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Olan Raley, Charles Hagood, Arthur Lee, at Olan's saw shop in Junction

Ken: Record. Shows how smart I am. (laughing) Here we go.

Olan: During the war we hauled posts to Arizona. 'Cause all them in California was afraid they was gonna get bombed, you know, during World War II. So they was buying up five, ten acre tracks in Arizona, you know, and moving to Arizona (laugh). And he said they didn't have any idea what it took to build pens around it, you know.

Charles: So he'd take a whole load out there ...

Olan: Yeah. He hauled 'em, hauled deuces out there, you know, and he said "you could have put 'em, built a picket fence around 'em, you know, for, hell they didn't have any idea how much it took to build a fence, you know. So he did a steady trucking them things to Arizona, New Mexico during the war.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: And, but then, yeah, he had this cedar yard down here, but then he, him an Snuffy Smith done a lot of long hauling. Even in the '50s, you know, early '50s.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: In the late '40s. That was the first time I lost a thumbnail, was when Daddy had that yard over there on Weaver Baker's place and Jake was loading them posts one day and I was helping him. Of course, I wasn't about six, seven years old, you know. I throwed one up there, and I throwed another one up there and it mashed my thumb and I lost that thumbnail.

Charles: Where do you, where did Cot and Preston have that mill? Have that cedar yard? At Preston's, or did they bring it to town.

Olan: No, I think it was at Preston's there, you know where the old house is?

Charles: yeah. We just went out there.

Olan: Willis Holden and Grace lived there for a long time, uh, and we'd go down there on Sundays and have dinner and fight roosters, you know. I didn't, they did (laugh) I was just there ready to eat, you know! But, uh, yeah, they

Charles: Charlie's up there in that draw.

Olan: oh, hell, we lived everywhere up in the South Llano. We, we lived there where Mike Henderson's bunch is now.

Charles: Yeah

Olan: In that old house.

Charles: ____

Olan: Yeah. I And we had a hail storm there too. When we was there. I mean it was big hail. It come through the roof and we crawled under the kitchen table (laugh)

Ken: So your daddy was a cedar cutter?

Olan: Yeah

Ken: And yall, yall lived up there

Olan: Just about everywhere

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: But, yeah, he did for years there. He cut cedar.

Ken: What years did he cut cedar in? The World War II years and before that? The Depression?

Olan: Well, there's a break in there, but yeah, he came down here in '43, I guess it was, you know, and, and he cut posts a while then he, uh, ____

Charles: Preston's dad's

Olan: Yeah. They was farming that country there then. And daddy was farming – he was a foreman for all that. I mean they was raising corn and beans

Charles: There was a truck farm out there

Olan: Yeah

Ken Uh-huh

Olan: And daddy, daddy did that two or three years, I don't know. That's when we was living over there. Where Mike Henderson's is now. But then we lived at Hill Terrace we lived on Weaver Baker's, and we lived in a tin shack on up there on that, the old __side, you know, where the house is burnt, back this side of there.

Charles: Well, where the old gin is still standing. Where ____ Iglesias is

Olan: Yeah, Jimmy Baker and them lived there, but back this side of there, in that canyon there, there was an old tin shack, we lived in that for a while.

Charles: You lived at Coke's for a little while.

Olan: And we lived at Cokes for a good while.

Charles: That was back there in the back where those pens are?

Olan: No, that was, no. It's where Dennis' is.

Charles: Oh

Olan: There was a house there, where Dennis' house sits, where Andy lived. We lived there. Yeah we lived on Coke's about ten years and daddy was cutting posts off of Coke's. And

Charles: You'all hauled water in those days, didn't you.

Olan: Yeah, we hauled water on all places except there at the Lins

Arthur Lee: What'd you do with them posts you cut? Did yall have a yard there? On the river?

Olan: No, Bus Carroll had a yard there, in the old Evergreen school house.

Charles: Oh yeah, yeah

Olan: And they was hauling down there

Charles: Arthur, when did, when did Hamp buy that place? Where, I don't ever remember him living anywhere but right there. Did he live, did he live out in the country at some point, down ____

Olan: No, I don't know what year he bought it, no. But he was

Charles: do you remember him living somewhere else?

Olan: Yeah. He was part of them that was out there in that camp.

Arthur Lee: Yeah, and on ____ too, right?

Olan: Yeah, he cut out there too

Ken: Now who is Hamp?

Charles: Hamp was Arthur Lee's granddaddy

Ken: Your granddad, OK. That was the picture I saw

Olan: Yeah

Ken: Yeah. And he lived in that camp out there?

Charles: yeah, he's the one I told you, he never veered from it. He made his living out of the woods

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: He never, I mean not that he couldn't have, he could have been a cowboy or whatever, you know, he cut cedar, he cut cedar.

Ken: Well, tell me about it, being a cowboy wasn't an option around Liberty Hill. I mean, there just weren't, you know, it just never was cattle country. What there was was a quarry and stuff like that. There were other things you could do, but, they didn't pay much. You know, and what I've been learning is that a man could have made more money cutting cedar than he could, like working in a rock quarry, or other jobs, that, you know

Charles: Well, and those day workers that were out here, that were cowboys

Ken: Yeah

Charles: Half of those guys at one time or another cut posts to supplement their income.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: They didn't get paid anything really, working on these old ranches.

Olan: But Daddy, daddy went from cedar cutting to ranching (laugh) you know

Charles: Most of 'em did. They didn't want to cut cedar. It was hard work

Olan: But I often wondered what Daddy did with some of his money, you know. Because at one time, you know, he had four wetbacks for eight months, and they cut a load every day.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: And that money was cash money, too.

Olan: It was between forty five and fifty dollars a load every day

Ken: Uh-huh, uh-huh

Olan: You know, and he was paying 'em two dollars a day and feeding 'em

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: Well, you know, it didn't take fifty cents a day to feed 'em. Each one of 'em, you know. And then,

Charles: Well hell, Raley, how much money have you and I blown in our lives? Shit, you know what we did with it.

Olan: Yeah!

Olan: ___ burned it up. My god, I'm ___ and drinking

Ken: You're talking, uh, you're talking the chainsaw days, back when

Olan: No, axe days

Ken: Axe days

Olan: Yeah, it's back in the early '50s.

Ken: OK

Olan: Before there was even any chainsaws in this country.

Ken: When, you're gona know this, when did the chainsaw take over the cedar industry?

Olan: When it took over?

Ken: Yeah, when, whenever it went

Olan: Yeah, it was up in the '60s when that, when the chainsaw was ever got to be around here. that would amount to anything

Ken: So yall, so we didn't

Olan: The first chainsaw that I ever saw was one the one that Pax had out yonder

Arthur Lee: Over ____?

Olan: But the first ones I'd seen was electric.

Arthur: I'll be.

Ken: Huh

Olan: They had a, they had an old Jeep, of course Pax at that time hauling their own wood, you know.

Charles: Pax's was one of the cedar men

Ken: OK

Charles: one of the early cedar men

Ken: OK

Charles: And it was out toward Telegraph

Ken: OK

Arthur Lee: and they was ____ chainsaws

Ken: Um-hum

Olan: And they had a Jeep with a generator on it and, and, they had four people. They had two cutting and one moving the extension cord

Ken: (laugh)

Olan: they had a long extension cord, you know big heavy joker and, and they'd cut on each side of it and he'd drive down through there, you know

Ken: Um-hum

Olan: And they'd cut, and they had to have two, three, sometimes they had four, you know, moving the extension cord

Charles: Those old saws were pretty big too.

Olan: Oh, yeah, they were great big ole' heavy things, you know. But, (laugh), that jeep probably started more fires than anybody ever. it never had no exhaust system, but, uh, they they got, then they got the Poulan gasoline saw.

Arthur Lee: ____ pretty good saw, wasn't it?

Olan: ____ well, yeah

Charles: and then the McCullough came along

Olan: Yeah

Charles: Old Mac '55.

Olan: They was was a few McCulloughs here. Hinkey's sold McCulloughs over there at Kerrville, between Kerrville and Fredricksburg

Ken: But going back to the axe days, I guess that's really what interests me the most. I mean you're looking at, you have a camp of thirty people up in there, and how many, tell me how many more people would there be around cutting cedar. Would there be other camps that size?

