inch saws going?

Bergazzi: They had one on a top shaft and one on a bottom shaft -- a big steel shaft about four inches across.

Calciano: How big a log could they cut?

Bergazzi: Well, I would say we cut logs up there ... well, about a seven-foot log was all you could cut and do it economically. Beyond that you'd have to blast them. You didn't get too many of them that were seven feet.

Calciano: If a saw is sixty inches in diameter, and you have got two of them (they'd both be five feet in diameter),

why couldn't you cut a ten-foot log?

Bergazzi: Your bottom saw is bolted on the shaft; the shaft is in the center of it. That only leaves twenty-five inches of space above, after you put that collar on. You see they put a six-inch collar on with a nut that screwed up tight. The inside collar was straight as a die against that, and then the outside collar was bolted right against it to hold them steady, and the top saw the same. Between those collars -- well on the top saw they had to have the chipper. That would cut a furrow for that top saw collar so the board, when it was sent off, wouldn't hit that collar. But the bottom saw only sawed to the bottom center of the saw. you couldn't go below that.

Calciano: From the top saw, did you only get 25 inches of cutting?

Bergazzi: Between the two of them they cut 52 inches. I have seen boards cut above the chipper (that is, not too wide), so you have a second board even above the top saw collar.

Calciano: It just split apart

Bergazzi: The chipper cut a furrow through so the top saw collar would go through.

Calciano: What is the chipper?

Bergazzi: It had four knives that were bolted on the top saw collar. They cut around and cleared a space for the collar to go through.

Calciano: Wouldn't it hurt the board?

Bergazzi: Well, it wasted that much wood, but that was the only way you could do with circular saws.

New Teeth for Old

Calciano: How often did you have to change saws?

Bergazzi: We used to change saws twice a day.

Calciano: Oh really?

Bergazzi: The middle of the forenoon and in the middle of the afternoon.

Calciano: Then would they be resharpened or ...

Bergazzi: Yes, we had saw filers.

Calciano: Oh, you had saw filers?

Bergazzi: Yes, you had to have them. The big circular saws we had at that time had about 50 teeth, or 54, something like that. Every so far there was a saw bit, or tooth, in other words. They had inserted what they call a ring. It went into a groove there, with a wedge and a little steel pin to hold it. They could lift that ring out and take the old bit out. The bits were grooved, too, to fit in the groove in that ring. They would

pull them down and set them right back in the groove,
in the saws.

Calciano: You mean the teeth came off?

Bergazzi: Yes. You could take the teeth out. You had to get them out. You pulled those rings, moved them up a bit. The ring wasn't very wide, just a little ring. There were grooves in them; the bit was grooved so it fit right in.

Calciano: Well, you take the teeth out and leave the rest of the machine, or

Bergazzi: You just took the little bit out, the small bit, and then you put a new one in when it got worn down so far. After they got short they wouldn't run good; your saw wouldn't run straight because somehow or other the teeth didn't clear themselves of sawdust. It packed in between the side of the log and the board in the blade. That would heat the saw and cause it to not run straight.

Calciano: How many times could they be resharpened?

Bergazzi: Well, it all depended on whether you hit any gravel in the logs, or if they were clean. That had a lot to do with it, too. Sometimes there was a little gravel in the edge of the log; you'd hit a pebble or a rock that would knock out a couple of teeth and then you would

have to put in new teeth.

Calciano: So each tooth was separate?

Bergazzi: They were separate, yes.

Calciano: How long would a tooth last?

Bergazzi: Well, I think they would run about three days. It all depended on how fast you were sawing. From three to four days.

Calciano: If one tooth on a circular saw broke, did you just stop the saw right away and put a new tooth in, or could you keep sawing for a few hours?

Bergazzi: No, you stopped the saw right away.

Calciano: Because it was out of balance?

Bergazzi: No, not out of balance, but you heard a clicking there because that tooth wasn't cutting there, so you stopped right away and put one in. It was seldom that they'd ever break a tooth. One day when I was at the San Vicente mill there, in 1915, there was a redwood log loaded on the carriage with a little bark on it. That saw was going through there and all at once, man, what a noise that made! There was a piece of an old rail, little narrow gauge rail, that got stuck in that log and bent around the saw. The sawyer didn't see it as it was in under a piece of bark. It really stripped

the teeth on that saw. They had to cut it way down, you know, grind the thing down so they could get the teeth all even again. They cut about a fourth of the saw away I guess.

Calciano: How long did it take to cut an eighteen-foot log through once?

Bergazzi: You mean to saw it up completely?

Calciano: No, just how long did it take the carriage to move the length of the log?

Bergazzi: Oh, it don't take very long. It all depended on what type of a mill it was, and how fast the mill was, and if you had a lot of power. And it all depended on the size of the log, and whether it was redwood or pine -- pine was slower and you had to go through it slower because it was tougher wood. I never even checked how long it would take, but it was just seconds. That is with the circular saws.

Circle Versus Band Saws

Calciano: Did you use any other kind of saw?

Bergazzi: The edger saws were circular. They were small, though. You could probably cut through ten inches, up and down. I think eight inches was the biggest you could cut.

Calciano: Did you have any use for straight saws in the mill at all?

Bergazzi: Not in those days. They had one in the nineties that they called a band saw. That was a straight one. That is what they use now, mostly. They had one in the nineties, up at Dougherty's Mill, up by Boulder Creek. That was the first band mill in Santa Cruz County. Then there was one at Hihn's Mill at Laurel. That was a band saw. They had one at San Vicente out here, and then one at the Monterey Bay Company. That was the last one before they finished up here.

Calciano: Are band saws better than circular?

Bergazzi: Well they are, I guess.

Calciano: Why are they better?

Bergazzi: Well you see a circular saw cuts a third of an inch. Every three cuts you lose a board. With a big log, look at the waste there. The band saw cuts a fifth. The band saw just makes a wide smooth cut while the circular, if you don't keep them in line good, makes a kerf there where the two saws meet. It might spoil a 1 x 3 or 1 x 4 or whatever it takes to cut the kerf.

Calciano: Did band saws have to be resharpened as often?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. The band saws are huge, you know -- big long

ribbons of steel. They are an endless saw; they go on big pulleys, one above and one down below. The wheels are way up above and one down below. You can cut a much wider board with a band saw than you could with a circular.

Calciano: I see. You could do a ten-foot log if you had a big enough band saw.

Bergazzi: They have different sized band saws, too. Some of them they called ten-foot band mills. You could cut huge logs like they do up in Humboldt and Mendocino. They have to have them big there for the monstrous trees they have.

Calciano: Are the teeth removable on a band saw?

Bergazzi: No, they have to be ground in; they are solid. They keep grinding them in until the saw is worn down too thin, and then they have to use a new saw,

Calciano: What if they break a tooth?

Bergazzi: Well, I don't know. I guess they just get shortened up so it don't make any difference.

Calciano: I see. Did any of the mills here have two big saws?

Bergazzi: None of them in this county had two carriages. They have them in Humboldt and Mendocino, and up in Oregon and Washington. I think the biggest saws there run over ten-foot wheels. They are farther apart at the

bottom, the lower ones, so they have more space to cut bigger logs, to take a wide cut. Then they have the eight-foot. I think the eight-foot band is about the smallest; they might have made six-foot ones years ago. Anyway, no smaller than six -- that is, for making lumber. It's really a marvelous thing to watch those band saws cut through those logs. It's really interesting.

Calciano: Are they faster than a circular saw?

Bergazzi: Well, no, I think they run about the same. I think a band saw runs about 11,000 feet a minute and circular saws, sixty-inch saws, years ago we used to run them 600 revolutions a minute. The majority of them. They were hammered for that and they would stand up and run straighter. So, that's going pretty fast too.

Judging the Lumber

Calciano: When a log is placed on the carriage, how does the sawyer decide what width to make?

Bergazzi: The sawyer could look at both ends of that log and size it. It seemed as though he could look through it and tell what you could make of it.

Calciano: Really? Sometimes did they use a log just to make railroad ties?

Bergazzi: They didn't saw too many ties. They did years ago, but in later years they got away from that.

Calciano: If you looked at the ends and sides and thought, "Boy, what a crummy log," what did you do about it?

Bergazzi: It would make maybe number three lumber. The best you could get out of it would be number three lumber. That was the poorest grade there was that they would keep. They had no such thing as number four like they have now. In those days number three was the lowest grade.

Calciano: Would you have to saw it in any particular way if it was a bad log?

Bergazzi: It was just sawed into inch boards. The only thing that was salable in number three was inch stuff. The dimension stuff in number three was no good for construction. They wouldn't bother with it. They couldn't sell it.

Calciano: What made a log grade two or grade three?

Bergazzi: A lot of knots, and black knots too. They weren't sound knots.

Calciano: Are there a lot of knots in redwood trees?

Bergazzi: Well, up toward the top, yes. You get into the tip of the tree and that is where the knots were, mostly.

Calciano: Usually when you see redwood panneling, you don't see

any knot holes.

Bergazzi: That is made out of big clear logs. You wouldn't hit knots until you got right into the center, just where the little heart center was. They were little sound knots, too, so they were cut into 2 x 4's, 2 x 6's or something like that.

Calciano: They were strong enough?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. But not when they had the old black knots in them, and the knots were pretty thick up towards the top of the tree. Maybe the wood was black too. Over-ripe timber, dark ...

Calciano: What makes it black?

Bergazzi: Just old age. If it was still fairly solid, but was dark, that was number three wood. They could sell it for nothing else. It was good for building a shed, or something that you didn't figure on having for over a thousand years. (Laughter)

Calciano: Most number three wood was purchased just for outside buildings and things like this? Did they use number three wood for anything else?

Bergazzi: Well they would use it maybe for building an old fence, or something out in the country, somewhere, or maybe some old shed that they weren't too particular

about. The wood was solid and all that, but it just wasn't as good as the bright redwood.

Calciano: It didn't look as good, or it wasn't as strong?

Bergazzi: Well, it wasn't quite as strong. It didn't look as good either. It was kind of dark. Of course you could always paint it and cover up all its sins! (Laughter)

Calciano: Now number one lumber has to be clear lumber, is that right?

Bergazzi: Well there is the clear, and then there is the number one clear too.

Calciano: Clear is the highest?

Bergazzi: It is. Number one is very near clear; it might have just a little bit of a check, or a few little hard knots in it. Small ones, you know, but they are solid and red, just like the redwood is. That would be number one too.

Calciano: What do you mean by checks?

Bergazzi: Well that might be just a little bit of a crack in the board, a little flaw, or in the grain, the slash grain, a little crack in it. It might just go in a little ways in the board. Something like that.

Calciano: The younger the tree the softer the wood?

Bergazzi: That's right. The closer to the top you get the softer the wood is.

Calciano: So you liked to find a big young tree if you could.

(Laughter)

Bergazzi: That's right. Nice soft wood saws easier.

Calciano: Do you remember what the daily capacity in board feet was at some of the mills you worked in?

Bergazzi: Yes. At the Hinckley Basin I think it was about 30,000 feet a day. And at Newell Creek it was 40,000 feet a day. We cut a million feet a month. That was considered a pretty good mill in those days. It's not much now. At the last mill I worked in, over here on the Aptos Creek, the Loma Prieta, I think the capacity there was around 35,000 feet a day.

Calciano: Now you are talking about board feet, aren't you?

Bergazzi: That's right. You know that one board foot of lumber is one inch thick, twelve by twelve, that's 144 square inches. That is one board foot of lumber.

The Off-Bearer and the Edger

Calciano: Now I sort of have the idea that as the log went through the big saw, boards fell off "plop" onto conveyor belts that took them to the edger. Is that right?

Bergazzi: They had to push them by hand. They went down on a

roller. There was a man right by the saw who they called the off-bearer. In the modern mills, later on, they had a power operated arm that laid up in there, and the board dropped back inside that arm and was lowered down. In my day, when I first started, they used to have to hold them up by hand and let them down easy. The wide boards took a pretty husky man.

Calciano: Two men?

Bergazzi: There was only one. If a board flopped down on those rollers and hit hard (the rollers were only so wide, you know), it would just split right off and drop on the floor. They had to let them down easy. They pushed them down the rollers, and the edgerman had a little bumper there that stopped them. It was hard work. Everything was hard. Then they pulled them over, slid them over on skids, to the edger table and that had rollers. Then they would push them through the edger from there and get all the different widths, you know.

Calciano: Was there a carriage setter ...

Bergazzi: Well the off-bearer just pushed it into the edger for the edgerman, and then the rollers -- the edger had double power rollers, see -- just set three-quarters of an inch apart. They could raise them up and down. The top set would raise up and down to push thick

four-inch stuff, two, three, four, or six through there. When the little inch boards hit those rollers it picked them up and took them right through. It took the others through, too.

Calciano: The rollers were moving?

Bergazzi: Oh yes.

Calciano: When the edgerman saw the big slab of wood coming at him, did he know, or did somebody tell him, or was there some scale there that told him that the board was forty-eight inches wide and to make six eight-inch boards out of it?

Bergazzi: He knew; he could tell approximately by looking. They got so used to it.

Calciano: He set his saws then for how wide he wanted ...

Bergazzi: He set his saws, yes.

Calciano: Would they maybe cut three eight-inch boards and a ten-inch and a six-inch, or was it always ...

Bergazzi: Well, they could, or they could make two twelves, or a twelve and a six, or two sixes, or two eights, whatever they wanted.

Calciano: Did they set the saw for each single board that came through?

Bergazzi: Practically always they did. Most of the time they kept moving those saws pretty much.

The Trimmer

Calciano: All these boards went through the edger saw, didn't they? The edger saw stayed solid and stationary, didn't it?

Bergazzi: Yes. Then the boards went out on the edger table and the men took them from there. Then they went down on the rollers and out on the trimmer table where they trimmed the edges. If they had a little ragged edge, or were split down a ways, the trimmerman always cut off whatever he thought was necessary. Then they went on out and men loaded them onto trucks.

Calciano: If it had been an eighteen-foot long board, and there was a split say a foot and a half up, would he cut ...

Bergazzi: He would cut two feet off to leave it sixteen foot even. In other words there were no seventeen- or, nineteen-foot boards. They were an even number in length, even if they had to waste a half or quarter of a foot or so.

Calciano: Did he do that by hand?

Bergazzi: Oh no! They had a trimmer saw, and some places in the big mills they had gang trimmers with the saw. He would just step on a little pedal there, you know, and the saw would come up as the boards were going along

the table and cut one off here and one back there, maybe, because there was different flaws. In the little mills they piled them up, stacked them up, If there were splits they piled three or four of them on together, and the trimmer had a handle there where he pulled the saw out through the roller and cut off that by hand there, see. He had to keep away from that saw there, too, keep those fingers away. He pulled it towards himself. It had a metal handle up above the saw.

