

An Oral History Interview with

Rudolph L. Fromme

Pomona, California

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by

Elwood R. Maunder

I'm Elwood Maunder and I'm head of the Forest History Society, Yale University, which is associated with the Forestry School. Today is February 25, 1967. I am interviewing Rudolph L. Fromme. Mr. Fromme, what year did you received your masters in forestry from Yale University?

FROMME: It was 1906. I got a bachelor of science degree in 1905 at Ohio. I had come to Yale in the summer of 1904 because I understood that they had summer terms at Milford, Pennsylvania. But Dean Henry S. Graves thought I ought to go back to Ohio State and get my bachelor degree so I went back for the 1904-05 years.

MAUNDER: Then you came back to Yale in the fall of 1906 and graduated in June of 1906 with a masters in forestry?

FROMME: That's right. We had our spring term at Waterville, New Hampshire that year but we got back in time to graduate.

MAUNDER: Where did you have your classes in those days?

FROMME: In Marsh Hall.

MAUNDER: What do you remember about those days at Yale?

FROMME: I remember particularly playing football, I guess they called it rugby, on the grounds just below Marsh Hall. It was a big open space.

MAUNDER: Where the Greeley Laboratory is now?

FROMME: Yes. I can't remember the man who taught wood technology, but I remember that class particularly and of course, we had lectures by Dean Graves and by Professor J.W. Toumey.

MAUNDER: Did you have Ralph Hawley?

FROMME: Yes, we had him and we had a lumberman, too, who taught us about lumbering. It was all very interesting.

MAUNDER: That was Ralph C. Bryant, I think you were there before Herman H. Chapman came on the scene, weren't you?

FROMME: W.W. Chapman was at this summer camp in Milford, Pennsylvania on the old Pinchot estate and that's the first time I met him. He was an assistant professor then and he was at Yale when I was there but I didn't take any instruction under him, I don't believe. We corresponded over the years after he became secretary of the Yale Forest School Alumni Association until he passed away.

MAUNDER: What did you do when you graduated from Yale?

FROMME: My first assignment was in the office of the U. S. Forest Service to get combed over by Gifford Pinchot and Overton W. Price on my qualifications. Then I got shipped to northern Idaho to the old Priest River Forest Preserve. In about a year it was changed to Kaniksu National Forest.

MAUNDER: What do you remember about the first assignment?

FROMME: I remember I looked rather crude when I came into town because I had my Yale type of clothes on, a suit you know, and I looked a little unusual.

MAUNDER: You were a real dude.

FROMME: Compared with the woodsmen around there. At the railroad station, I asked for B.F. McConnell's office. He was the supervisor. They said, "Well, we don't know whether he's in town, but if he is, he's probably at Harvey Wright's saloon this time of the day," because it was getting towards noon. "But if he isn't, he'll be catty-corner across the street because that's his office." I didn't know him by sight so I didn't go into Harvey Wright's saloon. I went across the street to look at his office and there was a sign on the door that said "gone to the lake," and there was

no indication when he'd come back. Some lady next door saw me curiously looking around the place and she came out and said, "Are you looking for Mr. McConnell?" "Yea, that's who I'm looking for." "Well, he might be in there asleep because he's been tottering around here and running over to Harvey Wrights a good deal lately, otherwise he might have gone on up to the lake. I think you can push open the back door. If you've got a skeleton key, I know you can open it."

I went around and jimmied on the lock and went in. He wasn't there. His bed was disarrayed like he'd gone in a hurry. Then I went out and looking around the front, I found a young girl tripping down the street. I eyed her and she eyed me. I looked curious to her and I saw she went into a general merchandise store, Gowanlock's, so I went down there. I thought she could tell me how to get to Priest Lake. We got acquainted and she became my first wife. I married her just about a year and a half later. Her name was Ruby Gowanlock, a Scotch name.

About that time I was transferred to Newport, Washington because we changed the forest to the Kaniksu with the cooperation of P.G. Redington, chief inspector out of Missoula. He came over and suspected that things weren't going just right because E.A. Sherman, forest supervisor in Missoula, had been there and McConnell showed the effects of being on a toot for a while. He was getting over it but he didn't approve of Sherman.

MAUNDER: Was that Daddy Sherman?

FROMME: Yes, that was. That's the reason Paul Redington came over. He suspected that I was in cahoots with McConnell in drinking and he started asking me some pretty close questions. I said, "Oh, I take

a little drink once in a while. I don't go on benders like McConnell does, I've got to attend to business here. Nobody else will run the forest half the time." That's how I happened to make forest supervisor within one year.

MAUNDER: What happened to McConnell?

FROMME: He was dismissed. But he tried to sober up pretty fast. I guess he went up to Priest Lake and starting running around the woods and sprained his ankle so he was back in Priest River in a very short time. He had to go to a hotel and lay up there and a lady that he'd been hobnobbing with came and took care of him. He was in this hotel down by the railroad tracks when Overton W. Price and Redington and I got together to talk over what we should do about him. Price says, "I'm going to put in a call to Washington, D.C. and talk to Gifford Pinchot." So he called him up and told him what the situation was and Pinchot said, "Dismiss him. Don't give him a chance to resign." So they coined a telegram to dismiss him. Redington said, "Do you think it would be nice for you to take this over to McConnell and see what his reaction is? Whether he wants to make any explanation?" I said, "Well, I don't think it would be very nice but I will if you say so." Price says "Well, you'd better do it." So I took it over. McConnell was lying in bed with his ankle taped up and I said, "I don't like to do this Ben, but they have decided that you have to get out of the Forest Service so I'm showing you this telegram." He looked at me and said, "Ah, that doesn't make any difference to me. I'm a brother-in-law of Senator William E. Borah and when Senator Borah gets through cleaning this place up, there will be a big pile of manure around here and you'll be right on the bottom. But he got dismissed all right. He gave it

MAUNDER: Was he a forester?

FROMME: No, he was a political appointee under the old General Land Office days. His father was the first governor of Idaho so he had a pretty good standing. He was a well educated man. He took law at Ann Arbor University. His sister was Borah's wife. But Borah never did anything about it, of course.

MAUNDER: Did McConnell then drop out of sight?

FROMME: Yes. I got a letter from him about two years later when I happened to be assigned to the Klamath National Forest in California. I was sure surprised. The letter said "I saw your name in the paper in connection with something or other. It reminded me of the days when we used to live in that little log cabin up at Priest Lake and you used to play the mandolin and sing a song, "Ain't it Funny What a Difference Just a Few Hours Make." That always appealed to me. Well, you'll be surprised what I'm doing. I'm on the water wagon now doing some work here in the office in the State House at Boise, Idaho. I'll try to stay that way." But it wasn't but a year or so later that I learned that he'd passed away.

MAUNDER: Did you know a man named Harry Shellworth at that time? He was connected with the Boise Payette Company.

FROMME: I think I heard his name but I didn't know him.

MAUNDER: Can you give me a little detail of what your life was like in that first year in the Forest Service? What jobs did you do?

FROMME: I went up to Priest Lake as soon as I heard that McConnell was up there that summer. I arrived in 1906 and I introduced myself. He said, "Oh, you're one of those technical guys. I don't know of any technical work around here but maybe you can make up some. Anyway we can use you fighting fires because we are always

having fires in the summer. You can live right here in this cabin with me if you'd like to. There's a double bunk there down on the floor because I don't believe in climbing up to get in the bed, I just plop down. You can sleep in there and when a fire breaks out we'll take you on it. Of course, if you want to study some of the trees around here or something like that or maybe return some of these General Land Office lines, why you could be doing that. Sam Davis is the district ranger here. He lives right up there by the hotel and you can work with him if you want to." I said, "I'll do anything you can spare until I get the experience.

About two weeks later McConnell said, "There's a fire over on the branch of Priest River. I think the best way to get there would be to go up Granite Creek, right over the head of it and down to {QUERY AUTHOR}. Sam Davis says, "I guess we can go but why doesn't the ranger over on that side take care of it, Mike Murray for instance?" McConnell answered, "He's gone in there with a bunch of men but they say it's still burning." McConnell didn't have any telephone service but he'd gotten word from somebody who'd come up from the town of Priest River. Everything was by word of mouth. We had quite a time getting up to Granite Creek. There was a trail about half way and the rest of it was fighting brush and following the creek. When we got over on the other side, it was a little better. That was on the west side of the Priest River Forest preserve. We came across the remains of a fire. It was still burning inside but the fire line seemed to be pretty good. We went around the thing and it was about ten acres in size and it probably was a lightning fire but there was nobody there.

MAUNDER: How wide were your fire lines in those days?

FROMME: About 18 inches. Of course, we'd sometimes cut the brush back a little ways but so far at the fire line, we dug into the earth just about a foot or two wide.

MAUNDER: And that was usually enough?

FROMME: Yes.

MAUNDER: As long as the fire was burning gently.

FROMME: Yes. Of course, it would run through the tree tops but you'd just have to wait until it got down to the ground. You didn't attempt to fight crown fires in those days.

MAUNDER: Had you any previous experience in fighting fires before this?

FROMME: No, I hadn't. I found out it was just a grubby business. We didn't use grub hoes into those days. We just used an axe to cut the timber and a shovel to shovel the dirt around to make the trail. We caught up with this group that had been on the bigger fire when we found the remains of a venison hanging up with pieces cut out of the leg. They had gone away with part of it and the rest of it was just left to spoil. So we went on downstream and caught up with this bunch the next evening. Somebody had brought some booze for them and they were feeling pretty good. Venison and whisky. Sam Davis gave this fellow the devil. A short-term guard instead of a ranger was in charge of that crew. There were about 10 in the crew, I imagine. But he couldn't fire him. He had to wait until he got back to talk to McConnell about it. McConnell said, "Well, I'll write him and tell him he's fired."

We had another fire or two but they were very harmless. I remember the evenings at the little log hotel at Priest Lake. It drew quite a few people from Spokane. And there were often some



girls along in the bunch. I'd go swimming in the lake every evening and find them doing the same thing. Of course, I had my bathing suit. We got acquainted and naturally I told them about having a mandolin, so when we built the campfire in the evening, I remember sitting around the campfire entertaining the gals with some of the back east songs that we used to sing at Yale and picked up at the theater. That was before movies, of course.

MAUNDER: Where had you come from?

FROMME: Richmond, Indiana was my original home. During the last two years of high school, I got a job as usher at the legitimate theater. Sometimes stock companies would play there for a week or two. Other times it would be a road company that would just stay one night, sometimes two nights. I picked up some of their songs by listening to them carefully and writing them down as much as I could because things weren't published. If they weren't real current songs they weren't published. I'd fill in the words that were needed to make it out and I didn't always get the tune just exactly right but I'd get close to it. I had a lot of other things in the back of head. That song that McConnell used to like so much "Ain't It Funny What A Difference Just a Few Hours Make" was one of Frank Daniel's main hits. He was a comedian that I liked to listen to. He came around once a year to Richmond, Indiana.

MAUNDER: He was on the circuit.

FROMME: Yes. He told about how different it was to get out at night and meet your pals and whoop it up til daylight. But in the morning it was different. What a difference a few hours make.

MAUNDER: When you finished your work up in the Priest Lake area you were assigned as supervisor?

FROMME: Yes. About a year later when McConnell was fired. Paul Redington said that we ought to change the name of this forest because it had a bad name to people, the way it had been around. I said I could suggest a name. Kaniksu, I found it on an old map of Priest LAke when it was called Kaniksu Lake. I inquired around and they said it was the name that the Indians gave to a priest and that's how it happened to be called Priest Lake. They didn't like the name Kaniksu I guess. Too hard to pronounce. Well, Redington fell for it. So he said, "Well, I'll recommend that we change the name to Kaniksu and move the headquarters to Newport, Washington, which is a little larger town and it's only about six miles west of here right on the Great Northern Railway and furthermore part of the forest is very accessible from Newport." It really wasn't as good a location for the center part of the forest because the Pend Oreill River ran north into British Columbia at that point, and, of course it ran by Priest River, too, and Priest River emptied into the Pend Oreill. And I remember the Pend Oreill real well because the first time I heard the name McConnell said: "Well, you've gotten pretty good on the typewriter now so you take a letter to Washington, D.C." He'd gotten over his monthly booze by that time and he said, "I've got word from the General Land Office at Couer d'Alene that some guys have been cutting timber on the national forest land up there and selling it to a pole company in Newport, and they tow it down the river in a boat. We've got to look into it." He dictated, "Gifford Pinchot, Washington, D.C., Honorable Sir, Hell is popping down the foam flecked Pend Oreill." I said, "Do you really want me to write that?" And he said, "Sure, that's what's doing down there." I thought "Pinchot will read that line and he'll know something is

wrong." But I wrote it down. McConnell hadn't been investigated up to that time and that probably tipped him off. He went on to say that he and a couple of his trusty rangers would go down with their six shooters and take care of the thieves who were stealing the cedar poles.

He sent word to his rangers to come down the Priest River and they'd go down and investigate this thing. Well, two of them showed up and Ben says, "We got to get over to Harvey Wright's and build up a little extra energy and boldness to take care of those timber thieves." So they went across the street. Pretty soon one of them came back. He was Dave McKenzie. He said, "You know I'm not a drinker like Ben McConnell and Dave Coolin. I'd just as leave sit here and talk with you and let them go ahead and get heeled up. But I'm ready to go down the river whenever they get ready." I said, "The boat leaves down there in the morning. They'll have to go down on the night train and stay in Newport overnight." He says, "I know that." Pretty soon into the office comes stomping a woman I didn't know. She says, "I'm Mrs. Dave Coolin. I brought my husband down here this morning to go down the Pend Oreill and I haven't seen him since." I said, "He'll be here in a little while no doubt, because he's with McConnell." About that time they showed up. She just sized him up a minute and said, "you're not going down the river with any Supervisor McConnell. You may think you are but you're going back home with me." She had driven down in a light rig with a pair of horses. Dave said, "I guess I'll have to go with her. You know how it is." McConnell said, "Yea, I guess you'd be no good anyway. She'd probably want to go along." She says, "Well, you know where you can go as far as I'm concerned." So she took Dave by

the ear and took him out to her little conveyance and away they went back to Priest Lake. Well, McConnell and Dave McKenzie went on down to Newport then on the train and as far as I know they went down to where the pole cutting was being done. When they got down there, McConnell saw the poles piled up along the shore of the river and he thought a boat would be here to take them away pretty soon. He said, "I don't need to stay, Dave, you've got your good six-shooter. You guard the poles tonight and I'll send Fromme down in the morning." So he goes back to Newport, in fact, he got to Priest River that same night and told me that I could get ready to go down. I went down as soon as I could get away, I think it was the next day, and found old Dave sitting there on the poles. He says, "I've been here all night and most of the day without any relief. Now you can sit here." I says, "Why sit here all night? We can hire somebody if we can find a responsible man." He said, "I think we can. There's a fellow that's been bringing these poles in with a team of mules. But he's had enough of it since the folks don't pick them up any more." I got him to guard the poles that night from about midnight on and I went back and got some sleep. Next day when we came to relieve this fellow, Dave said, "I'll guard the poles today because you've got to go and make a report on these areas that have been cut. See whether they're really the legitimate cutting for homesteads or whether it looks like timber thievery. But I've got a joke on the Forest Service. Some fellow branded one of the mules with US on his rump that was pulling out the poles." They didn't really brand them but they painted US in white letters on the mule's side. Well, I didn't have to clean up the mules but I made the report. It took me about a week or two to get around to make the

reports on all the homesteads that had been partly cleared.

MAUNDER: Were some of them legitimate?

FROMME: Some of them I considered legitimate. There was just a little cutting where they started a garden, but some of them, at least two cases, were very bad. They had cut poles and they hadn't even built a cabin of any sort and were just stealing.

MAUNDER: Who was buying them?

FROMME: A pole company in Newport, Washington.

MAUNDER: What company was that? Do you remember?

FROMME: No. I went back up there pretty soon. I left Dave and went back and saw the pole company and told them that the poles we had marked down had been cut illegitimately and they'd have to pay for them if they wanted them. And that I'd sell them at the usual price they'd been paying the settlers, but it would have to be a Forest Service sale. They said, "That's all right. We don't care who we buy the poles from." So we worked up a sale. I also went over to the land office at Coeur d'Alene and reported on the claims that I thought were invalid and should not be sent to proof. I think there were about eight claims and none of them had gone to final proof. And they were going to have hearings on the two that I contested. They gave me more forms to fill out. I was moved to Newport and made a supervisor before the hearing came up.

One night I got a knock on the door. My new wife was with me by that time. I went to the door and opened it slightly and a belligerent looking guy was standing there. He had his hand in his pocket like he had a hold of something. I said, "What do you want?" He said, "Are you going to make a case against me as part of that claim?" I said, "What's your name?" He gave it to me and I said,

"Yes, you're one of them that we have to contest." My wife heard that and she came running to the door. She was in her flowing nightgown and he looked at her, threw up his hands and turned and ran. She let out a snort at him I guess. He'd been drinking or he wouldn't have been so bold to come around and wake me up around midnight.

MAUNDER: Did you pursue the case and get a settlement?

FROMME: Yes, and both fellows had gone north into British Columbia as far as we knew. They never came to contest their case.

MAUNDER: Were there all kinds of dodges on homesteading land?

FROMME: Yes. We allowed about six of them to go to homestead on the chance that they were legitimate but the fact was that they never did homestead them.

MAUNDER: What did they do, sell their timber?

FROMME: They would sell their timber just like a timber claim. Of course, the old Timber and Stone Act was still in full force and people could take out timber claims but they had to pay two and a half an acre for timber and meanwhile a homestead was free and so they made a pretense of settling on it. (Timber and Stone Act of 3 June, 1878, 20 Stat. 89). Of course, we had a lot of trouble, too, up on Priest Lake road from what they called the June 11, 1906 Act of Homesteading. (Forest Homestead Act of 11 June, 1906, 34 Stat. 233) That was land inside the national forest that was considered more valuable for agriculture than timber growing. After we voted against them they didn't even attempt to get title to them. But we tried to get ahold of the locators who were making money out of it. They would look at the nice piece of land. The only piece that there was halfway between Priest River and Priest Lake was called

the halfway house and horse stages would stop there for lunch. There was a little bit of land that had been part of a natural meadow and these locators would take people out and show them this natural meadow and give a description of it and the description was something that was miles away maybe. And they would make a little money from locating people on this meadow.

MAUNDER: There have always been real estate sharks.

FROMME: Oh yes. When I sent in my report on that, I was the forest supervisor. Gifford Pinchot wrote me and said, "Send in full details about these claims. Give me the names and locations." It seems to me there were around 25 or 30, so I started writing a letter right away and I just about got it finished the next day when a telegram came. He says, "Telegraph the information. We need it right away before Congress adjourns." And I thought "My God, I can't telegraph all of this. It's too long." So I started cutting it down.

Finally I got it down under 500 words and I thought maybe he'd pay for a night letter. I was skeptical. I was afraid I'd get a letter back that I was fired for sending such a long telegram. I took it down to the railroad station--the only telegraph office they had and the agent looked at it and he said, "My God, do you want me to get that out tonight?" I said, "It's a night letter. I get a little better rate on it." He says, "Wait a minute," and he grabbed the telephone. (He had a local telephone there.) "Bill, you'd better come down here and forget your sleep tonight and help me get out this telegram. This government guy brings on this telegram and it's longer than the Lord's Prayer ever was. I can't take care of it and take care of my other business" So I went away feeling kind of discouraged. I didn't hardly sleep that night. I thought maybe I

should have trimmed that down some more. But Pinchot said to give him the names and the descriptions. It would take that many words to do that. Well, the funny thing about that was that I signed it Fromme. I told them to sign just my last name, because that's all the Forest Services requires. Well, he got so excited at the end that he separated the "From" and the "me". I never heard about that until some inspector came out from Washington, D.C. to attend our regular meeting the following spring. He said, "That was quite a joke about that telegram you sent. Somebody said, 'I wonder who that guy thinks he is that's so important that all he's got to do is say, from me?'"

MAUNDER: Did you ever hear from Pinchot about that?

FROMME: He thanked me for the telegram. He didn't say anything about it being too long so I was thankful for that.

MAUNDER: Did you ever have any personal contact with the man?

FROMME: Just when we were in Milford, Pennsylvania. He came up to check on the school. It was the old Amos Pinchot estate. Every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon we had off. So we'd organize a baseball game on those days. He happened to be there on Wednesday and we said, "We're having a baseball game today, and we'd like to play the faculty. We'll loan you a few extra men if you need them and he said, "Oh, that will be fun." He said, "I'll do a little pitching." I said, "Well, that's what I'm doing here. We'll be partners." We had a first pitcher who wasn't feeling very agreeable that day so I had to go in as the second pitcher. I enjoyed that, and when I saw him in Washington, D.C. the following year when I was ready to take my forest assistant job. I said, "We were opposite pitchers one time in a baseball game, but I hope you don't hold it



against me." He said, "No, you were just as rotten as I was."

