Oral History Interview

with

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Tucson, Arizona
October 28, 1958

by Elwood R. Maunder, Forest History Foundation, Inc.

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MAUNDER: Mr. Recknagel, I think you're aware of and acquainted with the method we use in making these oral history interviews. We just sit down and chat informally about recollections of the past, and we usually start out by getting you to give us a little personal history about yourself – where you were born, when, and what your background of family and education was.

RECKNAGEL: Well, that's easily done. I was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1883. my grandfather came over from Germany in 1840 and at that time settled, believe it or not, within sound of Trinity Church chimes in lower New York. That actually was a residential area in part at that time. Unfortunately though, he didn't hang onto that land but moved across the river to Brooklyn and there my father was born in 1842, as I said, in sound of Trinity Church. You could still hear it across the river but not on land quite so valuable. After attending Adelphi Academy in Brooklyn, I entered Yale College and graduated from there in 1904. At that time Mr. Pinchot came to address the Senior class and, as in the biblical parable, some of the seed evidently germinated and I was inducted into the Forestry School at Yale, which was then very small. In 1906 I graduated from the Yale Forest School.

There was only one job to be had in those days and that was with the U. S. Forest Service, so naturally I entered the U. S. Forest Service. This was a very fortunate assignment for me because it immediately took me to the Southwest. I'll never forget the certain sense of adventure I felt as I got off the train at Santa Fe in the early summer of 1906. in Santa Fe I reported to the Supervisor, Leon F. Knight. Leon Knight was a wonderful Supervisor. He actually took charge of the young fellows sent out there and saw to it that they had an opportunity to learn the country because that was very important – we were terrible greenhorns for such an area.

So I found myself sent up on the Jemez National Forest – now called the Santa Fe – and the famous Jemez Plateau where so many of the archaeological ruins have been found. The object of the trip up on the Jemez was, of course, to examine an area for a timber sale, and this proved to be a good venture because in those days the Forest Service was just beginning its practice of timber sales. We also had an opportunity while there

to see some of the archaeological ruins. I will never forget the thrill that I got when for the first time I crawled into one of those old cave dwellings and found the skeleton of a body that was buried there, together with some old potsherds and also quite a number of corn cobs, some of them with the grain still on them. Just the other day in Santa Fe I found they had those identical things which we turned into them at that time. However, they have better ones now. They have complete skeletons that have been reassembled, and it's become almost commonplace to find such things. But when I first entered this cave and realized that no human being had been near that place for many hundreds of years, it was quite a feeling.

MAUNDER: You say that you went up there to make an appraisal of a piece of timberland in readiness for a sale. Do you recall some of the companies who were bidding on this land at that time?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I do, very well indeed. It was a Denver, Colorado, firm – McFee and McGinnis. And there's a story that goes with that. We made the sale all right and later, of course, had to go back up there and mark the timber. Then on our honeymoon when my wife and I went to Denver, Mr. McFee, who was head of this lumber company, insisted on giving us a perfectly marvelous visit to Denver. I'll never forget – that was really something. It wasn't that he was in any sense apple-polishing; he simply was a good-natured, big Irish lumberman. And remember, Elwood, in those days the lumbermen weren't exactly too happy about the Forest Service because all these restrictions seemed ridiculous to them. But that was a pleasant episode.

MAUNDER: I'd like to ask you some questions here about your first visit out there. What was your specific job when you were sent out on this timber survey?

RECKNAGEL: The job was to estimate the timber and map it because there were no maps. That seems hard to believe when you think of the Forest Service today with its excellent cartography, but we actually had to make our own maps. At that time the Coast and Geodetic Survey were just running their famous base line across the country, and it happened that they were in northern New Mexico at that time. We got acquainted, of course; they were young college fellows and we were, too. So I was able to get from them the triangulation on a certain peak in the area which was being offered for sale, and on that basis we were able to make a map which, of course, is now part of the mapping work that was done by the Forest Service. It was perfectly accurate; there was no question about it – we had the Coast and Geodetic. It was also quite a thrill to realize that there were no place names. Modesty forbade us naming these things for ourselves. We could have done it, probably, because we made the first maps.

So we used names honoring Mr. Pinchot and Henry Graves. Unfortunately, I don't think they stuck because there was a ruling a little later that none who were still living could have their name given to such things. However, I'm sure that the honor was well deserved by Graves and Pinchot – too bad it didn't stick.

I liked the Southwest immediately and I hoped that I would be allowed to stay there, but for a while I was assigned to Utah. Without doubt the experience was good for me although I found the timber in Utah was much more difficult to do anything with. The area was one of great inaccessibility; it was in the southern part of the state – not far north of the Grand Canyon Rim. This is bad for people from Utah to hear, but the climate isn't comparable to Arizona and New Mexico. In fact, it was so cold and snowy that I managed to freeze one foot and was laid up in the home of a Mormon family where I was wonderfully well-treated. However, I yearned to get back to the Southwest and managed to fix it so that within a short time – after Christmas as I remember – I was sent down to Flagstaff. That is the ideal location for a young forester because Flagstaff not only has a wonderful timber area but is the headquarters of the Coconino National Forest. I suppose the Coconino has had more apprentice foresters than any other in the whole country. Every once in a while I still run into somebody who is a graduate of the Coconino National Forest. You've got everything there – timber, grazing (both sheep and cattle), water problems, and recreation problems. Best of all, in those days it had a supervisor who, I think, should be better known than he apparently is. His name was Mike Breen. He was an Irishman and he had a terrific sense of humor. He had a big forest under him; in those days the Coconino was close to two million acres. He also had a tremendous knowledge of the stock business so that we soon learned a great deal about the cattle and ship business – especially the cattle.

The timber industry, as you know, is very large in Flagstaff today. There are three sawmills still in operation, and they were in operation then – 53 years ago, if you please.

MAUNDER: Do you remember who was running them then?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I think so – not the men who ran them but the companies. One of the companies was a famous Michigan company – the Saginaw and Manistee – but I can't remember the name of the man in charge. Then there was the Arizona Land and Timber Company. They had a huge sawmill.

MAUNDER: That was Joe Dolan and the Riordans?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I believe so. Then there was a third company. I can't remember the name but I can see the mill before me now. These three were only some of the biggest; there were many small mills. You know, Elwood, this is the largest pure pine forest in the world.

The job I had there, in addition to the timber sales, was an extraordinarily great privilege. I was privileged to make the first growth study on yellow pine, as it was then called. Everybody called it yellow pine.

MAUNDER: Meaning what – ponderosa?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, ponderosa. And these figures were very interesting because later Dr. Andrew Ellicott Douglass of the Desert Laboratory asked for those growth figures and used the in part in his studies on identifying climatic periods through growth rings. We had no idea that that was the way they were going to be used, but we'd had a good training in the Forest School, so this was really a natural.

There are many memories about the Coconino and all of them pleasant. You'll be amused when I tell you that we lived in a joint, a place that we rented, and we had a Mexican couple to do our work for us. It was a wonderful group of bachelors, all of whom I think are now married, and I'm sorry to say some are no longer in this world.

MAUNDER: Who were these men?

RECKNAGEL: Among the men that I particularly remember, of course, was John Guthrie who, you might say, was the leader of this gang. Then there was Willard M. Drake. He was a very competent, hard-working man. Then there was John Howard Allison, who later became a Professor at the University of Minnesota. I'll say for Allison that he was the steadying influence because some of us were inclined once in a while to celebrate on some occasion or other, but Allison was always a steadying influence. Then there was Rutledge Parker. Do you remember him? He was out in Missoula later; he was the State Forester of Montana. And there were those who came and went. If any visiting forester came to Flagstaff, he automatically stayed with our group. We had a fairly large house; it was called the Hotel de Flag because there were so many who came and went. Of course, some the brass came, too, and stayed with us. I mustn't forget to mention that this was about the tie that Raphael Zon established the Fort Valley Experiment Station and Gus Pearson came out.

MAUNDER: That was in 1908?

RECKNAGEL: That's correct. And Gus was living at the Hotel de Flag.

Everybody lived at the hotel. You know, Elwood, expenses were ridiculously low. You could buy a steak dinner, the finest big steak in the world, for fifty cents. In fact, that was extravagant. Life was not easy as far as the work went, but we had magnificent opportunities for relaxation. The greatest relaxation, of course, was riding. Someone asked me the other day at this meeting if I'd ever been up on the San Francisco Peaks and I and I was inclined to laugh because we made nothing of riding a horse up as far as we could get – to the timber line.

Now, the other thing that's interesting is that most of us joined the Arizona National Guard. I am a veteran, if you please, of the Arizona National Guard, which required that you furnish your own horse and saddle. Can you imagine what kind of a nondescript outfit this was with horses of all different colors and the fellows all wearing their own clothes? All of the others were better horsemen than the foresters, of course; we had any number of cowpunchers who belonged to the Arizona National Guard. We saw no military service.

MAUNDER: Was there any pay for this?

RECKNAGEL: Oh, no – or if there was, it was minimal.

MAUNDER: What was the attraction – just the camaraderie?

RECKNAGEL: That's right. And you must understand that the foresters were more or less on trial, and we could qualify by showing that we could ride at least long enough to stay in the saddle and stay with these fellows. We were all very young, in our early twenties. The biggest parade was on the Fourth of July, and it was a hell of a big parade – they had the entire mounted force of this National Guard. What we did was to line up at one end of the big field and then at the signal we raced across – a cavalry attack. You could imagine who was at the head – it wasn't the foresters – when they got to the other side. There was some terrific riding. All the rangers were mounted in those days; everything was done on horseback. The rangers had gotten to the point where, if they wanted to get a stick of wood for a fire, they wouldn't go over and carry it back by hand; they would saddle a horse and take a rope and drag the log in. I've seen that time and time again. You talk about the modern automobile age and the person who won't walk to the post office – those rangers wouldn't walk anywhere; they rode everywhere.

MAUNDER: Reck, tell us a little about a typical day of a young forester beginning his work out here in the Southwest. Can you go back in your memory and try to go through a typical day and describe it?

RECKNAGEL: Well, I think I can. In the first place, you must understand that the headquarters were extremely crude for the rangers. I'll take a typical day at a place called Chalender, which is halfway between Flagstaff and Williams. You can probably find it on the railroad timetable. It doesn't look like anything and it isn't anything except a post office and a store. The ranger in charge there was Fred Platten, who had been a top Sergeant in the U. S. Third Cavalry and had taken part in the campaign against Geronimo, and that is what we talked most about. It evidently had made a terrific impression on him. We'd get up early and get our breakfast – we always got our own meals. We saddled our horses and that involved quite a lot of time sometimes – catching them – because the stupid arrangement in the West there is that instead of putting the horses in the corral where they could be found easily, they were hobbled and turned out. Then when the weather turns warm, like it does here in Tucson in the morning, the horses will start moving and grazing, and you have to follow them on foot. That has always struck me as a most stupid arrangement, but that's the way it was done.

After we got the horses we started out and rode to where at that time we were making an examination for a timber sale. That's the actual measurement of the strips – cruising. You know how that's done. We would go on a compass line measuring the trees on either side. We didn't do the measuring from horseback, although I suspect that it has happened; it was done on foot. we would tie the horses and then go back and pick them up and go on to the next place. After the noon halt, which was usually something which we'd put up in the way of a sandwich, the work went on in the afternoon. We had to stop early because we had to get back to camp while it was still daylight. Then there were the usual chores to be done. The horses always got the first attention, then we had our meal, then if data were to be worked up that had to be done at night.