Calciano: Were there very many accidents?

Bergazzi: I never saw but one man get his finger cut, just a little bit. That was in Hinckley Basin. I'll never forget him. Lawrence Schilling was his name, the old Schilling family here, years ago. He got a couple fingers chewed up a little, not too bad. It just happened to those two.

Calciano: There weren't many accidents then?

Bergazzi: Not too many considering the primitiveness of the conditions that they had in those days. Nobody was killed there in the Hinckley Basin while I was there. Nobody hurt very bad.

Calciano: Some of the work was really skilled. Did the sawyers

and carriage setters get paid a lot?

Bergazzi: They got pretty good pay for those days, you know.

Nothing like now. (Laughter) That was kind of primitive.

Calciano: Would the carriage setter get as much as the edger?

Bergazzi: No, I think the edgerman got a little bit more. That was tough. He had to go according to orders, too. He had a blackboard there, see, which told him to make so many pieces of a certain grade of stuff. He had to be a lumber grader, be an expert too. Also a sawyer.

Drying and Grading

Calciano: Getting back to the lumber, after it went to the trimmer, did men just pick it up and carry it out to...

Bergazzi: No, it went out on rollers.

Calciano: But then it had to dry, didn't it?

Bergazzi: Well, some of it they did. They didn't dry too much of it in the dry kilns in the early days. They do now, though. They did air-drying in the early days.

Calciano: Where did they stack it to air-dry?

Bergazzi: They just stacked it in piles; they had lumber yards, you know.

Calciano: This is at the mill, or did they ship it?

Bergazzi: Sometimes some of it would kind of dry at the mill if it laid there long enough, but they hauled most of it out. They had yards in town -- places where they dried it, piled it up.

Calciano: Most of it was shipped out green, then?

Bergazzi: Yes. Practically all of it was shipped out green.

Calciano: Well now, when it came off the edger, and especially when it came off the trimmer, you'd have all kinds of boards all mixed up together, wouldn't you? Somebody had to sort them. Was that done manually?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. The graders sorted it. Now they grade the boards as they come along on the table, after it comes from the edger and from the trimmer. They mark them. They have a grader there which is a good thing. In those days they had graders there, and they loaded them onto small trucks, see, and took it out in the yard. They run it down one of the tram ways on the little tracks, and the graders turned the boards over there (two graders to a truck), and they graded it right there themselves and put it on the different piles where they had different grades.

Calciano: I see.

Bergazzi: That's the way it was. Now they grade them right on the table, see, as it comes off the mill, just after

they get away from the trimmer. They have your graders right there, which is a good thing. They go out on chains now. Chains, endless chains.

The Engineer

Calciano: Getting back to the sawmill itself, what did the engineer do?

Bergazzi: Well the engineer in the mill, as a rule, did the saw filing -- that is with the circular saws. And he started the engines; he opened the throttle up there and took care of the steam engine. The fireman, well he did the oiling too, a little oiling, and if anything went wrong with the engine he kind of monkeyed around with it.

Calciano: Did the engine break down very often?

Bergazzi: Not too often. It was surprising, you know. Those steam engines were really marvelous pieces of machinery; they were really something. And they were good power, too. Steam power, in its day, was a wonderful power. Of course now they have electricity, which is more wonderful. All you have to do is push a button and away everything goes.

Calciano: Did the sawmill generate any electricity for lights

inside it?

Bergazzi: We used to have a generator; that was run by steam too. A small steam engine ran a little generator -- just enough for a few lights. But when I first went to work in the Hinckley Basin we had no electricity. They had a big lantern that had kind of a big square cage around it, up in the mill there, and it threw light around. There as he same thing up at the cook house; they had lamps. No electricity up there. But we had electricity at Newell Creek.

Calciano: So even in the early days they had some light. You didn't saw by daylight?

Bergazzi: Oh, no. Well they had lanterns, lamps, in the older mills before they had electricity. They had enough of them so that you could see after a fashion. But we were all young then and had good eyes. We didn't stumble over every little chip.

Calciano: So you also had a fireman in addition to the engineer?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, the fireman -- he had to shovel sawdust. They had big doors there where the furnace was built up, and they had the fire boxes underneath. He had to shovel the sawdust in from the front there. Later on they got so they ran little conveyors up over the top of the furnace. They had little openings up there

where they could open up those little small metal buckets that went up there on the conveyor and drop the sawdust down those holes. The fireman could look in from the front and see how much was there and how much he needed. He just shut it off when he got plenty in there. When it burned down and got ready for some more, he'd start the conveyor again.

The Rubbish Burner

Calciano: They also had rubbish burners, didn't they?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes.

Calciano: They used conveyor belts, too, didn't they?

Bergazzi: No, that was run on an endless chain that ran out to the burner. They built up a brick kind of furnace like. They cleaned a place out a ways from the brush, so there wouldn't be any danger of setting any fires, and they left little air vents in the four different sides, I guess. Then they ran a blower out from the mill. They had a belt there, and a fan that blew air through a pipe out to this thing so you had a draft in there pushing air out of the holes in the brick. Then that sawdust, and all these sticks and trimmings off the end of the lumber that came from the trimmer saw,

went out on this big conveyor. They went out (on a big endless chain -- in a big conveyor they went out and around) and pulleys dropped them over the end and down into that fire pit. And that blower kept blowing that air. Why it burned up that stuff about as fast as we could put it out with those saws. We burned all those broken pieces of scantlings and short ends and things that were too short for slab work. They kept most of the four-foot wood and loaded it on carts or wagons and hauled it out. Then the shorter pieces went out into the fire pit and were burned up there.

Calciano: Did you use the word scantlings?

Bergazzi: Yes, scantlings. They were little narrow strips of wood, just like little thin edgings. That was what they called them.

The Millwright and Mill Foreman

Calciano: Another word I've heard is millwright. A millwright was different from an engineer, wasn't he?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, although on Newell Creek we did have a couple of occasions where the engineer was also the millwright.

Calciano: What did the millwright do?

Bergazzi: Well, if anything happened and any of the machinery broke down, he got in there and worked on it, fixed it up. Of course we helped him too.

Calciano: Wasn't the engineer supposed to do that?

Bergazzi: Well, no, that was the millwright's job. That's what they called the millwright for. Well, the millwright is also a mill builder, like in Buckley's case. Like I say, the engineer was an engineer and could also do mechanical work, could line up shafting and stuff, and set up new bearings from each shaft, because where we had a steam engine we had a big drive wheel. It wasn't like it is now with the electric motors, where each machine has its own separate motor. Then they had a big belt that ran to the main line shaft, and then there was other shafting, and counter shafts and things. The mill was all tied together with belts here and there, because the main engine drove the whole mill, see. It was quite a complicated affair.

Calciano: It must have been difficult to move around the mill if you had conveyor belts all around.

Bergazzi: Yes, that's right. That's the way it was.

Calciano: Then there was the mill foreman.

Bergazzi: Yes. He was the head of everybody, but the sawyer was

really the head man in the mill when the foreman wasn't there. He was the man who looked after everything, and he was also responsible for the quality and quantity of lumber that that mill put out.

Calciano: Oh. No wonder he was well paid.

Bergazzi: Yes. That's quite a craft. It's an interesting job and it kept you on your toes. It's interesting to me; it still is. If I get around a mill now and hear the sound of those saws, why it's just like music to my ears. I like that type of work. There is something about it. You're destroying those beautiful trees, but what of it; you have to have the material to build your houses and bridges and what not; we still build houses out of lumber. It's a very important product.

Sawing Contracts

Bergazzi: Have you talked with any other lumbermen?

Calciano: Yes, I've interviewed Albretto Stoodley.

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, they used to call him "Al." He is getting pretty well up in years. What a wonderful man he was! What a wonderful character. A wonderful person to work for. He was really a marvelous man.

Calciano: He is just delightful. I enjoyed talking with him so much. It is hard to believe he is ninety.

Bergazzi: If you see him again, you ask him if he remembers the man that run the saws for him in 1919, in the mill there. It was the Loma Prieta Lumber Company. He had the sawing contract and was running the mill then. I suppose he got so much per thousand feet for sawing.

Calciano: He wasn't up there too much, though, was he?

Bergazzi: I think he gave up the contracting part after the end of the season in 1919. I can see him yet, in his quiet wag, quiet talking, nice man.

Calciano: You mentioned Mr. Stoodley had a sawing contract one year. What were the sawing contracts?

Bergazzi: Well, he put that lumber out for so much per thousand feet. He made a contract with the Loma Prieta Company to cut it for that amount, whatever it was. I never knew what he got for it. But he had the contract the first year.

Calciano: But he wasn't the mill foreman, was he?

Bergazzi: He wasn't, no. We had a new foreman there, Mr. Mosher. He's gone, too.

Calciano: Well, why did the company have a middleman and let him have the contract? Why didn't they just have their mill put out the lumber directly?

Bergazzi: Well, I don't know. I guess they probably didn't want to bother with it. If they let it out on contract they

wouldn't be bothered with the running of the mill or the hiring of the men, and Mr. Stoodley was a wonderful person. One of the grandest people I ever met, and I sure hope he's still in good health.

Calciano: Yes, he's in very good health. He must have led a good outdoor life. (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Oh, lumbering was. I'm telling you. The best. You were right out in the best of air, and we had plenty of

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Paging sequence skips from 90 to 100

cable and little dogs. They were all together so you could go across the pond on them.

Calciano: Was this all redwood?

Bergazzi: Mostly. Some pine, though.

Calciano: Yes, he's in very good health. He must have led a good outdoor life. (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Oh, lumbering was. I'm telling you. The best. You were right out in the best of air, and we had plenty of fresh air, I'll say that for sure.

Calciano: The mill didn't have closed in sides, did it?

Bergazzi: No, there were no walls on our mills. They were all

open mills. The only closed mill we ever had in this county was the San Vicente Mill out on the city limits, right by the Wrigley Chewing Gum plant, down in that little gully -- Moore's Gulch. It's all begonias now. The Antonelli brothers have begonias there. It is a beautiful site. That was all lumber yards years ago. Yes, that was the only closed mill. Roy Boekenooogen has a picture of that mill, a good picture. It shows the millpond. There was a slip that went up to the mill. Of course there were no logs in the pond at the time the picture was taken. There were just a string of boom logs where they had them tied together with cable and little dogs. They were all together so you could go across the pond on them.

Calciano: Was this all redwood?

Bergazzi: Mostly. Some pine, though.

Santa Cruz Pine

Calciano: Did you cut much pine down in Hinckley Basin?

Bergazzi: Our native Santa Cruz pine grew in amongst the redwood every so often.

Calciano: What kind of pine did you say?

Bergazzi: Santa Cruz pine. It is a species of a Douglas fir, but it grows locally here.

Calciano: Is it the same as Monterey pine, or ...

Bergazzi: No, it is different. It is a species of red fir. And that stuff is tough! Especially the butt logs, gee whiz!

Calciano: Did they ever peel pine logs?

Bergazzi: No, the pine bark was easily sawed.

Calciano: Would the edger get it off then?

Bergazzi: Well, the edger took the rough edges off the boards, just like it did with the redwood, too. Otherwise you'd have had a feather edge where the rounded log was.

Calciano: How wide were the pine logs?

Bergazzi: Well, they were smaller than the redwood. There were different sizes. It would be kind of hard to figure an average unless a person went around and measured a bunch of them in the forest. But they were not as large as the redwoods. And a good thing too, because they were tough. The wood was awfully tough to saw.

Calciano: Was it a heavy wood, too?

Bergazzi: Well, not as heavy as the redwoods. You never had sinker logs in the pine. The redwood would sink sometimes, some of the butt logs at the bottom of the tree, you know, the first cut. And sometimes the

second cut. It all depended on the density of the wood. And when they rolled them into the log pond they went right to the bottom and stayed there. They had to fish them out with the monitor.

Calciano: Well, were any of the pine logs two feet across?

Bergazzi: Oh, I've seen pine logs that were better than five feet, that is the bottom cut, the base cut. Between five and six feet.

Calciano: And would you get number one pine lumber from a Santa Cruz pine?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, you did some.

Calciano: Were they as good as white pine?

Bergazzi: Well, it was a different type of wood. It was a lot tougher than the white pine,

Calciano: What was it used for, mainly?

Bergazzi: Well, they used it mainly for planking up away from where it was wet, where they wanted something strong. And they used it in bridges some. They used to build the old wooden bridges in the early days, before they got to building the cement, and the plank floors were all pine planking; it was much stronger than redwood. And they used to make these steps, like the ones on the front of this house, out of pine. They cut it so

the grain was vertical, straight up and down; that made it a lot stronger than it does with a slash grain. Slash grain is crossways. They sawed the log down to a certain point and then turned it so the grain was pretty much across, and then they sawed it. That way you got your vertical grain.

Calciano: Did you try to cut all your pine lumber on one day, or did you just take ...

Bergazzi: They used to move it to one end of the pond. They kept all the logs off to one side and then made a special run on pine. That way they didn't cut one pine and one redwood, because then they'd get a mess of lumber mixed all up in the yard. They always had the pine piles all by themselves and the redwood by themselves. They just moved it off to one side, and when they got enough logs to run maybe half a day on pine, a little over or a little less, whatever it was, they'd just make a run on that.

Calciano: Were there any other kinds of trees that you lumbered?

Bergazzi: No, there was just redwood and pine, Once in a great while, just for curiosity's sake, they'd bring something in. I think it was in the fall of 1911 that I sawed the last week at the mill. The sawyer was sick. They brought in some laurel trees, baywood logs,

about two feet wide, and they brought in a big madrone log and sawed that up. I don't know what they were going to make out of it.

Calciano: What's madrone?

Bergazzi: I guess I'd have to show you the tree. It is back up along the road going from here to Boulder Creek. They have kind of a wide green leaf, They have a red berry on them in the fall of the year. They were loaded with them last year. And kind of a reddish bark, very thin bark,

Calciano: When I drive back and forth between here and Palo Alto and am crossing over the mountains, I see a certain kind of tree that seems to lose its bark every once in awhile and has sort of a red color.

Bergazzi: That's a madrone. The branches don't grow too big.

Calciano: They're very pretty, They do look as if they've lost their bark.

Bergazzi: Yes. Very thin reddish bark -- you might call it a dark brown bark. That's madrone. I guess the berries are set on them now. I know last year they had a tremendous crop, and I think I saw some trees a while back with heavy blooms on them, so if you notice them sometime as you go along, just take a look.