MAUNDER: How did you feel about G.P.?

FROMME: I thought he was a great man.

FROMME: We had a little correspondence after that. He wrote to me when I had gotten transferred to the Olympic National Forest and said he was getting out his book and wanted to know if I wouldn't send him some of my early experiences. I wrote back that I was terribly busy but that I would get at it and that if he'd look up some inspection reports that were made on B.F. McConnell that he might get some information from them. But he didn't use that and unfortunately I just let it go.

MAUNDER: Have you ever written any of this up in your own style?

FROMME: Yes. In fact the Yale School of Forestry has three mimeographed productions of mine that were mimeographed in Portland. They tell about my experiences on Priest River and some that I've been telling you about.

FROMME: Copies of them are at the Yale School of Forestry?

FROMME: Yes. I received a letter from the lady who is in charge of the library--I think she's just retired. She said that they were very thankful to get them and that they were being bound in Yale blue.

MAUNDER: What about your old letters and diaries? Did you keep a diary?

FROMME: I did, but it was very brief. Just enough to get my traveling expenses. I threw it away a long while ago. When I was writing up my memoirs of the Olympic National Park, I asked the Olympia Office if they could dig up any of my old diaries because I wanted to get some names out of them, some dates. And they wrote

back and said all of that had been thrown away. The old files just got too thick and they ditched them.

MAUNDER: Did you save any letters from Gifford Pinchot or any other of your associates in the Forest Service?

FROMME: Not until the time they had the Golden Anniversary. I guess I got a letter in connection with that I kept. I haven't got any of those old letters. It's a shame, because I might as well have hung on to some of them.

MAUNDER: Did any of the national forests that you were on publish histories which included some of your memoirs?

FROMME: Nothing has been published as far as I know.

MAUNDER: Some of the individual national forests have published their own. Mimeographs usually. And they've taken some of the memoirs of the people who were there and put them into these histories. Yours hasn't been treated that way?

FROMME: I don't believe so. Some of the mimeographed material that I sent back to Yale was mimeographed in our Portland office by the Thirty-Year Club, which means the people who have been in the Forest Service 30 years.

MAUNDER: Let's quickly go over the chronology of your career in forestry. You were at Priest River during 1906 and 1907, and the last year you were supervisor.

FROMME: Yes. From the Kaniksu Forest I was moved to Newport. In the fall of 1908 I was called back to Washington, D.C. to be sent to the San Francisco District Office as chief of operations. A year later I was sent to Klamath National Forest as forest supervisor.

MAUNDER: That was in 1909.

FROMME: Yes. Then in 1910 I got transferred to the Siskiyou

National Forest. I had tried for the Olympic because I had been tipped off that the supervisor there was leaving. But, they had already found somebody else. So they sent me to the Siskiyou. I was there until the Fall of 1912 when I was sent to the Olympic and I was on the Olympic for 13 years as supervisor.

MAUNDER: That brought you up to the '20s sometime.

FROMME: '26. Then I was called in to Portland, Oregon to take John D. Guther's place in public relations because he'd gone to Washington. They didn't know for sure if they were going to keep him back there or not. Well, they didn't. So when he came back I was sent to the Deschutes National Forest in Bend, Oregon. That was about in the summer of 1926. It was the spring of 1926 when I went into Portland, the summer of 1926 I went to the Deschutes National Forest. Portland, Oregon sent me there. I was there about three years, and then I was brought into public relations again. I was in Portland for three or four months and then sent to the Rainier National Forest at Tacoma. I was there about two years. That's where I got married the second time. And about that time they did away with the Rainier National Forest and combined it with the Snoqualmie and the Columbia. So I was sent to Bellingham, Washington to Mt. Baker National Forest. I was really an assistant supervisor because they had done away with the forest supervisor job in Tacoma.

MAUNDER: You received your masters in forestry degree from Yale University in 1906?

FROMME: Yes. Dean Henry S. Graves granted me the privilege of completing the regular two-year and summer term course in one year and summer term because of certain credits from my four-year course

in horticulture and forestry at Ohio State University. Graves also considered the fact that I spent the summer of 1903 as a day laborer in a logging camp of the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company, getting out yellow poplar and mixed oaks in North Carolina. I worked at swamping roads and driving grabs. Driving grabs are steel hooks on the ends of a harness chain sunk with a sledge hammer into a nosed-off log and are used for snaking by horse down trails from the cutting area to the skidway at the logging railroad. I also did some ball-hooting, which is using a peavey to start logs rolling or sling downhill to the swamped-out road or trailway. I enrolled in the summer term of Yale school of Forestry on the Amos Pinchot estate near Milford, Pennsylvania in 1904. This enrollment placed me in the 1906 group of forestry students. When I was finishing the summer term, Mr. Graves suggested that I return to Ohio State to get my senior year credit for a bachelor degree.

MAUNDER: Then you came back to Yale in the fall of 1905?

FROMME: Yes and I graduated in the spring of 1906 with the same group of students as at the Milford summer term. The spring term of 1906 was spent in the White Mountains of New Hampshire with headquarters at Waterville. We did topographic mapping there under the direction of Chief Gannett of the U.S. Geological Survey, who visited us along with Dean Graves, for several days. Professor Herman H. Chapman, whom we all called Chappie, was in charge of this project. In addition to our mapping supervision, I still recall Chappie's anxiety in the roll of chaperone on a weekend climb of Mt. Osceola. There were four of us males and four attractive girls, two daughters of Mrs. Elliott, our hotel hostess, and two visitors of the Elliott girls. The weather was quite fair when we started out

that morning, but a sudden wet snowstorm at the top of the mountain that night drove us to cover in a very tiny low-roofed hut, which we had planned as the ladies' sleeping quarters. We hardy males had figured to sleep under the stars. But the only stars in sight that dark, snowy night were in the tiny hut. So, what was large enough to sleep four fairly comfortable was induced to sleep eight. We had to share blankets. That is, all except Chappie. Besides, he had the obligation of chaperone duty, which was no easy task. He persisted in shoving open our crude door covering every so often and regaling us with a cheerful "Folks, I think it's clearing up," while the snugglers, at any rate the men, pretended to snore a bit louder. Well, the snow and rain did finally stop at Chappie's command and great relief, and we men had no reasonable excuse to linger longer. One creek we had to traverse in the snow was called The Flume, and the wet snow was almost knee-deep in places. We were also aggravated by knocking wet snow from bushes onto our traverse board. At the start of this job, the four of us, which included Stewey (Y.A.) Stuart, later chief forester, erected a pole and a bark lean-to, just big enough to accommodate two snug double beds of heavy army blankets and a rock pit for our combination heating and cooking fire. We amused ourselves in the evenings with wild yarns and singing, including our concocted parody on "Good Old Mountain Dew," as follows:

"Up the Flume"

On a creek, called the Flume, we rest our rumps in gloom  
 After fighting snowing brush all day,  
 But sheltered by our shack, our fire begins to crack  
 And the bacon sings a lilting lay;

It fills the air with a fragrance rare  
That sets us all abloom,  
So, lolling on our hips, we gobble juicy bits  
While the smoke goes up The Flume.

We had another important visitor to the Waterville Camp. This was Dr. Barton W. Everman, illustrious scientist of the Smithsonian Institute. He talked of reptiles and amphibia. At the close of his lecture, Dr. Everman stated that they had no specimens from this locality at the Institute or at their branch at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, and wondered if he could influence any student to undertake such a collection. He would supply the necessary glass jars, alcohol and printed instructions. I was about to offer my services, when several of the boys beat me to it, by yelling, almost in union, "Hoosier Fromme."

I soon got busy, but it wasn't until the fall of 1919 that I learned whatever happened to this collection, or what I actually collected, aside from the common name of frog, lizard, garter snake, snake, etc. On this 1919 occasion, I was surprised by a telephone call from Seattle to my office as supervisor of the Olympic National Forest in Olympia. It was from Dr. Everman, saying that he had seen my name on some fire warning signs while searching for amphibia specimens along the west foothills of the Olympic Mountains, and that he remembered me from Yale Forest School days near Waterville, New Hampshire. He told me that my name was on record as a collector in an exhibit of specimens at Golden Gate Park in the section headed California Academy of Sciences. He later sent me a printed leaflet which reads in part as follows: "Mr. R.L. Fromme, one of the

forestry seniors, paid special attention to these groups and collected 66 specimens, which are now in the department of herpetology for the Museum of the California Academy of Sciences, as a donation from Mr. Fromme. Then followed a long list of scientific names which are worse than Greek to the layman. I mention this because it is my only claim to true scientific fame without half trying.

Referring again to the summer term of 1904 at Milford, we got some wholesome exercise and training in the proper way to fall trees without serious breakage. We were not too successful, however; we also experienced the curse-breeding nature of working with pitch pine. A.B. Recknagel hatched a little campfire ditty, which went, in part, as follows:

"I love the pitch pine, the pitch pine sticks to me;  
stem analysis I'll never forget.  
The pitch pine's a daisy, it nearly drives you crazy;  
I'll master the pitch pine, you bet; Ho' Ho'.

The trees we fell were mostly marked for thinning. This meant that more dexterity was required to guard against breakage than sawing down trees in the open. In every case, however, we had to take certain notes. Age was noted by counting growth rings on the stump. Measurements of the different log lengths and diameters at their small ends were also taken. The measurements were used in determining board-foot volume and data for volume tables. Recknagel had another song for this task; parody on "The Man Behind."

The man behind the calipers reads fractions of an inch,  
The man behind the tally-board, he has an awful cinch,  
The man behind the tape is crawling out along the tree,  
Now which of these three lobsters would you most prefer to be?  
The man behind, the man behind,  
He's the funniest little man that you will find,  
Oh the man behind the bunch, he is sitting down to lunch;  
Now how'd you like to be the man behind?

And then there were days when we were instructed to tie a small bandana handkerchief lunch to our belts and trail Dean Graves up and down the back country hills around Milford. We took a short rest now and then, mostly then, to observe and discuss the ecology of the area, or what to do with the damn country, if anything. We would drag back just in time for a covetous camp dinner. There were always some of us ready then to wash our necks, sprinkle our hair with a little "come-hither" and hike on down the long hill. The destination for some of us was the Bluffhouse, summer resort hotel, with summer girls: "Some er peppy, some er mild, some er peaceful, some er wild." In any case, there was always that long hill to face, dragging back to camp. One one occasion, however, one of us had sufficient pep to pick up a small garter snake near our camp and to insert it gently into the dark but friendly recesses of one of instructor E.E. Carter's boots, which chanced to be resting near the entrance to his individual tent. Nothing was said the next morning, but I thought I detected a knowing, perhaps even an accusing look in my direction. Perhaps it was merely the result of a guilty conscience.

Edward E. Carter, by the way, had just received his master of forestry degree from Yale that same spring, in the same class with Herman H. Chapman, whom we worked under in our 1906 spring term in the White Mountains. At the Milford Camp, Carter served as an assistant instructor to Dean Graves, taking over his classes at times of Graves' absence, which was not very often. Carter's chief duty was as handy man in the operation of the camp, or sort of go-between in the students' financial dealings with the camp, or if



any, complaints. He was always quite neat in his dress and personal appearance, often in contrast to some of us students. This led to some good-natured kidding, as I remember, but he was plenty good at the same game, which made him a good tillicum (Chinook jargon for a good fellow plus).

I would like to describe one more incident before leaving the Milford camp experience entirely. I achieved some local notoriety among pals at the Milford, perhaps I can be pardoned for referring again to the puff-adder capture. As I was jogging back to our camp from our little tumbling creek swimming hole late one afternoon, wearing nothing but my bath towel, a strange, yellow-tan snake slithered across the trail just ahead of me. I promptly slapped my towel down on him, and he just as promptly turned on his back and lay still. This was a new snake act to me as I had already collected one live rattler, one milk snake, and several garter snakes, which I had imprisoned in camp, in a three by three dry goods box with a screen top. I thought perhaps I had miraculously stunned him. Anyway, I reached down quickly and grabbed him by the tail, lifted him up, and started swinging him around my head. He was trying to bend his head toward me, whereupon I violently slammed him to the ground. This really stunned him, and made it possible for me to grab him just back of his head. As I picked up the towel with my other hand, I felt the snake drawing in his breath, in spite of my grip. He seemed to be at least four inches thick, when he decided to exhale. I got some of this awful stench square in the face as I was running toward camp. By the time I reached the snake box, only a hundred yards or so away, he had wrapped his slithery tail around my arm in a quite flattened condition. One of the boys

saw me coming and slid back the screened top, allowing me to literally scrape that acrobatic contortionist off my nervous arm.

Dropping on top of the other snakes didn't seem to frighten the new arrival in the least. Around and around he went on top of them all, with utter abandon, and just as I was fearful that the little rattlesnake would rattle the end of his tail off, the derelict flopped over on his back. Dead? We thought he was dead; that is, all except Bacon, a Pennsylvania resident. While other students were conjecturing that I had choked the new snake by so severely bringing it in that it had expired in the throes of death, Bacon said, "No! No! Just step back a little and keep quiet. He's probably just playing possum".

Sure enough, the puff adder, as Bacon called it, soon started to turn it's head ever so slightly, then flopped over on it's belly and just rested. Bacon now suggested that we take it out, drop it on a clear place on the ground, and then form a wide circle and see what would happen. With two sticks, one quite hooked, I managed to gingerly lift our late specimen out of the box and him!

The snake must have turned in mid air, because when he landed, his shiny belly was uppermost. Bacon cautioned us to be very quite and patient. It wasn't more than three or four minutes till the head turned very slowly and one eye opened. Seeing no life in the surroundings, the snake scales at the neck started turning very slowly with the head and it was a repeat of the former box performance. Over he flopped with a running start for elsewhere. Down came Bacon's stick just a few feet ahead of him, and in a flash, he was belly-up again. Somebody got a bucket of water to see how long he would stay immersed. Some undertook timing these possum

pranks with watches, but I don't recall the figures. Anyway, it was a scientific diversion.

Other diversions in this camp included baseball games with the Biltmore town nine, and other nearby teams, as well as evening songfests, often with my mandolin accompaniment. I had been to the St. Louis World's Fair just prior to our camp opening, and brought back the "Hootchy Kootchy" melody, with some vivid descriptions, which inspired one of our group, Pearson by name, to suddenly burst forth from his tent, draped in nothing but a bath towel, and started the group with hip wiggling, supposedly sensuous, contortions lacking, however, the voluptuous curves of the St. Louis Fair original. Even so, he was Little Egypt around camp from then on.

MAUNDER: What did you do when you graduated from Yale?

FROMME: Well, there were about 15 of us who received civil service appointments as forest assistant at a salary of \$1,000 per year, which look quite magnanimous then. We were directed to come to Chief Forester Clifford Pinchot's office in Washington, D.C. for about two weeks special training in forest administration duties: forest supervisor office procedure; how to use the three-shift Oliver typewriter, in case we should happen to be consigned to a forest which employed no clerk; and a multitude of do's and don'ts from Mr. Pinchot, personally, in our attitude toward our expected environment, human and otherwise.

A few were to augment crews already working on determining and posting the boundaries of newly created national forests from the public domain in the west. Most of us were to serve under forest supervisors, of whom were a few former political appointees in the Department of the Interior. These supervisors were now assigned to

the Department of Agriculture because of the transfers of the forest reserves to national forest status. We were given some insight into the General Land Office surveys and descriptions; and into laws governing homestead acquisition. We were likely to find some abuses because new claims of this sort were no longer permitted on national forest land. No such claims were permitted prior to the enactment of the June 11, 1906 proviso, pertaining to certain small areas within the national forest boundaries which might be classified as more valuable for agricultural use than forestry and not needed for forest administration. (Forest Homestead Act of 11 June 1906, 34 Stat. 233).

We were also given insight into the instructions sent to the various supervisors to whom we were assigned, as to the use of our services in forest protection duties. Such duties included fire prevention, fire fighting and illegal timber cutting. The supervisor was to utilize our technical training to his and our best advantage on possible tree planting and timber mapping and sales.

We were shown the advantages of topographic mapping for timber sales areas and how to use hatching where contour information was not in sufficient detail for showing elevation lines. This sort of help was often supplied by young fellows just out of school one year ahead of us. If they had experience in the Far West I was particularly interested, but if their experience was on something like lumber studies in the southern Appalachians, I became bored and restless. I had had all the experience I craved during the summers of 1903 and 1905 in dodging rattlesnakes, copperheads, and suspicious, menacing moonshiners. It might be illuminating to mention a personal experience or two, which befell me in the summers

of 1903 and 1905.

In 1903 I was strictly on my own, but had ascertained from calling at the Columbus, Ohio office of the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company, that I could be sure of getting employment if I should call on the company employment office at Hurley, West Virginia. My main job at Hurley was bailing wide yellow poplar boards with metal strips for oceanic shipments. One warm, sunny afternoon, a stranger in the customary wide, flat, black felt hat of that region, slipped up to the straw boss with whom I was working and coaxed him off a few feet for a quiet snip from a bottle of white moon and a seemingly serious whispered conversation, then slunk away. My boss and work partner then tipped me off that there would likely be some feud shooting directly after work that evening, and it would involve Hal Hall, the young man whose bed I was sharing in one of the company boarding houses. He suggested that I slip into the mill at once and tip off Hall, who was working at a small cutoff saw, that the blacksmith in a nearby shed would be loaded with a rifle and the help of a certain pistol-shooting cousin to knock him off as he left the mill. My strawboss partner Q.T'd to me that he liked Hall better than the recent caller; besides, he didn't think it fair to sneak up on Hall without warning. Hall appeared to immediately savvy my delivered tip and grunted what I assumed was thanks as he shut off his check out. I can't say that I was well acquainted with Hall, even though I had been sharing the same bed with him for two weeks or more. He was very closemouthed, except on Sunday afternoons, when he would get swacked with some of the white mule, which he kept under our bed. He would then swagger around the place, bursting forth every now and then with a decided, but

somewhat wobbly "ahhm that ba--ad Hall from Kain-tucky!" (the last two syllables in extra loud, quick staccato). Well, sure enough! Just as the mill closing whistle blew, and some of the early birds were bolting out the main doors, including yours truly, the rifle-shooting blacksmith and his pistol-packing booze pal spied Hall out in front of our little shack all ready to shoot it out. The three guns cracked and the mill crowd fell back, leaving one of their advance number squirming briefly on the ground. That stopped the feud for that day.

The fatality was carried into the company shack next to the Hall-Fromme abode, where it was soon determined that he had died from the rifle shot, and there was talk by some of his friends of lynching the company blacksmith. But word came back shortly that the blacksmith and his pistol pal had vanished. Later, someone volunteered to hunt the following day for an undertaker and a sheriff down the tracks in Hurley.

The old bed didn't look any too inviting to me that night, but since the others retired unconcernedly, I blew out the porch lantern, slipped into the room, lowered the one window, and oozed well down under the covers. I had hardly dozed off when I heard the window being stealthily opened. Could it be the blacksmith or his pistol pal looking for Hall? Then the bed started shaking, but I guess that was me. Desperately, I lifted the edge of the blanket, but all I saw was Stygian darkness. My nose, however, picked up a whiff of stale corn liquor, and I sense low muttered cursing and a groping around the floor and walls. Mustering my courage, I whispered, "Is that you Hall?" "Shet yer damn mouth" came a husky retort. This I did, quite pronto, but just as he started out the

window, he did me the honor of saying, "S'long, kid, Ahm going' up th' holler."

I wasn't flattered with the kind of stuff, coming from a 30-year old to a young man who would reach 21 within a week, but I certainly was relieved. In the morning, I found that I was also relieved of a brand new pair of long wool, baby-blue underwear drawers and a good razor strap. I had just purchased the long drawers at the company commissary as flea protection pajamas to wear in the narrow-gauge railroad sleeping car bunk at the logging camp.

I might mention one eye opening experience at the wooden railroad logging job. As I was starting up a log-snaking draw one morning, with my axe, peavey and sledge hammer on my shoulder, the railroad construction foreman yelled out, "Hey Ketchup, come here with your axe." The nickname of "Ketchup" in this camp came for my propensity for peppering the putrid pork with gobs of commercial ketchup. As I responded the foreman gave me a squirt of tobacco juice on a two by four wooden rail just a few inches above the point where it had received damages. "Cut 'er off there," he said. "Thanks for the compliment," I responded, "I'm not a part of your crew, but that wouldn't bother me, if I could do the kind of job you want." "Give me the axe" and he carefully eyed the freshly sharpened bit. It was the double bit type, and I had carefully worked over the edge on the company bicycle grindstone that very morning. Apparently it met with his approval as he swung it high above his head and came down with a heavy swoop and cut the two by four except for a sliver at a lower corner; this sliver was severed by a second swipe in exactly the same spot, slicing the earth as he handed me back the axe.