Days like that were frequently interrupted by very heavy snowstorms because the Colorado Plateau is very high country and there the storms are severe. Frequently we would have heavy snows although they didn't last too long. Whenever that happened we flagged a freight train (and this will amuse the railroad buffs) on the Santa Fe and rode into Flagstaff. In Flagstaff we had equipment for working up the data we had taken. The timber, you understand, was for sale to these lumber companies, and it was very important that the examinations proceed in an orderly manner before the sales were made.

Such a day was often punctuated, too, by the visit of some important forester from the East. I never had the privilege of entertaining Mr. Pinchot but I did have the privilege of going out in the field with almost all the other foresters who later became very prominent.

MAUNDER: Do you remember some of these men?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I remember one very well – Tom Sherrard. Sherrard was the Chief of Forest Management in Washington. We had a very great respect for him because he was an extremely competent and very exacting officer. I can still remember how, when we presented our data to Tom Sherrard, he would never give us a word of praise. He'd sort of grunt, "Not too bad," or something like that, and that was probably the most praise we got. But he got a very good idea of the work in the field. He was not afraid to go anywhere; he would climb on a cayuse and go with us wherever we went and that, of course, was the test.

MAUNDER: Some of your VIP visitors wouldn't do that, I take it.

RECKNAGEL: I don't know about today, but I doubt that the average ranger here on the Coronado could even ride a horse. I'm very dubious about it because they don't walk like they've ridden a horse. There are cowboys around here and you can tell them, all right. they look like clothespins, you know.

I was so happy at Flagstaff with this gang; we had such a wonderful time. for instance, one of the trips I remember very well was to the Petrified Forest, which I think is now a national monument. It was nothing then; you could pick up all the samples you wanted. Anyway, the usual happened and in the middle of summer, of all times, I was ordered back to Washington. I was very unhappy. Imagine being ordered back to Washington in mid-summer! However, once I got there I found that it was pretty good for the job they wanted me to do was one in which I was very interested, a grandiose scheme to make a complete reconnaissance of all the national forests with respect to timber. It was a terrific undertaking! We had, of course, the help of the foresters in all these areas, and we tried to coordinate and bring the material together so that it would be in an orderly form called the "Forest Atlas."

Henry Plummer was the father of the "Forest Atlas," and the first Atlas was an attempt to bring together in Washington all the information with respect to what by then were national forests; they became so, as you know, in 1905. My job was to bring the timber data together. I had helpers, but we immediately found that there was the greatest diversity in the quality of the material available. That meant, of course, that we'd have to get additional information. In part we could get that by writing to the supervisor, and he in turn would get it from the rangers. But we also had to have field parties. We organized some field parties and for some time, until the districts were created (you know, they were created later), all this work centered in Washington. It wasn't a good arrangement because these field parties were subject to supervisors, and the supervisor,

if he had a forest fire, would simply break off the work of the reconnaissance and put the men on the fire line. I think I'd have done the same thing, but meantime we got very meager results sometimes from the reconnaissance.

So this wasn't, I think, a sensible undertaking although in principle there was need to have the information. Then all this was transferred to the districts in about 1908 or '09. you can probably verify the date. It was quite a hegira; everything was moved out to the six districts. Then we had a choice of where we wanted to go, and you can easily guess where I wanted to go. I wanted to go back to District Three which is still my first love (and here we are in District Three now). There were some wonderful fellows. Arthur Ringland was the Regional Forester, then called District Forester; A. O. Waha was the Chief of Operations. They were all personal friends of mine. We had headquarters in Albuquerque, a very friendly town of thirty thousand. I'd like you to note that figure; it's now close to a hundred thousand. We had again the same arrangement of all the bachelors living together. This time, however, we had an elaborate place called Adobe Mansion. It really wasn't a mansion at all but we called it that. It had a big yard and a corral; we kept our horses there. You must remember that everything was done on horseback. I find that this is hard for the young fellows to realize. Bird Read (Arthur Read) was in that group and John Guthrie was with us often, although by that time he was Supervisor down at Snowflake. Theodore Woolsey, who died some years ago, was Chief of Silviculture, and I was assistant to Woolsey in the timber sales work. I had all the timber sales. And let me tell you, Elwood, the size of that district – which is amusing today – Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Florida, and Puerto Rico.

MAUNDER: Florida and Puerto Rico!

RECKNAGEL: Well Puerto Rico had to be put somewhere. I never got there until recently, but it was added because there was no place else to put it. And please notice Arkansas and Florida. Texas wasn't added because Texas never had any public lands as far as the United States goes so there were no national forests there. The Arkansas and Ozark National Forests were established in Arkansas about this time.

We got along pretty well doing the kind of work which we'd been doing before but directed most specifically to building up records within the region, or district as it was then called. It was our pride that we had probably better control of the forest management work in Arizona and New Mexico – those two states – than any others in the West. I think that's a justifiable claim because Woolsey himself was a terrific man for that, and we had the help of Barrington Moore, who came out about then. He was a very competent worker in the field of forest management. But in

the states of Arkansas and Florida the situation was entirely different. In the first place, the national forests took the poorest land that was left, and Arkansas particularly had a very tough population. I remember one occasion where I was asked to go with Daniel Bronson, who was Chief Inspector, to attend a meeting where we had to try and settle the trespass situation in Arkansas.

That was indeed an interesting experience from many angles. First of all, it should be understood that Arkansas was an area where the government did not enjoy, shall I say, the best of reputations because the foresters were bracketed with the internal revenue officers and, consequently, they were suspect. At that time the Supervisor of the Arkansas National Forest, headquartered at Hot Springs, was Samuel Record, who later became the Dean of the Yale Forest School. That was a poor choice. I like the man and I have a high regard for him but he was a wood technologist, and his idea of running a national forest was according to the USE BOOK[1] (I guess everybody has heard of the USE BOOK) and ho deviation. Consequently, he started in and gave instructions that trespass must stop on government land. Well, those people who had been helping themselves to government timber simply went right on taking it, and Sam Record had no way of stopping it. The trespassing was normally something that they didn't regard as a crime; they simply said, "This timber is for our use and if we need it, we'll take it."

So the situation went from bad to worse and the rangers were powerless to stop it. Mr. Pinchot had a very bright idea. He said he would send Daniel Bronson, who was Chief Inspector for the Forest Service and a Southerner, to Arkansas. Bronson asked me to go with him although I was just a youngster. We got word to all the people in that region to meet at a place called Womble, Arkansas (what a place!) to discuss the situation. These people came to Womble bringing their shotguns with them. As we assembled in the court house there was quite a group of them and it was an alarming sight, even for one like myself who had been in the Southwest for quite a time, but Bronson handled it admirably. He said he realized that the national forests were a novelty, something that had never been attempted before in Arkansas, and consequently many of the rules and regulations must seem strange to the people there, but after all the purpose of the national forests was to help the very people who were living in Arkansas. Therefore, he thought it a good idea to explain a little of what the purposes and rules were. One of the things he explained was that there had been some taking of timber that was government timber and he suggested that there be no prosecution for trespass that had occurred in the past, that we close the books as of now; all past trespasses were wiped off the record. "But in the future," he said, "if you want to get timber, you go

[1] United States Forest Service, THE USE BOOK: REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE NATIONAL FOREST RESERVES. Washington, D.C., 1906.

to the nearest ranger and buy it. It won't cost you much; we're not going to sell you anything at a high price; we're simply going to charge what we think is a reasonable small price. If you want it for firewood or anything for your homes, building and so forth, you'll have free use because we have free use permits."

Elwood, the complexion of that group changed immediately from being hostile – and they were very hostile, nursing their guns on their laps. They became almost too friendly. In fact, Bronson, being a Southerner, could handle this damn moonshine but I hardly dared take more than a few sips because never in the Southwest had I tasted anything like that. We had to eat dinner with them, and we had to stay the evening. They wanted us to stay overnight – a tremendous change of attitude. And there's never been any trouble since. Also, when Bronson was there he saw to it that there was appointed a new supervisor, and he was a local man and a very good man.

MAUNDER: Incidentally, you kept diaries all through the years?

RECKNAGEL: It's required by the Forest Service.

MAUNDER: I saw Harris Collingwood's diaries in Washington recently and they're a wonderful source of historical information.

RECKNAGEL: I wonder why that wouldn't be an ideal source because these were official diaries. They were not turned over to the officer in charge but were retained by the people who wrote them.

MAUNDER: Have you kept them all through the years?

RECKNAGEL: I think I have them.

MAUNDER: They would be a very important source of information.

RECKNAGEL: Why don't I look into them a little bit and see what we can find that would be of interest, and maybe I might even turn them over to the Forest History Foundation if they're worthwhile.

MAUNDER: We'd be very glad to have them.

RECKNAGEL: They were, of course, mostly about day to day work and pretty tedious. You'd have to do some pretty strong editing.

MAUNDER: That's right, but it's that day by day detail which is in many ways very important to us.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I suppose so, even if it involved for instance, "Spent morning hunting horses." That was often the case; it isn't just fiction. Let's go back to the other area of national forests newly established. That was Florida, and that was still stranger. Florida, as you know, is a public land state. It's not one of the original states like Alabama and Georgia. Therefore, the land in Florida was subject to entry and all the best land had been taken. What was left was scrub. The only area of any consequence that was left was in the western part of the state, and Mr. Pinchot made of it the Chocawhatchee National Forest, which was proclaimed by the President. Then the problem came up of what on earth to do with it. Fortunately for all concerned, there was in Albuquerque in the district office, Inman F. Eldredge, bless his heart! "Cap" Eldredge and I were sent down to Florida to organize the Choctawhatchee National Forest, believe it or not.

MAUNDER: What year was that?

RECKNAGEL: 1910. My job was to do the timber estimating; Eldredge's was to organize the forest – he had the hard job. We made on cardinal mistake. We took along with us the pick of the southwestern rangers. That was a terrible mistake – Eldredge wouldn't make that mistake now, I'm sure – and the clash between the Arizona and New Mexico cowpuncher type of ranger and the local Florida hillbilly was simply fantastic. They got along as badly as you could possibly imagine. The Arizona rangers, who were perfectly normal and good in Arizona, started to brag. Oh, gosh, what stories they loaded on those poor fellows from Florida – especially about our mountains and so on here in the Southwest! They were partly true, but they were embellished to a fantastic amount. The rangers had a very low opinion of the ability of the Florida population and of the men who worked with us on these cruises because of their riding. They had no good opinion of the horses or of anything in Florida, as a matter of fact. The clashes between the two groups got to the point where the attitude of the rangers was intolerably arrogant. We had to ship them all back to the Southwest where they immediately subsided. It was really amusing, but at the same time it was very bad because this was the impression that the local people got of what the Forest Service was going to be like. Well, Eldredge took care of that just as Bronson had done in Arkansas; he appointed local men as forest rangers.

MAUNDER: What did you look for when you recruited a ranger in those days?

RECKNAGEL: Are you speaking about Florida or our own Southwest?