Calciano: I wouldn't think they would be big enough for you to

find a two-foot log.

Bergazzi: Well, it just happened that some big ones grew there by the mill. They were maybe twenty inches through, eighteen or twenty inches through. Santa Clara Valley Mill and Lumber Company, which had their main lumber yards over in Santa Clara Valley, San Jose, wanted to experiment with them for furniture, I think. That's what their object was; they used that madrone wood for furniture. I don't know what they did with the laurel wood. Something else that might interest you was the way we made telephone poles. We put the log on the carriage against the standards. On the one end they wanted a nine-inch bottom and at the top only six inches, so they had a three-inch block (it was about three by six or eight) which they put in by the one standard, see. That shoved that log out so it was only six inches when the saw cut it. It was still nine inches down at the other end where it was against the metal standard, so it run off at an angle, putting that three-inch block in.

Calciano: That tapered them?

Bergazzi: They turned them using that three-inch block, so it wound up with a nine-inch butt on the pole and a six-inch top all ways, all four ways. It puzzled me for a

Calciano: Did they come out square?

Bergazzi: The bottom was square, the ones they made in my time. They were nine by nine at the base and six by six at the top; they were twenty-four foot poles.

Calciano: Did anyone round them off before they put them in the ground?

Bergazzi: No, they were square; they left them like that. And we had a lot of them after I went to work for the Coast Counties Gas and Electric. There were a lot of those old sawed poles, and how those line-men did hate to climb them -- square corners, you know. They were hard to climb because the men's hooks would kick out of them. They would slide back down the pole, see?

Calciano: I've never seen a square pole.

Bergazzi: Well, they were tapered and looked funny. They went right up to a point.

Frederick A. Hihn

Calciano: We're rather interested in Mr. Hihn; what did you know about him?

Bergazzi: Well, I don't know too much about him, outside of his lumbering. He acquired lots of timber here in the early days. He had a large tract up Soquel Creek that was cut. They went in there in 1926 with a mill. I

can't recollect the date that they finished the Monterey Bay Lumber Company.

Calciano: That must have been his son, wasn't it? The father died in 1913.

Bergazzi: Hihn did not mill the Soquel Creek timber, the company did. Probably it was the daughter. There was a Theresa Hihn, just a few years ago; whether she is living yet or not, I don't know, but I think she is. She has an orchard out at Valencia. I picked apples in it during the war when they were short of help, on week ends that is, on Saturdays and Sundays when they could get nobody to pick apples. I was working for Coast Counties Gas and Electric then,

Calciano: You never saw the old Mr. Hihn then, did you? As a little boy?

Bergazzi: No, I don't ever remember seeing him. If I did see him I didn't know him. I might have seen him, perhaps, going through someplace, maybe Soquel or someplace, but I didn't know who he was.

Calciano: What was the year that the Loma Prieta Company bought the Bridge Creek timber from Hihn?

Bergazzi: Oh, I was working in a mill over at Pescadero then; that was in 19 They first started operating in that mill that they rebuilt there in 1918, the second

time. They started because the lumber business got to booming after World War I and during the war. They went back into it because they had a chance to buy that lumber from Hihn. The Bridge Creek timber was over the hill from Hihn's other holdings. And I think they went in there in about 1917 -- it might have been a little earlier, because they did fall some trees there and make some posts and pickets; there are some big trees there. They had what they called the Bridge Creek Gulch there, on Bridge Creek, and there were some huge redwoods in there. I guess they got to figuring that that timber was just too nice to be making posts and stuff out of. And since the lumber business was picking up and they had the mill already partly built down there and the machinery down there partly installed, they figured they would just go to lumbering in there. So that's the way they got started there.

Calciano: What years did Hihn lumber? You mentioned several places.

Bergazzi: I believe they had their mills out in Valencia, the first ones.

Calciano: Do you know about when they started there?

Bergazzi: It was pretty near before my time, but I know that

they were sawing there at the same time that the old Loma Prieta Mill was sawing. That company started in the eighties.

Calciano: 1883, I believe.

Bergazzi: I believe it was '83 when they first bought in there.

Calciano: Was Hihn already going then?

Bergazzi: Well, I think they started sawing a little later than Hihn. They had to build the railroad in there. That took some time because it was four miles of it and they had to bridge that creek up there one, two, three, four different places, I believe.

Calciano: Did Loma Prieta have to do this?

Bergazzi: No, the Southern Pacific did it.

Calciano: Oh, why was that?

Bergazzi: Well, they were going to benefit from it. They got all that freight there, see.

Calciano: Well, why didn't they do it for Hihn?

Bergazzi: Well, I don't know whether Hihn needed any bridging or not.

Calciano: Oh, but at the Loma Prieta . . .

Bergazzi: Yes. People went up and down that Aptos Creek and the bridges are still standing where it was crossed in

places. Those bridges were built in the eighties. There was one a few years ago, just a little ways above Aptos, where Mangles dairy was in there. It was just a little ways above where the railroad track goes through there now; it went across the first little canyon that goes down there. They called it the half-way bridge. I have an idea that that is still there, too.

Calciano: There is one that is not very far from the mill site -
- maybe a mile or two.

Bergazzi: Down this side? That is the half way bridge. You saw that?

Calciano: I saw that one. No tracks or anything.

Bergazzi: No, no, those have been gone for years. You see we finished in July there, in 1921. That's forty-two years ago. Going into the forty-third year since we sawed the last log.

Calciano: So Hihn was up in Valencia in the eighties. How long did he lumber up there?

Bergazzi: Well, I think that Hihn lumbered in there about, well, it couldn't have been too many years. They had a pretty fair mill in there for those days, too. They were in there in the nineties -- that I know -- and they might have started in the late eighties. They

probably sawed in there for eight or ten years maybe, or something like that.

Calciano: And then where else did Hihn saw?

Bergazzi: Then from there he had one at Gold Gulch, on this side of Felton.

Calciano: When was that?

Bergazzi: That was in the late nineties too. So according to that, to my wife's first cousin (she was just a girl there, her father was an oxteam driver there at Gold Gulch, just this side of Felton, just a little ways), Hihn must have gone into Valencia country in the middle eighties, somewhere, and finished up in the early nineties. He probably sawed less than ten years; I imagine he did. I don't think there was enough timber there on his side, with the type of mill he had, to go that long, so in the nineties they came up here to Gold Gulch. I think they finished up here in the late nineties. Then he went out of the lumbering business for a while. Later he had this nice tract of timber up at Laurel -- that's on a branch of the Soquel Creek. I forget what the name of that creek is, but it branches up about six or seven miles above Soquel. The other little creek that branches off the

Soquel is down, about half a mile this side of Olive Springs, I guess. The little Hinckley Creek comes into the Soquel at Olive Springs. In 1904, I think, Hihn built up there and started sawing at Laurel, and he finished in 1914. The last sawing was in 1914, because my brother worked there in the mill when they finished up. And he was working at Newell Creek when they finished there. He was the fireman there, firing the boilers and finished there in 1913. As far as I know that's all the lumbering that Hihn did. That was the end of it there in 1914.

Calciano: I read that Hihn's Aptos mill at one point in the nineties was doing 70,000 board feet a day.

Bergazzi: No, that's a mistake. I know they never turned that. They never had that. It took a good mill in those days to cut 70,000. They never had any mills that would cut that much here. The Santa Cruz Lumber Company has a pretty modern one up there, a single band, only one carriage, but they cut 60,000 feet a day there now. It's a nice little mill.

Calciano: Well, I read this 70,000 feet in one of the books that was published about that time. [Phil Francis, Beautiful Santa Cruz County] You think it was exaggerating?

Bergazzi: Yes, that's a mistake.

PIECE WORK

Shingles

Calciano: Weren't you going to tell me about the split stuff today?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, I'll start with the shingles. Well, first they had to fell the trees, and they felled them up hill, of course, to save them.

Calciano: Did they have to pick special trees to make shingles?

Bergazzi: You had to have good ones.

Calciano: Clear wood, or number one wood?

Bergazzi: Oh it had to be clear, not a speck in shingles. It had to be absolutely clear and a pretty good grain too, fairly dense grain and not too hard a wood, because some of the redwood trees are pretty hard. They wouldn't use them. Yes, they had to be absolutely clear. The first growth redwoods were the very best. The best shingles were made from the butt-cut, the base. It was cut from there up a ways. Maybe they'd go up fifteen or twenty feet making bolts, or maybe further, depending upon the quality of the tree and

the grain in it, or whether there was any little knots. When they got up the tree to where there were a few little knots, why they made the wood into posts, pickets, and grape stakes.

Calciano: What did they do right after they felled the tree?

Bergazzi: They had to ring it, so they wouldn't have to saw through that bark with a cross-cut saw. Then they split the sapwood off.

Calciano: How far in was the sapwood?

Bergazzi: Oh, I'd say about two inches on the average tree; it all depended. An inch and a half or two.

Calciano: Oh.

Bergazzi: Some was heavier than others.

Calciano: What did they do next?

Bergazzi: Well, in a lot of instances they made shingle bolts. They were four feet long.

Calciano: Shingle bolts?

Bergazzi: Yes, and the shingles are sixteen inches long. They'd cut the bolt into three blocks, each sixteen inches long. That made three cuts, three blocks to one bolt.

Calciano: Oh.

Bergazzi: And they made the blocks quite a bit larger than the regular split cord wood, in order to be able to get

wide shingles. They'd make them about, oh, about 10 x 10 inches, 10 x 12, or maybe 8 x 10 or 8 x 12, whatever blocks they could get handy by splitting them out.

Calciano: So they would cut the four-foot bolt into three blocks?

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: They could get several, then, out of a tree five feet in diameter?

Bergazzi: Oh, they could get a lot of them out of that.

Calciano: Well, how big would their blocks be?

Bergazzi: Oh, they could get them all sizes. See, a tree five feet in diameter would be that thick, so they could get several blocks out of a cut. Then, next, they packed the bolts out with mules.

Calciano: After they split the four-foot cuts into 10 x 10 or 12 x 10 bolts?

Bergazzi: Yes, when they got enough of them. They used either mules or horses. If they were up quite a ways, why they went up with horses, that is if they could make a sled road without too much trouble. They went in and loaded them on sleds that had regular wood runners so they wouldn't go downhill too fast. And I imagine in later years they might have used tractors. They

probably do now if they still make bolts. But they had horses and sleds, regular old up and down sled runners made out of two-inch planks. Poor old horses, they had to work too, in those early days. Anyway, they took them out to a railroad track or a landing where they could either load them on a car or on wagons to haul them down to the mill where they were to mill them up.

Calciano: How did they mill them up?

Bergazzi: Well by that I mean cutting them into shingles. They had a bolter saw first, on the table, a big circular saw. They made two cuts in it in a four-foot bolt, and that made three sixteen-inch blocks, the right length for shingles, house shingles. What makes a shingle is a piece four inches wide, the thickness of a shingle, and sixteen inches long.

Calciano: Oh, I see.

Bergazzi: They call that a shingle. Of course, there's some that are that wide, some are wider, but that's what a shingle is.

Calciano: Is there any difference between the word shingle and shake?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes.

Calciano: How wide is a shake?

Bergazzi: Six inches, that's standard.

Calciano: A shake is six inches and a shingle is four?

Bergazzi: Well, no, a shingle, there's all widths, but that's what they call a shingle. Now you take a shingle twelve inches wide, there's three shingles in there, if the cut is solid and twelve inches wide. They figure four inches is what they call one shingle. Oh, there's one thing I forgot in the shingle department, about the drag saw. Sometimes they brought in logs, loaded them on the carriage, and then lowered the drag saw on them and cut them into sixteen-inch blocks.

Calciano: Why would they do that at the mill?

Bergazzi: Well, I guess they thought it would be better than handling those bolts out in the woods, see. They sometimes brought the whole log in there, that is usually a bunch of logs at the same time. They had to be very good logs and pretty straight, not too much of a turn on the base of it see, because right down at the base of the tree is where you get your best timber for shingles. Anyway, they'd draw them into the mill and cut the bolts or the logs into blocks. Then they'd pile all the shingle blocks on the floor in front of the shingle machine. The shingle machine set right

alongside, at right angles to, or parallel with, the shingle saw. The saw was about three feet in diameter, the shingle saw. It cut about three-eighths of an inch saw cut. The shingle sawyer loaded these blocks on the shingle machine, set them in there, and pulled a lever which clamped the block solid, because the block stood on end. Then he touched another lever and it started that machine going back and forth. They put them blocks in kind of corner-ways. The first cut came across diagonally through the corner of the block. That give them a face there so they could make a shingle about three inches wide.

Calciano: Why did they do it that way instead of lengthwise?

Bergazzi: Well, lengthwise would make a long, wide, flat piece, you see, and you'd have shingles all one width. They wouldn't work out too well on the roof,

Calciano: Oh, I see.

Bergazzi: They believed in wide shingles, but they didn't want them all that way, so they cut right across diagonally like that.

Calciano: How did they clamp it?

Bergazzi: The clamp pulled down. The machine had a little metal bottom and a little roller there and a roller on top

on the frame. It was an uncanny machine -- it worked automatically. The shingle was only five-sixteenths of an inch thick on the thick end and a sixteenth on the top end. They run down to nothing. After every cut that machine would push the block out so it was five-sixteenths of an inch plus the saw cut on, the bottom, and when it went to make the next cut, it would kick the top out so it was five-sixteenths plus the saw cut. The thin part would be on the bottom and vice versa. That kept the block straight up and down all the way through. Otherwise, after two or three cuts you would have had nothing. The corner they cut off was called the "shingle spault." And the last piece on the end was too, where they come down to the last little part.

Calciano: What did they do with that?

Bergazzi: They used it for wood.

Calciano: Firewood or what?

Bergazzi: Yes. They had a stove long enough to take that. It was fascinating to watch them reload the machine. The shingle sawyer stopped the machine, see, when he went to load it, and he'd throw that block in there. The way that he set it in there was uncanny. He'd hit that

spault with the new block and knock that clear out of the machine. But he never lost over two cuts, loading like that.

Calciano: That's amazing. Was it a skilled job, that kind of sawing?

Bergazzi: Yes, yes.

Calciano: Did you ever do it?

Bergazzi: Never got a chance, never worked at it. I only worked three weeks in the Newell Creek shingle mill before the main mill started up at Ben Lomond there.

Calciano: They used to have a separate shingle mill?