In the summer of 1905, after receiving an appointment as student assistant, \$25.00 per month and expenses, I, along with five other forestry-minded students, reported to John S. Holmes at Swannanoa, N.C. just a few miles south of Asheville. Holmes was later state forester for Kentucky. For a couple of weeks in an active logging operation we counted and measured the logs cut from individual trees, which we listed by diameter breast high on certain printed forms. This information was to be used in the Washington office in developing volume tables, as an aid in timber cruising. After this training we were dispatched in pairs to other logging operations in the southern Appalachian Mountains. It was understood that we were to wire Holmes we were about to catch up with the fallers and buckers, so that he could direct us to other jobs. After another three or four weeks we were split up to work singly.

A.D. "Bird" Read and I worked out of Pineola, N.C. for about three weeks, before running short of fresh logs. This was another W.M. Ritter Lumber Company operation, the same outfit which had employed me in 1903 at a salary from 90 cents to \$1.25 per day, including board and lodging, near Hurley, West Virginia.

One Sunday evening, we decided to brave an old-fashioned revival in a small Pineola church, where the sinners go forward, wail out their sins, repent, promise to henceforth walk the straight and narrow and straightaway get saved, making sure, however, to drop some coins in the small tin bucket. Business was just starting to boom, when my eyes spotted an old, familiar figure stumbling forward under an unmistakable load of 99 proof. I hastily whispered to Read, "That's the old drunken, rifle shooting blacksmith of Hurley, West Virginia, that I saw shoot and kill an innocent mill hand in



1903; let's listen to his confession."

"Oh, ----", he wailed, "The whiskey devil gets into me and makes me beat up my innocent wife and children. I'm a peaceful man, oh Lord. Ain't never done nobody no harm, but when that whiskey devil rides me--Oh, my suffer'n old woman n' innocent kids--help me, help me." Then followed an apparent gush of tears as the revivalist prayed over him.

"The old scoundrel, let's wail till he comes out," I remarked to Read. We were planted under the blazing gas lamp outside the entrance as the crowd emerged. "Hello Hurley," I remarked in a rather gladsome tone, as the old 1903 rifle-shooting liar brushed past me. "Huh," he grunted, hesitated a moment, gave me a piercing squint and then swung immediately away, diving into the gloom, as he almost bowled over several people. Read was waiting in the background, wondering if he was going to be obligated to drag my supine body away. I felt a bit shaky myself afterward and wondered if I did such a smart aleck thing, for, as Read had remarked, "The old buzzard might get the notion that we were plain clothes detectives, ferreting him out." I was beginning to feel glad that we were almost through here.

Several other unforgettable events occurred in 1905 before we left the Southern Appalachians. As I was finishing at Pineola, Holmes wired me to go to a logging works out of Bristol, Tennessee. To my dismay, I found that there the wood crews were being worked twelve hours a day. This wasn't my idea of proper human treatment, and I refused to trail along by lantern light in the morning and return in the glooming night. The head woods boss gave me a kind of left-hand compliment one day for climbing to a high, out-of-the-way

spot to get the log measurements on a single down tree. He followed this by remarking, "I guess you Hoosiers don't cater much to this getting' up to eat breakfast by candlelight, so as to trail a bobbing lantern to work, and I don't blame you, as long as you don't have to. Anyway, you get around purty good for the scattered logs. But you don't seem to be so restless as a long-legged young fellow who was down here from Yale a couple years back. Say! He loped up and down these hills like a couple o' bird dogs, ferritin' out ev'ry hidden log as though they wuz dollar bills. Maybe you'll run across him sometime, if he stops long enough. Name wuz Greeley, Bill, I think."

During the three weeks that I was collecting volume table figures in this Tennessee camp, there were two cases of serious rattlesnake bite, in spit of the fact that the workers seemed to be more constantly cautious than any other place I ever worked. The 14-inch top woods shoes which I wore were constantly being called rattlesnake boots, although my purpose in wearing them was to protect my shins from uneven footing and save my trouser legs from constant tearing.

One of the two snake bites was fatal within less than 24 hours. This happened to a man in his sixties, who was employed in carting tanbark from drying piles to a loading point on the logging railroad for transportation to tanning mills. The bark had been stripped from tanbark oak in the spring when the sap was running and piled in layers to dry in the sun. Some of the piles would get higher than a man's head, w which was the case in the fatal bite. The man reached above his eye level to remove the slab of sunning bark, not knowing that a large rattler had selected that identical slab for slumber.

The man was struck in the cheek just below one eye, and the only medicine this camp seemed to have was whiskey, which of course, served no purpose than to probably make him forget what struck him.

The other snake bit case happened in my sight, and I got into the act so far as killing the rattler, but it was the husband of the bitten lady who sucked the venom from the wound with his mouth, spitting it out promptly, without any apparent ill effects. The victim was the cook's wife, who lived in a company cottage located opposite an open window where I was preparing some of my log measurement sheets for mailing to Washington. She was returning to her quarters going barefooted as usual. She may have stepped on the snake which was lurking in the grass, or at least walked closed enough to frighten it into action. It sunk its fangs into her bare leg just above the ankle and promptly brought forth a scream. Fortunately, I had a cane improvised from a stout tree limb, which I had been carrying around as a walking aid, and a good belt with that made the snake let go.

The chief medicine, again, was whiskey, and as I was saying my good-byes to all of the cook crew that afternoon before climbing on a load of logs for transportation to Bristol, the snake bite victim was fighting her way out a drunken fog.

I was leaving because of another telegram from Holmes to drop the Tennessee job and hurry to the little railroad whistle stop west of Asheville called Balsam, North Carolina. The wire said that I was to replace Barrington Moore, who had been called home by sickness in his family. Moore was also a Yale man but not then in the forest school. However, he was one of our original six and apparently was leaving a larger operation than the job I had had in Tennessee. I

was instructed to take room and board with a certain family whose name I have forgotten.

As I got off the train late Sunday afternoon, I was surprised to see some twenty to thirty men loafing around the station and only one passenger getting off. However, before I had time to conjecture, a 13-year-old boy rushed up, grabbed my grip and said, "Follow me." We were walking along the track while the train was pulling out. I thought, "That man Holmes! What a guy for detail!" I had been wondering if I would have difficulty locating my new boarding house in this mountainous area of patchy brush, trees, and sparse settlement. The lad started down a narrow foot trail, heading through the brush toward a weathered looking, small split-shake and pole cottage. I stopped him long enough to ask a question. "What is that rather large and artistic looking building further along the track." He replied, "That's the hotel where Mr. Moore was staying when they ran him out of town."

"Ran him out of town," I repeated inquiringly. "Sure, don't you know about that?" "No, what was the trouble?" "Wait and ask Mom," he said. Then he continued, "It was dark at night, so they trailed him only a half mile back down the railroad where he shook 'em off, jumped down the bank and slipped back to our place, and asked if he could stay overnight so as to catch the train back to Asheville in the morning. He let that gun-totin' bunch think he was walkin' back to Hazelwood."

Mom was rather tough to unlimber, but after I had bragged up her cornbread, she gave me the straight story, because I checked with Barrington Moore when I got back to New Haven a few weeks later. It seems that Barrington was trying to take a bath on a late

Saturday afternoon in his open-windowed, lower floor room, standing with one leg in a bucket of suds, no actual bath tub being available--when he proved to be an irresistible target for a small boy. The child was a spoiled brat grandson of an old, pompous, and apparently wealthy Florida judge who had made this board and batten retreat his summer home for several years. The kid equipped himself with rotten apples and ripe tomatoes and started exercising his pitching arm. Barrington promptly gave warnings of dire consequences if hostilities didn't cease immediately. About then, a particularly soggy tomato got him in the ear. Into his pants he lit, raced out the door, caught the kid, upended him, and gave him "something to remember me by." The consequent howling brought grandpa and several cohorts to the rescue, post haste. The little brat was far from killed, according to Mom, but his continued limping, wailing, and whimpering convinced the judge that the was at least half massacred.

That evening, led by the judge, a committee of five or six stalwarts--self styled, self-righteous citizens, mostly hotel handouts of local yokel type--pushed their way into Moore's bedroom carrying firearms of various shape and caliber to emphasize their order that he must start walking the railroad ties back to the next town tonight. They had the railroad agent with them to sell Moore a ticket, so that his baggage could be checked out on the first train in the morning. There was to be no compromise. They would wait now for him to get dressed and they would accompany him part of the way. Barrington told me in New Haven that they would listen to no explanations from him, but kept checking the condition of their artillery, while he was dressing. When he entreated them to permit

him to get some sleep on the promise of taking the first train out in the morning, one pistol packing patriot roared out. "Shet up! Git going! Down th' track tonight!" "Save yer breath fer hiking'," said another. So he had quite a solicitous bodyguard until they got tired of hitting the ties, permitting him to abandon this further service and sneak back through the brush on his own.

When I laboriously climbed up about 2,000 feet the next morning to my log measuring task, I found that these men were part of the group of rubbernecks at the station when my train came in. They were spoiling for a knock down and drag out fight with the hotel crowd over the news of Moore's expulsion. They liked him very much and yearned to wreck vengeance when the incident reached camp. This cooled off suddenly when I arrived, they felt sure that I had been sent there by Washington to investigate and start action to punish the hotel bastards, as they called the gun-toting committee. One strawboss wouldn't be convinced that I was not there gathering log measurements merely as a ruse and offered to help me "gather the dirt in black and white to put the overbearing bastards behind bars." Word also reached me through Mom, who hobnobbed with the hotel kitchen help, that the judge and his gang were doing some worried talking. Because of my youthful appearance, I found it hard to believe they were afraid of me. I was almost wishing that I had brought my makeup kit along to add some wrinkles, heavy, black brows and mustache. The old judge actually went out of his way to contact me at the station post office within a week of my arrival to say in very hushed tones. "A very unfortunate and regrettable incident occurred through a misunderstanding while Mr. Moore was a resident of the hotel recently." He wondered if I could give him the home

address of Mr. Moore and his New Haven superior officer. I told him to merely address Barrington Moore, care of the Yale School of Forestry, and not to bother about his boss.

Mom was tickled pink when I told her this news. Pop just grinned and went toward the open window to squire out a chaw of Horseshoe, his brand of "chaw". The older 18-year-old daughter admitted to chewing snoose now and then, but the 14-year-old admitted favoring "store chewin' gum," when she could get hold of a penny.

Both girls were extremely shy, as least in my presence, although the older one had a Sears-Roebuck mandolin, which Mom said the girl never touched after the first week or so. It was a welcome find to me, even though it was cheap and refused to stay in exact tune. (I had been playing first mandolin five years with the Purdue and Ohio State Mandolin and Guitar clubs.) Mom volunteered the information that her oldest daughter, who was married and had one baby, played the guitar quite fluently and that her husband sang to her chording, and that they would be paying a visit the next week. She hoped that I would still be with them, so we could try the mandolin and guitar together. That appealed to me, but when I thought of the limited three small rooms, all in a row, side by side, with the only access to each being a door from the long, narrow veranda facing the entire length of the house, I wondered where the visitors would bed down. Mom evidently anticipated my inquiry, before I had the nerve to ask it. She said, "Of course, it'll crowd us a bit, but you won't be bothered, 'cause you can sleep with the boy just as you've been doing. The girls will have to give up their room, in the middle, but we can bed them down in

here with us. That old couch in the corner opposite your bed is kind-a narrow, even when opened up, but they're both skinny."

The two double beds, occupied by Pop and Mom and the boy and me butted against each other along the inner wall, which was the partition between room Number 3 and Number 2, as they were designated; the kitchen was Number 1.

Mom also added, "I don't think the girls 'll bother you, sleeping in here with us, 'cause they go to bed early, while you'll be workin' your log figures onto them government sheets settin' there by the sewing machine." (I think she was proud of the fact that I used the lid end of her sewing machine as a writing desk, even though the only light she could supply was the family lantern.) As to the shy girls, I found after they moved into room number 3, that they considered sleeping on the turned down couch a kind of a lark. As I worked at the sewing machine desk I could hardly help from noticing them as they giggled in pulling each other's one piece dress over their heads and then jumped into bed, modestly incased in their Munsingwear union suit underwear. I once noticed these garments check marked in the open Sear-Roebuck catalog, which I often had to move from my sewing machine desk. There was another such catalog in the small house at the rear of the yard, which proved that Sears-Roebuck was truly a godsend in these circumstances.

With the oldest daughter, husband and baby in number 2, we were quite cozily set up during that visiting week, with the exception for some occasional baby yowls.

On Sunday afternoon, we had a musical party. The oldest daughter was quite clever at guitar chording to the mandolin or



voice, and I traded minstrel and musical comedy, and college songs for mountain and moonshine ballads. Several of our visitors' local friends were invited to join in this songfest and watermelon feast.

Sometimes I felt disappointed that I hadn't been sent to Balsam earlier, so that I might have enjoyed a room to myself in the attractive, rustic hotel. However, it was something to write home about, to be accepted so intimately in the private lives of a true hillbilly family. The boy and I devoted most of two Sundays gathering chestnuts. I sent a large gunnysack filled with them to New Haven, but there were enough wormy ones to contaminate the last third of the sack. Chestnut, by the way, supplied the best looking logs on the logging job I was on. The white firs also averaged quite good. All log snaking was by oxen, often by teams.

When I got back to school that fall, Barrington Moore and I enjoyed recounting the aftermath of his almost serious consequence of spanking the tomato throwing brat. He had received letters from both the old judge and the sheriff of Jackson County, at Sylva, as I remember. The judge had determined that the grandson had suffered no serious consequences, and he very much regretted the whole incident. The sheriff wrote that he would like very much to punish the "out-of-state judge and his stupid cohorts" for assuming to take the law into their own hands. He considered it a disgrace to Jackson County and the entire state. He just wanted the "go ahead" word from "Mr. Moore to round up the entire gang" for prosecution, and wanted to know if he could "count on Mr. Moore's presence." Moore answered it, "forget it."

MAUNDER: Those southern Appalachian experiences undoubtedly helped to round you out for forest contacts and duties elsewhere later on.

What was your assignment after the several weeks training in Mr. Pinchot's office?

FROMME: I was instructed to report to the supervisor of the Priest River National Forest, under the Department of Agriculture. One year previously it was known as the Forest Reserve Department of the Interior. The supervisor's headquarters was in Priest River of northern Idaho, on the great Northern Railroad.

MAUNDER: What do you remember about that first assignment?

FROMME: Plenty. As I got off the train at this whistle stop, it looked to me as though the little town had just emerged from the forest primeval. I could see the entire business district from the railroad station, and there appeared to be more stumps than frame buildings, and it was about the size of one average city block. One of the buildings was as much as two stories high, with a sign extending over the plank sidewalk, reading "Gowanlock's General Merchandise".

The station agent directed me to the forest supervisor. Ben McConnell's office by pointing to the board walk, which butted up against the railroad area, and saying, "Just follow this to Harvey Wright's saloon at the end of the block, and you will find Ben's office in the small three-room frame building just cater-corner, across the road. "But," he added, "Better look in at Harvey's, Ben may be there as it's purty early yet for him to be in his office." I didn't look in at Harvey's for the main reason that I didn't know Ben by sight. Besides I was loaded down with a duffle bag bulging with back-east woodsclothes and personal items hanging from one shoulder, and in the other hand grasping a mandolin ensconced in a leather case, which was plastered with stickers and labels of five

years' concert tours with mandolin, guitar and glee clubs.

A sheet of paper tacked on the front door read, "Gone to the Lake," but no word as to what lake or the probable date for return. As I rested my baggage and looked around a bit, I heard the klitty-klak of lady's high heels coming down the boardwalk. I glanced across the road and sensed that she was giving me quite a going over. She was quite a chic looking damsel. Since she was wearing no hat or coat and turned in at the large merchandise store, I conjectured that she might work there, and promised myself to look into that quite soon.

A lady next door came out to sweep her veranda, and asked if I were looking for McConnell. Then she remarked that he was generally up at Priest Lake during the summer, but that she had seen him just a couple of days ago, going across to, and she nodded toward Harvey Wright's saloon. "That place is no good for him. He spends too much time there, and when he comes out, sometimes he can hardly stay on his feet. I wouldn't make it any of my business," she continued, "but he carries a revolver and likes to shoot at targets or something. Anyway there's a bullet hole in my kitchen that I'm sure came from his gun one night when he was shooting around in his bedroom, just opposite." Then, in parting, she said, "I'm sure you will like it up at Priest Lake and I think you will like Mr. McConnell, because he's a very pleasant man when he's away from that dive across the road."

MAUNDER: That must have been quite an ear opener. Did you get into the office, finally?

FROMME: Yes. I didn't have to go pry the back door open, as the lady suggested. My ordinary skeleton key unlocked the front door.

There were two doorway openings in the back wall. The left one led to a tiny kitchen, equipped with a small cast-iron cook stove, open shelves nailed to the inner wall to serve as a cupboard, a large wood-box, and a window, and outside door.

The right doorway led into an eight by ten bedroom, with a narrow double bed along the inner wall, a window opposite and a cheap dresser in the rear right corner. The left rear corner was partitioned off by a sleazy curtain hanging from a pole nailed at the ends. This served as a crowded closet. The window opposite the bed opened onto the neighbor's rear porch and kitchen, and was screened by a torn, pull-down shade, faced by a badly mishandled curtain of cheesecloth weighted at the bottom by cartridges. On the mirrored dresser, there was a tray holding a partly filled bottle of whiskey and two stemmed tin cups, which emitted a stale, whiskey odor. There was also a large Big Ben alarm clock, to the top handle of which someone had attached with baby-blue ribbon, a card, reading in delicate handwriting, "Big Ben McConnell."

As long as I have mentioned this alarm clock, I'm going to jump ahead of my story right now to relate a startlingly hazardous but laughable incident which occurred one cold, wintry morning in the early spring of 1907. I slipped into the office quietly, assuming that McConnell was probably still asleep. It was in the latter half of the month, when his check and normal drunken spree were on the wain, and he would be trying to sober up. I found a few live coals still burning in the bottom of the large, oval, sheet-iron heater, and had a cheery fire going in minutes. I didn't bother to glance into the bedroom, but could hear McConnell sleeping rather fitfully.

I had been quietly working on a timber cruising map at the

small table which served for both desk and dining. when all of a sudden the large alarm clock started sounding off. I jumped from my chair, intending to rush into the bedroom to shut off the clatter before it would bring the volunteer fire department. But I had hardly reached the bedroom doorway, when I heard Ben thresh around in his bed and yell out, "Frow up yer hands you white-faced shon of a ----," then bang went his .38 Colt Automatic-- and crash went the bullet-bearing alarm clock as it toppled around on the dresser and slammed to the floor. I looked in and saw Ben starting to laugh his head off, but he was swinging the still loaded gun around loosely. I grabbed the gun from his wobbly fingers--and then I could laugh too. By this time, I was probably shaking a bit, but I picked up the mangled alarm clock, and shook it a bit, but didn't bother to rescue the damaged bullet. I put it back on the dresser and then noticed that the mirror hadn't been damaged a bit. I commended Ben for his accuracy, especially when just coming out of a two-week's drunk. I had known he was a good shot from sharing target practice with him during his sober periods at the lake. He now wanted the old Colt back, but I said, "Not till quitting time tonight. I'm working here the rest of the day." And I carried the gun, unloaded by now, up the icy hill to Gowanlock's for noon lunch.

I don't think I mentioned that I managed to coax my way into the best home in town for room and board as winter started to threaten that first fall in 1906. I've jumped ahead of my story, so let's go back to that unfinished first day of my arrival in Priest River.

While I was airing out the smelly little office, I noticed one drawer of an upright letter file. (The other drawer was assumed to

be at the lake). I thought I might get some idea as to the nature of the business being transacted by reading some of the supervisor's correspondence and reports.

There were inquiries to buy timber, but the replies were consistently the same; that "this particular reserve was being held for the future." He never used the proper name National Forest, but always the Priest River Reserve. He had issued some Free Use permits to settlers in and near the forest boundaries for fuel and home construction, but I never found where any ranger had been instructed to follow up, to see whether over cutting had occurred or whether the timber was from dead or inferior trees as stipulated, or whether the limbs had been well scattered or burned in small piles. There were also applications to graze a few cattle or milk cows on small natural meadows, but no fee was ever charged. McConnell's reports on cattle or sheep grazing to the Washington office were always, "No applications or possible interest, as there are no natural meadows and the timber and brush is too dense for any possible forage."

But the forest fires kept him running night and day for help, some of which was donated, or the emergency pay vouchers he was sending in would have been far greater. He and his trusty rangers were continually chasing away timber thieves trying to cross the posted forest boundaries. He added that all of his men were well armed with automatic six shooters. And I might interpose here that McConnell did actually insist that each ranger, and the forest assistant, provide himself with an automatic pistol of some reliable manufacture and adequate caliber. He helped me order a Colt .38 automatic, the same as his.