Olan: Well, there wasn't other camps that size, but they was a lot of other people cutting.

Ken: Yeah

Olan: They lived in different places. Lived on the ____ same place

Ken: Would they live on the ranches they were cutting on, for the most part? Or would they

Olan: not necessarily. They'd cut wherever, that's what I'm talking about, they was the most independent people in the world.

Charles: like gathering pecans

Olan: They'd tell you to take it and shove it and not a dime in their pocket, you know.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: If you made 'em mad they just walked off.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: They, they always kind-of figured that they was looking for a brake when they found that one, you know.

Arthur Lee: Yeah, yeah

Olan: So they didn't, I mean, they were pretty independent.

Ken: Yeah

Olan: And

Ken: How'd they find a place to live? (phone rings) Do you want to get that?

Olan: They kept looking around 'till they found one (laugh)

[break in recording while answered phone]

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Arthur Lee: He'd always sit by the fireplace and he'd get a piece of oak and he'd start whittling on it with a pocket knife.

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: And he'd sit there and he'd whittle on it for hours and hours. It would take him about three days to get down, and then he'd get it to where it'd fit his hands

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: and then he'd get it all set up and then they'd go use it for the brake. And after he cut he'd come back and finish it up, you know. And then he'd oil it down after he'd finished whittling on it. He'd oil it down, and, uh,

Ken: He's the one that made that art, that's for sale ?

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Charles: Yeah

Charles: I told Ken about granddaddy fixing that axe handle that day . Getting after me for grasping it.

Olan: Oh, yeah

Charles: He'd take that shard of glass

Olan: Yeah

Charles: And just Peel those little slivers off of there. It'd fit like the damn thing had grown in there. I mean it just as smooth as

Olan: They all did that. I mean he didn't -- They'd shave it down with a piece of broken glass

Ken: Huh. Did you make it, make it out of oak, for the most part? Live Oak?

Olan: Yeah, some kind of hard wood.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: Yeah, you know, but, I mean, that, one thing you didn't mess with was a wood hauler. With the wood cutters - was their axe.

Arthur lee: Yeah, that was their livelihood, yeah

Olan: Yeah. One side of that axe and I guarantee you could shave with it

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: you know. The other side might be a little duller but

Ken: Would they use the one side just a little duller for cutting around rocks and stuff like that?

Olan: Yeah, yeah, um-hum. The other one, I guarantee, they made it honed down thin, I mean, they'd file it and they'd take a whet rock and whet it down until it was thin and smooth

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: and, you know, you take a post that big around

Ken: Yeah

Olan: They'd cut it in two in two licks.

Ken: Two licks

Olan: a good cutter would!.

Ken: That's a four-inch post, three, four-inch post?

Olan: Yeah

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Charles: Can you see that now on some of those, uh, swap shops, or, or flea markets, if you find an old double bit axe somewhere that somebody just found and brought to town. Some of 'em are worn plum down to where, hell, like an old pocket knife. There's just nothing left.

Arthur Lee: Uh-huh.

Ken: Huh!

Olan: Yeah

Olan: Of course all your posts had to be butted four ways, you know

Arthur Lee: Yeah. That was an old Imperial knife, that's what that is ____ But you can see what he's talking about

Ken: Yeah. My daddy had a, I've got a knife like that from my daddy. Just like that.

Arthur Lee: Yeah. That was an old Imperial knife. Had a plastic handle on it

Ken: Yeah

Arthur Lee: I lost it the other day and it busted the handle all to pieces. But you know what he's talking about

Ken: Yeah, yeah.

Arthur Lee: You know you could tell it was fixed

Ken: How long would an axe, it wouldn't last forever, would it? 'cuase you're gona get it so thin and fine it's gona sheer off

Olan: they'd cut a lot of posts with one though before it did. of course nearly all of them used those 2½ pound double bit axes, you know.

Ken: I'm hearing Kelly was a brand a lot of people used

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Olan: Yeah. They used a lot of them.

Ken: So, we were talking earlier about how many posts a man could cut in a day. How many, how many, you know, fence sized, four, four-inch, six and a half foot. If he had good cedar. If he was in good cedar, cutting.

Olan: I don't know. He cut a lot of 'em in good cedar.

Chhrles: Yeah, and Back in those day's there was still some good cedar.

Olan: Oh yeah, yeah

Arthur Lee: He used to have guns about that big too. From handling that cedar.

Charles: Raley – Raley is a shadow of his former self. He had ____ arms

Arthur Lee: Hell yeah, He's a shadow of his former self. Doctor made him loose weight because he's getting old

Ken: Uh-huh. what did you have that big?

Arthur Lee: Guns. (laugh)

Ken: Guns! (laugh)

Charles: But, you know, when Raley was little, and even up until the time I, I came along, in the early 50s, on Saturdays Junction was so different. The interstate hadn't come through, and, of course, then, this was, our downtown area was pretty much bustling then.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: That was, that's where everybody went. Right down through town. And the shops were all full, and on Saturday's all of those wood cutters came to town. All the ranchers came to town. To do their grocery shopping, Saturday was the, the day of the week everybody gathered in town. And Preston has told me, uh, he grew up out there on that part where we were, that there'd be wagon loads of people coming in. Folks on horseback. There'd be old trucks. And said people'd come down early in the morning. The old men get drunk, so damn drunk, by the time they went home, said that half the men were hanging out the back of the wagon and the old lady's taking things home and loaded down with groceries and stuff. It just the day everybody came to get a haircut, whatever it was

Olan: In, in, uh, late '40s, '47-'48, you know, they was like the population of Kimble County was like five thousand people. You know, we still aint got that much today.

Ken: No.

Arthur Lee: Where is that picture ___ main street?

Olan: But all of that was the cedar cutters. You know, I mean they was

Ken: There was a lot of cedar cutters?

Olan: Uh-huh

Charles: Yeah

Ken: I mean, you're talking about

Charles: Half of those folks were wood cutters

Ken: Probably a couple of thousand people.

Olan: yeah, they was lots and lots of 'em.

Ken: So, I mean, you say they were all independent? I mean, you know, I used to think the cedar cutters that I, guys that I went to school with, like we were talking earlier, they came across, uh, the bridge when they first opened it up, were, we thought they were pretty different than the town people. You know, 'cause they were tough.

Charles: They'd kick your ass

Ken: They'd kick, well I'll tell you a story. All right. So the first time I, I was only eleven years old, and I used to go down, if you've been in Austin, there's a, there's a river that runs, you know, the river, the lake

Olan: Um-hum

Ken: that's that bridge they opened up, and that's where I went fishing. And I was, you know, I thought I was a pretty tough kid, and my, my neighbor was tougher. We ran a trap line down there. We fished and stuff. We were down there, when we were just starting to fish, and these two kids come up. We were about eleven. They're about eight. And they're smaller than us, and they're scrawnier than us, and they're barefoot and they've got a big stringer of fish (laugh). And they said "do you want to buy some fish?" My, my friend, he says "if we wanted to buy fish we'd go to the HEB." And I said "Dudley, I don't think you should have said that to those boys."

Olan: Laugh

Ken: And we were going, you know, we were going on down to go fishing, it wasn't five minutes, those kids were back and they had clubs. And we were gonna lose that fight and it was obvious we were gonna lose

(All laugh together)

Olan: Yeah

Ken: We high-tailed it out of there. So that was my, that's what started this whole project for me. 'cause there's nothing ever been written, you know. But that was the reputation that they had with us. Its "don't mess with 'em." 'cause they're tougher than you are.

Olan: Like Charles was talking about a while ago about Preston, talking about all the people in town. I mean it was nothing to stand there in the middle of town and see two or three fights going on.

Charles: That's what Preston said too ...

Ken: At one time?

Olan: Yeah, I mean. But, you know, and daddy'd might be right in the middle of it.

Ken: Uh-huh, yeah

All: (laugh)

Olan: But, I wanna tell you another story. Daddy and Willis Holden was partners cuttin' cedar. Out there on Coke's and, (laugh) they got up to the cedar mill one night and they got to playin poker and they got drunk and they got in a fight. And I don't know who won the fight, but they both laid up in bed for a week. (laugh) And, I think daddy had busted rib, and stuff but. Anyway, as soon as, as soon as Willis got to where he could get up and move around, why, he came to the house and he talked to daddy and, and, uh, and when they got healed up they went back to work again.