Bergazzi: They had a shingle mill above the saw mill there. The picture you're getting a copy of is of the main mill. The shingle mill was about just a mile above the main mill.

Calciano: Why didn't they use part of the main mill to make shingles?

Bergazzi: Well, they wanted it separate.

Calciano: What happened to the shingles after they were sawed?

Bergazzi: As soon as those shingles come off from the saw, they dropped in a bin right along side of the shingle sawyer. Then over near him set what they called the jointer. It had knives in it and trimmed the edges of

the shingles. The shingle sawyer held the straight edge of the shingles against the straight edge of the machine like that, against these knives that were whirling. He straightened one edge and then he flipped the shingle and straightened the other edge. And sometimes he got his fingers, nipped too. Boy, did that shave them off!

Calciano: Why wasn't the block smooth beforehand?

Bergazzi: Well, you see you had feather edges on the diagonal cuts. They weren't smooth.

Calciano: I see. Did he do a bunch of shingles at a time?

Bergazzi: No, no.

Calciano: One at a time?

Bergazzi: Yes, because they were all different widths, see.

Calciano: Oh, that's a lot of work then!

Bergazzi: Yes, but they were clever those boys were. Fast.

Calciano: Did they get as good pay as an edgerman or a trimmerman?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, they got good pay.

Calciano: After the sawyer straightened the edges, did he stack all the four-inch shingles together and all the six-inch shingles together?

Bergazzi: No, they were packed all together.

Calciano: Well how did they bundle them to sell them?

Bergazzi: They had a frame twenty inches wide and they laid one layer with the thick ends all this way, and then they started another layer with the thick ends all going the other way. They lapped them over one another, like that. They called that man the shingle weaver or packer -- either word is proper. The bundles were twenty-five rows high on both ends, on this end from here over there and on the other end; that made 250 shingles to a bundle.

Calciano: I see. One layer might have a twelve-inch shingle with two four-inch shingles, and another might ...

Bergazzi: That's right, but they fit in pretty close. The weaver had a good eye, and he would pick them out and lay them in there. There were 250 to a bundle, four bundles to a thousand. Oh, about the packing, they were 25 rows high, twenty inches wide, and about twenty inches the other way after the ends were lopped over. And they laid a one by two-inch strip down in the bottom of this frame, under the shingles. It went down the center and leveled the middle of the pile with the base of the frame that they were packing the shingles in. And they had a piece of tin metal nailed on the underside of that strip. It come out there long

enough to go up, when the bundle was completed, and nail on to the other strip that laid across the top. Both strips were one by two the whole width of the bundle, and they put pressure on them and squeezed that bundle together in the center and nailed, because you know they were laying loose, just lopped over and laying loose. They clamped the center of the bundle together and onto the top strip. Then they took and nailed the other end there and released the clamp and they had their solid bundle of shingles, 250 shingles.

Calciano: Oh, my, you could just pick them up?

Bergazzi: Yes, pick them up.

Calciano: Were shingles a profitable item for the mill?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. And that mill up there, with a good run of blocks and a good sawyer, would cut about thirty-five to forty thousand shingles a day.

Calciano: Oh, my goodness. That was with just two men, the sawyer and the weaver?

Bergazzi: Yes, from thirty-five to forty thousand in that mill up there. Some cut less, that is other mills in different parts of the country.

Calciano: But didn't they have four or five sawyers and four or five weavers here?

Bergazzi: Well, in the bigger mills they did, where they had more machines.

Calciano: But up here they didn't?

Bergazzi: No, not here. I don't think there was ever a mill in this county that had over one machine. In fact, I'm almost positive.

Calciano: Do they make wood shingles today?

Bergazzi: Yes, but they make them up north. I don't think there's a shingle mill in this county. Well, there's no more timber much here in Santa Cruz, you know; it's all gone. But most of your shingles, now, come from Washington -cedar. Cedar and redwood, they're about a standoff. Cedar's a durable shingle too. It has the same quality of wood as the redwood.

Calciano: Shingles could never be split, could they?

Bergazzi: No, you couldn't split a shingle.

Calciano: But they did split shakes?

Bergazzi: They did. Well, they made sawed shakes, too, years ago. They were not like these split ones.

Calciano: They weren't as good?

Bergazzi: No. See the saws, in sawing anything, open up the pores, and the wood don't weather as good. The split shakes are smooth, and they stand the weather much

better, won't wear out near as quick.

Calciano: I see.

Shakes

Calciano: Now what is the size of a shake?

Bergazzi: About one-third of an inch thick, six inches wide, and three feet long. That's the standard shake.

Calciano: Did you ever see them splitting the shakes?

Bergazzi: Yes, some of them. And the tool they used to split shakes was called a froe. It was about two inches wide and one-fourth of an inch thick of steel. I'd say it was about fourteen inches long and about one-fourth of an inch in thickness, and then they ground it so the edges come down to a sharp edge; they centered it see, beveled it from both sides. And they had a handle screwed up on one end with a round hole. They put a wooden handle in there and on the other end a little metal thing you get hold of. They laid that right across the wood block, about a third of an inch in, and tapped it with a mallet. That started the split, and then they took their hands and pushed down and just opened them right up. It split good because the grain was good.

Calciano: They split a whole bunch at once?

Bergazzi: No, just one at a time. They made the wood into bolts first, six inches wide one way and that's all. And they made them either 6 x 6, or 6 x 8, or 6 x 10, however good the grain was you see, because with a bolt ten inches wide they could keep a splitting a longer time.

Calciano: So, they'd split them one at a time, then?

Bergazzi: One at a time. Yes, they'd start it with a mallet and then take their hands and push down on the froe and just open the wood right up. And sometimes as soon as the mallet opened it up a little, the grain would be so good that the shake would pop right off, three feet down on the bolt, full length.

Calciano: How long would it take a man to get the thirty shakes out of the ten-inch block?

Bergazzi: Well, wouldn't take them very long; they went pretty fast. I couldn't give you any time.

Calciano: They didn't lose any wood either, with saw cutting, because they just split, is that right?

Bergazzi: Yes, no loss there. And about shakes, it took a special tree for shakes. It had to be an old growth tree; had to be a real old virgin timber.

Calciano: A new, younger tree wouldn't do?

Bergazzi: No, no.

Calciano: It wasn't solid enough if it was a young tree?

Bergazzi: In a young tree the wood is not strong enough, not durable. See a second growth redwood, to be any good, would have to be, I'd say, at least five hundred years old. That is to be good for anything like that, to make good shakes or good shingles, because the wood is not near matured, you know, until the redwood is an old, old tree. They live for hundreds of years; some of them around here are a couple of thousand years old.

Calciano: Did it take a better tree for shakes than it did for shingles?

Bergazzi: Yes. They went and looked at the trees, and they could pretty near tell by the nice straight seams on a bark of a tree that it was fairly soft and straight grained. But to be sure they went up about six or seven feet from the ground, and they cut a notch in eight inches wide and about three inches deep in there, and then they come down below about 14 or 16 inches and cut another notch in there. Then they split that piece out, and they tested it to see what the grain was, how it would split. They could tell from that whether that was a shake tree or not.

Calciano: I guess there were men who did nothing but pick out shake trees. Or were they regular fallers?

Bergazzi: Well, they done lots of things; they made pickets and poles and everything. They knew what the wood was.

Calciano: They went in ahead of the regular loggers then?

Bergazzi: Well, not necessarily. Sometimes the loggers would pick a shake tree and leave it. Maybe in some particular place they could find one or two good ones, and two big trees would make a payload of shakes.

Calciano: Oh really? Could they split shakes almost all the way up to the top?

Bergazzi: Well no, they go further up than they could with shingles, but as soon as they got up to the little knots, they stopped. The shake wouldn't take knots. Then they made poles, pickets, and grape stakes out of the balance of the tree.

Calciano: Why could they go further than with shingles?

Bergazzi: Well, shake was a different structure there I guess; it was a little different type of a product. If a tree was long and straight grained and was a little harder wood, you could still make good shakes out of it. Where a shingle has to be just a little softer, because a little thin shingle, especially with that

thin end where it come up to a sixteenth of an inch, well driving a nail close to it, or handling it around, might split it pretty easy. So they didn't want too much of that.

Calciano: Which were more profitable, shingles or shakes?

Bergazzi: I think the shakes were more expensive due to the type of tree it took to make them. They weren't too plentiful, shake trees weren't.

Calciano: How many would you find in a gulch?

Bergazzi: Well, that's a hard question to answer. It's a pretty hard one; I'm sorry, but I couldn't. In some gulches there was more shake timber than others, so that's the way it went.

Calciano: But, maybe one in a hundred trees or one in five hundred or ...?

Bergazzi: Well, I would say, oh yes, probably out of a hundred trees, maybe a hundred and fifty, you'd get a good shake tree. And you might get more; it all depends, see, on how it grew, or on what nature done there.

Split Stuff

Calciano: Railroad ties were both hewed and sawed, weren't they?

Bergazzi: They split railroad ties many, many years ago, but the

sawed ones were the best. They were even, see. They were absolutely square, and where they laid them they laid flat because they were uniform.

Calciano: You could take almost any kind of wood for a tie, couldn't you?

Bergazzi: Well, it had to be a certain quality. I'd say good number two lumber, number two wood, would make a good railroad tie. It could take small knots in it too, see.

Calciano: You said they also made grape stakes?

Bergazzi: Yes, posts, pickets, and grape stakes.

Calciano: Now, posts, pickets, and grape stakes weren't sawed, were they?

Bergazzi: No, they were all split stuff.

Calciano: What did they use to split a grape stake?

Bergazzi: Want to start with the little stakes first? Calciano: All right.

Bergazzi: Well, the standard grape stakes were three feet long, and for special orders they would make them four (some people wanted them longer). They would have to fell a tree and go through the same process as for making shingle bolts. Then they would have to check it all off. Grape stakes are two by two, two inches square. They're split. No sap in them, either.

Calciano: Oh really? Why do they get rid of the sap?

Bergazzi: It rots easy. It wouldn't last at all in the ground.

Sapwood is no good at all, good for nothing, only firewood.

Calciano: Well, when you sawed just regular lumber, did they always cut the sapwood off?

Bergazzi: Well, the edger took that off. When the wide board laying flat went through the edger saws they took the sapwood out. When they made grape stakes they always split the cut right in the center. Your log was a round log, see. Well, there's always a heartcheck in redwood where you can tell where the center is. It was a crease in the center of the log. They split the round log there with steel wedges and sledge hammers. Then when the halves laid over they checked them all off in squares with a marker, and then they went to work and split *them*. They were two by two, all checked and squared, marked on the ends of the cuts, on the sawed ends. They split with the grain, see. They split them in endwards with steel wedges.

Calciano: I see. They couldn't use this heartcheck?

Bergazzi: No, they wouldn't use that part of the tree. They split pickets the same way as grape stakes, the same procedure.

Calciano: I see. But the dimensions of a picket were different, weren't they?

Bergazzi: Two by three by six feet for a regular fence picket.

Calciano: Two by three inches?

Bergazzi: Two by three and six feet long.

Calciano: Did they ever make any skinnier pickets? Half-inch pickets or one-inch pickets?

Bergazzi: No, no never did. And the post, a standard post, is four by five by seven feet long.

Calciano: By sevens

Bergazzi: Yes, that was standard. Four inches by five inches, that is the end of it, you know, and seven feet long. And, as I say, the picket is two by three by six and the grape stake two by two by three, or four if it had to be a special order. The grape stakes, they use them when they set out the young vineyards you know, the little vines. They drive that stake down ten inches in the ground along side of the vine, and then they tie the vine to it to keep it growing straight.

Calciano: You certainly have a comprehensive knowledge of the lumbering industry.

Bergazzi: Well, I'll tell you Mrs. Calciano, I think I'm the only man living today, especially in this Monterey Bay

area, that has gone through the mill from the falling of the tree until the finished product was put out.

Calciano: Well, you never did falling did you?

Bergazzi: I did two winters.

Calciano: Oh, you did two winters? What years were those?

Bergazzi: I felled a lot of trees in the spring of 1918, and then up in Pescadero in the late fall of 1918 and in the early spring of 1919 I felled trees. That's the same year when they decided not to run up there; that was in March. Yes, I fell timber, going back to that, and I peeled with a five-foot pole, and I worked on the donkeys out in the woods a little bit, enough to set rigging now and then, you know. And then I worked in the mills, and I wound up sawing the lumber complete, finished it up.

Calciano: You never split shakes though, did you?

Bergazzi: No, I didn't. (Laughter) And I never sawed shingles.

Calciano: But you've done just about everything one can do.

Bergazzi: I did, just about. I done that, I can truthfully say.

MEN AT LEISURE

The Off-Season

Calciano: Now the falling was done in the winter, and the sawing was done in the summer. What did you do in the winter

when there wasn't sawing to be done?

Bergazzi: Well, I didn't do much of anything. There wasn't nothing else much to do unless -- well, one year I worked up at the cement plant for just a month and a half, I guess. But I didn't want to work there. We just got by somehow or other.

Calciano: Were the wages good enough that you earned enough in the summer months to support yourself all year?

Bergazzi: If you were conservative; well, you had to be conservative. When the work stopped your wages stopped. There was no unemployment insurance, no social security, nothing like they have now. How a lot of people got by -- well, they charged their grocery bills, and a lot of them had to go on credit and then pay up the next summer. When they got paid up at the end of the summer (that is some of them) they would just start going in debt again. (Laughter)

Calciano: When you sawed for this one company from 1905 to '13 or so, were you told at the end of each year that you would be hired the next spring?

Bergazzi: Oh, they expected you back!

Calciano: Was it just a verbal contract or did they sign ...

Bergazzi: There was no contract. Just verbal, that's all. They'd

say, "Well, we'd like to have you back," which they would, too. A sawyer was an important man, and so was the carriage setter and the edgerman. They were all skilled. It was skilled labor, and it was rough too, a lot of it. They had some wonderful men there.

Calciano: About when would the mills open in the spring?.

Bergazzi: We used to make it a point up here to start generally about the first of April, or sometime in April, when the weather got well enough settled so they figured the big rains were over and they could go to logging. Most of the mills had a little log pond where they could log a few days and fill the pond up before they started the sawing.

Calciano: The loggers, of course, worked in the winter. Did they do anything in the summer? The ones that felled?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. They worked in the summertime at other things. The regular loggers that cut down the logs were timber fallers, too. They did both.

Calciano: So they quite often had an all-year type job, whereas the people who worked in the mill were laid off for three months?