I've strayed away from the illuminating correspondence files. By far the heaviest correspondence was under the file "M" and "W" for MacIntosh and Wright, Priest River's two saloon keepers. There were numerous carbon copies of typed orders on government stationery for one or more bottles of various sizes and strength, or proof, of certain named whiskeys or brandies. He didn't seem to bother about milder wines or even mixers. He always added, "I will take care of the charge as soon as my next government check comes in. Well, enough of this heavy business correspondence for one day. I must now visit the Gowanlock store and get another and closer look.

MAUNDER: Did you learn the girl's name?

FROMME: Yes, indeed. It was Ruby Gowanlock, only daughter of W.E. Gowanlock, owner of the merchandise business and general friend and advisor of all the loggers, settlers and women, wayward and otherwise, in the Priest River environs. As I entered, she was perched up in a small office area, working on statements or something but she trotted right down to wait on me. Just then, I spied a peanut roaster, so I asked her how peanuts were selling. She replied, "Not too good, but we have hopes that the business will pick up, now that you've finally arrived." "Why?" said, I. "Has anybody been looking for me?" "Yes," she laughingly answered, "the whole valley, but especially Benjamin F. McConnell, the forest supervisor." "Well," I smiled, for she was unusually easy on the eyes. "I guess I'm really found out, without having to introduce myself." Then I followed with, "did you smile at me when you were tripping down the sidewalk earlier this morning?" "Oh," she quipped, "I was doing more than smiling. I was laughing out loud at the funny clothes you wear." I realized then that I did look quite

a bit different from the few men I had glimpsed. I was wearing the latest so-called dusty derby, a long, flared-tail orange plaid coat, or jacket, with extra long lapels, exaggerated peg-legged trousers of varied grays and bright, yellow, bull-nosed Oxfords, button type.

MAUNDER: You were a real dude.

FROMME: Compared with the woodsmen around there, I sure was. I tried to explain that these were my touring clothes from the Atlantic seaboard, and that I hoped she would not shy away if she saw me dressed like a rough-neck logger some day. When she replied that she didn't think that she would become badly frightened, I felt that I was really getting on solid ground, but I wanted to know more about McConnell just now, and how she happened to know that he was expecting me, unless she was spoofing me. That's when I got to meet her father. She had been really getting her tips from him, and he was the one who had talked with the supervisor a few days ago, and learned of my coming. Did I feel all puffed up and important with so many anticipating my arrival? The advantage of being a new toad in a tiny pond.

Gowanlock, who, by the way, became my father-in-law a year and a half later, gave me a more favorable impression of my new boss than I had gotten from the office files and nearby neighbor. He said that McConnell was a real gentleman when sober, very affable, considerate, and witty, but that some past experience or quirk in his nature made him a slave to hard drink, when he could get it. I learned that the supervisor was the son of William J. McConnell, the first governor of Idaho, when the territory was admitted to the Union, that one of his several sisters was the wife of U.S. Senator Borah from Idaho, that he, Ben, had a good education in law from



Michigan University and that he was close to forty years of age. It was rumored that he had once been married, but had divorced some years ago.

I passed up the opportunity for free lodging that night in the supervisor's boar's nest for a bed in the Beardsmore Hotel on the bank of the Pend d'Oreill River, flowing west about six miles to Newport, Washington, then north into Canada. However, before retiring, I had a congenial visit with Ruby, her French-Canadian mother and 3-year-old brother in their commodious residence uphill beyond the boardwalk.

The horse drawn mail, merchandise and passenger stage required most of the next day to cover the 25 dusty miles to Priest Lake, but I found the welcome mat out for me in the supervisor's summer office. McConnell greeted me with a cheery smile, but I thought his handshake a bit shakier than common, and he started excusing his bleary eyes to summer cold. He pointed to a double bed springs and mattress propped on four twelve inch blocks of wood in one rear corner of the 20 by 20 foot log cabin and invited me to be his bed guest for the summer providing I would occupy the half next to the wall, and not insist on cotton sheets instead of wool sheets, and army blankets as needed, to which I promptly agreed.

After advising that supper would be a little late because of the large mulligan stew he had prepared on the small sheet-iron range in the lean-to kitchen, introduced me to the three shift Oliver typewriter, in which he hoped I might get interested, so as to relieve him of some of the necessary correspondence, orders to rangers and insatiable reports to Washington. He said they sent him this a year earlier to take the place of the old screw-press

equipment for making duplicates or carbons, but they didn't tell him what to do with the old thin-sheet, pressed copies. But he had found them very useful in the little relief station in the rear, which he preferred to call "the Cave of the Winds." "One can get quite a little information while sitting there, on past forest history of a couple of previous superintendents, before putting the thin sheets to better use," he added with a chuckle.

Incidentally, he called my attention to the fact that the tiny pole and cedar shake shack had accommodation for only one person at a time, so that the women of fish canning visitors with children had to herd the little ones in, one at a time, and stand outside, backwards, with face and arms bent forward inside, around the somewhat torn burlap fronting. "Lake campers always seem to think that government structures are for anybody's free use," he added, "They very seldom ask for permission."

The mulligan was delicious, after which, he offered me a fat cigar, then insisted that I get out the mandolin and give him some music, preferably a song. So, I watched him smoke his cigar, while I tuned up. From what I had learned about him, I thought of a song which I had heard the comedian, Frank Daniels, sing in a musical comedy back in the late 1890's, when ushering in the Richmond, Indiana Opera House, entitled, "Ain't It Funny What a Diff'rence Just a Few Hours Make." Daniels made a big hit with this song and the seemingly self-incriminating manner in which he sang it.

Since this song seems to present McConnell's problem in life so fittingly, and came to be his bedtime request so frequently that summer, when I wasn't out on fires or helping a ranger, somewhere, I hope I will be pardoned for reading off the words of the first and

last verse and chorus:

Ain't it Funny What a Diff'rence Just a Few Hours Make

When the sun starts to rise in the far off eastern skies  
 And the waking little birdies peep--  
 Then some poor sad-eyed clerk has to hustle down to work,  
 It is then that I begin to need my sleep--  
 All the noise that is made in the busy marts of trade  
 Seems to lull me like a mother's soft refrain--  
 But at night, say at three, it is "little bright-eyes me",  
 There's a diff'rence that I really can't explain--

Chorus

Ain't it funny what a diff'rence just a few hours make,  
 In the morning I'm so tired I'm nearly dead--  
 But as day turns into night, I begin to feel all right,  
 Just about the time I aught to go to bed--  
 Then I lose that tired feeling and I find my friends,  
 And we hit it up 'til day begins to break--  
 But as noon time rolls along, I'm for prohibition strong,  
 Ain't it funny what a diff'rence just a few hours make.

3

There are times when I think that I'll give up cards and drink,  
 When I look back on the life I've led--  
 And my thoughts idly roam to that happy little home,  
 And the loved ones that I might have had instead,  
 Then my heart grows so sad, Oh I really feel so bad  
 That I worry 'till I'm actually in pain--  
 There's nothing else to do but to take a drink or two,  
 To relieve me as I'm trying to explain--

Chorus

Ain't it funny what a diff'rence just a few hours make,  
 There are mornings when I haven't got a cent--  
 When I'm sure the night before, I had started out with more,  
 Than I ever would have dreamed I could have spent--  
 Then I swear I'll save my money for a rainy day,  
 And I start to save myself a little stake--  
 But I've saved it all in vain, for next day it starts to rain,  
 Ain't it funny what a diff'rence just a few hours make.

My work that summer was largely on small lightning fires back from the lake shore. If they were remote or high up, we didn't bother with them, the excuse being that they were probably not destroying anything of value. I worked with Ranger Sam Davis, who employed a heavy large rowboat, on which he had erected a mast and sail, which relieved rowing when the wind chanced to be blowing in the direction we wished to travel. I don't think I can ever

forget that first fire that Sam and I corralled. First, we had to get to it. It was reported by a mineral prospector who had just returned by rowboat from Upper Priest Lake. It was by lightning. It was a mile or so up the mountainside.

Sam says, "Well, it looks like a rowing job for 25 miles long miles today, if we go over direct. The wind is coming straight down the lake, and we want to go up, have you every rowed before?" "Only for short distances on small ponds in small rowboats," was my reply. And he said, "Well, you sit in front and watch the bending of my back, so we can swing the oars in union. I'll operate the rudder, so we won't lose too much distance." That particular old scow refused to lurch. It preferred to crawl, especially as we started deviating away from the east shore toward the middle, intending to parallel closer to the west coast.

Oh, the horrible monotony of it all. If I were only alone, I could vary the stroke a bit, and gaze at something more exciting than Sam's undulating back and red neck. I began to recall some history of old galley slaves chained to their oars by the spear and bow and arrow lords of old Spain who lolled on the deck above, while the ship plowed the ocean northward to invade and conquer Ireland, Scotland and Old England in the years long ago before steam power was invented. Apparently I slowed down a bit and our oars collided. Came Sam, in a burst of steam, "Tired already?" "I guess my hands were getting sore from these old, weathered oars," I answered. "Oh Yeah? Well, you could put some powder on 'em, if we had any, don't spit on 'em, that'll make 'em blister all the sooner. Blow on 'em a bit 'n' take a new grip. Then I'll steer the old boat more t'ord the west shore, where we can pick up

more of a side breeze to tack forward by sail comin' back. The lake is five to six miles wide where we are now."

With our sail up and a stronger wind near noon, we angled about 45 degrees at a livelier clip. Sam assured me that the special keel he nailed on recently would keep her from dipping. After a brief lunch on the east shore, we managed to head back northwest by oar-torture. After tying up in a cove, and covering our supplies under heavy canvass, we loaded down with shovel and double-bit axe and scrambled up the brushy and timbered mountain side toward the fire, following the compass sight that we had read on the fire, as closely as the ground permitted.

I think it took us close to an hour to reach the fire, which, by this time in the late afternoon, had quit crowning and was down on the ground, just creeping. We tackled it at the very head, using the axe to clear away brush or cut down limbs or small trees laying across the trail. We used the sharpened blade for chopping above ground and the dull side for cross roots. We used our shovels more after we got a wide enough swath through this material to conveniently reach the ground and scrape or dig a clear trail.

MAUNDER: How wide were your fire lines in those days?

FROMME: It depended a good deal on the steepness of the slope, the ground cover, the direction of prevailing winds, and the amount and nature of the burnable material on the opposite side; also whether the fire trail was becoming projected along a slope, on top of a ridge, or in a swale. Generally we wanted a clean width, down to free, mineral soil of one foot to 18 inches.

MAUNDER: And that was usually enough?

FROMME: Yes. But, of course, ground conditions, wind and weather had a big influence. The fire might jump the trail under adverse conditions, no matter how wide and clear we made the fire trail, especially if it were jumping through the tree tops. Then we would just have to wait until it got down to the ground again, and decide on a new fire fighting line. We didn't attempt to fight crown fires in those days.

MAUNDER: Had you any previous experience in fighting forest fires?

FROMME: No, I hadn't. I just follow Ranger Sam Davis' directions and soon found out that it was a dirty, sweaty, tiring and grubby business. And we had no grub hoes on this first job. Such a tool is often quite useful, providing, of course, that there is soil and ground cover capable of being dug and scraped. The Pulaski tool, combination hoe and axe, which came later, was quite useful as a one man outfit for fire trail construction.

On this fire, the first for me, Sam decided that we should work separately at first, each with an axe and a shovel, so that we could attack more danger points quickly. We spread out across the entire front, heading the separate tongues or points of the fire's uphill progress. After we had quieted down these tongues of the fire's spread, we joined forces to connect the advanced or higher points into a continuous line. Later, I was permitted to be the front man with the axe, as Sam concluded that I knew how to use a double-bit axe properly to protect the sharper edge from chopping near the ground.

After three or four hours of grimy, exhausting work, we appeared to have the edges of the fire corralled and quiet,

although there was still some lively blazing inside, accompanied by a falling tree now and then. So Sam proposed that he go down to the boat and get some fresh water for the canteen water bag. He reasoned that I likely needed more rest than he, so could sort of loaf along our upper trail, just to make sure that it was holding while he was gone. In about an hour, which seemed like a half a day, he was back with coffee, a can of baked beans, which I devoured cold, while he built a small cooking fire for coffee and bannocks.

To make and bake the bannock, Sam poured a little water into the center of a layer of flour. Then, after putting in a pinch of baking powder and salt, he dove in with both hands and started kneading the gummy mass into a ball, stiff enough to cling to the surface of a slightly greased tin plate. The plate was propped at an angle facing the open cooking fire, and could be raised gradually from almost level to a 45 degree angle, as baking progressed. It was the first time I had seen this shortcut method of baking bannocks, but I used it many times afterward, and am not sure that my hands were always any cleaner than were Sam's for the kneading process. If we had some butter to lather them a bit, they would have tasted like ambrosia, whatever that might be.

After this banquet, came the letdown. Sam brought forth a heavy army blanket, remarking that, I could throw this over my shoulders or roll up in it where the ground had been burned over, and I might keep warm. It dawned on me that he was intending that I remain here alone throughout the night. I had never slept in the woods alone up to that time, but assumed that it was Sam's idea of a proper initiation. He explained that, while the fire

was now corralled and quiet, it was not a good idea to leave it entirely unguarded through the night. A burning snag might suddenly come to life, burn out at the roots, and fall across our hard built line and be ready to spread all over hell, when the wind came up in the morning. He further explained that the winds had a tendency to blow downhill at night and up in the daytime, so he didn't think I would have much trouble guarding our upper line that night; and the lower end was quite well burned out. He thought that he should go back to the lake and prepare cooked food for the next day and perhaps shoot a deer for fresh venison (I believe a state law had already been passed, forbidding deer shooting in the summer, but the supervisor considered that this didn't apply to forest rangers or mining prospectors.)

As a parting reassuring note, Sam suggested that I maintain a brisk warming fire, as cougars and wild cats shy away from such activity. "However, if you should get menaced, just fire off your gun. That generally scares em' away. If you need me because of the fire, or any other reason, just signal with three short shots. Good luck, see you in the morning," and he was gone.

I got to wondering how I was going to get much sleep if I had to maintain a constant brisk fire, but concluded that advice was just a part of Sam's initiation ritual. However, I didn't get too much sleep the early part of the night. I occasionally heard light stepping sounds in the older burned areas but assumed they were caused by curious deer. I also got jarred out of my occasional slumber by the crashing fall of a burning snag, but these seemed to be within the fire lines. I had a "bug lantern," a lighted candle in an old fruit can, but this wasn't very



effective. Finally, exhaustion got me so relaxed into a dead sleep, but a beaming sun hit me in the eyes, and brought me back to a dead campfire. Then, the fluttering of a large bird landing on a low limb of a small green tree just outside the burn really restored me.

I was on my feet in a hurry and reaching for my Colt automatic. I remember slipping in a cartridge during the night. As I was stepping around to get a good bead on the bird, Sam's sudden raucous voice stopped me still. "What are you aiming at?" he yelled. "A grouse, I think." "Ha," snorted Sam, "That's no grouse, That's a fool hen! No need to waste a shot on that bird." Then he cut a slender green limb about 20 feet long from a nearby bushy tree, and trimmed it all the while clucking toward the bird to hold it's attention.

"It sure is a fool hen," I commented, being fearful that it would fly away any minute, and wishing that Sam hadn't shown up just as I was about ready to shoot. Sam took a wad of heavy twine from his pocket, made an eight or ten inch noose in one end and tied the other end to the upper end of the long limb.

Patiently he lifted the noose end of the limb on the level with the hen's head, but only close enough to hold its curiosity. While he had it entranced, he gave a swoop and a jerk, catching our bird dangling by the neck. As Sam swung it down to me, I tied its feet firmly together and suspended it from a limb to be picked up later.

Some days later, when the two of us were at a higher elevation, a true grouse flew into the top of a stunted Alpine fir. I promptly pulled out the small cannon, and while resting my

arm against the side of a nearby tree for steadier aim. Sam whispered hoarsely, "Hit him in the head. If you plow into his body with that big bullet, he won't be worth cleaning."

The Colts were loud enough to scare every other bird or beast out of the county. Well, Mr. Grouse dropped straight down, but just as Sam stooped to pick the bird up, he jumped up and started to run. Sam quickly caught him and looked him over for the bullet mark. There was none. "Well," remarked Same, "I'll be damned if that bullet didn't pass by so close to his beak as to suck out all the breath." "But he isn't dead," I said. "That's what you think," he said, as he pulled out his hunting knife. We left the head behind.

I heard two shots fired by Sam near our boat landing the evening before, so I asked what he had shot at. "A small deer," he replied. "When we go down tonight, I'll fry you some nice venison." "Wow! What a feast," I remarked, "fool hen and venison."

That's day's work on the fire was much more pleasant. By the time the wind came up in the early afternoon, we had the previous day's fire line all burned out along the edges, including a few places where it had spread because of falling snags. We also dug out some hot spots inside our trail and chopped down the few burning trees or snags that were left inside. We picked up the fool hen and few tools and hurried down to our lake camp. I left Sam to prepare the feast, and hurried off with my sweaty, grimy clothes and got into the lake.

While I was splashing around I suddenly looked up to see a small mama deer and fawn stepping in right toward me. The mama

seemed a bit apprehensive and backed up to the edge of the water, but the fawn allowed me to swim slowly within about 20 feet of her, when mama gave a little whistle and they both trotted back into the brush.

Sam had an old piece of canvas on the ground in front of a small fire, on which were tin plates of boiled potatoes, cooked peas, parts of a baked bannock and a slab of fried steak. I started pushing the steak around rather gingerly with my fork, as it didn't quite look like Back-East venison, when Sam remarked rather casually, "The venison is a little fresh, just killed last night." By this time I was chewing away on it and swallowing as gaily as possible when I suddenly noticed that he was eating everything else but his meat. Then he started laughing. "Don't you like fried Cougar?" he asked. "Well, it's not impossible." I said, "But I didn't hardly think it tasted like venison, even if fresh." He was happy all evening, but he refused to eat any of his cougar even though I nibbled on my piece a little further until he scraped some crisp, hot bacon onto my plate. Then all was forgiven. The fool hen, he explained, was for breakfast, which was probably just as well.

Going back down the lake the next day was a cinch. With the wind behind our backs most of the way, the little sail bowled us along. Part of the time we went slow enough so I could troll, catching two plump Dolly Varden. I tried to give them to McConnell when we reached the cabin, but he said he already had all we could eat. Some hotel sports had given them to him, besides, he preferred smaller creek trout. He suggested that I give them to the "Barnyard savages from the Palouse country,"

which was his name for the farming element from the rich agricultural land south of Spokane, who were camping nearby, canning fish for their winter season.

About that time, I heard some girlish squeals from the direction of the log hotel, one-fourth mile away. I was into my bathing suit splashing off in that direction without delay. The water was quite chilly to these Spokane maidens and it didn't take long to get acquainted. Before we left for our various suppers, they had found out that I had a mandolin and craved to sing. So we clustered around a campfire that evening, about six or eight girls and one male, singing a bunch of new and old-timers. New songs of the musical comedy type and bar room sentimentals didn't travel as fast in those days, and I was on easy street with big headlines quite pronto. Before they left for home a week later, I had addresses to look up for the winter season.

My next fire trip was with Sam up Granite Creek to the west of the lake and over the top of the divide into the Upper West Branch drainage, where an assistant ranger by the name of Archie was said to have a crew of eight or ten small-town yokels combining deer hunting and heavy drinking to the detriment of fire fighting. Dave Coolin, the district ranger at the foot of the lake, had just returned from a trip to Priest River, where he learned of this from one of the original crew, who had become fed up with Archie's mismanagement. He also sent out for whiskey, to be horse packed in with the food items. As the word got to McConnell he felt that it was time for action. He dictated a letter to me on the three-shift Oliver, to be delivered to Archie, by Sam, telling him to turn over the men's time slips and the

completion of the fire control to Sam, then to report to Mike Murray on the lower, or main West Branch, turn in his own time and consider himself fired. (Archie had no civil service status, being truly an overrated forest guard, but given the title of assistant ranger by McConnell because of prior summer service.) We soon learned that the information picked up by Dave Coolin in Priest River was true, but the entire crew had left the fire by the time we got to it. There was evidence of some trenching, but all of the work and burning was quite high up, beyond any merchantable timber, even if it were accessible. The camp was a mess of empty cans, bottles, torn shirts and two dead deer hanging to a strong cross pole, half butchered and covered with flies, grubs, and what not. We buried the deer, flies, stink and all. That night we bedded in some ashes, even though it meant more blanket shaking in the morning than if we had cut some cedar or fir boughs.

Well, we didn't know whether Archie and his crew had gotten to town by this time or were doing some more deer hunting. There didn't seem to be any fire downstream, but Sam wanted to deliver the supervisor's message if possible. We caught up with the drunken crew by noon the next day. We had to clean up two other camps between. No more dead deer, however, until this last camp. Sam saw to it that they packed out the balance of the good meat on the remaining pack horse, and buried the rest. Archie accepted the letter from the supervisor with only a few outspoken curses and tried to blame his troubles on the kind of men they sent him. Back at the mouth of Granite Creek we found Sam's old rowboat

still tied up where we had left it over a week earlier. To double-row on a level, smooth lake was pure luxury for a change. McConnell let me sleep all the next day.