MAUNDER: Both places. You mentioned that you recruited cowboys in the Southwest and I presume that you got men who knew how to ride. What other qualities did you look for in recruitment?

RECKNAGEL: We usually asked all of the men one question and that was whether or not they would be interested in learning more about timber. A lot of them wouldn't; they wanted to stick to cattle. If they were interested in learning about timber, that was something that was important. Then we also had a question, of course, as to their willingness (and their families') to live in a rather remote area, and usually they were willing. Their physical competence was very important; they all had tremendous self-reliance. Of course, there was also the question of looking a little into their personal habits – particularly the matter of drinking, which was sometimes very bad. When you get back into the deep South, the questions there was not so much about the timber because they were all interested in that, but whether or not they were interested in the Forest Service principles. Surprisingly enough, some of the men who were recruited at that time rose to be important officials in the Forest Service. There was one fellow in particular that I remember – Huey – who came into Florida (I think he was brought in from Arkansas) and he became Supervisor of the Florida National Forests. At the time of his death he was as fine a well-informed Forest Service official as you could find anywhere; yet he was nothing but a hillbilly originally.

Pinchot had a great love for Eldredge and Eldredge had a great love for Pinchot. And you know that Camp Pinchot is in that part of Florida. That's its present name; its old name was Boggy Bayou. It was an old, swampy, boggy kind of a mess. However, Elwood, you'd be surprised what was done by Eldredge to win the populace after we got rid of those Western rangers.

I was able to make at least a fair reconnaissance of the timber in Florida, but, oh dear, the lines and attempting to find the corners was very difficult. The surveys were very poor; I never saw such poor surveys. Do you know what's become of the Choctawhatchee National Forest? It is now Eglin Field, and all the work that we did -- some of it in reforestation and some of it fire lines – is all obliterated. I passed through there not too long ago and I couldn't recognize anything – great shell craters and all that sort of thing. The forest was bad enough at the time but it's much worse now; there's nothing there.

MAUNDER: Let me digress here a minute and ask you some questions about the men you were associated with in the early days. You mentioned Pinchot. Can you give us a sort of a personal, thumbnail sketch of Pinchot as you knew him?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I can. In the first place, you understand that we regarded ourselves as "Pinchot's boys." He had leadership and was a magnificent man physically – strong, upstanding, afraid of nothing – and had a way of dealing with subordinates; he didn't treat them like subordinates. He had

great respect for good work and he rewarded it. He was our beau ideal, both physically and also in his leadership.

MAUNDER: Can you think of any examples out of your personal experience with the man that would dramatize what you mean by his relationship with his subordinates?

RECKNAGEL: One little incident comes to my mind. It didn't happen to me personally because for some strange reason Pinchot never seemed to come to the Southwest – I don't understand that. He would always send someone else. But I remember an incident where one of our fellows in the Forest Service, whose name I've forgotten, thought he should save money for the Forest Service. He was ordered from California to report to Washington and when he left California he bought about four-days' supply of sandwiches, which seems absurd. Anyway, he did, and when he got back to Washington he bragged about the fact that he'd saved the United States government a certain number of dollars by not going to eat in the dining car. Well, Mr. Pinchot sent for him and said to him, "X, I've heard what you did. Now, your motive is good but let me tell you, the Forest Service has some pride and we don't want officials of the Forest Service to represent us as being penny-pinchers. Next time anything like that happens the man who does it will get fired."

Well, that got around among us pretty quickly. Pinchot, therefore, had great pride in the Forest Service. It was to be comparable to any other government organization. When we reported to Pinchot it was always like reporting to an older brother. His favorite phrase when he dismissed us was, "I'm sure you'll have a good trip, and let me know how you make out." So we always felt that he was personally interested in what we were doing. Of course, today that would be impossible. No matter how much McArdle[2] might try to do it he couldn't have that personal relationship.

After Pinchot's dismissal by Taft things were pretty grim for a while. The Forest Service had a very bad time. Those were the black-dog days. I went back to Albuquerque and I began to get very worried. It seemed to me that the Forest Service had lost its brilliant leadership. Perhaps that'll tell you how we felt about Pinchot. And I decided that I'd have to leave the Forest Service, that there was nothing more there for me. Isn't that strange to realize? I liked Graves all right – he'd been Dean at the Forest School – but I felt it was time for me to leave. Isn't that what the Old Guard felt towards Napoleon?

MAUNDER: A sort of crusading spirit.

[2] [2] Dr. Richard McArdle, Chief Forester of the United States since 1952.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, and our leader was gone. He was still living but his position was no longer that of official leader. I had the ability to speak German and I decided to go to Germany to the forest school for a year. I took a year's leave of absence, and that was easily done. Mr. Graves was then Chief Forester – a very different type of man – dynamic but no personal affection. So he gave me a leave of absence for a year and I went over to Germany. It was a very useful period of instruction of an advanced character.

MAUNDER: What school was that?

RECKNAGEL: I went to two of them: first to Eberswalde, which is just outside of Berlin, and later to Tharandt, which is outside of Dresden, and in both instances I specialized in forest management, which I guess you know is my specialty and always has been. So that year was all right; I enjoyed the year in Europe.

MAUNDER: Did Mr. Pinchot have any influence in your making the decision to go back to school in Europe?

RECKNAGEL: No, not Pinchot. Pinchot withdrew himself and was almost inaccessible after his dismissal. It was very sad. I don't know whether he continued living in Washington or what he actually did.

MAUNDER: How do you recall the details of that controversy which forced Pinchot out of the Forest Service?

RECKNAGEL: You mean the famous Ballinger controversy? You understand, of course, that we were greatly prejudiced in favor of Pinchot and terribly antagonistic towards President Taft. I'm rather ashamed of that attitude now.

MAUNDER: Of course, we all see these things in retrospect, and sometimes a lot differently than at the time of the event.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, very differently. I'm really ashamed of the almost fanatical attitude about anyone who dared to impugn Pinchot's motives. However, my answer to your question is this: as I view the thing now in retrospect I am convinced that Pinchot was right in his attitude, but he was extremely badly guided in the way he went about it because he failed to realize that on the West Coast Ballinger was a man of high regard; he was well liked. Anyway, as far as the Forest Service went the dismissal of Pinchot was a body blow. I wasn't the only one who dropped out. And poor old Region Three, as it's called now, was badly disrupted. Everybody that I knew was broken up and they left and went different places.

MAUNDER: I suppose there were great bull sessions held in the wake of this?

RECKNAGEL: Oh, yes. We felt that a great personal injustice had been done by President Taft, and you should understand that we couldn't grasp at all how Taft could be so unappreciative of Pinchot's merits. Suppose he had made a mistake, suppose he was a little too radical in his charges against Ballinger, that didn't wipe out everything that Pinchot had done. Then, of course, you must remember the attitude between Roosevelt and Taft. We sided with Roosevelt; we all immediately became Bull Mooses, every man. And the attitude towards Taft was almost the same because hostility towards him was almost as largely due to Roosevelt's influence as it was to Pinchot's being fired. It's hard for me to explain to you how a young fellow in his late twenties, which is what I was, would react to seeing two of his beloved leaders disgraced and dismissed and thought little of.

MAUNDER: I can understand.

RECKNAGEL: It would be as if Eisenhower suddenly got the boot.

MAUNDER: Can you describe some of these other men? You've told me a little about Cap Eldredge when you were associated with him down in Florida. Cap's a man I want to interview one of these days.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, you certainly should. Do you know Arthur Ringland?

MAUNDER: Well, I met him just recently.

RECKNAGEL: There's a man for whom I have the very highest regard. Arthur Ringland was my Regional Forester. (I use that word but he actually was District Forester – we'd better call him by his present title.) There is a man! And I also have the highest regard for Earle H. Clapp. They were respectively Regional Forester and Assistant Regional Forester. Those two men were ideally suited for the job – Ringland because he had an outgoing personality, and Clapp because he had tremendous ability. Those two men, I think, as much as any others, stand out in my memory as being the highest type of forest officers that I know. Ringland, of course, continued his government career, but Clapp has sort of dropped out. Ringland is still very active in government affairs, especially in the State Department.

MAUNDER: I had lunch with Arthur Ringland and Ovid Butler in the Cosmos Club just a couple of months ago. I think Mr. Clapp lives there, doesn't he?

RECKNAGEL: He lives in Washington but he's retired from active forestry matters, as far as I know. What a man was Clapp! This is a real incident I think you should know about because it reflects tremendous credit in Clapp. When I got back from Germany I learned that charges had been preferred against Ringland and myself for graft on timber sales and the charges were preferred by no less a man than Salisbury Woolsey, who was in the region and claimed that Ringland and I had made sales of timber to one of the big companies in Flagstaff at prices which were shaded and the money was paid to Ringland for doing that. Woolsey had gone to Clapp first with this story and Clapp, bless his heart – I'll never fail to love him for it – said, "Woolsey, you know that is a God damn lie!"

Now, if you know Earle Clapp you'll know that he never swore. I never heard him swear. He must have been enormously stirred. It was a God damn lie! Ringland and I never did anything like that. However, Mr. Graves was then Chief Forester (I knew nothing about this until I got back from Europe; they didn't even ask me to come back to the country) and he sent Bronson – the same Bronson that I told you about – to look into the matter. Of course, he immediately found there was nothing to it, so Graves dismissed Woolsey. That was a strange thing, Elwood. What ever impelled Woolsey to think that Ringland and I had been doing that? It never occurred to us. You can't imagine anything we would be less apt to do.

MAUNDER: What did he offer in the way of proof?

RECKNAGEL: That was the trouble. He had no proof so we weren't even confronted with any evidence. I was in Europe and Ringland was in Albuquerque. I never learned about it until I got back to this country in the fall of 1912; I never knew about it.

MAUNDER: What happened to Woolsey?

RECKNAGEL: He dropped out completely. He wanted to be appointed to the Yale Forest School but the faculty wouldn't elect him. There was a great deal of feeling – the Recknagel and Ringland episode was pretty well known by the older fellows in the Forest Service. I have yet to have the first one joke me about it though. They knew damn well it wasn't any joke to be charged with anything like that; it was absurd. I want you to take notice that Mr. Graves didn't even get in touch with me in Europe. That's a degree of confidence, isn't it?

MAUNDER: It certainly is. There was a real <u>camaraderie</u>, wasn't there?

RECKNAGEL: Terrific. The esprit de corps was wonderful, simply incredible. It still exists. Haven't you sensed it at this meeting? Who is it that immediately sticks together?

MAUNDER: That's right.

RECKNAGEL: That was the only black mark against Woolsey. Otherwise I have high regard for him, but I just don't understand that incident.

MAUNDER: What did he do after he left the Service?

RECKNAGEL: Well, he was a man of wealth. He lived in New Haven until his death. I know he was persona non grata; they'd have nothing to do with him at the Yale Forest School. Graves would have nothing to do with him (he became Dean again, you know). I'm sorry to tell you this, Elwood, but it's the absolute truth.

MAUNDER: Well, that's what we want to get.

RECKNAGEL: But I hate to think that a man who otherwise had great ability would have been so stupid as to make a charge which had no foundation. Of course, nowadays we expect this. Think of the Sherman Adams thing, and how that was dragged through the mud! When that happened I couldn't help remembering what might have happened to me if it hadn't been for the wonderful support I got.