Bergazzi: Once in a while there was a mill man who was a timber faller too. He would go out and fall, you know. They had to fell a lot of trees in winter to keep the mill

going. There is more or less waste too, you know, in falling trees. Quite a bit at times, up towards the top when a log got so small they wouldn't take them anyway.

Calciano: They were left to rot?

Bergazzi: They weren't worth while to bring in.

Calciano: Did they bring in any for firewood, or not even for that?

Bergazzi: No, they didn't bother with that.

Calciano: How late did the mill stay open in the fall? You said they open about April; when did they close?

Bergazzi: It all depended on the rains, too. You would get heavy rains in November sometimes and that would close them down. Then maybe sometimes they would go into December. It all depended on how good your weather was.

Calciano: I understood from Mr. Stoodley that sometimes in the winter men would do split stuff and firewood.

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. They cut wood and made pickets, posts, grape stakes, and if there were any shake trees anywhere they'd make shakes, too. Regular three-foot long redwood shakes which is a wonderful roofing, split shakes. Well, I think there are some old shakes around here sixty years old.

Calciano: Did you ever do any of this?

Bergazzi: No, I never did. Oh, I cut a little wood when we finished up Newell Creek in 1914. We got through in December -- I think about December 12 we sawed the last of the logs. Then for a couple of months we cut a little wood, a little madrone that stood across from the log pond. There was quite a bit up on the side there. We put in time there until we got ready to go up to the Southern Lumber Company. We went up there in March.

Wages and Hours

Calciano: Let's see now, when you first started working it was an eleven and one-half hour day?

Bergazzi: Yes, that was in Hinckley Basin.

Calciano: And you got how much for the whole day?

Bergazzi: I got a dollar and a half myself. Some of the older men were getting two dollars a day. Maybe some of them got two twenty-five. It all depended upon what they were doing. Of course the edgerman, the sawyer, and them got more, you know.

Calciano: What would they get?

Bergazzi: Well I don't know what they were getting. I don't

remember what the edgerman was getting or the sawyers, but I know what the sawyer got after I went to Newell Creek. They got \$150 a month. They got their board, too. That was really good money. For \$150 back then you could have a good lot here in town.

Calciano: Really! So it was an eleven and one-half hour day and you got \$1.50. Then you struck for an hour noon, you said.

Bergazzi: We struck for an hour noon in 1902, in the spring of 1902. A whole bunch got together, and most of the fellows there figured one day we'd just go out there. When the whistle blew, there we were, by the edger. The edgerman in the mill there was the spokesman for the bunch. We all got together then, and when the whistle blew the engineer started the mill up, see. He got the engine running, the machinery all running. Nobody moved. Poor old Jim Walker's office was right down at the tail end of the mill. He could see us through the window there. He looked up there, and I guess he wondered what was going on there. He walked out the front door and stood down at the tail end of the mill and looked up at us. It was about fifty or sixty feet up there. He still couldn't figure out what was up, so he walked up slowly to where we were and

said, "Well, what's the matter, boys? We had a lunch, I think." So our spokesman said, "Well, we want an hour noon. I think we are entitled to it. This half-hour business is no good!" "Well," he says, "we'll have to wait until I see Mr. Bassett, I, guess." (He was the main superintendent.) The spokesman says, "No, we want it right now." So we didn't go to work until one o'clock. Walker called Bassett up anyway, and Bassett come up in a day or two and told Jim that it was all right. He knew it was overdue. He said, "They are entitled to it. That's all right." Old Bassett was a pretty smart old boy, too.

Calciano: He didn't let you get the pay raise in 1904, did he?
Was he the one who said no?

Bergazzi: Yes, well, he is the one. It was kind of hard going for them too, you know. Although business was commencing to boom there then, and things were picking up. But they still couldn't quite see their way clear then,

Calciano: What happened when several of you left your jobs? Were they able to find replacements?

Bergazzi: I guess they had to get some others in a few days.
There were a few, not too many, that were anxious to go to work. They weren't hurt too bad by four or five

of us. Just temporarily, that's all. Then you know the same company had a lumber yard over here where Opal Cliffs is now, in that patch just beside the railroad track, north of the track. They were handling the lumber there and had a planing mill there and everything. I had a neighbor that lived up Glen Haven Way -- Mr. Jones -- he is gone now too. He was a good plane man, and he was working down there for them at Capitola at the lumber yard. I was talking to him one day and he said, "Aren't you working?" I said, "No, I quit over there a while back." He said that they needed men at Capitola at the lumber yard there and did I want to go down there and go to work? I said, "Sure." I was anxious to go to work again, and he said they paid two dollars a day there. Well, that was all right with me, rather than do nothing so ...

Calciano: What had you been getting at the other place?

Bergazzi: Two dollars. That's when we struck for two and a quarter and didn't get it. So Bill (we called him by his first name then, everybody did) said, "You come down in the morning." He lived half a mile below us, I guess. "You can ride back and forth with me." I said, "O.K., Bill, I'll be down in the morning," and I was. I went down and went to work there and worked like a

demon; I sawed wood. Frank Cook was clerk there and was yard boss. He had been up at the old mill and came back along about four o'clock. You know they quit at five. They only worked ten hours then, I guess -- well until around five o'clock anyway. That was better than the eleven hours at the mill. Anyway, he said, "Were you in on the strike up at the mill a while back?" I said, "I sure was, Mr. Cook." He said, "You know your work is awfully satisfactory, but I am going to have to let you go. That's the orders. I would like to keep you, but that is the orders I've got." You see they had a list of those that were on the strike and that's the only time I was ever fired off a job in all my life.

Calciano: Oh dear, you only worked one day.

Bergazzi: One day -- I got two big silver dollars.

Calciano: Silver!

Bergazzi: I'll never forget that -- two big silver dollars. So I went home. I was kind of disappointed then, because I wanted to go to work. There was work there at home, but you didn't get much money there in those days, so that's when my neighbor told me about the Newell Creek job.

Calciano: You said that when you were at the Hinckley Basin you'd take fifty-minute noons and thus get off an hour earlier on Saturday. Is that right?

Bergazzi: We did, and at Newell Creek we did that too. Then we'd quit at five o'clock on Saturday. Why we thought we were getting through at noon at five o'clock, especially in summer when the sun was high yet.

Calciano: You really had some time left! Do you remember what the pay of a dogger or sawyer was at various periods?

Bergazzi: I don't remember what the sawyer got when I first went to work at Hinckley Basin. He was the poor fellow that was killed in the earthquake, Fred Peaslee, and I think he got something over \$100 a month and he got his board with that, too. That was clear, no tax or anything, and that was quite a bit of money in those days. But when I went to work at Newell Creek (that was in 1905), the sawyer there got \$150 a month, and he got his board and his cabin, too. There was no charge for that.

Calciano: Of course he only worked for seven months or so.

Bergazzi: Yes, weather permitting. Till the heavy rains came in the fall. Then that stopped all the logging. When I went to work there I was the dogger, and I got \$2.25 a day. It cost fifty cents a day for board -- that left

me a \$1.75 a day net. I'll never forget the first check I got there, I was only nineteen years old. It was for the month of May and was \$44.04. I thought I was a millionaires That much money in those days! It was, too. You could buy half the county for \$44 then.
(Laughter)

The Cabins and Cookhouse

Calciano: What were the cabins like?

Bergazzi: Oh, they were just straight up and down boards. No ceiling. Shake roofs and how the rain did pound those old shakes! And it was welcome too, in the fall, after working all summer, long hours, eleven hours a day we worked. Just imagine going to work from six in the morning until six at night in November, like now, when it's dark. It would be dark in the mornings and the fellows would get up and let out war whoops out there in the dark. We had a washstand and washbasin outside on a little stand built up outside the door of the cabin, and you would hear them letting out war whoops. They would echo up and down those canyons. (Laughter)
I'll never forget that!

Calciano: How many people slept in a cabin?

Bergazzi: Two to a cabin.

Calciano: And they had beds for you, I guess.

Bergazzi: Oh, they just had bunks built up there, and then later on we had our own beds. We brought our own springs, you know, these cots, folded up, with a little mattress, and we had to furnish our own blankets.

Calciano: And they had a dining hall?

Bergazzi: They had a cookhouse. The cook was there. And they fed good.

Calciano: What was a typical dinner?

Bergazzi: Well, we generally had meat. Sometimes we had steak or stew, and they had potatoes and bread and butter. They always had dessert -- pudding or pie, or something like that.

Calciano: And what did you usually have for breakfast?

Bergazzi: We usually had hot cakes and eggs and bacon and biscuits; we had regular old biscuits. They had Chinese cooks and they were good ones. They were really better cooks than our white cooks. And the Chinese were more reliable because a lot of the white cooks drank quite a bit. Your white cooks would work till they got a good payday and then would go down to town. First thing you knew you had no cook. And maybe

you had thirty or forty men waiting.

Calciano: Starving to death.

Bergazzi: Those big burly fellows, hungry, you know. (Laughter).

Calciano: Did you get a hot lunch?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, it was warm at noon. Excepting, the loggers.

Most of them, I guess, took their lunch with them out in the woods. But they had plenty. They had good meat sandwiches and stuff like that.

Calciano: You didn't have any coffee breaks, did you? (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Oh, boy, you'd have had one coffee break and you'd have kept right on going down the road. (Laughter) It would have been a one-way coffee break. I think it would do some people good now to have about a month of that type of schedule. A lot of people want everything for nothing. It's wonderful to have wonderful working conditions and good pay, but some people are going a little beyond that, I think.

Calciano: Yes, it is getting a little out of hand, maybe.

Bergazzi: I may be old-fashioned, but I think it is getting to be a little too much. People seem to keep wanting a little more and more and are doing less and less. There has got to be a little out-put too. In fact our last two president's, Kennedy and Eisenhower, told the people that. In a polite way they told them the con-

sequences of keeping on, but they don't seem to pay any attention to it.

Calciano: Did the morale or friendliness of the men vary from mill to mill?

Bergazzi: They were all pretty friendly. They got along very well. It was very seldom that there was any trouble between the men. And sometimes when they did disagree they got over it and were friends again, which was a good thing, too.

Calciano: And what about the relationship with the employers? Was that pretty good, too?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. That was always pretty good. But those bosses were pretty hard-boiled in those days. They were rough and tough and wanted a lot of work done; they would crowd you a little. Well, once in awhile some of the men would get up on their ear. Very few cases where they did, but sometimes they would fight back. And the bosses admired them for it. They told them that. They'd say, "I admire the grit that you've got." They admired the man who had the nerve to stand up and battle them back, believe it or not. But they were all pretty good. They respected their bosses. And the bosses respected them pretty well, too.

In the Evening

Calciano: What did the men do when they finished their day's work? They went to the cookhouse and ate ...

Bergazzi: Yes, they ate, and, believe it or not, they went down and ate before they washed.

Calciano: First things first! (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Yes, they went down and ate right away when the whistle blew. They went down and ate and then they'd go up to their cabins, or maybe they would sit around the cookhouse steps a little bit and talk a little. You know how it is in the summer. Of course when it got dark, the first thing they did was go up to their cabins. They lit their lamp or whatever they had there because there were no electric lights up in the cabins there. Just the mill and lumber yard was all they had then. They'd light their lamps and wash up, and they'd sit around and talk and visit back and forth amongst the cabins and talk about old times, and one thing and another.

Calciano: Did you have a lot of chairs in the cabins?

Bergazzi: Oh, they didn't have too many. They made do with little wooden benches. They had plenty of lumber to make those out of, and we'd sit on those things, and

stools you know. And we sat on the edge of their beds.

Calciano: Any card playing?

Bergazzi: Yes, they played cards, and once in awhile for money.

They gambled a little, but not too bad. They had to have something to kill time. Little poker games.

Calciano: Were a number of them drinking men, or were they pretty much not?

Bergazzi: They were not too bad.

Calciano: Could they drink in their cabins, or did they have to go down to town?

Bergazzi: Well, they could buy their own stuff and bring it up there if they wanted to. There were no regulations against that. In fact there was a winery up on the hill at the Newell Creek Mill. There's Newell Creek and then there is Love Creek. The winery was in between them. And an old German (Jake Kober, poor old fellow) ran it. I knew his daughter and I knew his son and they are all gone now. There was Jake, and Anita was the girl. She was a big red-headed girl. They were big burley people, and she was a nice looking girl, too. And Jake, he was kind of a big, gawky, overgrown, German boy, and he was red-haired too -- a big fellow. I hunted deer with Jake up there. Somebody murdered him on Love Creek several years ago. They found him

dead on the road up to Love Creek and nobody ever found out who killed that boy. They have no idea what was anybody's object, because he was a harmless young fellow, unless somebody figured he might have had a few dollars, or something. But it was nobody from around here that ever did that.

Calciano: When did this happen?

Bergazzi: Several years ago. I'm sorry, but I can't remember the year. But anyway, getting back to the winery, one night someone said, "Let's take a walk up to Kober's winery." I know they used to go up there and get gallons of wine there, twenty-five cents a gallon. He made burgundy wine and he made a white wine there. He was one of those old German wine-makers that knew how to do it. He made real good wine. So I said, "O.K., I'll go up with you." And we had a trail up there, going across the upper end of the pond on the logs. They were bobbing up and down in the water, but they were laying right together there. It was narrow up there though, and we were all sober, so even if we fell in we could get out. So we took off and went up that trail there, and it was pitch dark there. No lantern, no nothing with us. And there had been a little fire up there on the hill there, not too long

before, that had burned a little spot there, probably as big as this house here. How come it didn't burn any more than that I'll never know. We were going along in the dark and it was a warm summer night; you can get pretty hot in Indian summer, and we heard a little buzz there. I heard it too. Somebody said, "That's a rattler," and it was, too. A rattlesnake. And one of the boys had a block of those old sulfur matches. They used to come in blocks, years ago, and the blocks were maybe about 3/4 of an inch square and the matches, oh, there were a couple of hundred of them on the block. So he lit a couple of those matches and looked around and there was this little rattlesnake. He was a little fellow; he only had two rattles, but he was dangerous so we jumped on him and stomped him to death. Then we went on up and the boys got their wine and we came back down. No lantern or nothing. We were just like deer going up through there. There was a little trail there, after a fashion. Poor old Jake Kober.

Calciano: Is the winery still around?

Bergazzi: No, that's gone now. It's changed hands. I don't know who has it now.