MAUNDER: Do you recall any other official employment that first summer at Priest Lake, not connected with fire fighting?

FROMME: One other occupation was office work. Besides taking over what little correspondence that came up, I did most of the voucher preparation for salary submission and time slips for temporary fire fighters and a few official forms required on fires. McConnell was perfectly willing to let me get all the knowledge on office procedure I could. It gave him more time to go stream fishing for trout or drinking and yarn spinning with one or two special friends among the summer "perpetuals."

I also dug out old forest maps and made a few corrections, and tried the compass and my pacing, on General Land Office section line surveys. McConnell had suggested that I might like to rerun some of the section line surveys, taking off from the lake shore to determine the location of any illegal squatting on the part of summer home trespassers, but I argued that we didn't need to know their exact surveyed location to chase them off, as all the shore land belonged to the Forest Service, until such time as the railroad people decided what to do about an exchange with the government of every odd section of land granted by Congress for building the railroad.

However, I wanted to run a few out from the lake just to get familiar with the G.L.O. method of marking section corners and witness trees. I wanted this knowledge to help Ranger Mike Murray and me in cruising and mapping that timber on the West Branch,

which lumber companies wanted to buy.

"What's the matter with you, Fromme? Don't you like this Reserve the way it is? Do you want a bunch of logging grief to contend with, and Washington office inspectors, and timber sale nuts descending upon us, criticizing every move we make? I've held things pretty quiet so far." I would refer him to the new Use Book issued under Pinchot's direction, which stressed that the national forests were for use, and that timber sales should be encouraged where the timber was old and probably decaying and falling down faster than new growth was being produced.

I also said that I would enjoy limiting my hard, or serious work to fire only and recreate all the rest of the year, but that lumbermen seeking timber were bound to find out that the fine stands of white pine on this forest were subject to cutting, the same as on the Couer d'Alene or the Montana Forests, where cutting under government sale contracts were already underway. So, we couldn't keep answering inquires to the contrary, much as we would have liked to.

"I suppose you're right," he replied in a resigned tone, "but that's goin' to be your baby, and I'll just refer that Fidelity Lumber Company to you hereafter. They've been pestering me for a year or more about that white pine timber along the West Branch road, and I've been saying 'no sale'".

MAUNDER: Well, when you finished your work up there in the Priest Lake area, you were assigned as a supervisor?

FROMME: Not that soon. It was about a year later. E.A. Sherman, the chief inspector, dropped into our office in Priest River by surprise just after the first of that year, 1907. Fortunately,

McConnell was about recovered from a month's drunken spree, and was sparking pretty good. Sherman wanted to talk timber sale business. He had learned about the Fidelity Company's interest in our white pine and wanted to know if we were doing anything about it. This gave the supervisor an immediate outlet. He pointed to me, saying "that's Fromme's concern. I've turned the timber sale business over to him entirely."

Sherman still wanted to get him talking about some forest business, but McConnell dodged him by saying that he had been laid up with a serious cold from a trip to Priest Lake looking after some rumored trespass, and that he was behind on matters at the office. I detected some doubts as to this excuse in Sherman's demeanor, as he didn't express any compassion, but stepped over to the table, where I was working on the map and cruise of the timber in question. District Ranger Mike Murray and I had obtained this information the fall before.

Incidentally, I developed a real cold from that job, resulting in my having to have a large quinsy blister lanced by a doctor in Newport. I had good bed care from my future mother-in-law, Mrs. Gowanlock. I didn't catch the cold so much from the work in the snow, but from the improvised sleeping quarters. There was no handy place to stay except at Mike's ranger station. It was a small one-room combination living room, kitchen and bedroom, with no partitions. It couldn't be expected that Mike would tolerate my sleeping in this little room with his new mail-order bride and himself, so he provided a bed for me in the second stall manger in the small barn. The manger was stuffed with fresh hay, then surmounted by several blankets.



I agreed it was the best we could arrange under the circumstances. When I looked a bit dubious at the manger bed, he said, "A better man than you once did it." I got his consent to warm up thoroughly in front of the fireplace in his chummy abode prior to making a beeline, through a foot of snow to my steamy high bunk. I mentioned steamy, because Mike's horse occupied the first stall, and the natural warmth of his body seemed to radiate steam. By kinking myself up quite tightly, with nothing but my nose protruding from the nest of blankets, I got along quite fair, after my nostrils became accustomed to the barnyard aroma and the restless little mice that galloped across my bed and the intermittent chewing and stomping of Mike's steamy steed. In fact, it was like pulling teeth to rouse myself from my snores in the bleak, dark morning and respond to Mike's call to breakfast. However, it didn't take me long to dress, as I never removed anything but my shoes, which had rubber feet and 12-inch leather tops, with a double row of hooks, making them easy to lace.

It required a full week of this ordeal before we were through with the cruising job. We negotiated on bear-paw snowshoes, which Mike had made with vine maple and deer thong webbing. These were a little heavier than the usual store type snowshoes, but more convenient on soft snow and for getting through small brushy places.

By Saturday evening we had completed our field work on a section of the oldest white pine--with a scattering of larch, cedar and hemlock. I was up bright and early Sunday morning and on my bear paws going at the reckless speed of three miles an hour back to home and a real bed. Loaded down with the Jacob staff,

the Brunton compass, the Abney level, the tally board, a surveyor's chain and an oiled cardboard tube of maps, plats and tabulations, I was just rounding the bend at Torell Falls, two miles distant, when I was stopped short by a lusty "Hal-lo dar, foresh ranger--Merry Chreemus." It came from the dam tender, who operated the Falls Creek splashdam, which motivated Fidelity Company logs down stream. He seemed to be at the pink peak of congeniality. So, when he followed with "Hot alco-ho-lah, guid for what ails yu. Kom 'n' git it," I was there in a "Yump" or two.

When remarked that I had a sore throat; he came back with "hot alco-HO-lah, yust vhat d'dokter ordered. Mek yu vell k'vick! Huh?"

Only six more short miles to go, thought I as I maneuvered back on to the trail. The burdensome bear paws seemed to have acquired the wings of Pegasus, and my seared gullet now appeared to be soothed by the aromatic spirits of elation. In fact, I recall punctuating my "Pick-m-plop and plot-m-m bear-paws with a spur-of-the-moment sonorous concoction, something like this: "Hot alco-HO-lah, yust laike ve TOL -yah, Meks you go Hum-pin, Hop-skip - n Yum-pin."

\_\_\_\_\_ Unfortunately, this ecstatic exuberance failed me before I reached my destination. The last couple of miles or so brought a return of the harassed throat, plus a pulsatingly pressurized cranium, a profusely perspiring mackinaw and a lead-laden pair of bearpaws. I can't recall how I managed to get to bed under a mountain of hot waterbottles and blankets, but one squint at the ballooning roof of my mouth by my erstwhile nurse brought forth

this pronouncement, "old-fashioned Quinsy!"

I was on snowshoes again that winter, but I gave major berth to any manger berth from that time on, ad infinitum.

MAUNDER: When did they make you supervisor?

FROMME: After McConnell was fired in late August, 1907, as I remember. Of course, that had to be preceded by an inspection report. This was made by District Inspector Paul G. Redington from the Missoula, Montana office under chief inspector E.A. Sherman, who had visited our Priest River office early that spring. Paul Redington didn't have much trouble picking up plenty of McConnell's deficiencies. The alphabetical files alone--with the carbon copy orders for whiskeys, gins, etc. from our two local saloons, written on government stationery was evidence enough. There was also the mutilated alarm clock still on the dresser, several whiskey-stained coffee cups lying about the disarranged bedroom and a lady's nightgown hanging in the closet.

These things brought forth questions which I felt forced to answer in McConnell's absence. He had gone up to the lake on a check of rangers stationed in that district. As for the lady's nightgown, I had to deny the presence of a wife and admit that I couldn't help but notice the presence of a woman with him in his bedroom on more than one occasion when I happened to come to the office before he was up in the morning. In fact, when the gal was ready to depart, McConnell would stick his head around the curtain and laughingly ask me to be kind enough to look out the front window a moment so his lady friend could slip around and out the kitchen door.

McConnell explained these intermittent female visits as the

best, at any rate, the pleasantest way for sobering up after several days of too much hootch-hilarity. He also remarked that he had more than one local lady friend and sometimes forgot to have the departing guest take her night things or perfume case with her when he was contemplating a change. This led to some heavy apologizing and tears on one occasion.

I don't recall whether I told Redington about the drunken celebration McConnell engineered on the first Sunday Closing Law day for Idaho saloons. The Priest River baseball nine was playing against Sand Point on the local field, and ranger McEwen was playing first base while I pitched. That was sufficient excuse for the supervisor to get a few of his booze pals to accompany him to the game--to cheer and tip the bottle on very good play, whether it was by the home team or the visitors. We lost, but that didn't sober McConnell. He grabbed Harvey's ear and said, "Let's open the bar to these Sand Point boys. They deserve a treat." "No, No.", said Harvey, "Do you want me to get pinched for violating the new state law?" Big Ben replied, "To hell with that, there's no sheriff in town." Back to the street in front of the saloon they went arguing all the way, with the visiting ballplayers tagging along, licking their dry lips.

In the meantime, I beat it straight for home to get out of my sweaty clothes. Then came a frantic pounding on our front door. It was none other than Harvey Wright, himself, appealing for me to come down and prevent Ben from shooting in his door lock. A hasty glance down the road, one block away, proved Harvey's fears. There was the supervisor waving his familiar six-shooter around in front of Harvey's front door yelling for Harvey to open. He

apparently thought that Harvey had slipped around into the back door to better protect his property. Naturally, I didn't relish the idea of getting involved in this controversy, but being lulled by Harvey's flattery that I was the only one who could handle the supervisor when so lit up, I ran down, with Harvey at my heels, and the visiting ballplayers scattered across the road, trying to stay out of the range of the waving cannon.

I started yelling, "Ben McConnell, put that gun away before you shoot somebody." "Aw, hell," he said, "I'm not going to hurt anybody, Fromme, I just want to treat these boys and Harvey's just actin' like a damn fool. He knows that I'll pay for the damn liquor."

Harvey and I both started pleading together, trying to make him see that it was fear of losing the license that mattered. Harvey even offered to bring some stuff out from the back door, but Ben just couldn't let his followers down. He yelled, "I want to do this thing right! Get out of the way! Everybody!" Bang! The lock went to pieces. "Come on, boys, she's all on me!" One morning, as I was sitting at the typewriter, typing Redington's inspection report, he came in the door with a question as to the veracity of the railroad station agent. Redington always passed near the station going to and from the Beardsley Hotel, where he was living during this inspection detail. The agent naturally knew what he was working on from the nature of telegrams he had been sending to his boss in Missoula. On one occasion the agent asked if I had told him about the way we tried to scare Ben sober when he was supposed to be helping me with the ranger examination in the spring. Paul wanted to hear about that.

The examination had been announced in all the western papers in April. The first day was to be a written test, the day following was to be devoted to a field test including the use of a compass; pacing off; saddling a horse, mounting, riding a short distance and dismounting; using an Abney level or other device to estimate the height of a tree; and packing a horse with bedding rolls, food supplies, cooking utensils, axe, shovel and hoe. These tests came unsealed for the examiner's use in advance preparation.

My understanding with the supervisor was that I would conduct the written examination and help him with the compass, pacing, and tree height estimating of the field test, providing he graded the horse tests, with the help of Ranger Dave Coolin.

About twenty applicants showed up for the written test in the large second floor of Gowanlock's store. Ben and Dave helped me seat and supply the men with the written questions, McConnell all the time joking with the guards he knew. Then he and Dave excused themselves to prepare for tomorrow's field test. Well, about mid-morning I heard them stumbling up the long stairway, giggling like a couple of school girls. In they came, each swinging a tin dipper in one hand and carrying a large galvanized bucket of sloshing beer in the other. I started to throw a block, but Ben countered with "Now look here, Fromme, these boys are bound to be terribly dry." It left the examiner nothing to do but to announce "Every man stay in his seat and the beer will be passed. No conversation please."

Soon after, Ranger McEwen arrived to release me for an early lunch, and I slipped over to the railroad station agent to connive

with him on a plan which I hoped would scare McConnell into sobering up. Not long after I had returned to the examination room, Ben came puffing up the stairway to inform me that Bill the railway agent had sent for him to tip him off to the fact that something suspicious was going on concerning a stranger in town. He had delivered a telegram to this fellow, which was all in government code, but he thought he could decipher the name McConnell.

I injected, "Maybe the guy's a Civil Service inspector." "Yeh," added Ben, as he wiped beads of sweat from his troubled brow. "That Bill is a purty grouchy sort, so I don't believe he's kiddin'." He said he didn't notice the guy particularly, except that he was tall and dark, and was wearing a black overcoat." I said, "Well, the best thing you can do is to get to bed right away and be ready to do a good job on the ranger field examination tomorrow. If he comes up here, I'll tell him that you've gone to bed with a bad cold." Although he still looked a bit green around the gills, he went away apparently much relieved. I also felt much easier about tomorrow's situation, and spent the evening congratulating myself on my cleverness, when one of the new prospective rangers came in with news that McConnell and Ranger Coolin had been on an awful toot all evening, frightening the hotel and the entire downtown with pistols in hand looking for a tall, dark stranger in a black overcoat. We found Ben leaning against MacIntosh's bar with a final nightcap in his nervous hand, looking lonesome. There was no Ranger Dave Coolin. His wife had arrived, poured Dave into the family buckboard and driven off into the night toward Priest Lake with nothing but hard looks at his

supervisor, Benjamin F. McConnell.

Ranger McEwen and I conducted the field exam the next day, sealed all test papers in the large envelopes, after getting McConnell's shaky signature on the line (or near it) entitled "Examiner in Charge."

Inspector Redington had one more important question to ask. Was McConnell under the influence of alcohol, or truly involved with cedar pole thieves when he wrote a letter to "The Honorable Gifford Pinchot", which started "HELL is popping down the foam flecked Pend d' Oreill?" This question came to the chief inspector's office from the personnel department of the chief forester's office. They could hardly make out the supervisor's signature it was so erratic.

I laughed outright at this inquiry, because I thought at the time McConnell was dictating this letter to me that he would raise some questions as to his sobriety--particularly following his scrawley signature. I took some letters along with a pen and a bottle of ink to Wright's Bar for his signatures. He asked me at the time, "Dju think they'll wonner if I'm drunk?"

The letter in question was based on written word from the land office in Coeur d'Alene advisors that one of their special agents had reported seeing some cedar poles being cut from unpatented homesteads (squatter claims) on the lower Pend 'Oreill River, now within the Priest River National Forest. The poles were being sold to a Newport, Washington cedar pole outfit, which was towing them upstream to Newport.

Well, after McConnell's sensational beginning in his letter to Mr. Pinchot, he followed by stating that he had sent word by



fast saddle horse to David Coolin and Gabe McKenzie, two of his most trusted rangers, to hurry up to Priest River with their six-shooters to join him on the night steamboat out of Newport to put an immediate stop to this cedar pole thievery and, if possible, arrest the culprits before they should escape into nearby Canada. The rangers reported to McConnell near noon the following day. They planned to go to Newport on the late afternoon train, getting there in time to board the night steamer for the cedar pole skidway. The supervisor took the two stalwarts in charge upon their arrival in Priest River and started treating them to Harvey's firewater to bolster their courage for the perilous trip. Gabe escaped from the trio early, returning to the office to confide to me that Ben and Dave were on their way to becoming "real soused" on the pretext of building up their courage. He had noticed Dave's buckboard on a back street, but no sign of the team, which led him to conclude that Dave's wife didn't return to the lake, as she had pretended, but was hiding out somewhere to see whether Dave was going to get drunk, as often happened when he was with Ben. He surmised that she had taken the horses to the town livery stable until ready to return to the lake. Gabe's hunch was right. As I went down to see the three boys off on the late afternoon train to Newport, there was Dave's wife, and she didn't hesitate about going up to diagnose his condition, in spite of the presence of his boss. In fact, she gave the supervisor her customary hard look, grabbed Dave by his floppy arm and said, "You're not going anywhere tonight but home. You're too damn drunk to know that the hell you're doin'." McConnell stepped forward with an apologetic smile on his face as if to protest but

one more hard look from the female of the species and he turned to Gabe, saying, "Well, it looks like we'll have to excuse Dave." To my surprise, McConnell showed up at the office the second morning, saying that they stopped at the skidways of poles, but there was no one there laying any claim to them, so he left Gabe to guard them and he caught the same boat on its return from Metalene Falls in the morning. He promised Gabe that he would send me down to help him right away, as the cutting areas would require accurate examination to determine whether the cedar was being removed for legitimate farming or whether it was a real case of timber stealing. He suggested that I get ready to go for a couple of weeks job, taking along heavy clothes for working in the rain. We should keep the poles from being moved until I could determine what poles were from legitimate areas to be put to immediate farming, adding that each of six or eight owners had their separate brands, or initials marked with heavy blue crayon on the ends of the poles.

When I arrive at the pole skidway by the all-night steamboat, twenty-four hours following Gabe's arrival, I found one of the homesteaders on guard, who had no interest in the poles, except that he was hired by Gabe to do the day guarding, while Gabe did night duty, and it was raining most of the time. I found Gabe boarding with an elderly homesteader couple so I moved into the same bed with Gabe.

We were on this job for almost two weeks, before I was able to check the dozen claims, from which poles had been cut. I found only three that could be considered as trespass cases. These three had beat it when we tried to round up all overcuttings.

"Gone to Canada" was the usual answer. A year and a half later one of them rapped on the door of the small rented home I was occupying as a married man in Newport. He wanted to know if the government was ever going to compensate him some of the payment we had gotten from the pole buyers to cover his expenses in cutting the poles and dragging them out to the skidway? Also--was the land office going to allow him to go back now and homestead his old claim? "Not a chance," said I. Then he started cursing and making threats against my future happiness. He was undoubtedly partly intoxicated for he pushed back his mackinaw sufficient for me to glimpse a pistol in his belt. At that moment, out came my bride, Ruby, who had been listening in the adjoining bedroom. One glance and she let out an unearthly scream. This, plus the apparition in a white, flowing nightgown was more than our threatening midnight caller could take. He threw up his hands, gasped, wheeled about and evaporated into the midnight gloom, never to be heard from again. This last was true for the other claimants in the group which I contested at the Coeur D'Alene Land Office.

MAUNDER: Did you encounter many cases of timber theft?

FROMME: Not many, but until the national forests were accepted as the proper treatment for timbered areas, someone was always trying to acquire title to valuable government timber under abuse of the old Homestead Act and other schemes. One claim I contested in that recent addition to the forest was truly amusing. It was in the name of a woman, who had paid a professional locator to place her on a 160-acre tract of splendid timber not far from some active logging. When she had held it for five years, supposedly

living on the place a large part of the time and doing some soil tilling, she applied for patent, or title. Most of this five years was prior to this land's being placed in the national forest, so I received notice of her intention to "prove up" shortly after my assignment to the Newport headquarters. I didn't know the exact tract, so I had to make a special trip there to pass on the validity of her right to patent. All I found was a temporary shack which showed some evidences of having been used occasionally as a weekend visiting spot in fair weather and a couple of sawhorses. Her application for patent had mentioned two horses among property on the place. She didn't actually lie on that score, but the Land Office might well have assumed that she meant live horses. When I brought this out at the land office hearing, there was general chuckling and the lady hung her head with a sheepish grin as though she had been called in a poker game bluff. She departed sad but wiser. She should have been fined.

Incidentally, back at the cedar pole landing, Gabe and I got along quite well with the pole cutting settlers after they learned that they were not likely to be arrested for stealing government timber, and that it was fortunate that they had been stopped before running that risk. They were told that the poles would be released as soon as it could be determined which claims had been cleared in good faith, meaning pole cutting on very limited acreage and where residences and other necessary buildings were being constructed. This would have to await our examination and estimate of the progress and apparent good intentions on either tract.

Some amusing incidents occurred. One dim-witted fellow

stopped me early the second day of my homestead examinations to ask if the government was holding his team of mules because they had been used for dragging out poles. When I denied any such action, he led me to his stable, where his team of strong black mules had been painted during the night with the initials U.S. in white paint a foot high on each rump. I relieved his fears at once, telling him to watch the facial expression of his professed friends.