Now we get back from Europe, and almost immediately I was offered several positions as professor at forest schools. I'm going to abbreviate some of the rest of it because it's not so interesting.

MAUNDER: Did you take a degree when you were in Europe?

RECKNAGEL: No, they didn't give degrees; neither of them did anything but issue a certificate. These were academies and you got a diploma, as they called them in German. I wasn't interested; in fact, I had no intention at that time of going into teaching. I remember that Hugh Baker came to me and said, "Reck, I want you to go with me to Penn State."

This was before I went to Germany, and I said, "Hugh, I don't want to go to Penn State and teach."

He said, "Why not?"

I said, "Because I haven't had enough experience. I don't think anybody has any business going to teach forestry until he's had a lot of experience. "

Well, Hugh said, "If you come with me now, you'll be a dean before you're forty."

"That doesn't entice me either," I said. I was foolish; I certainly would have been a dean of any number of schools. However, when I got back I remember that Walter Mulford asked me to come up to Ithaca and look over the situation there. I was very much impressed with Cornell. Of course, I'm a New Yorker, as you know, and many of my friends at the Adelphi Academy had gone to Cornell.

MAUNDER: Reck, before you go on in detail about your career in forestry education, which I know has been rich, I wish you would just think for a little while about the story of the origins of forestry as a profession in this country and try to give us some insight into this story which is so controversial and has so many different and colorful figures in it. I'm thinking of men like Schenck, Fernow, Pinchot, Graves, Austin Cary, and a great many others who were engaged in launching a new profession, so to speak, on this continent. If you can give us any insight into the character of the individuals and the peculiar contributions which each made in the total pattern of things, it would help us a great deal.

RECKNAGEL: I'll be glad to as far as I can. I knew all these men personally so let's take up some of them. You've got a pretty good idea already of my attitude towards Pinchot; I don't need to go any further on that. Let's take my attitude towards Bernhard Fernow. Dr. Fernow was a Prussian and had all the rigorous, disciplinary attitude of a Prussian, and that disciplinary attitude existed in matters of education. He actually was a Professor for one year at the Forest School in New Haven after he left Cornell, and I owe him a great debt because he was the one who really grounded me in forest management, as it was then known in German forestry science. He was a man of very wide knowledge of Europe, and the United States also. He had a great ambition to see forestry established in the United States, but he proceeded on an entirely different approach from Mr. Pinchot. Mr. Pinchot's idea was embodied in the concept of conservation; Fernow's attitude was typically Prussian – things had to be done by government order, and there was to be no question about it. It was to be carried out not by the will of the people (he never thought of the government as the people; he thought of the government as something like he'd known in Europe) but was to be done, you might almost say, by edict – an attitude so foreign to the American way of thinking that it led to his trouble in New York State because he couldn't bear to be questioned as to his professional competence to do the right thing by the Adirondacks. He resented it; he didn't want to be questioned about it. "Who are you to question me?" he said to this legislative committee. "Me, I am a German forester." Do you see his attitude?

MAUNDER: Yes, I can see that.

RECKNAGEL: Let's take Austin Cary – utterly and completely different. Austin Cary had the idea that not only must we avoid working from the top down, but we'll work from the bottom up. We will go to the fellows who are the timbermen, the lumbermen, even the lumberjacks, and we will work with them and get them to understand the problem. He lived with them and worked with them both in Maine (and in New England and generally throughout the Northeast before he went South), and later in the South. This paid off very well because I have met many men, in the South particularly, who said, "My idea of forestry I learned from Austin Cary," or "old Doc Cary" as they called him.

MAUNDER: In other words, Dr. Cary was a very personable, friendly man, whereas, on the other hand, Fernow was a rather austere, autocratic person?

RECKNAGEL: Fernow was very autocratic, and Pinchot also believed that there was a strata above, which he regarded as more or less his own staff, you might say, his own organization. But Cary didn't believe that; he believed that forestry should be taught from the bottom up, and once you had the local people – the timberman and the lumberman, they're the people you work with – and once they got the idea, then it would develop naturally into a concept which we regard as the forestry concept.

Now, there were several other men who fell somewhat between these two extremes – and they are extremes. There was Filibert Roth. You didn't mention him, but Roth had a great idea that he would work with the individual states, and Michigan was the state that he particularly worked with. He was right about that, too, because both Pinchot and Fernow had no idea at all that the states were of any consequence. They were going to do it on a federal basis. In fact, Fernow had little regard for the state of New York, which was his downfall. Roth and other men who worked in the state field regarded the state as being the place where there should be the development of forestry, and then it would spread from state to state until gradually there would be a general concept of forestry. That idea has much to be said for it because, after all, that is the way many other aspects of American life have developed. Then there were other men in the early days who stood out. I must not at this time fail to pay particular tribute to one that I regard as the greatest forester who has ever lived in the United States, and that is William B. Greeley. I became a great admirer and believer in William B. Greeley, even more so than in Pinchot. Greeley's attitude was still different from any of the others I have explained to you. Did you interview him before he died?

MAUNDER: He was a very good friend and a member of my governing body for the last few years of his life.

RECKNAGEL: Let me say that Bill Greeley in the closing years of his life was able to write some very important books. Bill Greeley's life was given to forestry, and his attitude was very important for us who worked with him because he believed in infiltration of foresters into industry. Now, there's an entirely different concept. None of these other men ever thought of industry in that sense; even Cary didn't. Cary thought of it as working with the men down at the tree root levels, but Greeley went in to where the leadership was in industry and became accepted by that leadership and trusted. I know any number of men who regarded Bill Greeley as the one exponent of forest practice, and among those are the big shots like the Weyerhaeuser interest, and our own big pulp and paper companies both on the West Coast and elsewhere. Greeley had a tremendous ability to win the confidence of the industrial leaders, and that has been, to my mind, the greatest tribute that he could have. He also had all the confidence of the men who worked with him.

Now, don't think that we didn't have frequent clashes of opinion with Bill Greeley. I remember one very interesting case when I was Assistant Regional Forester in Albuquerque and Bill Greeley came out. We had a timber sale on the Mansano National Forest; it's in the Sandia Mountains that are now part of that great military installation at Sandia Base. We were discussing how the timber should be marked. Some of us thought that we knew the Southwest pretty well (after all, Greeley had mostly experience in California, you know, and later in Montana) and some of us from Region Three said that the marking should be done in a certain way.

Well, Bill Greeley, when he wanted to, could issue orders. He said, "I've heard what you fellows have to say, but now I'm going to tell you how it's going to be done. We're going to do so and so and that's orders."

Well, so great was our respect for Bill that we said, "OK, that's it. We'll do it that way." He always would listen first; you could always get him to listen, but once he made up his mind Bill made hi own decisions. He was not anybody else's man except Bill Greeley's. Bill, of course, as you know, in his later life became the recognized leader in forest industry. The Colonel (he was always referred to in later life as the Colonel) says this and it went. But we knew him before he was a Colonel and we had the greatest regard for him, and I have a feeling that the real beginnings of forestry as it has developed are as largely attributable to Greeley as to any other man. I think that the rather harsh judgment which a man like Fernow had about American ways of life never could have prevailed, and I even question whether Pinchot's views could have prevailed in the long

run because he had sort of an idealistic concept. But once the antagonism within industry had ceased when Greeley became Chief Forester, and the foresters themselves who had worked with Greeley became infiltrated into industry, then the real period of progress began. And we have it today, Elwood, to a point that you must be fully aware of – more foresters in industry than in government.

MAUNDER: Now, Reck, where did the breach come between the newly-born group of foresters and the so-called captains of industry? Was it something that existed from the beginning, or was it something that was triggered by an event or events?

RECKNAGEL: No, I can't think there was any particular event. I think it was implicit in the whole setup. It would be natural enough for the captains of industry to resent the Roosevelt approach – "malefactors of great wealth and so on"[3] – and they immediately bracketed everything that Pinchot did with Roosevelt, and they transferred their dislike of Roosevelt to Pinchot, and they transferred their dislike of Pinchot to any of his men.

MAUNDER: All right. We're getting something here in historical perspective. Did this antagonism, this rupture of good relations between industry and the federal government, begin with the Teddy Roosevelt administration or did it go back beyond that?

RECKNAGEL: I don't think so. As far as I know, neither McKinley or any of his predecessors had any such attitude towards industry.

MAUNDER: Was this break one that stemmed entirely from statements that were made by Teddy in his speeches, and do you recall any in particular that stand out as being causes of dissension between the groups?

RECKNAGEL: You mention Roosevelt's own statements – yes. But there was also a growing feeling that industry had arrogated to itself the control of things in the United States. That was not due only to Roosevelt's statements, but there was quite a general feeling among educated people that this had gone pretty far.

MAUNDER: Now this was the whole period of muckraking in the magazines and press, and it was also the period of the great reform movement. It was the reaction against the free-wheeling laissez-faire capitalism of the nineteenth century. I've wondered many times in going over this period in my own research where the break actually came, for in the first years of the Pinchot administration of the Forest Service there seemed to me to be a real endeavor to reach out and grasp the hand of industry. There were all these studies that were offered. In other words,

[3] Reference to Theodore Roosevelt's strong denunciations of big business leaders.

men like Arthur Ringland and Ovid Butler and you and others were sent out to make working plans – this working with individual companies.

RECKNAGEL: That's absolutely correct.

MAUNDER: This seemed to indicate that there was a real endeavor on the part of the new profession of forestry to bring industry's leaders along into a recognition of the value of forestry and apply it in their own operations. What happened to the working plan idea, and why did it break down if it did break down? What was the cause of it?

RECKNAGEL: That's a very good point. I think that while there was a fairly general appreciation on the part of the men sent out that we must win over industry, the approach to industry was from the top down instead of on the basis of "we are here to help you and we bespeak your cooperation." It was more that "we will tell you what you should do." That was wrong. That is why the antagonism developed and, of course, the antagonism was fanned by these incredible statements that bracketed everybody who made a dollar out of timber as a "wicked usurper of the people's privileges and a malefactor." There is, however, the question that you have in mind, and it has very often occurred to me, too. Since we were almost at the point of cooperation, how was it that we shied away from it, right? Well, that brings us to the whole matter that you must be familiar with – the doctrine of government control of private land. That was first announced by Pinchot, who believed in it. He was going to have all private forests controlled by the government. That wasn't shared by many of us; I didn't believe in it then and I don't believe in it now.

MAUNDER: Was this a doctrine that Pinchot believed in from the beginning, or is it something that he came to believe in later on?

RECKNAGEL: Later on, Elwood, because he saw the failure to bring about the change of attitude on the part of industry voluntarily, so he said, "All right, we will force it." And he announced his doctrine. You follow his life and you'll see in hi letters and writings that it's true. At first it was to be done cooperatively like in the early working plans, but when he saw that the attitude of industry hardened in opposition, then he also hardened his attitude and he went over completely to the idea of dominance, control – not by the states, incidentally, but by the Forest Service central organization in Washington. Every acre of privately owned timberland was to be controlled. Not the wood lots, but I'm not too sure but what at one time he also thought they should be controlled also.