Hunting

Bergazzi: Another thing up there at Newell Creek, I used to like to hunt deer. I was raised in the primitive days-and my dad had an old shotgun to shoot rabbits or quail now and then, never very much. I got to be a regular Daniel Boone. That was kind of born in me, the hunting instinct. There was a lot of quail, lot of rabbits, wild pigeons and tree squirrels. I couldn't use that shotgun until I was thirteen years old and one day I came in and I saw a nice big rabbit sitting out in the field there. He was sitting there all humped up, facing the brush. I went over to my dad, "Gee, there's a big nice rabbit out there." I figured he might go over and get him. He said, "I'll load one barrel." It was a muzzle-loader, you know; you poured the powder in and tamped it in with a rod from the outer end. "I'll load one barrel for you and you go over there and see if you can get him." So I did, and I got the rabbit. There was a stump between me and the rabbit on the edge of the brush and I had to go swing south -- I shoot left-handed, see.

Calciano: You are a left-handed person?

Bergazzi: Half and half; half right-handed and half left.

Calciano: But you shoot left.

Bergazzi: Yes. I sneaked up there and I had to lean out, you know. I didn't want to scare it so I raised that gun up a leaning out there and I let him have it. I flattened him out. Was I tickled. Thirteen years old, I was.

Calciano: Was hunting a popular sport?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. Although a lot of people didn't like it. Of course, there were not too many people here then, either. I don't know, I started hunting right away. That is, it was born right in me, because I watched my dad shoot quail. We had those by the thousands. We had that little old double-barrel muzzle-loader, sixteen gauge, not a breach-loader like they have now. You had to put the powder and the charge in the muzzle end and then ram it down ...

Calciano: How did you ever catch anything? (Laughter)

Bergazzi: I got that first rabbit sixty-four years ago last September. Was I proud when I picked that rabbit up and walked home with it. My Dad said, "Next time you go out I'll load the other barrel so you can have two barrels loaded when you go hunting." So he did a few times, and then after that I got so I could take my own powder and shot along and load it myself. He

showed me how to do it.

Calciano: That was dangerous, wasn't it, loading it yourself?

Bergazzi: Well no, the only danger was when you put the cap on.

There was a little metal tip there that stuck up with a little cap on it when the hammer went down over it, When you pressed the hammer down hard or let it slip down, of course the gun would fire. But you always kept the barrels away from you. I see about accidents occasionally now -- people get killed cleaning their guns. How do they do it? Or they get shot with a weapon that is four feet long.

Calciano: A lot of them get hurt when they go through fences, don't they?

Bergazzi: You know, Mrs. Calciano, it's the most foolish thing on earth. They should poke that gun through ahead of them.

Calciano: That's what I would think. You'd put it through and then climb over.

Bergazzi: Lay it on the ground and then shove it through the fence and then you go over here some place and crawl through and then go over and pick it up and bring it up with that muzzle pointed away from you. Or before they go through the fence they should take the load out of the chamber. That's safer.

Accidents and Remedies

Calciano: Were there many accidents in the mills?

Bergazzi: Not too often. I know once I got nicked on the saw and tore my thumb nail off. I went downtown and had it dressed and went back to work the same day. Thought nothing of it. It was torn right off, too, right to the bone. I could feel it all that night; I didn't sleep very much.

Calciano: Did most of the lumbermen have home remedies if they got a stomachache or headache or such?

Bergazzi: No, they didn't even have a first aid kit. They maybe had a little gauze and iodine. You know what I saw a man do? He got cut with an ax. Some of the men chewed tobacco and they'd take a big chats out of their mouth and put it right on their cut. And that's true. That's no kidding. Most of the times when we were cut or scratched we never even stopped to wash it. We just kept on working and it healed itself somehow. Now when I think of the infection a person might get, you know, very easy too, I wonder how we lived.

Calciano: I was wondering also, did they use any patent medicines or liniments for charleyhorses or such?

Bergazzi: Oh, I guess they had horse liniment, or something. I wished I could think of the names of some of those

things they had many many years ago when I was a kid. Something somebody dreamt up. I don't know whether they did any good or not. I never used any of it. In fact, so far I've been fortunate. I haven't had to go to doctors much. In fact the only thing I've wound up with is this emphysema. And it's miserable.

Calciano: You can be glad you don't smoke, at least, because if you did you'd be worse off and you'd have to cut it out, too.

Smoking

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. People who have emphysema and smoke are foolish.

Calciano: It's a hard habit to break, though, from what I hear.

Bergazzi: Well, you know it is and it isn't. I smoked for years and I quit in 1949, in December.

Calciano: That's quite remarkable.

Bergazzi: I was working down there at the Coast Counties Gas and Electric and I told the boys, "One of these days I'm going to quit." There was a fellow named Lee Arvig, a little Swedish boy, that is Swedish descent -- he was born and raised in Minnesota. He was a good boy, a good worker, a wonderful fellow; he was pretty wild,

and he drank quite a bit years ago, but he was a good worker and a good man to work with. I said, "Lee, I'm going to quit these things," and he said, "You can't quit them." I said, "I'll show you one of these days whether I can quit them or not," and I quit them right off and I've never taken one since. I wonder now why I ever smoked at all. I got started when I was seventeen years old with the lumberjacks up in the Hinckley Basin. They started me to smoking after I had worked there two or three years.

Calciano: Did you make your own?

Bergazzi: Yes. I did most of the time I was smoking. I don't think they were as harmful as these you buy. Of course I don't know. They all are harmful; none of them are good.

Calciano: What about chewing tobacco? Did you ever try that?

Bergazzi: I took a few chews. I could never go that. Oh, I don't like it. I don't see how anyone could ever chew tobacco.

Calciano: From what you mention, apparently quite a few of the lumbermen did.

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. But they weren't too bad though. Smoked a pipe, most of them. There were very few cigarette smokers in the early days. Hardly anybody. The only

ones that smoked cigarettes were our natives here. Many of the boys I worked with were from foreign countries. The majority of them were Portuguese and Italians, boys from there. There were a few Swedish boys, and Norwegians and Finlanders. The majority of them were of those five races. They were all wonderful men, too. I can say that for them, because I know; I was with them. And those men never smoked cigarettes very much. They'd smoke a pipe or

Calciano: Who started you on cigarettes, then?

Bergazzi: Well, some of our natives here were smoking them, see?

Calciano: Did they have chewing gum as well as chewing tobacco back in those days?

Bergazzi: Well, there was chewing gum, but nobody bought it much. We were way out in the jungle where we didn't even know what that stuff was!

Calciano: But the stores carried it?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. They had it. Not as many varieties as they have now, but they had it. In fact I remember Wrigley's. They've been going for years. They're the oldest in the country.

The Earthquake and the Hinckley Basin Slide

Calciano: I wanted to ask you about the earthquake.

Bergazzi: Yes, I well remember that.

Calciano: You went up there to help dig the men out, didn't you?

Bergazzi: I went up that night, yes. We hired the surrey. There were four of us went up. My brother-in-law was one of them; he has been dead now for ten, eleven years. He knew some of the fellows that were buried up there. We came down from Ben Lomond and got up there that evening. We ate there; they had a temporary place, a big tent put up, where they cooked to feed people there. That was down this side of where the slide was. The road up to the mill was a wagon road. A fellow there by the name of George Van Winkle was running that. He had a pack train -- a mule pack train. He packed tanbark and pickets and things out from up in there. We walked on up that road -- all we had was lanterns. When we got up on the slide we started digging there. I knew approximately where the cookhouse had been, the cabins there, you know. But Lord, it was -- well with that vast gully full of dirt you didn't know how deep down they were. I had an idea, probably, because I knew where the cabins were, but they were all buried up. The cookhouse was buried up. They had set up on the slope on that side of the road. We dug around there and after a little bit it

commenced shaking again. Tremors shook all that night and part of the next day. You could feel them every once in a while. It was pitch dark outside of where our lanterns were. Of course we were in no danger there, really. We were away from the slopes. The only steep place was on the other side, but that was back quite a ways because the slide had run across quite a ways to where we were. Sometimes you would hear a boulder or something let go -- you'd hear a noise up there in the dark. But what I was leery of was coming down the road. It was steep on both sides coming down out of there, and if it happened to shake and some let go up in there When you were walking down there with little old lanterns you'd hear something coming, but you didn't know where it was going to hit. We worked there until about eleven o'clock that night. Then seeing that it was useless and shaking continuously we figured well, fellows, we'd better go back down, get out of here. We could do no good, didn't have a chance on earth of finding them. In fact it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. So we came on down and went to bed. We slept in the haybarn there. One of the fellows that had worked at the mill had been an edgerman there, too. He was Portuguese;

Joe Pimentel was his name. He said, "Well boys, we've got no extra beds here, nothing, but there is a lot of good hay up in the barn." (They had a couple of horses in the barn, I think.) So we said, "That's good enough for us." (It wasn't cold.) We went up and crawled in the hay there and slept there where the horses were eating hay, you know. We slept. It didn't bother us. Along toward morning here come Joe up there; it was dark yet. I don't know what he was going to do -- feed the horses or something, or see how we were getting along. I was awake and there was another fellow with him and I heard Joe tell him, "Be careful now, don't step on the poor boys. They are in the hay here somewhere." He thought we were buried up four feet deep in the hay. (Laughter) I'll never forget that.

Calciano: You went back up and got a few men out that next day, didn't you?

Bergazzi: No, it was some time after that. They found them within a week or so after that because they dug down right where the cabins were. The engineer had been folded right up in his cabin, mashed flat. They said his body was flat as a pancake. Joe Dunham, that was his name. Jim Walker, the foreman, was just outside of his cabin. He had a big yellow dog which might have

been a mastiff. The dog's name was Judge, and the dog was right at his heels when they found him. He did get out of the cabin, but that's all.

Calciano: They never found the Chinese cook, Mr. Stoodley said.

Bergazzi: No, they never found him. The millwright, Alfred Buckley, built the mill at Newell Creek in Ben Lomond, When they were finishing up there, there was some work to do on the mill in the Hinckley Basin. It had been damaged by a flood in February of that same year, so they sent for him to go over there and help rebuild or remodel the mill, whatever they had to do. So he was there when that happened and he got caught in there too, poor fellow. But I believe they never found his whole body. I think they found what they thought was part of his body, his skull or something; they recognized it by a tooth or something later on. You might say that two men were never found.

Calciano: You told me a fellow actually saw the earthquake.

Bergazzi: Yes, Henry Velasco did. He was right down just beyond the lower end of the lumberyard where there was a little bit of a curve there. The yard came down pretty straight and then made a turn there to connect with the wagon road coming down from Hinckley Creek. The road wasn't too far above the creek bed there and

there were logs and things that got jammed down in there from that flood there'd been during February. It had ruined the mill -- near wrecked it. It was on account of it that Buckley came to Newell Creek there to partly rebuild it. So they had moved one of these small yarding donkey engines down there. Henry used to get up early; he was running the machine. He was the engineer. They also used a fireman with that little machine; someone who got the wood for him. They had what they called the wood box. But Henry would run the engine and put the wood in the fire box when it needed it. So he went down early; he used to get up steam. He had a little terrier dog with him -- a little bit of a terrier, a little pet. He had his fire started and was looking around watching, and all at once the tremendous shakes started. He said he looked down and the little dog braced himself, scared to death too, the dog was. He knew something awful was happening. Animal instinct, born in them, tells them something is going on out of the ordinary. Then all at once this slide comes. The whole side of the mountain came in there. Henry knew that the boys were gone. They were in bed up there yet where he had just come from. That was it. I don't think he was fifty feet away from the

end of the slide. Stood right there and saw that come in.

Calciano: Is he the one that rode down and gave the news to the men down below?

Bergazzi: I don't know what Henry did. I never asked him up there. I should have asked him when he came up to the mill. He came and worked at Newell Creek afterwards, He was a good man, too. A crackerjack! He was from one of the old Spanish families from Watsonville. Velascos, you know. They are descendants from some of the old -- way in the early days when the Spanish came up in there, part of them came in there with some of the old Mission Padres, and they mixed with the Indians there. I think Henry had a little Indian mixture in him. He just looked it. He was a mighty good man. He was very dark when he was a young man, but I noticed that he seemed to have gotten a lot lighter when I saw him in Oakland last year. He looked different. Wasn't as dark as he used to be when he was younger. He had that straight black hair, you know, the Indian hair. He still had a good head of hair.

Calciano: Did the lumber company ever cut the timber in the Hinckley Basin?

Bergazzi: All the timber left over in Hinckley Basin was made

into split stuff.

Calciano: What damage did you notice in downtown Santa Cruz? You lived at Santa Cruz at that time, didn't you?

Bergazzi: Yes, well, I was at Newell Creek, but my folks, they lived up Glen Haven way. They didn't move into town until 1910.

Calciano: Were you married then?

Bergazzi: No, I was single then, free as a bird that flits the air. No, in 1906 I was twenty years old. I was born in 1886. I was just a kid then, as we'd say now.

SANTA CRUZ

Calciano: Did you see downtown Santa Cruz at all? The damage?

Bergazzi: We never used to come down very often. We'd, come down about once a month, on payday. We got paid once a month. We'd catch a train at the mill and come to town. We didn't get down here till almost dark on Saturday, and believe it or not, we monkeyed around here a little bit on Sunday and were crazy to get back up there and start work on Monday. We just had that feeling, that urge, to get up there and get back to work. We were tired of staying in town in just a little while. I guess we were what you call poison oakers. (Laughter)

Chinatown

Calciano: You mentioned the Chinese cook. Did you have any Chinese workers?

Bergazzi: No. They were too smart for that. (Laughter)

Calciano: But there was a Chinatown in Santa Cruz.

Bergazzi: Yes, there was a big Chinatown in Santa Cruz.

Calciano: What did most of them work at?

Bergazzi: Well, I think most of them had laundries and things. And many years ago, when I just moved here, they had vegetable gardens. I can see them yet, with a pole over their back and a basket of vegetables on each end, walking down the street with that thing a bobbing with its baskets. I saw that in my day. And they had a little gambling in Chinatown, two or three places, not on a very big scale.

Calciano: Where did all the Chinese go?