One other morning when it was raining as usual, the landlady was serving Gabe and me breakfast when she glanced out the window and remarked in an anguished voice. "Oh, deary me. This indecent rain is getting monopolus. Don't you boys agree?" It wouldn't have been so bad if she hadn't appended the question as a clincher. Gabe assented in a suppressed voice, but I didn't dare try to speak--along with a mouth full of hot mush and a yen to snort. Gabe was around fifty-five or sixty so had learned to control his emotions better than I. Anyway, as we agreed later, this remark of the old gal, and in such an anguished voice, broke the monopoly of this damn damp and tedious job.

I supplied the cedar pole buyers with a list of all the poles we were releasing, together with a bill of payment due from them to the United States government. The poles were listed in foot lengths, at their regular purchasing price, regardless of whether the buyers had advanced cash to the settlers to cover costs in getting the poles to the skidway. Although grumbling at having to pay for some of the poles twice, they took care of the bill. They promised to check with the Forest Service on any further cedar pole deal with settlers on unpatented lands.

MAUNDER: Was the inspection report on McConnell accepted by Mr. Pinchot?

FROMME: Yes, and he took action at once to dismiss him. Redington had sent for Overton W. Price, Pinchot's right hand and the assistant chief forester, who was on a trip to Missoula at the time, to come to Priest River for consultation and advice. Price read the inspection report, discussed the details with Redington and me, then drew up a telegram to Pinchot, containing his recommendation for immediate dismissal. I was asked to take it to Ben for his perusal.

I've neglected to mention that Ben was now in bed at the Beardsley Hotel. Ben was recovering from a sprained ankle, sustained in the woods while checking on some rumored trespass. A lady friend of his, from the Priest Lake Hotel, known as Maggie Less, was taking care of him. I had been over to see him a couple of times and told him what was brewing at the office. He would ask Maggie for another swig at the bottle and pretend to be unconcerned, except to remark on one or two occasions, "I expect that you are telling all you know?" My reply was, "I'm answering questions as honestly as I know how; as I've always told you I would do if this kind of situation should arise."

MAUNDER: What was McConnell's reaction to the Price telegram?

FROMME: He gave it a bleary-eyed squint, and handed it back to me, "Go ahead and read it, flunky." After which he said, "Well, you can tell that Price and his gang of pussyfooters, that they can go straight to hell, so far as I'm concerned. And, as for you, when Senator Borah gets through with this mess and the stink clears off of Priest River, there'll be a big pile of manure; and

who'll be sitting on top? B. F. McConnell. And who'll be flat on the bottom, begging for mercy? R. L. Fromme!" To which I responded with a laugh, which I didn't altogether feel. I handed the wire to the railway dispatcher, in compliance with instructions of Mr. Price, then returned to our little office with McConnell's response to Price's offer.

MAUNDER: Did you hear whether Senator Borah ever took any interest in this matter?

FROMME: No, I never did, but I'm sure he was no friend of the Forest Service. I got that from reading his remarks in the Congressional Record. On one occasion these seemed rather laughable. A bill was being debated as to whether Forest Service employees should be granted thirty days annual leave, like other government workers, instead of their present fifteen. Borah rose to say, "Certainly not. Their entire employment is recreation at government expense."

MAUNDER: Do you know what happened to McConnell after his dismissal?

FROMME: He and Maggie went to Spokane. After a week or two, there was some publicity about my being promoted to forest supervisor and the office moved to Newport, Washington. I received a letter from Spokane with "Return to Maggie Lee" on the envelope. Inside was a short news item torn from a Spokane paper regarding my promotion, followed by a comment that it was understood that "R.L. Fromme, just turned 26, is the youngest supervisor in the U.S. Forest Service." There was also a commercial joke card reading in glaring red letters "You may think that you are it, but you'll find out you are a nit!" I thought of

designing a card of my own manufacture, reading, "You may think he'll take the halter, you'll ne'er get him to the altar," but I didn't send it. Ben must have been quite a chore for her, and I was inclined to think that she was paying a large part of their living expenses in Spokane, for I never knew him to receive any income, while in government service other than his monthly salary from \$1500 per annum. When he asked me to bring his suit, a small grip of traveling shorts, socks, underwear, and dress shoes, Redington, who was at the office said "Take this too and handed me a lady's nightgown. As I delivered the grip to Ben, I handed the gown to Maggie. She gave it a contemptuous glance, tossed it aside, and said, "That's not mine." Ben chuckled.

Another item I handed her, she greedily accepted. It was a large, manila government envelope on which McConnell's unmistakable handwritten notice appeared: "Private Papers of Maggie Lee." The envelope was unsealed. Inspector Redington, by the way, became excitedly curious as this envelope appeared, while we were cleaning out the dresser drawers. He remarked, "Well, it's a government envelope, and it's unsealed, so, I think we've got a right to glance inside to see if it has any important bearing on this inspection." I refused to commit myself one way or the other. In a moment, Redington remarked. "It's nothing but her final divorce papers, and she gets some property."

I did see McConnell once more. It was during the Christmas season that same year, 1907. Fred Ames, of my Yale class, and in the district office in Portland had agreed to spend part of the holidays with me in Spokane. The subject of McConnell's escapades naturally came up in our conversation. He wondered whether the



dismissed officer was still in that city. We were dining in the famous Davenport restaurant at the time, so I slipped upstairs to the Penington Hotel in back which Ben often frequented, and asked to see the hotel register. I went back to about the time I had helped Ben and Maggie on the train out of Priest River, and recognized the familiar hand scrawl at once. But instead of B.F. McConnell, it was F.B. McLee. The clerk advised that they were still living there, but that Mr. McLee had gone out with a couple of gentlemen callers. I thanked him, saying that I would probably find him about town somewhere.

Fred and I started looking into the various booze emporiums, but we hadn't gone very far when we had to suddenly jump aside to avoid being struck by outward swinging double doors. Out came Ben with a wobbly friend hanging to each arm, and down the sidewalk they swayed, like a ship in heavy seas. We watched them a few minutes, clearing the sidewalk of other pedestrians as they floated along.

The thing that incensed Ames about this experience was that McConnell was buttoned up to the heck in the first adopted Forest Service uniform, approved and advocated by Mr. Pinchot.

That was the last time I ever saw my old boss, and I worried some as to his means of existence. During the time I was associated with him he never received any mail or had other contact with his folks in Boise. I didn't believe that Maggie could support him and I had given up hopes that he could ever earn a sober living. So I was surprised to notice his handwriting on a letter addressed to me two years later when I was serving as supervisor of the Klamath National Forest at Yreka, California.

It was from Boise, Idaho on State of Idaho stationery, and started by saying that he had just read under government news that I was being transferred from Yreka to the Siskiyou National Forest at Grants Pass, Oregon. It sent his thoughts back to a chummy log cabin on the shore of Priest Lake, with a mulligan stew, simmering on a tiny cook range, "and you with your mandolin, singing "Ain't It Funny What a Diff'rence Just a Few Hours Make." Then he went on to say that I would be surprised to see him now that he was on the water wagon, and had been for three months in spite of the fact that the going was awful rough at times. He hoped that he could hang on 'til the temptation to drop off disappeared. Also, he now had an easy desk job with the state and was still single. He hoped that Ruby was still with me and that I hadn't forgotten that song. I read that letter more than once and tears almost came to my eyes, as I recalled the extremes of emotion that man evoked in our short association. I answered him at once, praising his new attitude and hinting for further word of progress. Within six or eight months I learned via Priest River of his death at age 45.

MAUNDER: When you became supervisor, the office was changed to Newport, Washington?

FROMME: Yes. Both Price and Redington seemed to feel that such a change would harmonize better with a fresh start, and the shift of only seven miles would be immaterial from a travel standpoint; besides Newport was more of a business center with city telephone service and better railway facilities. Redington interjected, "It would also be helpful, if we could logically change the name of the national forest."

"Well, I can suggest a good name," I said, "Kaniksu." I

found that name on old maps for our present Priest Lake. Inquiry among old-timers, disclosed that Kaniksu was the name that Indians applied to an ordained priest who worked among them in the lake area. With the approval of the new name, I was on my way to locate new office space, which I selected over a hardware store in a new building. I also rented cot space in a back room for one of the new rangers and myself. This new ranger was the son of a well-known timber cruiser, with whom he had worked for several years. He also had recently graduated from a Spokane business college, the same class as my intended bride. As I had requested, Mr. Price authorized the employment of a male clerk who would be useful in spelling and in carrying firewood up the long flight of stairs. There were also errand jobs anticipated of rustling emergency fire fighters and supplying district ranger demands for tools, horse-feed, etc. However, my plan of employing the new ranger in a dual capacity didn't last long, for I received a telegram advising that a male clerk now considered surplus in the general land office was being sent me at the request of Mr. Price.

In the meantime, my ranger-clerk had devised a more efficient way to supply the heater. He noticed that a temporary scaffold of two planks nailed side by side to form a 24-inch tramway furnished wheelbarrow entry to the rear hallway door of our second floor. The building owner explained this construction as a temporary means for transporting paint and other supplies to complete the unfinished back rooms, and had no objection to its use for transporting fuel, if we thought we could keep our balance, as the painters had done. He loaned the wheelbarrow, and my ranger-clerk, equipped with his caulked boots, fairly danced his way up.

When 35-year-old Otto arrived and was advised of his extracurricular duties, which also embraced opening up the underside of a number of native birds, shot and sent in by the rangers, he blanched and belched quite noticeably. The dead birds were part of the study to determine the eating habits of western birds, and the instructions were to carefully lift out the gullet and stomach intact, attach to the decapitated head for proper identification by the Biological Survey, treat with preservative, wrap in tissue paper and ship in heavy wrapping paper to the Washington Office.

I showed Otto how to attend to the birds. He wondered if I couldn't find time to do them all. I told him quite definitely that I had supervisory obligations, that the former clerk had prepared a dozen or more at the start of this project and that more dead birds would be arriving for our attention, until this cooperative project with the Biological Survey was called off by the chief forester. He rolled up his sleeves but didn't get very far, as I learned after I returned from an errand. There was no Otto in sight, only a note saying that he was very sick at his stomach and had gone to his room at the hotel.

Also, he had been carrying stove wood up the long flight of stairs too slowly to keep us reasonably comfortable. So I suggested that he learn to use the wheel barrow and bring up the larger amounts at a time. I offered to show him how the former clerk handled the job. He watched me add a few screw caulks to my hobnailed field shoes to get better traction and my delivery of one well loaded wheelbarrow to the second floor rear entrance. He then pulled on the same shoes, gripped the handles of the

wheelbarrow, with only half a normal load as a starter, lifted his eyes to heaven in silent prayer, and attained a height of probably six feet, when his coy shimmying suddenly became desperate shakes, punctuated by a harrowing scream and a death-defying dive to the ground below. He landed on hands and knees and was not hurt except in dignity. Not so the wheelbarrow, which called for some overtime on repairs. The scream brought quite an audience from the store and neighboring buildings, as Otto indignantly changed back to his own shoes and meekly picked up a chunk of fuel wood under each arm and patiently followed the old routine of around to the front and up the long stairway to victory.

It wasn't long after this last experience when Otto began to pine for steam-heated rooms and government provided janitor service, so agreed with me that he would prefer to celebrate this and all future Christmases in Washington. I was authorized to re-employ my former ranger clerk and was sent Forest Assistant W. N. Miller to get our Newport office functioning efficiently.

Well-intentioned Mr. Price caused me another worried situation earlier that fall. He had visited Priest Lake after McConnell's dismissal, and became quite enthused with District Ranger Dave Coolin and wife, when entertained at dinner in their neat log cabin quarters. He told me that Dave had given up all interest in hard drink and was worthy of promotion to assistant supervisor. I wasn't altogether sure of this. Through intervention of Mr. Price, I received an allotment of trail construction money to start work on the frequently travelled Granite Creek route to the Upper West Branch. I promptly sent tools, food supplies and several day laborers from Newport and

Priest River, with a letter placing Coolin in charge and Assistant Ranger Sam Davis as his right-hand man. About three days later, two of the Newport contingent showed up in my new office to report that Dave and Sam had celebrated the trail building prospect by getting half the crew drunk with them resulting in the tipping over of one of the rowboats depositing a large part of the tools and food supplies on the bottom of the lake.

I got in touch with Chief Inspector Sherman at once, who promptly expelled both men, but in deference to Mr. Price, limited Coolin's suspension to six months on condition of no over-drinking during that period. It put me in the position of keeping a close watch on that gentleman, which I assumed his wife would do. In any case I didn't now fear so much his being pushed for assistant supervisor. Within four months, he passed away from apoplexy, so it was reported. I attended the funeral.

As for Sam Davis, that was difficult to face in view of our close association at Priest Lake. This became more trying when he called on me at the Newport office. I proposed that we go out for a quiet walk, while I tried to make him see my position under Mr. Sherman and others higher up. I doubt that I succeeded, although I got him to admit that there was no legitimate argument I could make, following so close on the McConnell well-known conflict with the liquor problem.

MAUNDER: What was done about the Granite Creek trail project?

FROMME: I surely didn't want to lose that, so I went to the Priest River livery stable, and asked for their speediest saddle horse. They rented me one that was really raring to run, equipped with a buckaroo saddle so I wouldn't likely slide off at the rear.

That animal ran with the minimum of spurring most of the way to Ranger Gabe McKenzie's station and my lower back was one vast broken blister from rubbing against the high back of that snug buckaroo-type saddle. I gave Gabe orders that he was to take over the trail construction job at once. Before he left, however, he gave my blistered back some remedial treatment and applied a soothing bandage.

MAUNDER: After you finished with the cedar pole problem, did you encounter any more cases of timber stealing?

FROMME: Some of the attempts to homestead timbered lands under the Forest Homestead Act of June 11, 1906 had that appearance. However, in most cases reached by the Priest Lake road, these were usually due to a willful fraud on the part of a professional land locator. This unscrupulous guy would show the prospective homesteader a piece of natural meadow within the forest boundaries, pretending that his forest homestead application applied to the said meadow, but the locator would actually enter the land office description of another area, too heavily timbered to ever be approved for homesteading. His fee was usually insignificant compared with the actual value of the land shown. It was understood that the victim must live on and cultivate a reasonable part of the acreage embraced in the description for five years. It was also understood that a Forest Service representative must investigate the described land in the application to determine if it was more valuable for agriculture than forest production and that it was not needed by the Forest Service as a ranger station or for raising needed horse feed, or other important government use.

Even though the locator's fee was small compared to what service he was supposed to be rendering, it was easy money for him, especially if he was able to dupe several would-be homesteaders on the same attractive piece of meadow. He had to make sure that he gave each a different general land office description, so that the application would be accepted pending the time that it could be examined by a qualified forest officer.

We received so many applications during one short period of nice weather in the autumn of 1907 that I became suspicious that some indiscriminate locator was on the job, especially since they were all in the Jack Pine Flats (the pine actually being lodgepole pine). In one instance, the examiner happened to contact the prospective homesteader, who showed the land he thought this application covered. It was part of the meadow extension above the Halfway House, a luncheon place on the stage road to the lake. His application actually covered 160 acres of Jack Pine with soil too shallow and sandy to justify attempts at farming, even if it were not timbered.

As soon as weather and surface snow permitted, a young forester by the name of Clyde Leavitt was sent out from the Missoula district office on my appeal for help. He concluded that the locator must be getting his application forms and land descriptions from or through an attorney. I suspected a certain man in Priest River, who used to operate under the old Timber and Stone Act. (3 June, 1878, 20 Stat. 89)

I reported this Jack pine situation to the Washington Office as field examinations of many of the applications began to prove fraud. I received orders to mail in a complete report with names



of applicants and legal descriptions of land covered, so they could plot this extensive area on a Kaniksu Forest map to show Congress how this June 1906 Forest Homestead Act was being abused.

MAUNDER: How did you feel about Gifford Pinchot?

FROMME: Oh, I thought he was a great man, very inspiring.

Bringing up his name reminds me of one of the many unfulfilled promises made in my life, probably the most serious. He wrote me a personal letter when I was on the Mt. Baker National Forest at Bellingham, Washington, near the end of my 37 years in the Forest Service. He was writing his book on personal reminiscences of his early years as the forester and he wished my recollections of the first years of my own Forest Service employment. I either didn't realize how important my experience under McConnell could have been to his story of political oppression and failures, or else I had an inflated impression of being overburdened with important demands on my time. In any case, I never did supply him with any of my initial experiences. I still have his letter of January 26, 1940, acknowledging my lame excuses for failure to respond to his very reasonable request, and also my lame promises for the indefinite future. His letter was much too liberal in excusing my derelictions and letting me off with his preference for a full report rather than an early one. I'll send you his letter for whatever possible value it might have for your files. I prefer not to accidentally run across it again. I did suggest to Mr. Pinchot that if he could locate the Paul Redington reported on Benjamin F. McConnell in the old personnel files of 1907, he would obtain plenty of information concerning forest administration carry over from the political days of the Interior Department

control. A lame dodge on my part.

MAUNDER: Have you ever written any of this up in your own style?

FROMME: Yes. In fact, the Yale Forest School of Forestry Library has three separate memoirs of mine that were submitted to the Thirty-Year Club of the Forest Service in Portland, Oregon for distribution to their members in their publication called "Timber Lines." These covered the following periods of my official life: 1906-17, an addition to 1906 that I entitled "A Better Man Than You Once Did It," which was the answer I got from Ranger Mike Murray, when I questioned the suitability of the bed he had provided for me in a manger of his horse stable, and 1912-26. Frances M. Bolton, Librarian, acknowledged receiving these through the editor of the School of Forest Yale Forest School News, and stated that she was having them bound together in durable library buckram of Yale blue with gold letters and placed in the Alumni Section.

I could have mentioned that by the end of the fire season of 1908, when I was called to the Washington office for some training for my new assignment as chief of operation in the San Francisco District office, McConnell's warning came to mind. "If you let these damn logging outfits know that they can buy timber on this forest reserve, we will be invaded by timber fallers, inspectors and perpetual grief."

Closely following our first sale to the Fidelity Lumber Company, I was hounded by so many other prospective timber purchasers that Pinchot sent me Forest Assistant John F. Preston from his timber sales office to help me check on three widely scattered tracts.

Other special memoirs of mine, mimeographed for "Timber-Lines," of which I have extra copies are "Forester Fromme's Frenzied Fruition Following Flying for Forest Fires," "Reckless Rides Recalled by Rudy," "A Certain Supervisors' Banquet During Prohibition Days," "Black Bear Bats Out His Breakfast," "The Detached Cartilage Finally Departs," "River Driving By Day and Revel Riving by Night," and a couple others, the exact titles I can't now recall--referring to an earthquake stalled elevator in San Francisco in the fall of 1908 and one relating to the former Multnomah Hotel (now the Regional Forester's Office) during a Supervisors' meeting. I'll dig out copies of these and send them to you.

MAUNDER: Do you have any old pictures or snapshots that were taken when you were in the Forest Service?

FROMME: Yes, but most of them are pasted in an album. I'll have copies made of some of the clearest, which I think may be of some use to you. I snapped more pictures in my earlier years in the Forest Service than later and these were on government film, of which I have very few copies. My best pictures of mountaineer outings and scenic features were taken within the Olympic National Forest.

MAUNDER: Did you keep a diary?

FROMME: Only as required by the Forest Service, mostly very briefly, just enough to aid in preparing expense accounts. These diaries were always placed in the files of the office concerned, and were very likely destroyed after a few years. A while back when the Portland Thirty Year Club wanted my memoirs of the 13 years I spent on the Olympic National Forest National Park, I

wrote to Olympia to see if they could let me have my old diaries to help with names, dates and reminders in general, but they said that all that stuff had been thrown away.

MAUNDER: Let's briefly go over the chronology of your career in the Forest Service. You were at Priest River, Idaho, from July 1906 to August 1907, then to Newport, Washington as supervisor when the forest name was changed to Kaniksu. But in the fall of 1908, you were called back to Washington. To do what?

FROMME: To get about two weeks training in district office procedure preparatory to being sent to San Francisco as chief of operation under Olmsted. It was then called the District Five office and was later changed to Region Five. A year later in 1909, I was made supervisor of the Klamath National Forest at Yreka, California. And a year after that I was supervisor of the Siskiyou at Grants Pass, Oregon. I took the Gasquet Ranger District of California with me, because it was easier to reach via stage road from Grants Pass than by saddle horse from Yreka.

I had wanted for several years to become supervisor of the Olympic National Forest, because of its reputation as having the most timber and wildest scenery of all the national forests, besides plenty of rain, hence minor fire risk. But there was always someone in Washington to beat me to it. By being in Grant's Pass, I was now in Region Six, and when I got the call from Portland in the late summer of 1912, that P.S. Lovejoy was going East to teach that fall, I was in Olympia by the first fall rain. I sold my new bungalow to Nelson Macduff, the new incoming supervisor for \$3100 in escrow for \$10 down. It took him about three years to pay the balance. Meanwhile I was supervisor of the

Olympic for 13 years. It rained 13 inches per annum, on the west side.

MAUNDER: That brought you into the '20s, right?