MAUNDER: There was a period in which there was some <u>rapprochement</u> between industry and the young profession of forestry, but there was a

hardening on both sides as to the methods by which forestry should be accomplished. You have said, in part, this might have been caused by the attitude of the young forestry people going to industry and telling them, "This is what you're supposed to do and how you're to do it." Was this the kind of brashness of youth, the know-it-allness of a group that hadn't even really found out who they were themselves yet but still had a lot of self-confidence, or what was it?

RECKNAGEL: I think you've got it. Perhaps one story I can tell you about Greeley will illustrate this. He loved to tell this story and maybe you've got it recorded already. Have you ever heard to story about the time he met with the stockmen on the Sierra National Forest?

MAUNDER: I'm not sure.

RECKNAGEL: Well, the stockmen came together to protest against Greeley's rulings on the Sierra (he was the Supervisor) as to the number of head of cattle per township. One old stockman got up and protested that the ruling was unfair, and that on the neighboring Lassen National Forest the ruling was fair and it should also apply to the Sierra. Have you heard this one? It's a wonderful story and exactly illustrates what I'm talking about.

MAUNDER: No, I haven't heard it.

RECKNAGEL: So Greeley was just a youngster like the rest of us, a little older but not much (not more than thirty or thirty-two) and he drew himself up and said, "I don't care what they do on the Lassen National Forest. On my forest (meaning the Sierra) the ruling will be thus and so."

This old stockman got up and he said, "Mr. Greeley, you remind me of the story of when the devil took our Lord and Saviour up on a high mountain and he showed him a great area and he said, 'All this land will be yours if you fall down and worship me,' and you know, Mr. Greeley, the son of a bitch didn't own an acre."

Greeley said he never forgot that. That illustrates it perfectly, doesn't it? In other words, these young fellows coming out without any ownership, without any roots in the land, were trying to tell industry what to do. The story's about stockmen but I think it's been told about lumbermen.

MAUNDER: Do you remember the American Forestry Congress of 1905?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I do.

MAUNDER: Were you present at it?

RECKNAGEL: No, but I remember it. I was out West.

MAUNDER: It was at this famous Congress that Teddy Roosevelt made one of his side-winding speeches. He had a speech prepared (probably written by someone in the Forest Service) but when he got up to speak he rambled through about a page of this prepared speech and then threw it aside and proceeded to read out all of the lumbermen who were sitting on the platform with him, including the late F. E. Weyerhaeuser and several other prominent men in the industry. I've often wondered whether this event wasn't in some way a real turning point in the whole situation. I think there were probably a lot of factors, just as this story you related about Greeley showed that the young profession was alienating itself from the industry, but on the other side of events I think this statement by Roosevelt widened the breach even more, and at that point it was a point of no return for Pinchot perhaps. He had to go all out the other way in order to back up his chief's public statements.

RECKNAGEL: I knew very little about it as I was in the field at that time, but I believe your point is correct. I'm convinced that not only was it a point of no return, but there are some of Pinchot's followers – including my good friend, Clapp – who to this day still believe in government control of timber. They're as wrong as they can be but they still believe in it. Unfortunately, this breach continued for a long time; in fact, it continued until Bill Greeley became Chief Forester, and then the change came. And may I add at this point my tribute to McArdle, who also like Greeley is a great worker with industry, but not his predecessors since Greeley. There was a great gap between Greeley and McArdle which was not filled by men of a cooperative attitude.

MAUNDER: In that period was there a return to the Pinchovian policy?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, there certainly was. It was useless; it was against the trend and everything was wrong about it, but there was a return – an attempt to return. I couldn't understand it.

MAUNDER: Do you think that politics itself played any particular role in this forestry picture?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I'm sure it did. I think that politically forestry became anathema for a while. It had been so identified with Rooseveltian doctrine that for a long time forestry suffered very much. Certainly in my home state of New York the whole episode with Fernow, followed by what had happened with Roosevelt, gave forestry a very black eye. We've recovered from that; it's entirely in the past now.

MAUNDER: Yes, forestry has now no doubt of its own recognition as a profession, but there was a time in the early days when it had to struggle for recognition. Have you ever felt that in the endeavor to get the public's support and recognition some of the leaders of forestry used what we might call publicity stunts or public relations methods which weren't strictly honorable or strictly right?

RECKNAGEL: I can't say too much about that. I do think there was an attitude of fanaticism that prevailed, and it took some of us younger fellows a long time to see that the fanatical attitude wasn't getting us anywhere.

MAUNDER: In other words, you were mounting your chargers on a great crusade?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, and going ahead in an entirely wrong way. That's why I've laid such tremendous credit at the door of William B. Greeley because, while the rest of us began to see this thing, he crystallized it. I think the great turning point came in the days of the NRA. I don't' know if we're going to get around to those days or not, but it's my feeling that when the National Recovery Act brought industry and forestry together, that was the turning point.

MAUNDER: It was then rather than back in the twenties with Clarke-McNary and all those things?

RECKNAGEL: Good as it was, that was still government. Industry and the forestry profession sat down together to lick this problem in the days of the so-called Conservation Code in 1932 – not too long ago, 26 years ago, is that right? Most of the progress has come since then.

MAUNDER: Do you feel that perhaps it was the calamity of depression which forced the meeting of the minds?

RECKNAGEL: It certainly helped because it was a case of "if we don't hang together we'll hang separately." There was also a new attitude that had developed among the leaders of industry. Most of the old, very hard-boiled leaders had gone off and a newer, more pliable group had come in, and I think it had something to do, also, with a change on the part of the forestry leaders, so both worked together. You know, Elwood, I regard the fact that the National Recovery Act was thrown out by the Supreme Court as a great calamity as far as conservation was concerned. I won't say anything about the chicken industry or anything else, but as far as the forest Conservation Code went it was the supreme achievement, and it was based on <u>voluntary</u> observance. The codes were established by industry and foresters working together under these so-called Code Authorities. I was closely drawn into that; I was on the committee of ten to carry on the conference which was held in 1933 or '34. Greeley played a tremendous

part in all that. He was a forest statesman, and so modest! He was so modest you wouldn't believe it.

MAUNDER: Were there others contemporary with Greeley whom you would single out as being great forestry leaders?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, one of them is right here at this meeting today – Sam Dana. I can think of some others, too. Ed Stamm fits in here and also Dave Mason. It was the same with George Drake; he's from the West. I know the fellows from the West a little more intimately. Let's take the Southern men. There immediately we have the leadership of the pulp and paper industry pretty largely.

MAUNDER: Whom do you think of in that leadership?

RECKNAGEL: The greatest leader that I can think of in the Southern pulp and paper industry would be Richard J. Cullen and J. H. Allen – Cullen with the International Paper Company and Allen with St. Regis. They weren't forester; they were industry men, but they had the forestry viewpoint. Then later, of course, we had the Camps – now the Camp-Union Bag merger – in Virginia. Virginia has always been regarded as a leader in the South anyway. Then there were men in the Forest Service who equally did tremendous service. More credit goes to Phil Wakely than he usually gets, but he really made the scientific basis of reforestation possible, and then, of course, Eldredge – he's a statesman.

MAUNDER: We were talking about these two great forces coming together – one being the strongly led nineteenth century capitalistic force of the lumber industry and the other industries….

RECKNAGEL: The Adam Smith school.

MAUNDER: That's right, and they were coming up against this new force, the Pinchovian concept of forestry behind which was mounted all the strength of a public opinion emotionally charged with the strength of the reform movement and an emotional attitude towards trees, and armed also with muckraker support – muckraking was a very popular part of the literature of that time. These two forces met head on within the first ten years of the century, wouldn't you say?

RECKNAGEL: That's correct, and they continued to be absolutely at loggerheads until the depression. The depression, terrible as it was in its economic effects, had one tremendous advantage, I think. It was a great catharsis in which troubles disappeared in the face of greater troubles. As I've told you, Elwood, it's always been my feeling, and I feel it

stronger every year, that the greatest thing that Roosevelt did was to put the National Recovery Act into effect. The National Recovery Act embodied the famous Article X in the Lumber Code, the Conservation Code. And the greatest loss is that the Conservation Code (though it was carried on, particularly on the West Coast under Greeley's influence) fell into abeyance generally throughout the country. However, what we lost in the period following the end of the Code I think we have regained, don't you? We've regained almost all that was lost. The only thing perhaps that was lost that we haven't regained is a feeling of solidarity among the different regions. Today there isn't quite the same feeling that there was in Washington – that we're all one group striving for the same purpose. Occasionally you get a sense of it a little – like at this American Forestry meeting – but it was so marked in Washington in the days of '31 and '32.

MAUNDER: '33 and '34.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I've forgotten the years exactly. When was Roosevelt inaugurated?

MAUNDER: In '32.

RECKNAGEL: Almost immediately came the NRA, right? Then we come to another period which we're in now. This is the period of what might be called the renaissance of forestry. We have a happy combination right now – a renaissance of the idealistic attitude, but it is well tempered by the knowledge that forestry is also based on industrial support. And the combination, if it can be carried to its ultimate end, will be the solution of our forestry problem. It will never be done by federal control; that's out. I'm sure it's out. There are a few die-hards that still believe in it, but it can't be done that way. It can't be done by anything excepting the strong support of the American people in all their different aspects.

MAUNDER: Reck, here's a question that isn't so much a historical question but one of those questions asking for a bit of prophecy or prediction. What do you see as being the most important need of forestry today?

RECKNAGEL: I think I know the answer to that because I've been talking to some of the fellows who feel as I do about it. We still are very weak in the education of most of our foresters in what might be called industrial forestry, that is, there is a great lack of knowledge of the business aspect of forestry on the part of most of the foresters who've gone merely through the standard curriculum of the forest school. We learned it the hard way. You know, of course, that was with St. Regis. I had to learn an awful lot when I went with them. I talked to some of the fellows here

with the paper industry and asked them the same question. They all say, "We had to learn the hard way." Well, that's one way of learning, naturally, but it's also quite possible to introduce this material into the curriculum. It needs, however, a new attitude on the part of some of the heads of our forest schools how are a little disinclined to add anything or to change anything in the curriculum.

Yale has led the way with these seminars, you know – industrial forestry seminars with E. T. Wohlenberg, and more recently with Zebulon White (what a wonderful name, by the way!) but that's for men who are already in industry. All you've got to do is just use a little imagination and see that this is brought down to the level of the instruction period under competent instructors (they've got to be competent, men who've had the experience themselves) and the last great gap will then be closed. It does exist today; there is that gap. I've employed a lot of fellows for St. Regis and I had to take them and teach them; they just didn't know, they didn't know anything about the industrial relations, about just exactly what it is that makes industry tick.

MAUNDER: What's this going to do to the forestry school curriculum? Does it mean giving forestry students more forestry courses in the four years they're in school and cutting back on the electives that they take, or how do you see that?