Bergazzi: Oh, they died off. That was many years ago. I was just a little fellow then. I was just five or six years old when I saw them. I would come into town. We were fortunate enough to get in once every couple of weeks or so, because it was an all day trip from where we lived, with a horse and wagon, you know. Go in in the morning and get back in the evening. And they had laundries, like I say, and gambling, a little bit, and

those vegetables. And some of them, I guess, had made a few dollars and were taking it easy. That was quite a place, Chinatown. We used to go down there Chinese New Year's and shoot the firecrackers there. I'll never forget one night we went down, a bunch of us, and there were a lot of other people around that went down out of curiosity's sake and, of course, you had some rough characters in those days, too, young fellows. Some of them had what you call those little torpedo bombs; they used to make them. They were about as big as the end of my finger and they were quite explosive. When they hit something and got a jolt they exploded. One of those fellows threw one on the floor just inside the door of one of those Chinese buildings and one of the fellows I was with had his heel knocked off his shoe, believe it or not. Whatever it did, I don't know, but it knocked the heel off of this fellow's shoe. Gee, the Chinese were running and a kiyi-ing and squawking and those fellows that threw it took off. We were standing outside there and they came out and wondered what was going on. Of course everybody thought then that every Chinese had a pistol or something and would shoot you right off on sight. (Laughter) That's what a lot of them said. And as a

youngster I kind of believed it because they looked kind of mean to us, you know. They were so much different from any white person.

The Japanese

Calciano: Do you remember when the Japanese influx came?

Bergazzi: Well, we never had too many Japanese in those days.

Calciano: They came in between 1900 and 1920, didn't they?

Bergazzi: Well, most of them came then. There were a few Japanese in the early days, around 1900, but not too many. They came later. Later on, between 1900 and 1920. Quite a few of them came right after the Russian-Japanese War in 1904 and '05. You know, I don't know whether I told you this, or not, about the Japanese War. It broke out in 1904. I was working up in where we lived and was working with a bunch of Japanese boys. There were sixteen of them. We were trimming trees for a man by the name of J. W. Forgeus; he's been dead for years. He got hold of the land, some of it I think, from the Grover Lumber Company. Somehow or other he bought it or got an option on it. Anyway, I think he had an idea of opening some of it up in there for summer homes, even in those days. This

was 1904. There wasn't much of anybody here so he hired these Japanese boys, giving them a dollar a day trimming those redwoods. They trimmed them as high as they could with an ax, you know. They just reached up so you could look up under them at the slopes there. The man that he had hired to be foreman over these Japanese boys was one of my neighbors. I wasn't doing much of anything; it was winter and there wasn't much to do at home either, you know. This foreman came down and he said, "Would you like to work down there trimming those trees?" I could handle an ax pretty good then. I was only eighteen years old, but I was still a pretty good axman for my age, because I had used one a lot and it seemed to just come natural to me. I said, "Sure, I'd be tickled to death." "Well," he said, "I'll see Mr. Forgeus." So he told him. He said, "I've got a young man up there, a good axman, and a good worker, and when I'm not there he can kind of look after these Japanese boys." (I knew what to do, because I was used to the hills.) So he says, "Fine. I'll give him a dollar and a half a day."- (That was good pay. The Japanese boys got a dollar a day.) So I led the way, and I could work, then, too. I went right along, just a little faster than the

Japanese boys did. So he says, "Will you keep time for them too?" because I don't know, once in a while one of them would be off for some little thing, or happened to be sick or something else, so I said, "Sure." I kept time for them, sixteen of them. And I never made a mistake. I used to check with them every month, too, and never made a mistake of an hour in their pay, and they thought I was all right. They were good fellows too. The Japanese are still good people. It was their leaders that took them into the war, it wasn't the people. They are a lot different from us, their skin and everything, but they are still a marvelous race of people. So getting back to the Japanese War, Japan was having trouble just before the outbreak of the war, and these fellows (they were very patriotic) would get a paper once in a while, and they'd talk. One of them said to me (it was raining a little bit one day and we had to come in under the trees there), he said, "I don't like those Russians." So there was a friction there between them and the Russians, see. And you know, I think they all went back to fight in the war. A lot of the Japanese got killed, and probably some of those boys that were out there did. They all went back home to fight for their

country. They were that patriotic. And they whipped Russia, too. They did! Of course, Russia really wasn't organized much. But they destroyed the Russian fleet in two naval battles and sunk all the Russian boats, and of course that hurt Russia too. And then Russia wasn't too well organized. They only had that single track railway.

Calciano: Yes. The war was a long way from their headquarters.

Bergazzi: Yes. So Japan had the big break there, and the Japanese are fighters, too. They will fight to the finish. They were doing that in this war too. It was lucky we had equipment enough to swamp them, or we would have had a hard time whipping them. Man for man and gun for gun, man, I'm telling you, they're rough. It's because they believe in fighting right to the last. So I'm glad things turned out this way.

Calciano: When the Japanese first came, was there much feeling for or against them in the Santa Cruz area?

Bergazzi: There was, yes. In fact our people insulted them. That's what helped bring World War II on. They didn't forget that from years ago. They registered all those things. In fact one day, one Fourth of July, I was in Santa Cruz here; it was about 1909, I think. We were down watching the parade, and there was a couple of

Japanese families there. The women were there and had little children with them and I saw this incident with my own eyes, and it hurt me, too. I didn't believe in that kind of stuff. We're different; we're far apart as far as races are concerned, but I still don't believe in abusing people. Well, anyway, they were strangers to me, these young fellows there, and one of them hit one of these Japanese boys and knocked him down. And, of course the little women were there and the kids were crying. I saw that, and you know I had a lot of fighting spirit in those days and I really wanted to get in there and take that fellow over. It wasn't my place to do it, and it would have got into a mess there, but I really wanted to clobber that boy. And I know I could have done it too, without any trouble much, then, in those days. So there were a lot of incidents like that, and the Japanese registered that. They are pretty proud people -- well, all races are proud, you know. Everybody has more or less pride, every race of people. I think that that was one of the things that helped bring the war on too. A lot of incidents like that took place.

Calciano: Oh, dear. Were there many labor problems up in the lumber camps? I know that you struck a few times.

Bergazzi: No, we had no unions then. Everybody just worked. Once in a while somebody would ask for a little more money, or something. If he got it, all right, and if he didn't, and didn't have another job, he probably stayed. It was kind of a hard pill to swallow, but he, stayed on and worked for what he was getting. No, there was no labor problem. Nothing like there is now.

Other Immigrants

Calciano: Did the Italians and Portuguese and Finnish all work together well?

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. They were all wonderful men. All wonderful fellows.

Calciano: Did the Scandinavians and Portuguese pick up the language quite fast?

Bergazzi: Yes, they learned it pretty fast. They wanted to learn it fast.

Calciano: Were most of the Italians first generation, like you? Not straight from Italy?

Bergazzi: No, a lot of them were coming in. You know, from about 1850 to 1910, I think, there were about 40 million immigrants came into America here, mostly from Europe and the Scandinavian countries. And they were all wonderful people. They came here -- they were coming to a new land. They had to leave their people and

their homes there. Mostly it was rough picking there, and they had heard about America from others that had come before them like my folks did. The climate here in California was similar to what it is in southern Europe, and that's the reason that a lot of the southern Europeans came over here.

Calciano: Well, how quickly did the people pick up the language?

Bergazzi: Well, some learned it a little quicker than the others. It all depended. You know, the same way with kids in school, I guess. It didn't take them too long. Some of them talked broken for a little while; it sounded kind of funny and we'd have a lot of fun with them, you know. They liked it, though, as long as they knew you were just kidding. They got a kick out of it.

Education

Calciano: Was there much use of the apprentice system?

Bergazzi: You had to be an apprentice years ago. There was more of a chance to learn things. You had to be an apprentice to be a plumber. That is, they welcomed apprentices, see. The plumbers, electricians, and various trades and crafts did. Now I understand there are not too many apprenticeships in some lines. Of course you have to work as an apprentice to be a

lineman or electrician, I think.

Calciano: Did you have to be an apprentice?

Bergazzi: No, not in my time. No. Now you do, though. Plumbers, I don't know how they work it now, whether they have to be an apprentice or not. My wife's brother was a the powder works out here on the edge of town?

Bergazzi: I worked about nineteen months at the powder works at Hercules during World War I. My wife's father worked in the powder works down here, but when I was a kid we were living up Glen Haven Way and I heard some terrific explosions down here. That was before 1900 and some were in the nineties, early nineties. Three, four different times I heard them.

Calciano: Were men killed?

Bergazzi: Oh yes. There was one time thirteen men were killed in one explosion. That was around about 1900, close there I guess. I don't remember the date. Another time there were two men killed in an explosion here, right locally here. I remember the name, Charlie Mercier. The other was Jack Valencia, John Valencia, a Spanish family. Before he got killed he had worked up here at the old Loma Prieta Mill on the Aptos Creek. He worked there when my father was working there. Then he came in to work at the powder works and that's when the

press blew up there. It was the press, I think, and burned them so bad they died a horrible death.

Calciano: You said you got kind of leery of the powder and quit after nineteen months?

Bergazzi: Oh I had that on my mind all the time when I was working. If I go in a place and can see a hazard I know is a hazard and it is up to me to keep clear of it, like around machinery or something, that's one thing. But where you are working in something where you might just step on a little grain of dust there and cause a little spark and that's it -- I just didn't want that. I know everybody can't stay here forever, but I don't want to be taken out of circulation without knowing anything about it.

Local Hospitals

Calciano: This talk of accidents has me wondering about the medical facilities available. Do you know any of the history of the local hospitals?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. There are several of them. Dr. Nittler started the one over on Soquel Avenue.

Calciano: Well, there was an old hospital before either Sisters or Santa Cruz Hospital, wasn't there? Wasn't there a small hospital that isn't around now?

Bergazzi: There was the old Mission Hospital. It used to be on the hill up there by the Catholic Church, just above it.

Calciano: Was this a Catholic Hospital?

Bergazzi: No, no, it was just a regular hospital. Then we had the Hanly Hospital out where the Sister's Hospital is now, out on the foot of Bay Street there. I don't know, somehow or other things didn't pan out at Hanly, so these Sisters bought it, I guess, and started operating it. And this hospital on Soquel didn't seem to pan out too good for the investment or something.

Calciano: The one Dr. Nittler started?

Bergazzi: Yes. I don't know what happened. Anyway I guess they wanted to sell it, maybe, because the Sisters bought that too. Anyway it is a beautiful building. I think of Nittler every time I see it. He was such a good old fellow. He was our Company Doctor too, down at Gas and Electric. He really was interested in his patients. Well, I think all doctors are.

Calciano: Yes, I think most are.

Bergazzi: I think they love their work; that's the reason they choose that type of work, just like I like to saw lumber. I think doctors are the same way. I have heard people condemn doctors. They say, "Aw, they are just

trying to do something for what they can get out of you." I say, "Listen, those people are interested in their work. That's the reason they chose that profession. They're proud of the job of curing you. What would you do without a doctor if you got a broken arm or a broken leg? Those people kind of get my goat sometimes. I don't like to insult them, but in just an easy way I tell them what I think of them. There's not too many of them that way, but you hit one now and then.

Calciano: Yes. I guess everyone understands their own work and not so much about the next fellow's.

The Coming of the Highway

Calciano: You know, I was wondering if you remember when the highways came into Santa Cruz?

Bergazzi: I think that the first paved highway, the old Glenwood highway, was paved around 1914 or 15.

Calciano: Was it quite a big occasion when it came through?

Bergazzi: That was quite an occasion, a big highway like that. Little old two-lane, it was, all turns and crooked, going up to the top. You know they never had any accidents on that road. There was a lot of traffic on it in those days, too. A lot of people used to come

down to the beach. Little old Model T Fords and all kinds of junk heaps and everything. (Laughter) They never had but very few accidents. Everybody knew the road, I guess. They were careful then. Now there's so many speeders I can't figure what they've got on their mind. A lot of people kill themselves with these high powered cars. Every paper you pick up there's somebody got killed, run into something or off a grade somewhere, hit bridge abutments -- its a shame.

Calciano: How long did it take you to get to San Jose or San Francisco from here in 1900? Did you ever go?

Bergazzi: The first year I went to San Francisco was in 1905.

Calciano: Did you go by train?

Bergazzi: By train, yes. That was the first time I saw San Francisco. The year before the earthquake. You mentioned the bears in the woods when we first started here. I read an article here a few days ago about Monarch, the last grizzly in California. They captured him down in San Bernadino County in 1883 or '86, I forget which, in a big log trap. They made a pit for him and what a time they had. He was a big boy and they loaded him up and brought him to the zoo in San Francisco. I went out and I saw that bear alive in the zoo in San Francisco in 1905, and he looked to me like

he was big enough to fill half this room. Of course he was getting old. I think that they figured he weighed around close to 2,000 pounds anyway. What a mammoth animal! But he was so old he just laid out there. It was November or December and the sun was kind of weak out in front. He had a den back in there and he went back into it. I think he died in 1911. They have him stuffed in the museum there. Monarch, that was his name. The last grizzly in California.

Entertainment

Calciano: What did people do for entertainment?

Bergazzi: In the early days? Well, they used to have country dances and dances around in town, usually on Saturday nights. They had a little dance hall; in fact there used to be one on the east side here, the old Lotman Hall they used to call it, where the firehouse is. Then they had various ones. Up where we lived our neighbors, these Lunbecks, had a dance hall, and people used to come out from town up to dances. You know there was the first time I ever saw Fred Wagner, the old blacksmith. Before he was married he and his wife used to come out to Lunbecks right often. Fred always had a fancy rigging and two fancy horses. They

drove up there when I was just a kid. Fred is 83, I think. That's the first time I saw him. He'd drive out in the country to dances. People came out of town and people from out there would drive into town to go to dances. And then they had their little shows. They had an opera house in Santa Cruz at one time, many, many years ago.

Calciano: Did you ever go there?

Bergazzi: No, that was before my time. But we had some famous characters come there many years ago.

Calciano: What about sports?

Bergazzi: Well, baseball. They had a professional team here many, many years ago. Called it the old Sand Crabs.

Calciano: Sand Crabs! Was that their nickname or their real name?

Bergazzi: They called the team the Sand Crabs because they played down close to the beach. It was kind of a sandy soil where the baseball diamond was laid out. Of course it was packed down and rolled down -- sandy loam is what it was. It mad a good ground, actually. That's about all that I can think of. There was very little football. They played a little football at the Universities, but nothing like it is now.

Calciano: What did people do on Sundays?

Bergazzi: Well, they used to go out on picnics once in the while in the country or neighbors would get together at home sometimes -- three or four families. They would have their little picnics out somewheres.

Calciano: Did people do much gardening then?

Bergazzi: Oh yes, they raised gardens. They always gardened years ago. More so than they do now, I guess.

Calciano: More vegetable gardens, maybe?

Bergazzi: Yes. They raised everything they could raise.

Horses

Calciano: I gathered that most people didn't keep their own horses. They would rent a wagon, cart, or surrey when they needed a horse -- is that right?

Bergazzi: No, most of them had their own horses. They had livery stables around then like we rented that surrey when we went up to Hinckley Mill. But most of the people had their own horses and their little buggies -- horse and wagon. They'd have two horses and a little spring wagon.