FROMME: Yes, 1926. But, I am overlooking the fact that in 1917, when the U.S. got into the First World War I was sent to Alaska, with the understanding that I was to serve as supervisor of the Chugach and Tongass National Forests, during Supervisor W. G. Weigle's absence as a major in a forestry regiment. District Forester George Cecil seemed to feel that Weigle would not be called until fall, but felt that his temporary substitute for the Alaska Forests should get to Ketchikan by June 1 to get the benefit of his advice and good weather for acquaintance with the area and problems. I got a wonderful acquaintance with the coast region from a little below Ketchikan to the Matanuska territory beyond Anchorage, including travel in the cabin cruiser "Tann," supervised by a capable young captain and a Japanese chef, all in Forest Service full-time employment for the Ketchikan Ranger District. I visited Skagway, Sitka, Cordova and Anchorage by commercial steamer, railroad or on foot. I found Weigle in a hospital in Anchorage instead of in his Ketchikan office. He was resting from a hernia operation, which he had thus far kept secret from the Forest Service or the Army, for fear of prejudicing his application. He felt sure that since he had the doctor's okay I could continue my plans for renting a house. He felt sure that he would be called in the fall.

I deposited one month's rent on a house, which was to become vacant October 1, but when I got in touch with Cecil by Phone from Seattle, he suggested that I accept a detail to his office for the

winter, as he had grave doubts that Weigle would now be accepted by the Army. He approved my taking leave to pick up my wife, who had been staying with her folks in Spokane, pending our move to Alaska. I wrote and asked George Drake, who was then assistant supervisor at Ketchikan, to request a refund of my advanced rental payment of \$75. (For further information on Mr. Drake, see George L. Drake, Santa Cruz, CA: Forest History Society, 1975) George got the release but not the refund, and he kept watch on the house to note that the owner actually kept it vacant until the very morning of Oct. 1.

After filling in the offices of timber sales and public relations, I returned home to the Olympic, and furnished a rental home. I had previously become involved as chairman of the Inaugural Ball and Legislative Dance Committee for the Chamber of Commerce, which entitled me to enter the floor of the state legislature at any time and buttonhole a legislator. I tried not abuse this privilege, but certain social dance nuts among the Senate, in particular seemed to crave my advice on such bills as requiring fire protection anywhere in the state. Mr. Joy, head of the Private Land Owners for Fire Protection was especially outspoken in his praise of my efforts. He believed that the state forester's sponsored bill was certain of defeat except for my last minute intervention with the Senate whip. This senator, by the way, was one of the dancing nuts, and was always requesting complimentary tickets from me for the governor's inaugural ball or legislative dances, for his many Seattle friends. He and his wife were very popular socially and Ruby and I had had them to dinner.

I must digress a moment to relate our encounter on the

Olympic with the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World was often dubbed by timber operators as "I Won't Work"). These men menaced the war effort by urging strikes on one pretext or another. Three agitators entered the Webb sale of government timber on Jimmy-Come-Lately Creek one afternoon, without being aware that the loggers were engaged in burning slash as required by the Forest Service contract. Mr. Webb, the purchaser, telephoned me at dinner time. I called the sheriff in Port Angeles and urged that they be arrested and taken before the U.S. District Attorney in Seattle. I met the whole group there in the morning. Webb, the sheriff and three IWWs. The latter had been treating the matter as a lark until I read some federal laws pertaining to interference with fire fighting and the timber sale operator's obligations. They began to look more serious and asked us questions.

This resulted in a much larger trial than anyone had anticipated. These arrested men succeeded in making it a trial of the entire IWW movement before it was over. Their local attorney had for assistance the former trial lawyer of Chicago, Clarence Darrow, to the defense and subpoenas on District Forester Ferdinand Silcox and Chief of Operation {Query Author} Rutledge. Silcox and Rutledge were there to vouch for the cooperative help they had gotten from the IWW on recent fires out of the Missoula, Montana office. By this time, our Portland attorney, Mr. Staley, together, with the Seattle district attorney, managed to get the trial judge to forbid their testimony on the grounds that this was a trial of three individual men who interfered with fire suppression on a single government logging operation, where

unburned slash was a dangerous menace. It was being burned in a careful manner by experienced men under contract requirements of the Forest Service. The three men were sentenced to the McNeil Island Prison for a year and a day. The timber sale ranger Everett Harpham testified on the dangerous condition, due to slash burning. He was on the torpedoed Lusitania enroute to France as an enlisted man in the forestry regiment the next year, saved by a life boat on the west shore of Ireland. Incidentally, Roy Moncaster, another Olympic ranger, and previously a member of the University of Washington rowing crew, was an oarsman on this same life boat, but lost his life as they struck the Ireland shore. I got the Geological Survey Board to honor his memory with Moncaster Mountain in the Quinault District of the Olympic Forest.

As to Sitka spruce for airplane construction, the Olympic Forest, especially the Quinault Ranger District, contributed the most in the splitting of large logs. A railroad was hurriedly constructed along the north shore of Crescent Lake to get out spruce, mostly from private holdings off the northwest corner of the Forest. George Cecil and I had a rather heated argument with Colonel Brice P. Disque, of the Spruce Production Division, at Crescent Lake on the railroad location just prior to its construction. We wanted it further up the slope so that it would not interfere with an existing resort and several special-use summer homes, but we were accused of trying to interfere with the war. The railroad was built close to the shore as the Colonel wished. This was during the winter of 1917-18.

We also were forced to run down false reports on wireless station construction and such. Probably my chief activity



connected with this war was largely unofficial in leading group singing of patriotic songs in local theaters, schools and other public gatherings, also helping with the entertainment of soldier groups, either as director or participant--and managing Wednesday and Saturday free dances for Fort Lewis soldiers on behalf of the Red Cross, when not on official travel. I arranged for dance orchestras well in advance, some from out of town, but I had a cooperative committee to help, including my wife. There was one cooperative official job with the Army management of Fort Lewis. That was covering the area on horseback with a lieutenant to pick out two or three practical lookout points for fire detection. We received good cooperation from them in furnishing non-combatants (conscientious objectors) for fighting two bad fires.

MAUNDER: Where did you go after leaving the Olympic Forest in 1926?

FROMME: I was transferred to Portland to serve in the office of Public Relations during the absence of John D. Guthrie, on an indefinite detail to the Washington Office. That was the word sent to me. Short news items sent out to Seattle and Peninsula papers merely stated that I was being called to the Regional Forester's office to serve in Public Relations and that "C.S. Plumb, recent supervisor of the Deschutes National Forest of central Oregon, was replacing Mr. Fromme at Olympia." Two or three editorial comments on this brief item seemed to have assumed that my transfer to P.R. in Portland was a promotion, and so commented. An editorial in the Port Angeles paper really effused over my past service on the Olympic, especially in "promptness on the fire menace and getting things done with the least red tape

possible," ending with the time worn compliment: "The Olympic's loss is Portland's gain."

However, I had good reasons to doubt the permanency of this Regional Office assignment. In the first place, Guthrie's absence was for a specific service in Washington, not expected to last more than two to three months, and the Portland Office had been subjected to a change in Regional Foresters only the year previous, C. M. Granger, a new man to Region Six, replacing the long established George H. Cecil, who was being transferred to supervisorship of the Angeles National Forest at Los Angeles. My first meeting with the new Regional Forester was under embarrassing circumstances to me, Cecil brought him in to my Olympia office about 11 o'clock on Monday morning, wholly unpredicted, about an hour after I had agreed with the president of our local Kiwanis Club to open the meeting that noon in his sudden unexpected absence. (I had been serving as one of the directors, and the vice president was out of town on a long trip). Our club lunched behind a movable partition at the end of a large dining room of our main hotel and, since it was not too late for me to try to rustle another substitute, I explained to my visitors that we three could select a small luncheon table in the main dining room and put in our orders while I took the seven or eight minutes necessary to start Kiwanis off with singing the National Anthem, followed by the customary allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and a short prayer by one of our ministers. Then, probably one Kiwanis song if the waiters were slow bringing on the food. I had previously told Cecil what to order for me, so when I rejoined my visitors, there was no waiting on the part of

anyone. However, I again thanked them for excusing my absence, to which Cecil responded agreeably, but not a sound from Granger, which left me rather embarrassed.

When I found time to catch Cecil's ear privately, as Granger was busy with my head clerk, I asked if Granger had been "put out" by my attention to the Kiwanis Club. The answer was a definite "yes", followed by quite a number of disapprovals of my conduct of the office of forest supervisor. Most of these had to do with my spending too much time on community cooperation, giving public talks, associating with state legislators (especially in the matter of advising on pending bills, whether of forestry interest or not), getting involved in entertainment projects (all of which should be considered beneath the dignity of a forest supervisor). His argument with Cecil, apparently in evaluation discussions prior to the Kiwanis episode, was that such pronounced public relation activities couldn't help but interfere with time, which logically should be devoted to field contacts with Olympic Forest problems.

I believe that Cecil and other Regional officers appreciated the fact that at that time, in 1913, when I arrived on the Olympic, there was quite an agitation on the part of the Mountaineer's Club in Seattle and the Chambers of Commerce of Grays Harbor cities to transfer a large part of the scenic interior of the national forest to national park status under the Department of the Interior. So far as I could learn, no forest officer had openly confronted this agitation excepting District Ranger Chris Morgenroth to a mild extent with the Klah-hane Club (mountain-climbing) of Port Angeles, his district.

I considered this a problem of real precedence, aside from getting acquainted with the district rangers, their major problems and the more accessible areas of each district. I called on the main officers of the Seattle Mountaineers, got myself and wife an invitation to join their 1913 Olympic Outing, a trek by foot and pack horses, through the forest, north to south, up the Elwha River and down the North Fork of the Quinault. We made a side trip climb of Mt. Olympus and other prominent peaks adjacent to the main route, and succeeded in getting their unqualified endorsement of national forest administration of the entire area. This was repeated in 1920, when other forest matters prevented my starting with them, and I had to catch up with them by horseback after they had gone one week. No wife with me this time. She had had all the roughing it she wanted on the previous trip, seven years before.

When I reached them, just before Mt. Anderson, on the Dosewallips-Duckabush East Fork Quinault-Hayes Creek Divide, was to be climbed for the first time of record, they had already sent out a small contingent to climb a previously unnamed peak on the Hayes River-Dungeness divide and left a Mountaineer Club copper cylinder chained to a large rock, with an indestructible signature roll inside, bearing the date, their signatures and the name "Mt. Fromme" at the top. (Incidentally, this peak, along with the major mountain area of the original wilderness designation of the old Olympus forest was transferred to the Olympic National Park along about 1940 or '41. An inquiry by letter to the park superintendent at Port Angeles about 1965, assured me that the Mt. Fromme cylinder was still in place and bore a large number of

mountain climbing signatures, following the group who named it. The Grays Harbor National Park agitators became rather quiet after I got acquainted with their leaders. The Hoquiam half drew off entirely and publicly endorsed our wilderness designation and treatment, thanks to my congenial acquaintance with their active, long-serving secretary and my frequent discussions with their prominent and prosperous machinery manufacturer and community booster, Frank Lamb. He invited me to his home on frequent occasions just to get me into an argument, while he criticized Forest Service shortcomings in the matter of perpetual timber production, or natural regeneration. On two different occasions, when he was informed that I was in town on a fire prevention speaking program, he telephoned the hotel and invited me to dinner.

As to Granger's charge that I did too much public speaking for one serving as a forest supervisor, I can't very well refute. My incentive for mature audience appearance was usually the Park agitation or the opportunity to meet a new club or organization, but my lineup of high school assemblies, occasionally as many as four or five schools in a day in and around Seattle and Tacoma, was to cover as much ground as possible for "fire-prevention" week. My chief aim with this type of audience was to keep them alert to what I was saying, called for the injection of timely expressions or short, appropriately witty or humorous stories, especially when feeding statistics which would stick.

I frequently used fire prevention slogans or warnings in the parody of topical songs, using a lantern slide or portable blackboard for the words which the audience was expected to sing

in response to leads, or questions, I would sing, or, in other cases of simple wording, easily memorize, merely sing the words to be repeated in advance. As a sample, of the earliest I used was "There ain't no fires where we go" with brief verses telling why; all to the then popular "There Ain't no Flies on Auntie". Needless to say, that was a long time ago. A much later sample is to the melody: "I'm an Old Cow-hand". If using slides, I would show the full choruses, and, after a brief rehearsal, obtain a generous response on the repeats, especially the "YIPPI-I-O-KI-AYE". I would sing the verse. The verse I hatched for this number was:

To the woods each summer Tender-feet,  
like a drove of menacing grubs,  
Its no wonder some trees leave in a heat  
before these careless fire-bugs;

-1-

Yes-sir-ree, some trees really pine,  
No-sir-ree, can't last long'  
Listen, you fire menacing tenderfeet,  
while we sing this song:  
(All sing) I'm a tanned pan fan  
for the woods, so grand,  
For the forest land--I take my stand;  
I'm a camper, who never left a fire  
to reduce the woods to a funeral pyre  
For I get that last spark or I'm a liar  
Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye, Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye.

-2-

(All sing) I'm a tanned pan fan  
(Etc. as before for two lines)  
I'm a tourist whom forest roads inspire,  
never tire of rubb'ring on a rubber tire,  
But I flip no fag, freedom I desire  
Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye, Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye.

-3-

(All sing first two lines, as before)  
I'm a fisherman who seldom gets a bite,  
But oh not so where mosquitoes light,  
And the bees 'rouse me from a sit-down-strike,  
Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye, Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye.

-4-

(all sing--as before)

I'm a hiker, whom forest trails invite,  
 if I crave to smoke, I must sit to light,  
 Then I rub the light 'til it's out of sight,  
 Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye, Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye.

-5-

If a guy should puff on a coffin nail,  
 He must plant it deep 'fore he hits  
 Otherwise he'll sleep in the county jail,  
 Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye, Yippi-I-O-Ki-Aye.

-6-

(All sing etc. as before)

As we go through life, let this be our goal,  
 always keep our fires under safe control,  
 If we don't our ghosts may be shov'ling coal  
 Yippi-I-O-Ki-Yea, Yippi-I-O-Ki-AYE

Frequently, as the termination to my lantern slide talk on the beauty and purposes of the Olympic National Forest, I would mention progress on the Olympic under construction along Hood Canal, also north from Hoquiam and via Dungeness, through Port Angeles to Forks, the Bogachiel and south. This was the cue for my request of audience participation in singing my song "Oh Olympic Highway to the Olympics" or, if in Olympia at the time, "Oh Olympia, Gateway to the Olympics". I borrowed the idea for this song from the popular Canadian "Alouetta", but altered the melody and meter to better fit the Highway wording and the naming of the laughable stream crossings of Indian origin. I developed it as a rollicking feature of our banquet entertainment of the Canadian contingent to our Kiwanis District Convention at Olympia in 1922, but it was frequently requested at highway boosting meetings during the several years that construction was in progress on this circuit of the Olympic Peninsula.

Governor Louis Hart was probably my most outspoken publicity advocate. He requested my attendance at a number of booster banquets in adjacent communities so that he could call out "Hey, Fromme, let's have that Dosewallips Song." He preferred this name

of one of the rivers to be crossed by the Highways, and which was listed in one of the many short verses under "Next we cast some wicked wallops, Dosewallips." Other streams or features were, as samples. "On the highway, north we push, Duckabush, running wild just like a chickie, Waketickie; Turning west for crabs, a mess, Dungeness." etc. etc. As we reach the end of construction at Forks, as first written, the song hurries south along the west side, as follows: "Someday further south we go--to the Hoh; Further treats--on the Queets; Next to halt--at Quinault; On she trips--Humptulips; Going some--Hoquiam; Lumber queen--Aberdeen." etc., etc.; "Back to Gay Olympia"--with audience repeats of the leader on each phrase and name. The foregoing are only about one-fourth of the places listed in the song, hence, the leader was instructed to use only parts of special interest to his location.

It was in Seattle that I had my first experience "Going on the air." The Seattle Chamber of Commerce invited me to demonstrate the Highway Song with the backing of their prize 30-voice glee club, and following a short statement of recreation trail plans to scenic Olympic features. I met the glee club a few minutes early so they could develop four-part harmony on the verse repeats and choruses before we started broadcasting. It came in strong in Olympia.

A revival of National Park agitation was called to my attention by Mr. Asahel Curtis as I was visiting his photograph business on the Seattle waterfront. He had been engaged because of his national reputation as a mountain scenery photographer, particularly of Mt. Rainier National Park features, to photograph Mt. Olympus and surrounding rugged recreational features of possible national park stature, now within the Olympic National Forest, Monument or



Wilderness Area. The Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce would supply him with a combination guide, cook and packer with three saddle and three pack horses, also a companion, the husky Mr. Olson, reporter for the Aberdeen World newspaper. The route to follow would embrace a round trip, starting at Quinault Lake, skirting the west foothills to the Hoh River, up that valley to the Soleduck Divide, then crossing to the head of the Elwha and Queets Rivers, out to Quinault Lake via the North Fork.

Mr. Curtis wished me to accompany him as much as convenient, especially to help him get pictures of the wild elk. He had read a news article of my having given an illustrated address to a joint evening session of the Senate and House of the State Legislature, in which I showed starving and dead elk due to overgrazing of the natural river bottoms browse and tender tree tips. I was asking the legislature to consider some form of limited hunting. He wanted me to show him some of these too numerous elk.

As I remember, it was about 1923 or 24 that Curtis made the projected trip. I met him in the head of the Elwha after a two-day backpack hike of some 50 miles. To get pictures of Mt. Olympus, we left the horses, cook and news-reporter in Elwha Basin camp and hiked over the Dodwell-Rison Pass to the lower glaciers of Mt. Olympus taking photos from the pass and closer. The weather was intermittently good and bad for photography. The discovery of a large ice cave or tunnel, roughly 15 or 20 feet wide and 10 to 15 feet high afforded some unusual pictures for Curtis in short spells of sunshine. However, as we stepped outside the dripping ceiling (?), we encountered suddenly drifting fog, which became irregularly dense with snow mist. It was a warning to get back to the pass into

the Elwha Basin without delay. This, we started to do, but without any howling success. The wind was beginning to do the howling.

Well, we stopped for a moment to see if the wind might blow the snowy-fog enough to give us a peep through to some familiar feature of this Upper Queets Basin. We certainly didn't wish to get lured through the wrong pass and find ourselves in a strange watershed, and it was foolish to lose elevation by trying to locate the former snow tunnel for a fresh start. The afternoon was just about gone when we bumped against cliffs, too steep to climb, even if we had wished to, which we didn't. However, they seemed to be a slightly familiar landmark of that edge of Queet Basin just to the north of Dodwell-Rixon Pass, as we had studied the topography when we came over, toward noon. So we scrambled and slid sideways to our right. I had a compass all this time, but the fog and blowing sleet made it useless. All of a sudden we were on and starting to cross downhill, sliding foot tracks - Eureka! Up sideways we scrambled, just as though we had a new shot of high-powered gas. It was our long coveted true pass to the Elwha sure enough. Seven or eight more miles down hill found us stumbling into our camp in the dark, much to the relief of the cook and Olson.

A couple days later, while engaged in our threesome pinochle game, an after supper ritual, Curtis suddenly stopped to jump me about the 7,000 elk, "so many that they were starving to death." "That condition is only in the deep snows of winter, when they are crowded in the Hoh and Bogachiel river bottoms," I remarked; "Now, they are fattening up in the high mountain meadows." "Well, we've crossed several high mountain meadows while coming through the Low-Divide and I haven't been crowded off the trail by any elk yet," he

replied. "That's the trouble," I answered. "You've been traveling trails with a small army of livestock ever since you entered elk country and hardly beyond the ring of the packhorse bell when taking pictures. Tomorrow morning, you and I will leave this cavalcade to rest up a day and I'll show you elk before noon."

So, the next morning, bright and early, but still exuding pessimistic remarks, he loaded me with his large portrait camera of 8 x 10 film plates while he slung his gray flex-speed camera and extra films over his shoulder and followed me up through scattered alpine firs and mountain hemlock toward a grassy notch about 300-400 feet above our camp elevation. No! They weren't there, but we were in mountain-meadow country, although rather narrow and curving in and out around rock points and patches of short trees and brush. As we neared these frequent, small and usually sloping meadow barriers, I would step more carefully, crane my neck and hopefully peak around a rock or through some small brush and get fooled, no elk again. I was beginning to doubt my own optimistic promise, but I hurried on to just one more squint around or through, and I could not trust my voice to even whisper. I just pointed while grinning back to Curtis, right on my heels. There appeared to be at least fifty bulls, does, and calves, all deliberately milling about in and out of a small, shallow pond or so called water hole, surrounded by patches of stunted, alpine trees and brushy growth.

Curtis had his graflex ready for duty in seconds and started easing a bit closer to clear his view. When I was beginning to wonder if he was going to whistle to them first, his camera snapped. A rear guard old bull heard the click, immediately alerted his harem, other bulls, does and calves. They were all on friendly

terms now, but not so, in the rutting season of late September and October, when the more virile and larger bulls covet harems of 5 to 10 or more cow elk, and often tangle their antlers with infiltrators.