RECKNAGEL: No, I don't think it will. I think there may be some diminution of some of the aspects which are more or less traditional and which, after all, do not need to be emphasized quite as they have been. I don't mean that we should have more of that type of added material – of lectures and so on. I think it can be done best of all by adding only to the extent that is necessary to fulfill the task of the forest school so that when a man comes out he has at least a basic knowledge and grasp of business. Forestry is business and the men who are going into the forestry aspect of it – not the research workers, not the wood technologists – most of them are now going into industry. Already the majority of foresters are in industry, as you know. That training can be done in connection with the last year in the school, provided only that we be sure that the men who give the instruction are themselves competent to do it. It's going to be hard to get those men because they don't want to leave industry, but they are available. That's my idea of it as to the curriculum; it should be flexible. I think you can take a perfect parallel between the forest school and the agricultural college. You know, of course, that agricultural economics, farm management, is now taught at all agricultural colleges, and it has become a very important part of the curriculum.

MAUNDER: And something comparable to it must be put into the forestry curriculum?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, and it isn't being done.

MAUNDER: I wonder, Reck, why there are so few schools of forestry that give any recognition to forest or forestry history?

RECKNAGEL: There you have a field, unfortunately, that is regarded by the students with very little interest. After all, he's very young, you must remember – he's in his early twenties or even younger – and what went on way back is something almost unbelievable to him.

MAUNDER: For example, I was a journalist or public relations man (I'm more or less a historian through the back door) but when I was an undergraduate in journalism the course in the history of journalism was a must. We had to have this for the reason that it was a good thing to know something of the history of the profession we were going into and to know something about its struggles for recognition, the problems that it has faced, and how there have been overcome. Doesn't it seem to make some kind of sense to you that if the forestry students of today knew more of the history of their profession it would give them some insight in dealing with many problems they encounter in training and when they get out into practice? After all, most forestry problems have some kind of a history! If you know the history of a problem you may get some insights into dealing with its contemporary application.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I agree with that all right. I can see lack of it in the dearth of background knowledge which has been revealed to me in talking to some of the people here in the Forest Service in Region Three.

MAUNDER: For example, if the young forestry student can be made to recognize the struggle that went on here between industry and government, isn't that going to give him some better perspective?

RECKNAGEL: I think you're right; I have no reason to doubt any of it. I have only reason to question how much of this can be usefully taught in the undergraduate years where the student is primarily trying to learn the tools of his trade. It's all right for the graduate schools like Duke and Yale.

MAUNDER: Or even perhaps the senior year of the undergraduate work.

RECKNAGEL: Yes. It's important; there's no question about it because you cannot live wholly in the future. Remember what Charles Kettering said, "I'm interested only in the future because I intend to spend the rest of my life in it?" That isn't quite fair, that statement. There are plenty of opportunities, by the way, to bring this in during other courses. I can't imagine silviculture being taught without a review of what has

happened in silviculture in the past, and in the case of forest management the same thing is true. But I can also agree with you that it is very cursorily treated in most forest schools so the average young graduating student can't answer intelligently any questions you ask him about Pinchot or Graves, or any of those men.

MAUNDER: It seems to me to be a weakness. Perhaps I have an overweening enthusiasm for the subject because it's my special field, but it seems to me that to a considerable extent both our dynamic quality in America and also our immaturity in America stems from this lack in our education. We take great pride, I think, in this country in standing up and saying, "I'm not looking back; I'm looking forward into the future. I'm not concerned with what happened yesterday; today is important; tomorrow is the area that I'm interested in." Well, that's fine. That creates a forward thrust; there's no doubt about it, but it also results in some damn foolishness, too.

RECKNAGEL: You could make the same mistake twice.

MAUNDER: Yes. I think this is one thing that we run into here. I heard McArdle just the other night up at Flagstaff speak, and he started off by saying, "We've been celebrating here the last few days the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Fort Valley Experiment Station and that's fine. We ought to pay honor to the past, but I'm concerned about the present and the future and I want to talk about that tonight. This is the thing that's of greatest importance." And then for more than an hour Dr. McArdle went ahead to draw copiously upon history to make the point that in the last few hundred years progress has been made at a steadily accelerating rate in a great variety of fields. In the field of communications he showed how we have moved steadily upward. In the last few years with the radical discoveries in electronics we've made just a tremendous inroad, similarly with our ability to move through space – the speed that the human animal can more has been going up at a fabulous rate. So also, McArdle pointed out – and rightly – in medical science, knowledge has veered sharply upward in the last twenty-five years. But he sees forestry as moving along on a steady growth in the same period without the same sharp veer upward, and he's saying, "Now, what we need to do is get forestry into this pattern of a sharp veer upward."

RECKNAGEL: That's a very interesting aspect. Did he really say that?

MAUNDER: That was the gist of his speech – and I'm sure he must have a typescript copy of it.

RECKNAGEL: All right. I don't often disagree with Dick McArdle but in this instance I do, because I would maintain that this tremendous upward surge

has already happened, and it has happened particularly and very noticeably in the South. When you realize that today we plant a million acres a year in Southern industrial forestry, that's enough of an upsurge, isn't it? What McArdle means is that the United States Forest Service hasn't upsurged. I know why that is and you do too.

MAUNDER: Why is that?

RECKNAGEL: Because the number one men go into industry when they get out of forest schools, or just as soon as they possibly can. That's a harsh thing to say and I don't like to say it, but young fellows come to me and they ask my advice on what to do. I say, "Go into the Forest Service but don't stay in it. Get out where the going's tough. It'll be tough enough for you for a while in the Forest Service but when it gets to be kind of easy, you know, then get out. It'll be a wrench for you, and the first few years in industry you'll wish to heaven that Reck had never talked to you, but you stay with it and see what happens. It'll be heartbreak for you and you'll be wishing you were back in that nice, cozy little group called the United States Forest Service."

Do you know that I still feel it sometimes? I suppose today it's a sort of homesick, nostalgic feeling that I'd like to be back in the year 1908, but that's not it altogether. There's also a very wonderful, warm, cuddly feeling of belonging to Uncle Sam, or being one of his very own nephews. That's the situation; so I disagree with McArdle. I think this upsurge is the result of a tremendously invigorated attitude which has taken hold of forestry in industry, and that again, Elwood, brings me right back to where I said, "This must be included somehow, no matter how inadequately; give the boys some idea of industrial forestry," which they're not getting.

MAUNDER: Isn't it true, Reck, that even though there is this tendency on the part of a lot of good men in the profession to go through a period of training in the Forest Service and then jump to a better paying job with what seems like better opportunities in industry, isn't it also true that there still is in the Forest Service a dedicated group which makes a career of it, and that these men are exceptionally able?

RECKNAGEL: Oh, I should be the last man to deny that. It's impossible for me to deny. But it is also true that there is a dead level of mediocrity and the dead level does better in an organization which is bureaucratic because it gets carried along by the others. But in industry it doesn't get carried along. A mediocre person in industry soon finds himself <u>out</u>.

MAUNDER: Do you think that is a generalization that you can make without any qualifications?

RECKNAGEL: Oh, there are some exceptions. There are influences – if you belong to a certain family, or son of a terribly large stockholder – but, by golly, in general it is true, yes.

MAUNDER: And you don't think there is any tendency towards bureaucracy in big industry?

RECKNAGEL: I suppose inevitably there will be. By the way, Elwood, that's why I dislike to see all our big companies like the big pulp and paper companies having these endless mergers. I think it's a very bad aspect. My own company, the St. Regis, is a great offender in this merger business. It seems to me every day like …. Do you remember Fafnes in Wagnerian opera? He opens his big mouth and takes another swallow of a couple of heroes. Frankly, I don't like to see it because that's the way bureaucracy is built up. No longer do the men on top know the ones below.

MAUNDER: It becomes more and more impersonal.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, very impersonal. But I do think that, strangely enough, so far we've escaped it pretty well, and I hope we may continue to escape it. However, there is a definitely rapid increase of tempo in forestry. That I am so sure of, that I'm surprised McArdle wouldn't see it, too. I know, of course, what's bothering him and everybody else, namely, the goal is still so far from being achieved.

MAUNDER: The impatience to get on and make faster progress.

RECKNAGEL: Have you any idea that the goal in any other human activity has been fully achieved? I don't think it has.

MAUNDER: No. Of course, I think McArdle really was straining to make him point. I think his analogy breaks down on any one of a number of counts, and there's not time or tape enough to go into these here.

RECKNAGEL: Let me say right now that Dick McArdle, though, is in my judgment the ablest and best-informed forester since Greeley's day as to the relationship of forestry and industry. He is perfectly, adequately, and completely informed.

MAUNDER: And he has helped to continue to build the bridge between the two.

RECKNAGEL: Yes. If there's any criticism that I make of anything that Dick McArdle says, it's never a criticism of his basic knowledge, which to us in industry (and I feel myself now largely an industry forester) is the most helpful thing that we've had.

MAUNDER: I'd go along with that, of course.

RECKNAGEL: Supposing that we now briefly review what happened after I dropped out of the Forest Service and went into teaching. Would you like to hear about that?

MAUNDER: Fine. Let's go back to Cornell.

RECKNAGEL: It won't take long, but there's something about teaching that I want to tell you. I never failed to do a lot of consulting work and therefore soon became quite well-informed on industrial problems. I'd already had a pretty good intuition into them in the days when I worked with the lumber companies in the West particularly, but it developed that it was pulp and paper that I was particularly interested in. That has become, of course – in my judgment at least – the most forestry-minded industry of the wood-using industries. I sometimes feel that that was more or less chance, but it also happened fortunately that the paper industry has had leadership by men of great intelligence.

The first few years at Cornell were kind of hectic because they almost coincided with the coming of World War I, and I soon found myself in the position of "Hi, private." That's as far as I ever got in the Army. I never got overseas; I was sent to Albany and stayed in Albany during the war. My chief job was guarding Governor Smith, which wasn't too arduous, and attending maneuvers and various things of that sort. I enlisted as a private, I remained a private, and was discharged as a private, and that's all there was to my military service. I was so damn glad to get out, but this is not for quotation.

MAUNDER: I think we all felt that way.

RECKNAGEL: Well, you were in the next one. I got out and had a very unusual privilege. I was asked to be Secretary of the Empire State Forest Products Association, which is a group of timberland owners in New York State. That was really a privilege because their problems are the problems that we've been talking about in industrial forestry. They were mostly pulp and paper companies. You know some of them – International, my own St. Regis, West Virginia, Finch Pruyn – and they all come to mind immediately as leaders in forestry practice in the country. These were the days when they had non expanded into other parts of the country. The idea was still entirely in the Northeast in large operations in New England and New York. West Virginia Pulp and Paper was elsewhere, also, but St. Regis at first was entirely in New York, and Finch Pruyn has always been only in New York. Immediately I was drawn into some very important contacts which continued and were accentuated when

the NRA came along. Perhaps I should mention the fact that when the NRA came about, the Empire State Forest Products Association practically gave over its offices and everything to the Code Authority which was then established for the Northeast, and was called the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers' Association. It was created as a Code Authority. Wilson Compton called me from Washington and said, "Come to New York, Reck. We're going to establish a Code Authority."

I said, "What is it you're talking about?"

He said, "Code Authority. Don't you follow the papers?"

I said, "Yes, I've heard about Code Authorities but how are we going to establish one?"

He said, "Come to New York tomorrow morning and meet me under the clock at the Biltmore at ten and you'll find out." And we did find out. About a dozen of us met and we created the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers' Association. There had never been one before. And we became the Code Authority and moved into the Empire State Forest Products Association offices in Albany.