Arthur Lee: (laugh)

Charles: They were still partners.

Ken: Yeah

Olan: You know. But, I mean, they, they were.

Ken: They liked to fight, didn't they?

Olan: They didn't have anything against fighting

Ken: Yeah

Charles: Back to your deal, though. Uh, you'd be real surprised if you, if you started it at the north Llano bridge, and you went to every business in town and you met all of those people. A certain number of those people moved in here after the sixties. They're what we called newcomers. You know, even if they came in the seventies.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: They hadn't been here as long as some of us.

Ken: Right

Charles: But if you stayed with all the ones that pretty much grew up here, you'd be amazed who all, out of those people that are in other businesses, they either came here cuttin' wood, someone in their family was cutting wood, or they were cutting wood, or they were, they were tied to the cedar business somewhere

Ken: Yeah

Charles: And maybe they worked their way out of it. they didn't want to do that anymore. Uh, some couldn't ever work their way out of it. Some didn't want to work their way out of it.

Ken: Right

Charles: It was good for them. But, nearly everybody, including ranchers, have been impacted by first the cedar cutting and then the cedar hauling.

Ken: Right

Charles: It's been our whole ... it goes through every

Ken: Well I'm hearing that. And, you know, I mean, I've talked to folks, you must have known too, that are cedar cutters all their lives, that old man that was in his eighties

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Ken: and, he's a, he's a very religious man. He doesn't drink. He never has. You know, he's, I've said, he once told me he started cutting at nine. I said "you, you were probably a lot tougher" -- he went in the Army, during World War II. I said "you were probably a lot tougher than those city boys. Did, weren't you?" and he said "Yeah, but I didn't like to fight." Then he proceeds to tell me about the only three fights he's ever in. But I mean, the thing is, they weren't all, you know, hard partying, whatever you want to call it, you know.

Olan: They was .. Most of 'em were family ...

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: That's just like, uh, Hamp Wallace, you know, your grandpa, you know. And they was, he, at one point, he was out there on that company ranch, you know, what they called the company ranch, where the, all them hills, they was Bob and Arthur Dee and, uh, all the girls. Cause Arthur Dee was cutting posts out there too. Gary, Bob and all of 'em, you know, 'cause they all lived out there at one point, you know. And I guess Hamp moved to town here and I

Arthur Lee: That's where he moved to

Olan: Yeah

Charles: There was a, there was a stigma that both wood cutters and non-wood cutters, like you're talking about in school

Ken: Yeah

Charles: There was a stigma that went along there and I, I, I never, I always knew what it was. You knew who to leave alone and who not to. You know, who you could get away with something with and who you couldn't get away with anything with. If you wanted some trouble. Generally there was somebody ready to give you a ration of trouble if you wanted it.

Olan: Yeah

Charles: Those guys that came up through that wood cutting industry, and who grew up in those hard times, they'd give you a ration of crap if you wanted it. His uncle, and his two uncles, and Clinton McDonald, and Ernest McDonald, and, oh, maybe

Olan: the Webbs

Charles: Maybe Hap Insley, when my daddy in the '50s – For example, my father, uh, had come back down here to try to ranch. My mother had inherited the place, but her family was still running it. They wanted mother and daddy to move down here to the place where they'd been farming. Well, they came down here and low-and-behold they couldn't ranch our country, so daddy starts looking for places to lease, or, something to do. And the drought came along and we went broke in about '54, '55, '56 – in there. And so he was working during the day, he was cutting staves, and selling them to Jake, and then, at night he was running the Moon Glow Drive-In out here, he was punching tickets in the ticket booth

Ken: Um-hum

Charles: Well I'd go out there with mother. I was six years old, something like that, seven years old. Mother and I'd go out every night and watch the movie. We'd get in free and I'd get me a chili dog and if I ever had to go pee I'd go down to that concession stand. It was right in the middle of, like all those drive-in theaters were, their concession area and the projection area, and, and his uncles, who were about, from five to eight or nine, ten years older than I was. And some of the guys they ran around with. Now you want to talk about somebody that'd scare a young boy (laugh)

All laugh together

Charles: they were pretty tough. And, and they were not opposed to giving you a – a little grief. You know, they'd pull your pants down and whip you ass or something and send you back up to the car.

Arthur Lee: scared the living daylights

Charles: just for meanness, they were mischievous.

Ken: Um-hum

Charles: They never, they never offered to hurt me, but they scared the shit out of me.

Ken: laugh

Charles: All of my life. And, and as a result, you grow up, and there, there was a, those guys felt like, you've seen probably the movie The Outsiders? It, it had to do with

Ken: John Wayne?

Charles: they called it a socies --- no this was a later on deal. They called 'em socies and greasers. It was in California.

Ken: Oh, OK

Charles: And the greasers were bike guys and mechanics and they were greasers. They were tough guys. Socies all had their letter sweaters on, and they were, had their hair slicked back and had all the cheerleaders with them and they were fighting all the time. It was culture clashes. We had some of that here. It was some of both, both groups did that

Ken: Uh-huh, football boys?

Charles: If you really boil it right down there were hardly any of us that grew up that weren't impacted by that, that business that, that so many people tended to kind-of look down on

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: Hell, it, it ___ damn wreck, didn't it?

Ken: Yeah

Charles: It got everybody going. And the cedar mill. I'd hate to think what this town would have been without the cedar mill

Ken: Well, what do you, I mean what do you think people were looking, why, why were they looking down? Was it just like education, or something like that? Or they, everybody just needs someone to look down on? Is that what it is?

Charles: Well,

Ken: You didn't have any blacks

Charles: If you've got some guys that are ready to, ready to rumble, in fact, it's about, they're about ready to do that any time

Ken: Yeah

Charles: And then you've got some other guys that are gona get mad when that happens, they're just, it's just constant

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: It was always the same thing here. A whole lot of the same kind-of deal when, when we were growing up. Little Mexico, Junction was pretty much segregated. Mexican guys all lived over at Little Mexico

Ken: Um-huh

Charles: and they didn't come to Junction much. If they did their chances are, on a Saturday night, there'd be a damn fight or something like that

Ken: Yeah, yeah

Arthur Lee: You can't get a good haircut. (laugh) If you live over there

Charles: but, you know, you learn through that stuff

Ken: Yeah

Olan: You grow through that and you grow out of it, and

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Charles: and as a result we've got a society now that hell, there's not differences. They, we don't have those, that society of wood cutters that lived out in the camps

Ken: Yeah

Charles: We don't have the Mexicans living over in Little Mexico. We're all in Junction

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: It's just kind-of, we're all in it together, and, uh

Olan: I'll tell you what. Me and Gary got in drunk one night out in _____. Well, I don't know, even what started it, but, like I say, all them down ____, ____ down there in Little Mexico there you know. And I don't know what started it, but anyway, we had

Charles: Yeah, Whatever started it.

Olan: Yeah

Charles: It's just like, both, both sides

Olan: Anyway, Jerry and I got into it. Jerry and I got our stuff and we went back to the car and we decided to get another coke later on, you know. And we went back down to the concession stand, you know how you went down the steps there. I just went in the door. Jerry went around the run-around there, you know. And I thought, shit. And I, anyway, I turned around and come back out and come up behind him and one of them Mexicans sitting there holding his pistol on Jerry, you know. And Jerry told him "you better put that son-of-a-bitch up because you're gona need it." And about that time Jerry kicked him, hit him right there, and that gun went up and when it come down he had it and you talk about a bunch of 'em scattered (all laugh together) They - I was there several cars of 'em and they all left so they _____. They didn't just go to their cars - they left.

Charles: Raley about half-ass raised me from about '65 on. Since he came back from Germany, he, I hung out with Raley a lot before I was twenty-one. I'd drink beer with him, whatever, nobody give me any crap, but, also, nobody bothered with me. 'Cause he kind-of had a reputation. He'd never got in many fights. Hell, he was the good guy, always. But everybody knew if you did, shit, he'd just break 'em in two. He was a stout son of a gun and quick, all that. Now, Arthur's Uncle Jerry, this fella that Raley's talking about, now there was a different case for ya. Now, Jerry'd woop your ass and make you like it. He, he was good at it and he liked it.