Calciano: Where did they keep their horses?

Bergazzi: They had a barn,

Calciano: Did the people on this street all keep horses?

Bergazzi: Yes, they did. I think my wife's father used to have
a horse when he worked at the powder mill.

Calciano: Was there a barn here?

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: Was this your wife's family house?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes.

Calciano: And you had a barn in back here?

Bergazzi: Yes, they had two of them.

Calciano: Oh, instead of a garage! (Laughter)

Bergazzi: Her father had a cart to go to work in and he had a
surrey -- but only one horse. (Laughter)

Calciano: Do you remember what surreys and carts and so forth
would rent for when you did have to rent one?

Bergazzi: Horse and buggy? They rented for two, two and a half.

Calciano: Dollars a day?

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: Goodness, that was pretty expensive wasn't it, if you
only earned a dollar or so a day?

Bergazzi: Yes, but you had that horse all day.

Calciano: You could do a lot of things?

Bergazzi: I rented a horse and buggy in Ben Lomond one time when my wife was working in an apple drier up Rodeo Gulch out here before we were married. I drove down there and picked her up there. That was the automobile in that day.

Calciano: You spent a lot of time going to and from places, didn't you?

Bergazzi: Oh Lord, yes. We were forever going and coming a few miles. You could trot the old horse once in a while if the road was good, but he could only stand so much, you know. Although a horse is a durable animal.

Calciano: When was the first automobile you saw?

Bergazzi: Let's see, I think the first one I saw was around about 1904.

Calciano: Who owned that?

Bergazzi: One of my neighbors up there. It was the same man that I was telling you about, that mentioned about all the clear lumber being up at that Gulch up there above Soquel. Guy Lunbeck was his name. He got one of the first automobiles in town here. What the dickens did you call it? I think it was an old Flanders car. It was new when he got it.

Calciano: When did you get your first car?

Bergazzi: We didn't get a car until 1927. We had the kids; we had to raise them you know; they're kind of expensive. Things weren't too brisk, you know, so we got the first one in '27. We got the first standard shift Dodge that came into Santa Cruz.

Calciano: Oh really!

Prohibition

Calciano: Speaking of that time, what was Santa Cruz like during prohibition?

Bergazzi: Well, (laughter) of course I didn't carouse around much; I don't know too much about it. I know there was a lot of grumbling, and a lot of fellows Actually got to making this bootleg, you know. They had little bootleg joints here and there and they had to keep them well hid, too. In fact, I went into one one time, the only time I was ever in one of them. We went through two or three doors. I was downtown and I met an old edgerman; he was an old old-timer; he's been gone for years. He said, "How about going in and getting a little drink?" Well, I didn't care. I didn't drink much; I took one now and then, just to be sociable. Joe Enford was his name, he was Danish or

Swedish, one or the other. Anyway, he was a good old fellow, so I said, "OK, Joe, being that it's you, I'll go in with you." He'd been in there before, see. So we went through two or three doors and I got to thinking, "What kind of a deal is this!" (Laughter)

Calciano: Was this downtown?

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: On Pacific Avenue, or ...

Bergazzi: It was right up on the upper end, no, wait a minute, it was on Water Street. It was off of Pacific Avenue, where Water comes into Pacific Avenue, just next to where that gas station is on the point now. It was just beyond, just to the right of that. This little place was there -- a little bootleg joint, as they used to call it.

Calciano: Did they also call them speakeasies?

Bergazzi: Well, they called them bootleg joints, although I guess speakeasy is their proper name.

Calciano: Did you hear any rumors of where the bootlegging was done? Was it run in at Aptos or anywhere?

Bergazzi: Yes, they used to land liquor over there. That was kind of a, well they never really had no gun battles there, but they had a good amount of racing down

there. Some of them trying to get away from the authorities there, some of the birds landing liquor there.

Calciano: Was this down at the Rio Del Mar beach, or where?

Bergazzi: Well, I believe there was a little that went on at Rio Del Mar and then the New Brighton beach, there, because there was a road that used to go down there to New Brighton too, you know. Yes, there was quite a bit of it that went on there. And I think, well some of it landed here at Santa Cruz, Capitola, all along.

Calciano: Did anybody ever know who was behind importing it?

Bergazzi: Well, I didn't. I never heard, myself, but evidently somebody was doing it. (Laughter) It must have been somebody that knew we weren't drinking.

Calciano: Where did it come from?

Bergazzi: Well, a lot of it came from Canada, I know, and I guess it came from Scotland, some of it, some of the Scotch. Good old Scotch whiskey. That was what was shipped in, when they landed it in boats. It come from the outside. Of course then there was a lot of it that was made in hollow trees here, too. (Laughter) They are still making it back in Kentucky and the Ozark mountains there in Arkansas.

Calciano: Sure, moonshine.

Bergazzi: Those rum runners there had some pretty good races there at times, I know that. I know a fellow or two that was out there, happened that one of them used to be a motorcycle cop; he is gone now too. I know they had some fast races there. Some of them fell down in some of those canyons there -- trying to get away I guess. Tumbled down. (Laughter)

The Depression

Calciano: How did the depression affect Santa Cruz?

Bergazzi: Hit it pretty hard. Pretty tough. There was no industry here, you know, to speak of, and when that depression came it was pretty rough.

Calciano: I bet the tourist trade fell off, didn't it?

Bergazzi: Yes. I was lucky because I was working for the Coast Counties Gas and Electric. I got down to five days a week, and of course that cut the pay too, but we still got by pretty good. It was steady work, so that is more than a lot of them had. That was really rough. I never want to hear of anything like that again. As I said, I saw a lot of people, you know, a lot of people who actually went hungry. Just think of the people, especially with little ones. It would kind of break

your heart, those cases like that. If you were just a couple without any youngsters, somehow or other you might manage to get by, but if you had little ones you had something on your hands with a happening like that.

Calciano: In Santa Cruz just before the depression, in the years 1900 to 1920, was there very much poverty? Was there a poor area or slum section?

Bergazzi: No, there was no slum section. Oh, we had a few poor people here, but there never was a slum section. We never had that. We weren't really big enough for anything like that. That applies more to the bigger cities, I guess.

Calciano: Yes, but lots of towns will have the wrong side of the tracks. Didn't Santa Cruz?

Bergazzi: No.

Calciano: What were the welfare provisions if a woman's husband were killed and she had several small children?

Bergazzi: Many years ago they had nothing.

Calciano: What did they do?

Bergazzi: You know that's a question that I can't answer very intelligently. I really don't know what they did do. Of course there weren't too many cases, although we

did have one. The only man in my lifetime that I ever saw actually killed on the job was killed on a pole, in 1923, down on River Street. I was right under the pole, right under him. He was a young man, had a wife and three or four youngsters. I never knew, but I think she remarried, but I never heard from them anymore, never knew what they ever done. But those were the days before you had welfare. Then you had nothing. The poor people, if anything happened, were really ... I doubt if they had State aid of any kind. Later on they got to giving insurance.

Calciano: Did the churches help?

Bergazzi: There wasn't much the churches could do because it was all they could do to just barely get by. They'd help what little they could, you know, and maybe people that knew the family would take up a collection and give it to them, whatever they could afford to give. That was about all there was.

Water, Gas, and Electricity

Calciano: Oh, I noticed that the Santa Cruz water supply used redwood pipe, buried in the ground, to carry the water through.

Bergazzi: Well, I understand they've got a lot of redwood pipe.

They did have them in different places, and I understand they still got some out around Soquel, in that area.

Calciano: I was wondering how often they had to change them, but I gather it was not very often?

Bergazzi: No, I don't think they've ever changed them. I don't know whether I mentioned it to you or not before, but you take a certain type of sinker redwood, that is the heavy dense grain, wet heavy redwood, and you put that in the ground and it is there from now on. It never deteriorates, or nothing. It just seems to get petrified to a certain extent and stays there.

Calciano: Since you worked for the Gas Company, I thought maybe you could tell me when gas started to be used a lot in homes and engines.

Bergazzi: I don't know what year they started using gas. They had the manufactured gas first, see.

Calciano: Bottles?

Bergazzi: No, they made it in -- well the old gas plant is still standing down on River Street there, down on the south end of River Street. They used to manufacture it and store it in that holder, and then they piped it from there on out all over, you know. But in 1928 they got the natural gas here. I was in on the changeover; I

was working there then. That's when I bought that heater around the corner there. That's one of the old Frazier heaters.

Calciano: Oh, yes.

Bergazzi: And you know, that's a good heater, too. It warms up pretty nice there. That is, you can open it up and turn it up. The only thing is, you have to have a vent pipe up there for it to go through. Yes, in 1923 we got natural gas here. And we had to go around and notify everybody that had gas ranges that the company was switching. I think they had to change the door over a little bit, or something. I believe the company had lots of men out making the changeover, and I was one of the crew that helped.

Calciano: When did the city get electricity?

Bergazzi: They got that here in the nineties, I think. Early nineties.

Calciano: And when did sewers become ...

Bergazzi: The sewers. By golly, I really couldn't answer that question very intelligently. I think they got them quite a few years ago.

Calciano: Well, when you came into Santa Cruz, did they still have outhouses behind?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, they had them still, here, years ago, and

some of them had their own wells. This place here had its own well in the backyard.

Calciano: This house!

Bergazzi: Yes, they had the old well here, and it was good water, too. You didn't have to go down very deep. Of, course, that's several years ago..

Coast Counties Gas and Electric

Calciano: Were there any big improvements or developments in the distribution or use of gas and electricity while you were working at the Gas and Electric Company?

Bergazzi: Well, not too many, not on a very big scale, it was just medium you know.

Calciano: They still climbed the poles and everything?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes, although now they've got trucks with those booms on them. A fellow can get in there and press a button, and he can raise that up a ways. Then, when he's climbed up there he's got another button on top and he presses that button there. He can lift that and swing it around a little bit and get right under whatever he was going to do. Isn't that something, now, compared to what we used to do?

Calciano: How did you use to fix a break if it occurred in the

middle of the wire, between two poles?

Bergazzi: A break in between poles? The wires? Oh, they just spliced a piece on the end of one of the wires, on the end that was down on the ground. The piece had to be long enough to go up over the pole, and they tied a rope on the end of it. Then a couple of fellows climbed up there on the pole, and the fellow on the ground pulled that end up there to them. They grabbed it with blocks and grips and then they spliced it on to the other end, the end that was still up there.

Calciano: I see. You cut out a piece then?

Bergazzi: Well, they cut off one end and squared it up, and then spliced on to it there, yes. They had the blocks with a hook on each end, double blocks, and they had a wire grip on each end, see. They grabbed the one wire that you pulled up and pulled it up as tight as they could by hand. Then they put a grip on the other end that was up and pulled it up over the crossbeam to whatever level they wanted it, see. They sighted it in, made it level with the others, and then went to work and spliced it. Years ago, when I first started, they used to have to make them old twist splices. Now they've got connectors. They put those ends right in there and just crimp them together with a little tool there. It

just squeezes them there together solid; it looks like it is solid wire.

Calciano: They have to turn the power off before they do any of this, don't they?

Bergazzi: Well, some of the lower voltage stuff, they can work it hot.

Calciano: Oh, really?

Bergazzi: Oh, yes. But with the really high voltage now, although I think they now have equipment that they can fix them together with when it's pretty high too. But just think of it, years ago they used to work with it. Before they got these rubber gloves they used to handle wires up to 2,200 volts. It had to be dry, of course. If the pole was wet it would really knock you for a loop.

Calciano: I guess you got a few shocks in your day?

Bergazzi: I got quite a few, yes, not too bad, although I did get pretty well shook one day up the coast by the cement plant there years ago. Yes, I can remember the first pair of rubber gloves that ever were used here in Santa Cruz. Yes, the foreman was Al Strong; he was later manager at Coast Counties Gas and Electric; he passed away here, about a year ago. Al went out, he was foreman then, just a young fellow. It was he and I

and a man by the name of Dowell, he's retired and still living out there, this side of Soquel. We had a complaint come in from Twin Lakes where the yacht harbor is out here. There was a little old telephone pole, one of the sawed ones there, and there was a transformer on it, a small transformer. So Al Strong said, "I'll climb up there." He was foreman, you see, and he was a good lineman then, too. He said, "I'll go up and change that fuse." You see it was a little fuse that had blown up there; they had that little old porcelain type, cut out, old, real old; you don't see any more of them, now. So Al climbed up there, and he put that glove on carefully, you know, and reached up and pulled that plug out. They had a little fuse that had a little screw on it that you tied it to, and he had to put that fuse on there, Then he plugged that in there carefully. I can see him yet, up there on that little old sawed pole.

Calciano: It must have seemed awfully spindly compared to the poles we have now.

Bergazzi: Oh, Lord, yes. Yes, that was a little bit of a thing. Oh, we had to set them all by hand, then, though. One old pole here on Soquel Avenue, I helped pike that in with pikes for my shoulders. That was set in 1928. I

was looking at the date there the other day, and that's thirty-five years ago. That was just before they got the gins on the truck where they pick them up now and set them with the beams you know. Yes. to the early days, that was rough.

Calciano: They were heavy things!

Bergazzi: Yes.

Calciano: How did you get them up?

Bergazzi: Well, we had to dig a hole by hand to begin with.

That was a bad job too, I'll tell you, those big bars pounding in there, down six feet. We'd loosen up a little dirt and then spoon it out with a long handled spoon. Then, when we set them, we had a gin there, about seven feet tall, with a crossbar -- a bar with a metal part in it there. A whole bunch of us would get ahold of that pole and lift it up there and the gin man would set the gin under it, see. We'd have to lift the tip of it off the ground quite a ways, then we'd lift it a little more and he'd lift that gin down a little more, see, and then we'd have it high enough to get under it. We had fourteen and sixteen foot pike poles (a pike pole is a wooden pole about that big with a steel spike in the end of it, a pointed spike)

then we would get around it, four of us, maybe five, one in the middle and two on each side. We'd lift it up quite a little ways there and he'd move that gin way up and we'd get another hold. Then by that time we'd have it far enough so that we could push it right into the hole. They put a bar or something into the hole so it wouldn't dig into the dirt, see. It would slide right down into that hole. Otherwise it would have dug into the bank on the other side, and hung up there. That wouldn't have been "no good for nothing" as the fellow says.

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The Newell Creek Mill

Michael Bergazzi is Fourth from the Left in the Front Row



The Lumber Yard and Part of the Loma Prieta Village

The First Loma Prieta Mill 1883-1898