I found myself in the position of sort of a czar who could bind or Loose. It was an astonishing thing, but the good aspect of that was that we also had participation in formulating the Conservation Code; we had that contact in Washington. I've already spoken about it. I think it was one of the greatest forward movements that I've ever known, and while in the Northeast we were very small hairs on the end of a very large dog's tail, nevertheless we had contacts with these others, and with the great leaders on the West Coast and in the South like George S. Long and both Fred K. and Phil Weyerhaueser, and so on.

When all this smoke finally cleared away and the NRA was abolished and we went back to our separate little organizations, I stayed on as secretary for a while at least with the Empire State Forest Products Association. But somehow the old spirit didn't exist that had been there before. So many of the older men had either died or had moved elsewhere, and their interests were more concentrated outside of New York. I'm sorry to say this, but the Empire State Forest Products Association today reminds me of a group of nostalgically-minded older men who come together twice a year to have a good dinner and to talk over old times. That's not a nice thing to say but that's about what it's like. Clyde Sykes you've heard of, haven't you – the Sykes of Pennsylvania? Clyde Sykes says that's all wrong. "We're like a group of firemen sitting around playing checkers until the fire breaks out again."

I said, "Well, if we sit around long enough playing checkers I don't think we're going to be able to get up when the fire breaks out."

However, I continued at Cornell until 1937 when all the professional instruction was removed to the College of Forestry at Syracuse. At that time I had determined that I would go back into industry, but there was on little brief interlude there. When World War II came along I was too old, of course, even to resume my high rank of private but I did get a peculiar appointment with the Forest Service. They asked me to be Area Forester for New York and the Timber Production War Project. Do you remember that thing?

MAUNDER: Yes.

RECKNAGEL: It was better known as "Teepeeweepee." It was all right. Those of us who knew something of industry were able to get a little organization together of the sawmills and other industries using wood in New York. I think we made some progress, particularly in pulpwood, but it was a brief interlude and didn't last very long. *

MAUNDER: Reck, we're getting into more recent days in this interview and your activities with industry. We've had from you an appraisal of the role which our great foresters have played. I'd like you to give a little attention now to the role which men of industry and the academic world have played in more recent times in the development of a more professsional, more stable forest industry and profession of forestry. I'm thinking in particular now of men like Dr. Compton, some of the leaders of industry, top management, some of their forestry men who have risen to top management. Do you see any patterns in this which stand out as being significant?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, I'm glad to do it Elwood. It seems to me that that's a very important thing. We carried through pretty well up to the point of the NRA and the Lumber Code and the Famous Article X and resultant Conservation Code. You know, of course, that that was the personal desire of Mr. Roosevelt, didn't you?

MAUNDER: The NRA?

RECKNAGEL: No, I mean Article X. If that isn't generally known, I'd better repeat that a little. Wilson Compton was in close contact with Mr. Roosevelt, and when he took the Lumber Code in its rough draft (it was the second Code, by the way; the first Code was the Textile Code) to the White House. Mr. Roosevelt looked it over and said, "Dr. Compton, this is all right and I'm prepared to sign it, <u>but</u> I want an article inserted which will deal particularly with conservation." It's a tremendous credit

* See pages 45 and 46 for supplementary information.

to Franklin D. Here we are celebrating the other Roosevelt;[4] let's not forget Franklin.

And Compton said, "Why, Mr. President, that's wonderful. Of course we'll do it."

Roosevelt said, "Then put it in and I'll sign it." So Article X was drafted by Compton – no one else – and taken down to the President and the President signed it. I remember the occasion very well. Then Compton called various men by long distance, including myself, as I told you, for a meeting in New York because then it was up to us to get active, and we did. Well, I think Compton deserves a tremendous amount of credit for his wise leadership of industry at that time. He's not a forester at all, you know, but he's a statesman.

MAUNDER: He's an engineer.

RECKNAGEL: That's right, and he's a statesman. Among the great leaders of that period I would put the two Weyerhaeusers (Fred K. and Phil) and Mr. George S. Long. I would put Mr. Corydon Wagner in that group, also, and C. C. Sheppard in the South – very much so. It was a wonderful group. We met in Washington under the most God-awful climatic conditions – no air conditioning, no nothing but sweat. I remember Mr. Sheppard, for instance, who was one of the ablest and most lovable characters, finally said one day (General Johnson himself, "Old Iron Pants," was presiding at this meeting), "General, I've got to go back to Louisiana. My business is suffering and I've got to go back."

And the General reared up and he said, "Mr. Sheppard, I order you to stay in Washington."

Sheppard in his mild Southern drawl said, "General, you can't order me to do anything."

The General said, "Well, I guess that's right. I ask you, I request you to stay."

Sheppard said, "General, I'd love to stay because my heart is in this work, but I've got to go back for a while. My business is going to pieces, but I'll be back." Isn't that illustrative of the whole thing? He came back although things were very difficult. Well, we hammered out quite an achievement.

Then we go forward from that period, and there comes a long period of recession, you might say, as far as forestry of a national character

[4] American Forestry Association meetings in Tucson, Arizona, October 26-30, 1958, honored centennial of T. R. Roosevelt's birth.

goes. It seems that our progress goes by waves. Everyone was so relieved when the depression was over – that was really a depression – and when it was over people went back to their own businesses. The industry itself was award of the fact that there had been a period when the two, industry and forestry, were working together, but there was a lull in that forward movement. In fact, there was a recession in the movement. The leaders continued to be particularly notable on the West Coast, due to the fact that Greeley went with the West Coast Lumbermen's Association. Then there were the men that stand out in the South. (I've already mentioned the two whom I think deserve the greatest credit, namely Cullen of the IP, and Allen who, you know, organized the mill first in Pensacola and then later sold out his interests and became vice president of St. Regis.) Then there were men in West Virginia like the Lukes – tremendously forward looking men – and I've mentioned the Camps. But there was a period when there was a feeling of "let's get back to work now. We've had quite a jolt and let's not stir up anything more for a little while." The Forest Service was the same way; they didn't stir up anything very much.

Now, in New York, fortunately, we had several men of great ability. I'd better mention them. They were not all foresters but they were men of leadership qualities. The first one that comes to my mind is Roy Kellogg, who isn't a forester by training. He exercised tremendous influence through the Newsprint Service Bureau, but particularly as the chairman of the committee which helped with Congressional action. There also was the Secretary of the American Paper and Pulp Association, Earl Tinker; then there was Ovid Butler in Washington. Those men were real leaders. And we had many a difficult situation arise, particularly as there was a question of how Congressional support would be obtained for cooperative work like the Clarke-McNary Act, and so on. But I would say, as I look back, that there was a period of almost calm while business recovered from its terrible scare (and it was a terrible scare) and when the foresters themselves had to kind of catch their breath because things had moved awful fast.

MAUNDER: This is the period of the New Deal that we're talking about, is that right?

RECKNAGEL: That's right. This is the New Deal.

MAUNDER: Very often we hear people say that this was the time of the coming of the welfare state and the socialistic trend in our American government. I wonder if that is completely accurate. Do you have any thoughts on the subject? Do you feel that the free enterprise system in any way was deeply undermined in this period, or do you feel that a more extreme

kind of socialism may, indeed, have been stood off by what was done in this period? I have mixed feelings on this and I wonder what your feelings are.

RECKNAGEL: I don't know exactly whether I'm competent to answer for the feeling in general. This was indeed the period of the New Deal but, strangely enough, any attempt by the New Deal to reestablish a doctrine of federal control of private timberland failed completely. It scarcely got to first base. It was a failure because industry had found that it could operate with its own foresters to bring about its own solution. That, I think, is why the New Deal left most of the forestry aspects untouched. There were some foresters who were campaigning for it, you know. I've mentioned some of them by name. But I think the attempt was due for failure before it got underway.

MAUNDER: Where was Pinchot in all this?

RECKNAGEL: Pinchot at this time was not in very good health. That you knew, didn't you? He had a bad attack of shingles. I saw him the last time at a meeting of the Yale Forest School in about '42. Would that date be right? When did he die?

MAUNDER: He died about '45.

RECKNAGEL: That's right. Then it was the early forties, and I was shocked. The great dynamic leader that I knew had become a pretty sick man.

MAUNDER: What part do you ascribe to Franklin Roosevelt?

RECKNAGEL: Franklin? You know, I have a very high regard for Franklin Roosevelt. I don't like all parts of the New Deal but I think when it came to his being forestry-minded (he had strong support from the Forest Service), he had a real belief in conservation even in the days when he was in Albany, and he had a very good grasp of what conditions were in the Forest Service and also generally throughout the industry.

MAUNDER: Would you compare F. D. R. with T. R. in his attitude toward industry?

RECKNAGEL: Of course, very obviously. T. R.'s attitude was a simple one; he was just going to beat them over the head until they yelled "comrade." Well, that was very simple. The attitude of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal was a little more complicated. We were to have cooperative development in which industry was going to be regulated but it was going

to be regulated very largely for reasons that businessmen were to be told were for their own advantage. The New Deal, of course, was repugnant to a good deal of industry, as you are well award, but isn't it a fact, as you look back, that many of the New Deal principles have been adopted by industry itself? I think we have underestimated the fact that Franklin Roosevelt in the days of the depression and in the days that followed showed astonishing statesmanship and understanding.

MAUNDER: That's my own personal point of view, but I think with people who have had more at stake in the matter and probably therefore a more red hot interest in politics that it's a little hard to make fair judgments of history which is so recent.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, it is hard, but I do know this much, as far as the forestry aspects go there was no rocking of the boat; there was none of this return to bludgeoning. There was a small group in the Forest Service who didn't date from Franklin but who dated from Theodore, and they were absolutely without influence.

MAUNDER: Do you think that they had, therefore, little influence with the Chief Executive, Roosevelt?

RECKNAGEL: I don't think they had any whatsoever with Franklin.

MAUNDER: In other words, they were still carrying on the Pinchot crusade but weren't getting the kind of support from the White House that would have carried it into effect?

RECKNAGEL: Oh, I'm sure of it. The whole period, I think, showed a peculiar little flare-up of the old attitude which is complete outworn. It was absolutely unrealistic. As far as Franklin went, I heard him make several speeches while he was still Governor and he had a good grasp of the underlying principles and he had none of the arrogance of knowing all the answers.

MAUNDER: Would you say that his interest in forestry was more than that of a dilettante?

RECKNAGEL: Not much more, but I don't like that word dilettante. They play at things, don't they? No, it was more that he relied on the judgment of men in whom he had confidence.

MAUNDER: What was his evidence of interest in state forestry when he was Governor of New York?

RECKNAGEL: When he was governor of New York, he was in the position of appointing the Conservation Commissioner and supporting his Commissioner as one of his cabinet, which he did exceedingly well. He also appeared as a leader when it came to the budget and the financial support of the Conservation Department. We had good years when Roosevelt was Governor. By the way, let me quickly add that Governor Lehmann carried right on on the same basis, and since then there has never been any lack of support financially for the conservation work in New York State. It doesn't matter whether Rockefeller is elected or Harriman continues; the support will be excellent.

MAUNDER: What would you have to say about the Republican leadership throughout the years? You've lived through the Harding and Coolidge and Hoover administrations in Washington, too. What would you have to say about the interest of those men?