Olan: Yeah

Charles: And he grew up later and found the Lord and he quit that stuff, but I'm telling you, he was good at it then and he liked it.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: He also had a reputation. He didn't take much trouble

Ken: And what was his name?

Charles: Jerry Wallace

Ken: Jerry Wallace. He was your Uncle?

Olan: there was a lot of difference between Uncle Dee's style of fighting, though, you know. Jerry stand back and

Arthur Lee : Uncle Dee go grab 'em.

Olan: He want to stay back. Uncle Dee would take that first lick and go to the ground with 'em

(all laugh together)

Olan: Yeah, he always said everybody's equal then, you know.

Charles: Jerry served a little time and he said the first thing he learned in there was when a son of a bitch pats you on the butt you've got two ways you can go. You've got to go but the one and he came back without three teeth, but, goodness, that one patting was all they ever got from Jerry. He was tough one

Ken: I think if a man, if a man grew up cutting cedar he's gona be strong. I mean

Charles: Hell, arms are just as wide

Ken: I, I'm, that's what I'm thinking. I mean forget playing football

Olan: Yeah

Ken: you know, those guys, they ought to, you ought to be able to whip the ass of a football player

Olan: But most of 'em that grew up in cutting cedar, they started when they were little, you know

Ken: yeah

Olan: I mean

Charles: Those guys were men, when most of the guys they were fooling with, or trying to fool with them, were boys.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: Men kind-of in their minds

Ken: Yeah

Charles: They didn't, uh, it was a different deal

Ken: You're talking Scots Irish, and I was, I was talking to this guy who's grand-daddy, I was talking about that earlier, his grand-daddy he had a cedar yard in Oak Hill. And, uh, the first thing came out of his mouth was "well, you know, that's the Irish in us." He just said "that's the Irish in us." And my daddy was Scots Irish too, and, uh, and there is something, you start reading, there's a, you know, about the history of Ireland and Scotland, and

Olan: Yeah

Ken: If you ever see that Braveheart movie, you know

Charles: They're a little intense

Ken: You know, and then those folks come on down through Appalachia, and they, and they came to Texas and they went to Arkansas and the Ozarks and come to Texas, and, and what I'm thinking, in at least around Austin, is that's, they're pretty much direct descendents.

Olan: Yeah

Ken: Now, you think there's anything to that? To the thought of just, uh, sort-of in the blood, uh, you know

Olan: Well, I'm sure there's a lot of that

Ken: (laugh)

Charles: You know, some of that, too, that happened, Raley, if you remember, lots of times if, if you, if your circumstances were such that, that you didn't have that helping hand from family or the community, or what have ya, to, to achieve your full potential, uh, education wise, or opportunity wise, over, over a generation or so with that, there can get to be some hard feelings, and it's not, it's true and it's, it's, uh, kind-of tough deal, and, and in my mind Junction lost, this whole area, probably, Camp Wood, all of the cedar country, where, where that wood industry was a subsistence kind-of an industry for a while, a lot of those, we lost a lot of people, in my mind, who had a lot more potential, to go and do certain things 'cause they just never had the opportunity. They were working their ass off and had to quit school, a lot of 'em. School to the seventh and eighth grades, you know, had to go to work.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: and, and when I think back on now, the folks who are a generation or two removed from that kind-of hard times, hell, they're doctors and they're engineers, and, and I just think that, all over Texas, maybe during the Depression, we lost a lot of, a lot of the best and brightest, just because, hell they had to go to work.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: Somebody died in their family and they had to go to work to support 'em.

Ken: for sure.

Olan: Yeah

Charles: And there was a lot of that.

Olan: But they, they was, I'd say, pretty independent.

Ken: Yeah. That's what I'm hearing

Charles: The woodcutters and later the wood haulers are the best, best, uh, natural mechanics, and uh, layout guys, and, and fixers, shade-tree fixers that I ever saw. You look at your Uncle Tom - that Tom, you talk about somebody that puts some stuff together. Tom could fix anything. You know. Just make it work. Make it run. At least those old motors, they might not could now - you've got to put a damn computer deal on it

Ken: But you're saying kind-of independent, you know, I mean, it's a little bit of an, I mean, my father certainly had it. It's a bit of an attitude that I'm as good

Olan: Yeah

Ken: I may not have had what you had, I may not have grown up like you did, but I'm as good as you are.

Charles: don't act like you're ...

Ken: And Don't you, don't you ever forget it, you know

Olan: Yeah

Ken: And if there was just that, my friend did when he was eleven, he just kind-of put that guy down, you know, "we're not fishing for fish, we're fishing 'cause we like to fish." Of course we ate them, but that wasn't the point you know.

Olan: Yeah

Ken: I mean, so there's that, you know, that's what I'm hearing, is just an attitude, don't, you know, don't put me down, or you're gona be looking for trouble.

Olan: And like I say, they, they didn't, none of 'em, I don't guess, you know, that I knew of, ever worried about finding a place to go to work.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: you know, I mean, they wasn't worried about their job being

Ken: They worked. And they weren't worried, were they worried about making enough money to, I mean, to survive, or, or was it really this sort-of hand to mouth?

Olan: No, 'cause they worked from one day to the next anyway.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: It was like you said, I was looking for this wood brake when I found this

Olan: You know, I mean they

Ken: So it was, uh, they really weren't worrying people

Olan: Unt-uh

Olan: If they did they didn't show it

Ken: Uh-huh, uh-huh

Olan: Um, you know, but

Charles: You know one thing that I've always thought about? Uh, here I am talking ...

Ken: Yall know Junction

Charles: You'all can correct me if I'm wrong, but you know the advent of the mills and wood haulers, it took a lot of those people that had made their living cuttin' and they gravitated over to being the mill hands and running those mills and it created a whole nother industry for them. Uh, where, where all that might have been available to them up until that time was going to the wood brake

Ken : Um-hum

Charles: and cutting posts. All of a sudden they became boilermen, and tank men, and went to work at Pax, and went to work out there by 700, you know, and it kind-of created a whole nother deal. Its still in the cedar business but they weren't hauling. They were running the mills

Olan: You know, you look at Orlan Thorpe and Junior Evans and

Arthur Lee: Elvin Jones

Olan: And them, you know

Charles: MacDonalds

Olan: They, they were cutting posts before they went to work at the Pax. And this was in 1950.

Arthur Lee: Roger, Roger was, Roger McDonald was

Olan: But they were cuttin' wood then, you know, for the mill. They used the mill, hauled their own wood then, you know.

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Olan: And Orlan, Junior Evans, you know, they all started '50, '51 you know, and they stayed with the mill.

Arthur Lee: They stayed with 'em all along

Ken: When did that mill open? '50, 51?

Olan: No, what was it, late '40s?

Charles: I would have thought early 50s.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: I don't know. It was going when I can remember

Ken: Yeah

Olan: but it wasn't anything like, like it is, but, I mean, I knew it was out there. I don't know

Ken: Let me try this one on you. Cause, you know, I, I'm really what I'm doing is making comparisons between the folks I'm familiar with in Liberty Hill, and, and the Junction I mean, a lot of those people, do not, did not want to come into town. Basically did not want the, the city life. They're out in the country, they're living in, you know, a little house or something, maybe it had a dirt floor, usually water was a, there usually was water by the way

Olan: Um-huh

Ken: I heard you say they're hauling water. That's always got to be an issue.

Olan: Yeah

Ken: But they really didn't want the city life. They, they stayed in the country longer than most, let's put it that way. You know, when

Arthur Lee: They didn't want anybody jacking with them

Olan: We'd come to town twice a month.

Ken: Twice a month.

Olan: The first and the fifteenth.

Ken: Uh-huh. On Saturdays? Or Sundays?

Olan: Saturday, you know. And that was a'bout the only time we ever came to town

Ken: Did you, did you, uh, do much hunting and, uh, fishing,

Olan: All the time

All: (laugh together)

Ken: gathering, getting your own food and, tell me about that a little bit.

Olan: Well, when we were living on Coke's, out there, you know. Yeah, I mean, we had five miles of river front,

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: Sixteen thousand acres,

Ken: Wow

Olan: So,

Ken: catfish

Olan: Yeah, we fished and hunted all over that place

Charles: Ate deer meat all the time.

Ken: Yeah

Olan: Yeah, we had, we had deer, and had some wild goat, we'd kill a goat every once in a while

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: slip up on 'em (laugh_

Ken: (laugh)

Olan: but, you know, Daddy would, we had them wild hogs, you know

Ken: Yeah

Olan: Feral hogs, and, usually, daddy'd catch one of them every year and we'd put em in a pen and feed 'em out and butcher it every year

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: So we had pork, and of course we had chickens

Ken: Yeah

Olan: Of course, Daddy had a fighting roosters too

Ken: Um-hun

Olan: but, you know, we had plenty of chickens and eggs and milk

Ken: did you have a garden or corn, or anything like that?

Olan: Yeah, a big garden!

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: a big garden

Ken: Did you, who did that, your mama? Sisters, and stuff, or

Olan: Mother, but me and sister was the ones that got to do all the work (all laugh) We hoed the weeds

Arthur Lee: I got in on some of that too (laugh)

Olan: We kept the garden going, you know. She would water it.

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: But Yeah, you know, Uh, we had a huge garden

Ken: Oh

Olan: Probably, it was probably Three quarters of an acre

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: I hated that thing

Ken: (laugh)

Arthur Lee: Well, we had some help. The old man went ___ boy I worked my ass of when I was fifteen. I got fat and I turned and worked for you when I was sixteen, you know, wasn't much of a hand fat. But after that I went with dad and started making a hand, you know, and the older I got I got to be a better hand, we'd go to cut stays and we'd cut, uh, two hundred apiece in the morning and then we'd go back in the evening, we'd come in and lay out for the hot part of the day and then about five o'clock we'd load up and go back and cut two hundred more apiece.

Ken: My goodness

Arthur Lee: And, uh, I always get to load most of 'em because he was heavy so I'd get to load most of the stays and then unload them while he was resting and we'd go, about time I got 'em unloaded he was ready to go back.

Ken: (laugh) Oh. I bet you were covered in cedar sap.

Olan: Oh, man, I'm telling you what, I lived in it. I mean always.

Charles: and Ticks

Olan: Y'all remember her?

Olan: Who?

Olan: Little Amy Pell, Johnny and Amy Pell? I guarantee, She cut five hundred heart staves every day.

Arthur Lee: Damn!

Olan: With an axe.

Arthur Lee: Whoo-wee

Ken: Huh!

Charles: Johnny Pell

Olan: Yeah

Charles: he was, uh, he just kind of ____

Ken: So the women were, were working, could work just about as good as a man sometimes?

Olan: Oh, yeah. Sometimes.

Ken: So, when you had those families out in the camps, the whole family was working together?

Arthur Lee: Yes, my grandmother cut staves too, is what they told me. She cut her share of the staves. When they went to cut, she cut too. Yeah

Ken: Would she cut the big trees too, or would,

Arthur Lee: I reckon she got the old limbed cedars, the limbs that was already laying

Ken: Yep, yep. So you, you come up to a good sized cedar post, you know, say a four inch top, ten foot post, twelve foot, you cut two post out of that, lay that down first, and then cut off the staves? How would you, I mean, I've never done it.

Arthur Lee: You cut the bottom ones first. You cut at the bottom then the top

Ken: OK

Arthur Lee: Some of them were strong enough to hit it in one lick and bring it all the way off.

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: That's where you'd cut, one on the bottom and one on top. It'd fall and you'd get all your bottom limbs then you'd start on the tree.

Ken: Oh, OK

Arthur Lee: Yeah, the bottom

Olan: Yeah, they

Arthur Lee: If you started cutting your, on all four sides, or three sides, you wouldn't have so much job of butting it later on

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: if you started, get you a couple over here, a couple over here

Ken: Right

Olan: You're talking about a four-inch post though, it, they'd normally just cut it on this side and then switch hands and cut this side, Because most of your good wood cutters, cedar cutters could swing an axe with either hand.

Ken: Really?

Olan: Yeah, I never could do that. I'd have to crawfish around it

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: But they'd get it from both sides

Olan: Yeah, they'd cut it from here and cut it over here and let it fall

Ken: How many licks would it take to, to knock a

Olan: Oh, I don't know, a four inch post, they wouldn't never hit it very many times.

Arthur Lee: 4-5 times

Olan: Yeah, you know

Olan: Sometimes they___ it out here, then hit it once more here, then do the same thing over here.

Ken: But you already had taken the limbs off. Is that what you're saying? Off the bottom?

Arthur Lee: Up so high.

Olan: Up so high

Olan: Yeah They trimmed up to where they could swing an axe, you know

Ken: Could you use those limbs for stays?

Arthur Lee and Olan: Yeah, a lot of 'em

Arthur Lee: Yeah, sometimes those ___ trees had thirty-eight stays in a tree, you know. I've cut lots of trees with thirty-eight stays in 'em, thirty-seven, twenty-five, some of them, most of the time six or twelve. You know.

Ken: Um-hum

Arthur Lee: Once in a while you get a good tree that'll have thirty stays in that son of a gun, you'd cut them staves out of it and cut that tree down

Olan: You know a lot of this cedar around here grew up and then it limbed out

Ken: Oh, OK. 'cause it's real tall? Was that on the draws, or something like that?

Olan: Well, no, just even out in the flat, they'd have one big trunk and then they'd limb out

Ken: Right

Olan: You could cut four inch posts off the limbs, you know. Now a lot of that cedar, where its real thick and goes straight up, you can cut it off at the bottom, cut it off at the top, you know, trim these little limbs off ...

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: There's still some of that around

Olan: ___ you know, get that big around, and, and, uh, you know, when it got up in, uh, it would limb out, and hell you'd six foot fours, and fives out of 'em, you know.

Ken: Out of the limbs?

Olan: Yeah, the limbs.

Ken: That's something. Would you cut those big trees, like that, use it for blocks, for blocking and stuff like that. Big ole'

Olan: Yeah, or they'd

Ken: corner posts?

Olan: you know, yeah, corner posts and stuff too, you know

Arthur Lee: ___s?

Charles: Corner posts and ___s and stuff.

Ken: That'd take while to cut

Olan: Cut one one time. It was down in a draw, you know, the side of a hill. And he parked the truck down there and cut the tree down on it, 'cause it was so damn big you couldn't

Arthur Lee: You couldn't move it (all laugh)

Charles: Arthur Lee, what were a, lets say a twelve foot ten-inch top bring now, a good one?

Olan: Oh my god, a fortune

Arthur Lee: a hundred and thirty, hundred and fifty bucks

Olan: Yeah

Charles: They still have some down in Ingram, and that yard behind, uh, uh, T.J. Moore's

Arthur Lee: Jerry Stephens?

Charles: you can go in there and they've got a lot of, a lot of wood in there from all over _____

Ken: Yeah, Jerry Stevens

Olan: Yeah

Ken: He's re, he's related to some of the people I'm talking too. Back there in Austin

Charles: He had a hell of a cedar yard down there

Ken: Yeah, I haven't been down there yet

Charles: Expensive

Ken: I got to ask, What would that post weigh?

Arthur Lee: three hundred and fifty pounds on you

Olan: I've seen some of 'em that weighed

Olan: When I was working at the cedar mill – this is another story though. I worked out at Pax for a little while, and they was one in there. They brought in for wood, you know. And it was eight foot long and there aint way you could handle it, you know. But we unloaded the truck. I pulled the truck around there and put it on the scales and I pulled back over there by the fence and rolled that bitch off of there and then pulled back across the scales and it weighed eleven hundred pounds

Arthur Lee: My god

Olan: I've seen _____

Olan: Wetbacks put it on the truck, and how they got that joker on there I have no idea, but, when I left, when I left Pax it was laying still over there by the fence

Arthur Lee: I've cut some ten foot posts, you know, about sixteen-inch big around and we cut some ten-foot posts like that, have 'em in the yard, and big men, six-five, big wide-shouldered men come in there and grab the end and shake, you know, it'd be that heavy, and I'd just grab hold of it, pull it out there, throw it up on that truck and boy they'd say "how in the hell did you do that?" You know. I say it's all in the balance, you know. Anything has got a trick to it, you know

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: the balance of, the post, you know

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: You're letting the post do the work. You don't do the work because, you know

Ken: Yeah

Arthur Lee: It'd be a hundred forty, a hundred sixty, seventy pounds

Ken: That's seen I've seen a picture of a man with a post on his shoulder that was about that big around

Olan: Oh, yeah. Big, you always shouldered that son of a bitch

Ken: (laugh)

Olan: That's what he's talking about. You get the little end up and ___ the middle

Ken: Uh-huh, uh-huh

Olan: and get it on that shoulder and you ___

Arthur Lee: I had one day cutting by myself then three days with my son and he come in there and got an old ___ post with my cedar loader and I just cut him a yard, I cut it in four days. The whole damn, uh, cedar yard. And I, he'd only give me like two, three months to cut it and I never did cut it. And so I went out there in four days and cut every one of 'em and my son come in there and got 'em with the cedar loader and brung them out to the road and then I took the trailer and truck and then I did the precision work with the cedar loader, loaded 'em all up there and took 'em to the hill and unloaded 'em by hand. And they ___ said "man, I can't believe you cut a load of them damn posts." I said "yeah, I can cut posts. I'm a cedar post cutter. That's what I do."