RECKNAGEL: Those were interesting years. As far as Coolidge went, you know, it was almost nullity as far as an interest in forestry was concerned. Coming as he did from Vermont, it was really peculiar that he didn't know anything about it or have any interest in it. I guess the less we say about Harding the better, isn't that right? There was no interest in forestry. I never heard of any. At the time of his death I was heading up a party for Finch Pruyn and Company on a growth study of their entire holdings in the Adirondacks.

By the way, that was quite a job. Would you like to hear something of it? They owned 140,000 acres, and our job was to determine what rate of growth of timber supplying the mill at Glen Falls they could be sure of. When we came through with our report and figured that they could count on 35,000 cords a year, I sure had stuck my neck out because if they didn't get the 35,000 cords on a sustained yield basis my name would have been mud. That's what I told you about industrial forestry, right? Well, the Lord be praised, not only have they been cutting 35,000 cords (that period has expired anyway; it was a ten-year plan) but during that ten-year period they were able to step it up to 42,000, and no company ever felt badly if they cut more than was predicted. It was quite a thing, by the way. It was the first time, as far as I know, that anyone had attempted to evaluate exactly in terms of thousand cords what the land would produce; it was a novelty. It was while I was doing that field work that summer of 1923 that Harding died. He had no interest in forestry and Coolidge had none, but Hoover is an entirely different story. Hoover's interest was in utilization in industry, and that's when we had the period (first when he was Secretary of Commerce and later when he was President) when there was a great deal of interest in codifying, in having lumber standards, and so forth. Do you remember Axel Oxholm? The work that was done there was always in cooperation with the industry, industry committees, industry organizations. Roy Kellogg had a great

deal to do with it. These were not codes that were administered by federal authority; these were voluntary organizations to improve the standards under which the product was manufactured. It didn't extend so much into pulpwood, but Hoover was tremendously interested in the lumber standards and Oxholm was a great man for that work. Both as Secretary of Commerce and later as President, Hoover not only knew many things, but I might say that he was the most intelligent man with respect to the forest products industry. He really knew what he was doing.

MAUNDER: Because he was an engineer?

RECKNAGEL: Yes, an engineer, and thoroughly acquainted with the West Coast. And it fitted right in with Greeley's work, and it fitted in particularly with the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison. This was a real forward movement on a line that had been somewhat neglected. I am a great admirer of President Hoover; he is a wonderful man.

MAUNDER: Was good progress made at that time?

RECKNAGEL: Yes. This was progress of a character that wasn't sensational; it didn't make any headlines. Can you imagine it making any headlines to have, say, "Standard lumber grades for western yellow pine?" No, but there was tremendous improvement just the same. And no company did more to help in this than the Weyerhaeuser people; they were among the leaders in it.

MAUNDER: How did they show this leadership?

RECKNAGEL: They showed it by participating in the long drawn-out sessions in which things were thrashed out and then adopted. You know, the latest and the last companies to come into the standard lumber grades are our northeastern ones, but these have all come in now. In other words, this good work that was done by Hoover is not over; it's still going on. Now, that was a kind of progress that I say was just a steady level of achievement, and very important, incidentally, because it stabilized the business aspect. Hoover was followed, of course, by a period we've already touched on which was, you might say, a return to a somewhat troubled and tumultuous period, but when that ended we returned to this former attitude and nothing gained in Hoover's time has been lost – nothing.

MAUNDER: What effects did World War II have on all this?

RECKNAGEL: On forestry it had the effect, of course, again of a tremendous upsurge of personal interest on the part of government to be sure that

there was an adequate supply on raw material for the industries. There was less control of industry, although there was some – wages and hours and so on.

MAUNDER: Less control than in World War I?

RECKNAGEL: No. Less control than would have been desired by those who went back to the days of Pinchot. There was no attempt to control the land itself, but there was considerable control of output for government use. Let me cite one example. The pulp mills all had been lined up and if this mill A was short and B had a surplus, B was supposed to furnish its wood to A; or in the paper mills if B was short and C had a surplus, then C would furnish pulp to B and so on. In other words, there was integration – and pretty rigid control, incidentally – but there was no control of the land.

MAUNDER: Do you think there was any danger at any point of control of the land coming?

RECKNAGEL: No, I don't think it was even hinted.

MAUNDER: Never pressed by any politicos?

RECKNAGEL: No, not by anyone of any prominence. There was plenty of control of labor, as you know, but there was no attempt to dictate the form of cutting or of management, or the amount that could be cut on the land, and all those things.

MAUNDER: Prices were controlled.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, prices and hours of labor were controlled, and there was tremendous control of raw material distribution. That's illustrated by the paper mills. But going back to the land, no, fortunately, or there would have been tremendous confusion. The Timber Production War Project was designed to stimulate production. In fact, I have a somewhat guilty feeling, having been a New York area forester, because I stimulated the production of white pine lumber, which was very much needed, but I couldn't control the way the forest was cut. I go through some of those areas that I was responsible for and they look like a desert to me today, and they are a desert, but I comfort myself with the fact that this lumber was needed for boxes and shipments of materials during the war. Elwood, war is a harsh taskmistress. You've got to product this stuff, right? And right away quick. Now, in the long run whatever areas were poorly cut will be rehabilitated.

MAUNDER: It's the old story that there's no good in crying over something that's done in a period of emergency or rapid growth. It's just the same way in regard to the methods that were used to cut the forests in the Lake States in pioneer times.

RECKNAGEL: That's right. I find no sympathy in my own thinking with those who would have failed to apply the maximum means of bringing the war to an end. There are plenty of people who think we made a mistake in allowing the cutting of white pine – people in the Adirondacks particularly because unfortunately much of this impinges on the Adirondacks. But they soon forget what the feeling was during the war.

MAUNDER: Is there a strong element of what you might call "the preservationist group" in the Adirondacks?

RECKNAGEL: Oh yes, of course, very strong! It's strong in New York City, and is by no means limited to the East. I'm sure if we'd scratch around here we'd find it.

MAUNDER: But I've always been impressed with the fact that there seems to be a real strong hotbed of it down there.

RECKNAGEL: Well, it's because of the great wealth of the Adirondacks owners who center in New York City.

MAUNDER: And this preservationist attitude is nowhere stronger than among wealthy people, is it?

RECKNAGEL: That's natural, isn't it? However, let's see what happened after the war ended. Fortunately, we came out this time not only with the war won, but also we avoided the depression which might have followed. Consequently, today forestry is on an upsurge, and we have no greater example of upsurge than we have in the pulp and paper industry. The two areas where the industry is most prominent, you know as well as I do, are the West Coast and the South.

Those foresters who've been fortunate like myself not only to live through the early period and can now see this great future development already taking shape can feel that their lives were indeed not wasted. We made mistakes, but fortunately like so often happens in American history, it seems that we must have a special guardian angel who prevents the mistakes from being too serious. We've made one serious error, of course, and that's in so long deferring the cooperation between industry and forestry. That need not have been deferred so long, but perhaps we've caught up much of what we lost in the early days. Today it's a real pleasure to see right here at this meeting lumbermen who are hobnobbing

and friendly and understanding of the forestry problems, and rabid conservationists who are hobnobbing with lumbermen whom they wouldn't even have sat down to eat with in the early days, and they both are working for the same end.

That's about all I can tell you except there's on man that I think we should mention before we stop. That is the man who more than anyone else has done for forestry what needed to be done and has done it consecutively over a great many years. The man I have in mind has never received the recognition which he deserves. He has been more or less in the background; he has never pushed himself forward very much. In fact, he isn't any single man; he is the fellow who does the day-by-day work in the woods. The whole program and progress of forestry has depended on the individual men in the woods who are so modest that you would hardly be able to convince them that they are important, but all this progress that we've talked about would be absolutely impossible if it weren't for those day-by-day workers.

MAUNDER: Well, that's pretty generally true in anything.

RECKNAGEL: I can close this record by telling you what McArdle said in Washington when he got the award from the Civil Service Association. Were you there?

MAUNDER: No, I wasn't.

RECKNAGEL: McArdle, unlike some of the others, didn't make a long speech. When he got the award (this was in May of this year) he said, "I am proud to accept this award, not for myself, but for the men and women of the Forest Service who are recognized thereby."

MAUNDER: That was a mighty fine thing to do.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, it was. These fellows who are today working in the woods – the fellows with the hard hats on – they're the ones who should really get the recognition.

MAUNDER: Well, there's been a tremendous amount of education.

RECKNAGEL: Yes, it's taken a lot but it's also been a wonderful achievement and it has been done, fortunately, in such a way that we need never worry about the future because what we've gained will be carried on. I don't think any form of regulatory control would have achieved it.

* The following paragraphs which supplement his oral history interview were written by Mr. Recknagel at the time he corrected the original rough draft.

The end of World War II also ended the T.P.W.P. job and so I was free to go back into consulting and forestry work. My first job was with the so-called Ostertag Committee (Joint Committee of the New York Legislature on Interstate Cooperation) to make a forest tax study throughout the state of New York. This was an interesting assignment, and, in collaboration with Dr. Chester Pond of the state Tax Department, we made what is still the most complete report on this highly controversial subject. This was in the fall of 1946. I might add that the report pleased no one because it presented no sovereign cure for the increasing tax burden on forest lands.

When this was finished, I continued with various consulting jobs, one of which, with St. Regis Paper Company, was in northern New Hampshire where the company owns large areas on the Connecticut River drainage. In my report to Roy Ferguson, President of the company, I made certain recommendations and was literally flabbergasted when he asked me to become technical director of forestry for the company – thus putting it up to me to do the job I had recommended. This truly great opportunity I accepted and in the spring on 1948 I entered on what I still consider the most unusual task of a somewhat chequered career.

The St. Regis Paper Company is an outstanding company in the industry and its holdings cover vast areas in the Northeast, the Lake States, the West Coast and, of course, the deep South. At that time they totaled two million acres. Now with the addition of the operations in Alberta, Canada, they are twice that size. As I look back on the years that followed, I owe much to the support I received from Mr. Ferguson and other officers of the company. Industrial forestry was getting into full swing about that time and there was much to be done to integrate the company operations in the woods with the concept of sustainable yield.

For a while the company maintained an office in Syracuse, New York, where George Abel, an outstanding forestry technician, was my assistant. We laid the groundwork for management of the company lands. Later, at Deferiet, New York, Jacksonville, Florida and Tacoma, Washington, this has been continued and when I terminated my active work with the company, Paul Dunn, former Dean of the Oregon State College School of Forestry (Corvallis, Oregon), took over as my successor. With his headquarters in the New York office, he has placed emphasis on a unified program of forestry for the far-flung company lands.

There is much more I could say about those years which ended in 1953 (Dunn came in 1955). Like the character in HUNTING THE SNARK, when admonished to be brief, "Reluctantly I skip twenty years" -- between 1938 and 1958. suffice it to say that they were years of constructive work when I had opportunity to apply what I had learned in a full lifetime.

In more recent days I have continued and even expanded my consulting work – not with St. Regis alone, although that continues – but with other companies. I am also one of the editors of the NORTHEASTERN LOGGER in charge of "Recent Publications" – that is, book reviews -- which keeps me in touch with developments in this increasingly large field of forestry and allied literature.