Ken: Yeah (laugh)

Arthur Lee: That's the last posts we cut

Charles: You know, Arthur Lee, when you talk about that, some people can run saws and some people -- it's like welding. Some people can weld, and there are some people that can daub

Arthur Lee: You've got it.

Charles: I'm a dauber.

Arthur Lee: Yeah, yeah

Charles: And I, I can, I can saw it, but I can't run a saw. I can run a saw, but I can't saw.

Olan: Yeah

Charles: The people that can just ___ they stay out of the rocks, they just, Ol' Lupe, pretty damn good at staying out of the rocks, I'll watch him and he'd just pretty steady. Hell I'm hitting sparks, you know, and it's just

Olan: Yeah

Charles: And all of that's time consuming. When you have to stop and sharpen that damn saw

Olan: Oh, yeah, you're a wasting time then.

Arthur Lee: you didn't want to do that.

Charles: Those Segura boys that cut it with Andy Oh man. Oh shit, you talk about sawing. These guys are

Arthur Lee: Them boys are wets

Charles: Well, they've got _____. And they've been over here thirty years, cutting cedar, cutting green cedar for a guy who cut, who clear-cut some places

Olan: and they haul wood when they're not doing that

Charles: And there're three brothers and they just wilder than ____ bulls. they'd go back to Mexico and get drunk, get thrown in jail. They're indians, but they're the saw-runningist-son-of-a-guns

Arthur Lee: That's for damn sure. That boy cut – old Leon -- He worked for us. He cut twenty-thousand pounds a day. I hand loaded it and brought it down on my tongue, two ten-thousand pounds every damn day. And he'd have that shit when I got back and I'd load that other one and go.

Charles: He's come into town from Preston's every day at lunch with that little-old flatbed with about, probably, oh I'm guessing he's got between four and five tons on there.

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Charles: He's back out there with another load cut and ready, just about ready to load, and he'd load it out the next morning. So every day by lunch, he's, he's got a load and I mean those are big, big posts and they're smooth down the sides and they're smooth across the top.

Arthur Lee: Exactly

Charles: And he stacks them in there tight

Arthur Lee: He's something else. He runs on pure gasoline – he got to drink gas

all laugh together

Arthur Lee: I never seen anyone like him You know

Ken: Is he a big man?

Arthur Lee: No. He's stout and wide and one-hundred eighty-pound Pretty good stout guy though

Ken: Huh

Charles: Boy his old arms are just like cement

Ken: Did they, back when they had these camps and all, did anybody ever burn charcoal. Was that, that was a big thing around

Arthur Lee: ____

Ken: Make, make charcoal out of cedar

Arthur Lee: ____ cedar didn't come, ____ light the fire though.

Ken: No. Huh.

Olan: ____ tried it one time

Ken: How about moonshine? Does, a lot of that in the hills around here?

Olan: No

Ken: Because there was around Austin.

Charles: I never knew ..

Ken: No? huh

Charles: They damn sure could work their way around a, around a beer can, or beer bottle or a bottle of Lonestar

Ken: Was it, when all these, it sounds like it really took off in the thirties around here, is that right? Or the twenties? Were people, did they come in for, in order, because they heard there was money to be made cutting cedar? Was it, was it attractive, or were they already living here doing something else?

Arthur Lee: There was nothing else for them to do. They had government programs that started all that wasn't it

Charles: Yeah, I think so

Arthur Lee: That's when it was . The country was down and they come up with those programs to open it up and give people something to do.

Ken: OK

Charles: See that, don't forget, that country, this country, this county wasn't even organized until '76, 1876. And it was still open range then.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: And rustling was the, was the worst offense in Kimble County through the seventies and up to about the 1880s. And that's when Major Jones sent the Rangers in to clean this county up because there was a, a confederation of rustlers in Kimble County that ___ Mason, Gillespe, Mendard county. This was a damn

Olan: Well Not only rustlers but outlaws

Charles: But these ____

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: it was Kimble County, but, see, then, when that fencing started in about the 1890s

Ken: Yeah

Charles: See, our country, when my great-grandfather came up here he bought that ranch and it was in three barbed-wire fenced pastures, Those barbed-wire, were like three or four strands of barbed wire, three pastures in 18- 19-thousand acres. So it was three big pastures. Well, over time, then, those ranchers began to say, you know, we could run these ranches so much better if we had 'em fenced

Ken: Sure

Charles: well they had to, they had to use something for posts and so the cedar was here, and as that happened all over west Texas, and all over east Texas, then there became more of a market for cedar posts and I don't think that really happened until after the turn of the century, probably.

Ken: Uh-huh

Charles: I mean, at first taking them from here to there

Ken: Right

Charles: Maybe some of those big ranches did, but it was probably in the teens, or after they got trucks, those old Model-Ts, and Model-As, and, you know, I guess they'd haul it in wagons, but there wasn't any trains or anything out here

Olan: There weren't any trains yet. There had to be trucks before we really got to be a market for the cedar.

Ken: What, what I'm hearing around Austin was that there, yeah, there were some that was taken out in trains, 'cause they, remember they built the capitol out of marble, marble from Marble Falls, granite, from Marble Falls. So they put this train line out there, and once that train line was there, Burnet, Marble Falls, and Cedar Park are all on that train line. Cedar Park wasn't, didn't even exist, before cedar came into business. So, I don't have any records, I don't have any proof of this, but I'm thinking that back then in the early days that you're talking about, they were using the train. Then you get up, but you really couldn't long-haul 'em in truck. There weren't trucks that could go up to Wyoming, Nebraska, Arizona, back in the twenties and stuff, so, that didn't take, that didn't really start, I don't think, until the forties. And, and I'm hearing that even World War II there was a lot of rationing, you know. Of tires, gasoline

Olan: Yeah

Ken: So there wasn't a lot of trucking then, so I think, it was just this boom, it just boomed in the forties

Olan: Back then, though, you're talking about them rationing tires and stuff, there were some of 'em they could get, you know, script, or whatever, you know, to buy tires if you was doing something related to

Ken: related to the war

Olan: yeah, you know.

Ken: Yeah

Olan: 'cause I know Jack Maples when he was long hauling out to Arizona, he'd get that.

Ken: OK

Olan: You know

Ken: What years was he doing that?

Olan: During the war.

Ken: OK

Olan: You know.

Olan: I think he went down here. But anyway, he'd get script where could buy tires

Ken: Uhhuh

Olan: And, uh, that's how he was hauling, back then, you know, New Mexico

Ken: Yeah. So in the later years, back in the late forties and fifties, were yall hauling a lot of, was a lot of cedar being hauled out of here for long distances?

Olan: Oh, yeah. Yeah

Ken: OK

Arthur Lee: Me and dad took it, New Mexico, Louisiana, Oklahoma, all over

Olan: Colorado and everything else

Ken: Uh-huh, uh-huh

Charles: When I was little it was nothing to see all kinds, every day, or every couple of days, a trailer truck loaded plum to the gills with cedar posts. I mean it was coming down main street every day, you know.

Olan: They was, they was several of em around here that long hauling, you know. Zapeda,

Olan: Snuffy Smith, Jay, you know, they was several of them long hauling out of here.

Ken: I wonder how many truck loads would go out of here in a week, or something like that, how many of those big trucks

Olan: Because you had a lot, you know, in the fifties, you had lots of, late forties and fifties, you know, early fifties, you had lots of cedar cutters so the yards had to be moving lots of cedar.

Ken: So you,

Olan: They was lot of yards around

Ken: Were the cutters, were they bringing it in or did they ever own little flat bed bob-tail rig, something like that?

Olan: Oh yeah

Charles: sell 'em by the post

Ken: Yeah

Olan: Yeah

Charles: They made a trade with the rancher

Arthur Lee: I started cutting at seven cents apiece, that's what I started cutting at.

Ken: What year was that in?

Olan: It was in, uh, 1982. when I started cutting

Ken: What do you think he resold them for?

Olan: Thirty-four cents, thirty-seven cents.

Ken: About five times as much as he paid you?

Olan: Yeah

Ken: Holy moly, I didn't know that.

Olan: Yeah

Ken: (laugh) So like you should have had a cedar yard (laugh)

Arthur Lee: Yeah, yeah

Olan: back

Arthur Lee: I can't keep 'em ____

Olan: ___ money

Arthur Lee: last several months, you can't keep 'em

Ken: Uh-huh

Olan: No, somebody'd drive by and

Arthur Lee: You know, I'd finally get tired of cutting 'em, I'd give up on it, you know. Because I'd sell every one could get. It's just

Olan: But they still use lots of posts in south Texas

Arthur Lee: ___ what sizes to cut, you know

Ken: Yeah, they say that the t-posts don't last as long

Olan: No, because they rot

Olan: you know, they rust out. So they're using cedar posts

Charles: You saw that post in the corner of that barn, oiut there at Preston's, that son-of-a-bitch is a hundred and twenty-five years old.

Olan: Heart cedar will stay there forever, you know.

Ken: So they were bringing it in on, on, they had their own trucks by then. You knew, somebody with a wagon?

Olan: Um-hum

Ken: Somebody had a wagon

Charles: There were wagons even in the early fifties

Ken: Uh-huh. Yeah

Olan: Yeah, Johnny Pale had one, Rubber tires

Olan Raley 5

Olan: Even mules

Olan: I rode down, one time, with them, me and Sister

Olan: I'm gotta get my pictures I'm gona go down to the truck right quick Charlie

Olan: We was coming to town and they was too, so we rode with 'em, in the wagon

Charles: This old man is just as crazy as hell, just as crazy as hell

Ken: Who's that?

Charles: Johnny Pale this fella

Ken: Uh-huh. Was the one you were telling me about that rode a horse bareback and had a

Charles: that's Johnny Pale. Had an Indian feather

Ken: Tell me about that _____

Charles: we went over to Lacy Flemings, my cousin was gona buy a bull from Lacy Flemings in Rock Springs, and John Pale was working for him. And we went out there looking for that bull and standing in the pen looking at his bull and we heard a scream, blood-curdling-ass-scream. And here comes John Pale.

Arthur Lee: There's one of them wagons back there. that's Arthur Dee right there

Charles: He was riding as fast as he could bareback, rode up there and jumped off that horse

Arthur Lee: You see that team of mules back there on that wagon

Olan: Yeah

Ken: What's he got in that wagon? Barrels of something?

Olan: Yeah. Probably water barrels.

Arthur Lee: Yeah, Probably water barrels (laugh)

Ken: So that's your granddad there?

Arthur Lee: That's my dad

Ken: Your dad

Arthur Lee: Yeah, that was him there.

Ken: (all laugh)

Arthur Lee: _____ meanness

Ken: What's that?

Arthur Lee: I said that was meanness, _____

Ken: Who's that?

Olan: Oh, Arthur Dee. That was my dad.

Ken: Oh

Arthur Lee: That was a mean bastard. (all laugh) That's what they tell me – he was mean!

Ken: Well, You should know.

Arthur Lee: He wasn't ever mean to me.

Charles: I don't know of any fights Arthur ever lost. He just quit fighting after a while (laugh)

Arthur Lee: Yeah, I think, he just got tired of fighting

Ken: You were tell, so, that story about you were there buying cattle or buying a bull.

Charles: He came riding up, they heard him scream, and he just came roaring off the side of the hill on horseback, and he came running up there and jumped off that horse. He was barefoot. Had on a pair of old slacks, that looked like they'd been worn for about two months. No shoes on and no shirt on and a, and Indian feather braided into his hair, and jumped off and came running up there and started talking about half jibberish.

Arthur Lee: _____

Charles: Yeah, we were all about ten, twelve years old and I was pretty impressed the way he came barreling off that hill horseback

Ken: (laugh)

Arthur Lee: Who was it?

Olan: Johnny Pale

Olan: But he'd park that wagon back off back yonder you know, edge of town, you know, just before where yall live now, somewhere off back there and he'd walk to town, he'd never brought it down in town, hardly ever

Arthur Lee: he walked into town. It was a pretty good sized town then, though.

Olan: Well, yeah, 'cause, you know

Charles: There was three grocery stores between yall's house and town.

Ken: Huh

Olan: Yeah. And then the laundrymat was down there, you know,

Olan: Yeah. And they had groceries in there too.

Arthur Lee: Yeah ___

Ken: Well Charlie, You're were talking about, you know, down in the draws, having the best cedar, because they hadn't, wasn't the fires down in there. So that'd be tough to get out. I mean, you know, particularly it would be tough to get that vehicle close enough to get it out, right. Would they use mules to pull it out, those big posts out? Or sleds, or anything like that?

Charles: If they cut it – a lot of it didn't get cut

Olan: ___

Charles: ___ still has big cedar, down in those draws, ___

Olan: Some places you just didn't go, I mean, it just wasn't feasible. But one time daddy was cutting and I forget now where it was. It was back – might have been. Hell, I don't remember – it might have been at Preston's, I don't know. But anyway, somebody had went along there and cut all the posts off the side of the hill, you know. Its pretty steep, but they had rolled down to the bottom, you know. And they had, never did bother to get em. I mean, when daddy went in there and was cutting, and he found out they wasn't never gona come back and get the posts, you know. So me and mother and sister sitting out there and that's all we did all day long, throw posts off that hill down to the bottom.

Charles: That's how you got 'em out.

Olan: Yeah, we'd end them son-of-a-btiches all the way down, then go back up the hill and get another. Of course, I wasn't very damn big then. And, uh, daddy would load 'em and haul 'em, you know, and of course some of 'em paying these wetbacks to cut 'em, you know, but if they needed to be trimmed up

or something, you know, cut off or whatever, you know, he'd do that. And then he'd load 'em up and he'd haul em to -- Old Bus Carroll had that cedar yard there at the old Evergreen School House. Bus was living 'there then, at that yard there. And, we'd haul them, and that's all we done for two days. And, I think, they was a hundred and two dollars and something, of posts, cut over there.

Charles: Nobody ever came

Olan: No. And then we kicked every one of them posts down the hill

Charles: Ken, after the post cutting, the same, the same dynamic exists for wood hauling that did for post cutting. The best wood is in the worst country to get out. And I can remember, I was helping Raley one summer, and he was cutting at Tom _____, at Segovia, and the roads in there weren't good anyway. We went up there on the side of this mountain and the damned old road, the side of the road was like that as you went along the side of this hill cutting the side of the hill. And there weren't real good roads at that, and he had a load on that thing, we were bringing it out, and I was up, on the up-hill side, I was on the passenger side coming back down. I went up hill and we were on a slant just about like that and we went over a rock on this side, and it lifted both tires up off the ground and for a second we were on those two tires on Raley's side. And I started opening my door (all laugh). Raley said "don't jump out!!!"

Ken: You were the ballast!

Charles: Oh, hell! Scared me to death! (all laugh)

Ken: Shoot, I bet you lost some , I'll bet some folk were lost in those hills.

Charles: Sure

Ken: Probably still up there. Man.

Charles: Preston says that Plumley, old man Plumley unloaded a load of posts up there where yall lived, up in that, oh little pretty flat, that pretty bottom that has the creek and then the mountain, they came across that little-old steep draw there and the standards broke and it rared his truck back up like that and the standards broke on it and they just unloaded 'em right there, just as level in that draw

Olan: Well I've done that in the woods before

Arthur Lee: had to get out and reload them and pull 'em out of there?

Olan: Out there on where old Townsends got now

Charles: Ms Lee's?

Olan: Yeah, I hauled in there one time. I had two wets over there and I had to come out and went uphill pretty much straight up you know, the top I had to turn left, you know. And of course that truck I was hauling on , as soon as you got up there, you know, the front wheels come off the ground, you know. And I got it there and I needed to turn, you know, and of course my front wheels was that high off the

ground, anyway. Well them brakes never worked real good on those cedar trucks, you know. So I clutched it and hit the brakes and when I did I thought it would come down, you know

Arthur Lee: Yeah

Olan: But my standards broke and I just laid that load of wood out (all laugh)

Ken: I talked to one guy _____

Olan: Back up, reload, turn the standards around

Arthur Lee: Exactly. That's all you can do. I seen a guy lose one last week, they come in here yesterday morning and I was going up they had a crippled up, gooseneck, beat all to hell, looked like a bomb and they had a wood on another trailer bringing it in, I don't know who lost it out there on Rock Springs road, somebody lost one.

Ken: Hum

Arthur Lee: I was driving an old '55 and the whole spindle would break off and the tire'd just lay right there and truck would sit down, '55 model chevrolet and that 48 model dump truck you had, I run that off the river one time, backwards. Man, that's something else, you know

Ken: Forty-eight dump truck?

Arthur Lee: Forty-eight

Olan: I've still got it. Still runs.

Charles: That's what I tell you, they're pretty good mechanics

Olan: I was hauling, I was working for old Lizard Smith. And, we was were hauling of Fred Coleman's out there, he had wets out there then We'd go out and get a truck loaded, and then go to we hook up ____ Hell, I'd been hauling for two weeks I guess, anyway, straight-away down there, you know, by ____ Nelson's, you know, and it kept jumping out of 4th every time I put it in 4th if I let off the gas it'd jump out of gear, you know. "What the hell is wrong with this thing?" Anyway, I finally, finally went on, Got up to Telegraph Hill along around Crystal Holler over by the mill. crawled under that truck after I got unloaded, and I had one bolt

Charles: One bolt (laugh)

Olan: I had one bolt still in transmission, and it was half way out.

Arthur Lee: You were fixing to dump her right there in the road.

Olan: I dug around up there – old Otis ____ was running the mill back then you know. I dug around up there and finally found more bolts. While I was laying there looking for that I looked over there on the tie rod. And he had it bailing-wired on there. Them damn ball joints had come off that tie rod

Arthur Lee: Yep

Olan: He stuck that thing back in there with bailing wire.

Olan: I would ___ - him to death.

Arthur Lee: Get a choppin axe and beat that damn thing back on that

Olan Yeah, put the baling wire on it

Arthur Lee: Come on down

Ken: You almost fixed Charles truck with bailing wire out there (laugh)

Charles: I just backed over the damn dumpster across the street. I was backing up, to see out the window, I wasn't looking out my right mirror. Ran over that damn dumpster knocked my fender skirt off, clear off, Arthur Lee crawled under there to put that thing back on _____ plastic

Olan: But we would – me and Arthur Dee hauling off of, uh, Guthrie's over there, old Frank Guthrie come out, we was working for Lizard Smith again (laugh) and, uh, hauling wood off that, we started off the damn hill and, they was a gate about halfway down there, you know. And Arthur Dee got over there in that, right rear tire -- tandem - hit a rock, and of course it turned down and the driveshaft fell out from under it. And of course, like I say, none of them trucks had brakes on 'em then, you know. I jumped out of the truck and went to throwing rocks and stumps under of that son-of-a-bitch, trying to stop it. Because I didn't want to have to fix the gate back . We knew it was going to go through that gate. anyway, we finally got it stopped before it got to the gate

Charles: You were throwing rocks in front of it! (all laugh together)

Olan: Trying to stop the ... Cause I knowed we didn't have no brakes, you know. Drive the shit out of it

Arthur Lee: seven, eight tons of posts on there, and have one left brake, that barely. You'd have to pump it forty times to get that son of a gun to hit. you'd be pumping that son-of-a-gun, man those tires "swish, swish, swish" (laugh) I've been there dude

Olan: Me and Arthur Dee was hauling, a, off of, Willie Bolts, up there on, next to Alamo Road, you know, next to Woodards. We had to come off that big-ole' hill then, you know, it was straight down. He didn't have no brakes, you know. I'd stop up there at the hill. So when we got the truck loaded and Arthur Dee goes to cuttin and I'd haul it, uh, out there on the place

Charles: Right there by Fiola's

Olan: Yeah

Olan: We was hauling out there. So I'd stop up there on top of the hill and I'd fill that brake cylinder full of water. Damn brake was fluid was too high, so we'd put water in it. And I'd have, I'd have brakes

coming off that hill, you know. And if I was lucky I could get through town with a little bit of brake, you know. By the time I got to the other side of town I didn't have any brakes.

Charles: Your water was gone (laugh)

Olan: So we'd just. Anyway. I did that one time

Charles: Anyway, we had a wood hauler last year, who had a fire, it had a flat out by Fort McKavitt on Fort McKavitt Road. During that drought when it was just as dry as a tinder box.

Ken: Yeah

Charles: And he ran the rubber off of his tire and rolled down the road on the damn rim, loaded with cedar.

Ken: Umh-hum

Charles: Well, hell, he was starting fires all along the road, for about ten mile run, he lit the road behind him, and finally it got so hot it caught his truck on fire. Caught the load of wood on fire, burned his truck and trailer, probably plumb to the ground, sitting in the middle of the highway, and he had probably three hundred acres burning behind him (laugh)

Ken: Oh, no!

Charles: Hell fire! He just ____

Ken: He didn't have a rearview mirror, I guess, did he (laugh)

Arthur Lee: Not one of them boys got a fire extinguisher. I'll bet I'm the only one who's got a Texas ____ fire extinguisher on the rig. You have to have that stuff on that job or you're gona lose it. ____ bought him a fire truck, last week. And it's a real good deal to have out there, Looks good on the job, you know when you're on the job

Ken: Yall ever have any big fires in the brakes around here? It would seem like they'd catch on fire.

Olan: Yeah

Ken: and never quit.

Charles: Yeah. Most of the fires over the last thirty years have been started by, either lightning or chainsaws. A muffler's get hot

Ken: Yeah

Charles: Especially if the muffler's gone (laugh)

Arthur Lee: You get up there in the tree there, where he's got that, and the muffler's right there, and that spark can get on that and set it one fire. Especially if you get on a big tree, you know in that bark

Ken: Yeah

Arthur Lee: You get in there, and it'll set one on fire.

Ken: Damn

Arthur Lee: You better be watching for it too, because it will sneak up on you and smoke, You come back the next day and a big ole burn spot

Ken: There's your -- your income's all gone

Charles: A hunter said – Leon had a little fire out there the other day –. He said “I think your wood hauler must have set a fire.” He said “It burned off about two acres out there out there by the windmill back there

Olan: Well, I bet he already drove off and it burnt out overnight because until it hit a rock ledge

Charles: Exactly, because he doesn't even know it because the wind blowing like it was, yeah, it will, it will do it. I've had it happen. I've come back and seen, I've lost two-or-three saws like that

Olan Raley 6

Arthur Lee: We'd always cook on the campfire, you know. My dad always had wetback camps and I'd go run em and he'd stay in the pool halls and play and I'd go run them wetback camps (laugh) Take 'em and ____ all that stuff , you know

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: And the first thing we did in the morning was build a campfire, you know, you'd go there to the brake, and at dinner time we'd eat on it and at night we'd always, I'd leave them with it, and I guess they kept it going.

Ken: Yeah

Arthur Lee: And, uh, I've come back and had the chainsaws around t here and every one of 'em burn up

Ken: Oh

Arthur Lee: Thank God there was a rock ledge, It would burn itself out

Ken: Uh-huh

Arthur Lee: I've seen that happen lots of times. You know, Mexicans go

Ken: Well, listen, I don't want to keep you guys from dinner. I imagine, I have no idea of the time, I don't have a watch on

Charles: Its ____ minutes to six

Ken: I bet that's dinner time. Let me, uh

Olan: No, it's a long ago

Ken: Lets call it a day.