The result of the Curtis trip, in brief, was his endorsement of the Forest Service Wilderness Plan as opposed to any National Park involvement and a wonderful set of scenic photographs supporting either idea. He, with his pictures and recommendations was later called to a congressional hearing in Washington, accompanied by my district ranger Chris Morgenroth, to present the local angle and early history of chiefly the west heavy timber Olympics.

My contact with Asahel Curtis in early 1926 was quite flattering to me, but, as I predicted at the time, it never got off the ground. He said that he had been delegated by the directors of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce to ask if I would be willing to accept a speaking tour of about two weeks to present my Olympic lantern slide talk to the principal cities of the state of Washington, all arrangements and expenses to be financed by the Seattle Chamber. This project had been proposed and accepted at a recent state-wide meeting of Chamber of Commerce Secretaries in Seattle and dates had been tentatively set for February, providing of course that the entire idea would be acceptable to me and the Forest Service. Curtis was to accompany me on the first part of the trip involving Bellingham, Wenatchee, Yakima and Spokane to introduce me and operate the lantern, so that I could speak from the stage and better get the audience primed to respond to the singing of the Olympic Highway Song, which should terminate each gathering. Either Curtis or another Seattle Chamber of Commerce director would

carry on for Walla Walla, Vancouver, Longview, Centralia and Tacoma. A Seattle automobile and driver would be used throughout, and the program would be presented in the high school auditorium or a local theater, all evening shows.

I was personally elated at this generous offer, but I had to promptly dampen Curtis' enthusiasm by advising that we had recently been subjected to a change in regional foresters at Portland, and that I had serious doubts of the new man's approval. He naturally was curious, dumbfounded, etc. etc., but wouldn't accept any immediate "no." Wanted to know if I was entitled to annual leave and would be willing to use at least ten days or so as outlined. "Gladly," I said, "but Granger would assume that I would be representing the Forest Service even when off duty, and he already feels that I have accented public activities to the neglect of more pertinent forest duties." "Well, but you wouldn't be expected to be available for a forest duty while on annual leave, and there's surely no likelihood of a forest fire in February," etc. etc.

He finally asked if I had any objection to his calling on Mr. Granger in person, providing he could arrange for an audience by telephone, and if so sanctioned by the other Chamber of Commerce directors and in spite of my explanation of reasons for any likely approval.

He called me by telephone two or three days later, saying that he was too mad to trust his remarks over the telephone and wanted me to accept a dinner date at his home "tomorrow" if I could arrange it, which I did. The answer in Portland was "No!" as I had anticipated, but I will not attempt to quote any of the conversation as related to me by Curtis nor his expressed opinion of the person

who so "depreciatingly insulted" him, as he put it.

Perhaps I can be pardoned for recalling here some of the involvements of my 'teen years, which tended to build up my interest in public contacts. Gaining some competence with the mandolin was one thing, especially as I became a part of the high school orchestra. Singing popular songs, especially the comedy type, was promoted by audience response to vaudeville or musical comedy hits, which I picked up by ear from frequent ushering duties at the Richmond, Indiana Opera House.

A residence neighbor was employed as head usher with pay. I worked under him for fun and experience, the latter being chiefly obtained back stage before the audience doors opened. This led to taking acting parts in high school plays, and joining the Strollers drama group at Ohio State in my junior and senior years, with the additional title of makeup assistant. (Which interest has pursued me throughout life, resulting in a paying hobby with colleges, high schools, community players, fashion shows, queen-contests, etc. since retirement. The latter type makeup, however, required some further special training in cosmetic supply houses in Hollywood, after moving to Southern California. Prior to this family move, I accepted a student-teacher position in the Drama Department at the University of Washington, largely due to the war demands on the younger males available for such duties at that period.)

Back again to high school days, a particularly fond recollection of my senior year was my acquaintance with Strickland Gillilan, then a young man reporter and humorous writer of both verse and prose with the Richmond Palladium, of which I had a distributing route after school. He had suddenly become famous for

his "Off agin, On agin, Gone agin, Finnigan." This was the purported telegraphed report of "Kyars" off the track, as reported to the superintendent Flannigan by section boss Finnigan, after the latter had been censored for making his previous reports of frequent similar accidents too wordy. The story was told in seven-line verses of extremely humorous Irish brogue.

Strickland became quite popular as a humorous speaker for various gatherings after that, and encouraged me with my yen for giving humorous public monologs in attempted German or Swedish dialect (more popular in those days than now). He also seemed to enjoy some of my foolish writings for my history class, often published in our high school magazine, such as "Copy of a letter to Rudy Fromme from King Henry VIII, written on his death bed concerning his many wives" and "Shall We Gobble Up the Philippines." The latter was my pretended attempt to refute U.S. Senator Beveridge, whose speech was in the current press, advocating annexation of these islands by the United States. I took the opposite, or Democrats' view, pretending to have visited them about that time. Then I quoted interviews with "beer-suds salesmen, Chinese laundries and drug vendors, noting that DeWitt's Little Early Risers were advertised to get the lazy men out of the muddy shacks and into the muddy lairs of snails and turtles for the family soup. Corn medicine was also pushed as curing the expansive feet of Aquinaldo's fat wives, who were attempting to wear the high-heeled, pointed toe atrocities taken from the pinched feet of visiting missionaries they had eaten.

My attempted humorous argument for Philippines independence ended as follows, quoting from an old scrap book "Every time I lick

a revenue stamp to a bottle of Dr. Allen's Brain Food. I reflect with Aquinaldo: Why is this thus?" And, "Some of you may actually think that these Philippinos need the kindly guidance of a superior hand, with the index finger on the trigger of a Krag-Jorgenson rifle; but let us, in this onward march of civilization always remember, "there are others."

Gillilan requested that I accompany him to a rally of the local Democrats, where he drew some laughs with Irish yarns, then introduced me and my "Shall We Gobble Up the Philippines." This appeared to be quite laughably--if not politically--received, and received some notice in next morning's paper. My father, who was advertising manager for Gaar, Scott & Company, staunch, if not rabid Republicans, had to endure some raillery because his son appeared to be championing the Democrats. But I don't think it disturbed him too seriously. (Jumping briefly to 1919, I was afforded a brief, but laughable, heart warming visit with my old boosting friend. The Seattle papers had given papers quite a bit of space to this nationally recognized humorist, all to the advantage of his appearance in person on the visiting Chataudua stage.

This entertainment was scheduled for Olympia, immediately following the Seattle showing, so I was all set to hear my former friend from the audience. But, as bad luck would have it, a telephone call from Portland required that I catch the midnight steamship, Soleduck, out of Seattle for Port Angeles Sunday night, to be gone for probably a week. Luckily, I found by inquiry at our main hotel that he had slipped in quietly around noon, but with word to the clerk not to be called until the next morning.

The old fashioned register book disclosed the room number, when



the clerk discreetly turned his head, and I was shortly tapping on the door, after noting the room to be well lit. The gruff response was not encouraging, but I softly remarked "I wonder if you recall a certain high school jerk, who peddled the Richmond, Indiana Palladium in 1900-01 by the name of Rudo Fromme?" My welcome was very warm, even though he had sprung out of bed in his pajamas, throwing newspapers in all directions.

Needless to say, we laughed at many old reminders, and he particularly joked over my entering the Forest Service after sparring with cartoon illustrating, attempts at feature writing and stage entertainment. He remarked that he thought at first that I was devising some heroic manner of getting lost, but when he learned that I was planning employment with Uncle Sam, it sounded more sensible than wrestling with the writing, illustrating or acting game.

Another more famous Hoosier came into my high school years very briefly. This happened when I was invited to sit on the Earlham College speaker's platform. I was uncomfortably starched up in a "boiler plate" white shirt, wing collar, white tie and "tails," same as the college male quartet, with whom I "was working," and the same as the college president and our distinguished visiting speaker, James Whitcomb Riley. A big difference, however, was that my dress suit was rented, while the others, no doubt, "belonged," hence better fitted. However, the college quartet paid the rent, as they had on several previous occasions, when I supplied the "laugh relief," as termed it, by appearing between some of their heaviest tear jerkers with a "Dutch" or Swedish monolog. At Mr. Riley's visit, we served as a sort of noise abatement, while the ushers were

piloting the audience to their reserved seats.

MAUNDER: About how long were you in the P.R. job at Portland?

FROMME: I believe it was about two months, and I was beginning to enjoy my contact with news reporters, making an occasional public address and working up Forest Recreation Folders, involving visits to the city public library. I had only one personal conflict with Mr. Granger, when he questioned the propriety of my accepting an invitation from the local Kiwanis Club to accompany them and their families on a caravan up the Columbia Highway to a picnic lunch with Hood River Kiwanis. I was to lead the singing of a parody of my Olympic Highway song, extolling the major scenic spots of this route. I had planned to take annual leave for the day, as I was not on a detail to Portland, but an actual resident on my own expenses.

He asked me if I thought that that was a more important use of my time than what I was doing in the Region Office, which I thought was not a fair question, as I didn't assume that I was working on anything at the time that was urgent. That's where the matter ended, except that I had the embarrassing chore of telling the entertainment committee that my participation as contemplated was not looked upon with favor by my superior officer. They seemed to be more than disappointed, and proposed at once to send one of their most prominent business heads to intervene, which, of course, I had to cool off immediately. They had already printed several hundred copies of the suggested song words I had prepared, and which the Portland Club had rehearsed under my leadership at a recent luncheon.

I left them a copy of the original Olympic Song for the piano score, and urge that one of their customary song leaders get to

working on it, but later learned that they were not successful in this maneuver. I began to look more favorably on my next assignment, which was the supervisorship of the Deschutes National Forest at Bend, Oregon. I reached there in June, just in time for the Guard Training School, arranged by the Assistant Supervisor Bill Harriman. Bill had been serving as acting supervisor after Plumb's transfer to the Olympic several months before and he, as well as many close friends, had hoped that he would be promoted to supervisor, for which he was well qualified particularly in the cattle and sheep grazing business, of which there was considerable. However, I couldn't ask for a more cooperative attitude than Bill showed before me. He noticed that I had a mandolin as he met me at the train, so suggested that I bring it to the Guard training school for some evening fill-in around the campfire. I suggested that it would sound better with guitar chording, to which he responded that he might be able to supply that if I could put my stuff in the key of C or G, as those were the only chords he knew. That was no problem for me, so we had something for the boys to sing their cow-punching songs to, as a relief from commiserating over compass mistakes and horse-packing debacles of the day's exam.

This more open country, with its surplus of roads or car trails was an enjoyable contrast to the West Side Forests on which I had previously been employed, and I enjoyed the contrast for a change. The timber sale business in Ponderosa (Western Yellow) pine gave me some contrasting problems to the far denser and rougher Douglas fir types. I found Shevlin-Hixon and Brooks-Scanlon excellent people with whom to do business, and the district rangers and other forest personnel well qualified for their particular jobs and locations.

Bend also had a lively Kiwanis Club for my song leading propensity and a patient audience for talks on forest work and the fire problem. We depended almost wholly on the mountain lookout system for fire detection then. Forest Assistant Les Colvil got some good natured raillery for disturbing the local airways by his heavy voiced joshing and plotting of unusual smokes of and from these six or seven high-sighters. He sat by an open window on a downtown business street, and passersby often would ask me if he was broadcasting over some invisible airway circuit, or really blasting into a hidden telephone. We had small smoke chasing units organized and trained among our trail or road construction crews, along with some adjacent ranches and mill workers.

The Deschutes Forest was very popular for the small car traveler in the hot and dusty summers, and I often made a point of trailing the more careless looking types on Sundays and holidays, in particular. I arranged in advance with justices of the peace to be ready to interview and set the fine over the telephone if any ranger or I caught anyone flipping a lighted match or burning cigarette from a car window or leaving a campfire not thoroughly extinguished. If the offender couldn't promise to call at the officer's office on his way out, he was instructed to pay me the amount of the fine set, for which I would naturally supply a receipt, stipulating the date and name of the offender, the type of offense and amount of fine, usually ranging from \$10 to \$25 depending on circumstances. I had as many as three cases in one busy Sunday.

Among the city of Bend, I soon encountered a very cooperative spirit, especially as I found more time in the fall and winter seasons to devote more attention to civic and social matters. A

high school committee of three members of the freshman class called on me the first fall to serve as their "Class Dad." to meet at the said school regularly once a month or more if called by their principal to develop plans for greater cooperation between the kids and city business or other interests in any project of merit that might arise, and in which such help was feasible. The other three classes were already supplied with working Class Dads, one being a movie house manager, one a general merchandise owner and the third a police officer. I was re-elected by the same group as they advanced through the stages of sophomore, junior and senior grades, but was transferred to Portland in the early spring year of the senior class, which fortunately or unfortunately excused me from all the fol-de-rol of graduation ceremonies and responsibilities.

In social and local money raising affairs, particularly high school stage improvements, the American Legion was quite active and soon pressed me into service as banquet song leader, also an endman director of their annual minstrel show. They furnished "Chorus Girl" costumes, different each year that I was there to take charge, for a group of eight to twelve dance step high school girls, directed jointly by our chief clerk's 20-year-old daughter, Evelyn Crites and me. Evelyn had danced on the Chatauqua Circuit for a year or two and knew some clever chorus line steps. I had picked up most of mine from watching professionals rehearse at theaters, where I ushered as a kid or from tap dance teachers in various communities, whom I used as bowery waltz partners or other stunt acts put on at lodges or community benefits.

Bend, Oregon's location, especially in the dead of winter, was such that professional entertainment acts were never available, nor

was there television then, hence almost any type of entertainment talent was in demand, and mostly for very worthy causes. Two of the routine song and dance acts with the Legion sponsored high school girls, I entitled, "Goofy Gus and the Follies Berserk" and "The Swede and Sweet Review." A local sportsmen's club, affiliated with our two large mills once took our group to a mid-winter convention of the State Rod and Gun Club, at which the girls, working from a stage in a large dining room of the main hotel, shot small candy balls toward the men and their ladies from small red pop guns at certain accent points in a song and dance act I prepared.

For Fire Prevention Week, I organized a large city parade for a Friday afternoon, when all schools were let out, as many of them were used in the parade to represent various forest visitors: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, picnickers, campers in old, overloaded jalopies, hobos and girl Gypsies in makeup and tattered clothes. We didn't have hippies then, although plenty of mini skirts and foolish swim costumes, representing various Deschutes Lake Resorts or Camps. Some kids went as forest fire fighters, some in a Forest Service fire truck with a portable pump and reels of hose.

The groups kept separate as much as possible and each was labeled with billboard or cheap white cloth signs with large painted letters of designation and fire slogans. The high school band was in front, closely followed by large draft horses pulling high wheels dragging big logs, supplied from the nearby logging woods; also mill trucks with finished lumber, shingles and a story and a half lookout house properly occupied. This last mentioned brought up the rear, flying a large U.S. flag. A small dance band immediately preceded

the lookout house, the band being seated on a flatbed truck. All the kids' groups preceded the last two mentioned trucks.

We seemed to have everything in this parade, plus the high wheels, that was in the Olympia Fire Prevention Parade during Governor Hartley's administration except a state governor. In the Olympia situation I didn't use as many kids' groups but more marching bands from other nearby schools, and more wood products trucks, plus Governor Hartley in person. He had told me that he thought he could plan his time so as to ride in his seven-seat limousine driven by a regular chauffeur with Amy (meaning his well-known private secretary) seated in the rear between him and any city dignitary I might select. I hadn't selected anyone for the rear seat aside from himself, as Amy told me to count her out of it entirely. A King County attorney (also State Senator) contended that the governor would find some excuse to back out at the last minute--pressing business elsewhere or something--I didn't think so. He bet me a 25 cent cigar, to which I agreed, although such a cigar in those days was a bit beyond my experience.

Well, sure enough, he called just the day before the big event saying that his chauffeur and car would be available but that he must be out of town on some unforeseen business. I rushed up at once to confer with Amy in the outer office and found that she knew nothing of such a conflict, which was quite good proof that he had merely changed his mind, perhaps because she didn't wish to go. In any case, I had already arranged with six attractive senior high school girls for two in front, two on the jump seats and one on each side of the governor in the rear seat. I informed Amy of this plan and she agreed to keep him around in the morning on the pretext of

some foreign visitor, whose name she had misplaced, until the bevy of girls should arrive with a "legal summons."

So I typed a bunch of "Where As Is....Therefore, be it resolved that the Honorable Governor Hartley shall ride in the Fire Prevention Parade in company with the following senior high school maidens...then followed the six names. I had the six girls in Amy's office a trifle before nine, as previously arranged, and Amy stepped into his office announcing that there was a bevy of beautiful young ladies desiring to serve him with some sort of a legal summons. Well, I had my first taste of a regal 25 cent cigar after dinner in my easy chair before a cheerful fireplace at home that evening.

The observance of Fire Prevention Week, especially for getting the message over to the school youngsters, inspired me to develop a short play of perhaps 20-30 minutes of presentation time, including some brief preliminary remarks as to the seriousness of its purpose, even though presented in light vein in an attempt to keep it interesting and the audience continually awake. I entitled it "Forest Fires Folly" or "Camps, Tramps, Vamps, Scamps and Clamps."

Rush M. Ranger--Athletic type in Forest Service shirt and breeches.  
 Willie Watchout--New lookout. Tenderfoot. Light weight.  
 Governor Goof--First Hobo. Shabby misfit clothes. Comedy.  
 Senator Sap--Second Hobo. Shabby misfit clothes. Comedy.  
 Campfire Girls--Six or more high school girls, who can sing and dance. (The Campfire Chorus Girls should be of about uniform size, if possible, and dressed alike in a red, white and blue outfit to represent "pearl, ruby and saffire" words in their song; perhaps, blue sweater or blouse, wide, floppy red ties and white skirt, or etc. One group at another school wore white blouse, blue shorts and red half socks.)  
 Mr. Wal. Nutt--Hen-pecked papa in outing garb. Slender type.  
 Mrs. Wal. Nutt--Rather robust in outing slacks. Speaks emphatic.  
 Ches. Nutt--Awkwardly attired in small boys short or stag pants.  
 Hazel Nutt--In foolishly flashy young girls camping outfit.

The story in brief: The ranger is flipping flapjacks for Willie's breakfast, while the latter is snoring in a sleeping bag, fully clothed, except for hightop, laced field boots nearby. Ranger kicks



sleeping bag and remarks that Willie's breakfast is ready and they must be on their way soon to finish carrying supplies to the lookout station that they visited yesterday, and which Willie is to man this summer. (Terse remarks from both as Willie eventually gets himself out of the sleeping bag.) Telephone rings offstage. Ranger answers from emergency phone he had placed on crude table. It's a call from a lookout station advising of small one-man fire on a given azimuth reading, which the ranger plots on large forest map on support (vertical) back of table. He then calls another lookout for a cross shot. (Plotting visible to audience by means of cords from pegs stuck in map at the lookout points.) Both men are off to the fire, the ranger remarking that fire tools are in the car. (Audience hears car motor departing.)

(Pianist facing stage from auditorium floor starts "Artillery Song"). At a designated point in the music melody, the Campfire girls march on singing:

We're the girls, yes the girls,  
we're Bend High Campfire girls,  
Camping out for a good, healthy tan.  
Do we work, Yes, we work,  
Campfire Girls must never shirk,  
So we work everybody we can.

(Chorus)

Then it's Hi! Hi! Hee! With our socks below our knee,  
Singing and seeking beauty gay:  
We love to hike, along a trail or pike  
With our torching brightly shining the way.  
(Shouted)) KEEP IT SHINING  
With our torch brightly shining the way.

2

Do we cook, yes we cook,  
Biscuits like a novel book;  
Lots of crust and so mushy between.  
Do we serve, yes we serve,  
Campfire Girls must show some nerve,  
Whether serving a Lobster or a Queen.

(Chorus--as before)

(As girls are completing last line, Hobos peer in grotesquely from left.)

Girls see them, scream and rush off right. Hobos tip-toe and gaze around. Goof going to lower left and Sap to lower center.)

GOOF: Golly me! Did you glimpse what I just lamped?

SAP: Oo Baby! Dem must a bin wood nymfs! Eh! Gov'nr?

GOOF: Back-up, Senator, back up. Dem ain't no wood nymfs. If dey wuz dey would nymph around a bit and flit among de flora and play hid and sneak wize usens. I tink dem wuz just beechnuts from some beach resort.

SAP: De way dem waved dose limbs and branches, I though dem was peaches. I could hardly keep my feet still. I just thought my right dog wood bark.

(In the meantime Goof has tiptoed to the table, seated himself on a box and sarted nibbling on a cold flapjack, but he turns front and speaks).

GOOF: Spruce up, you sap. Your attempts at haw haw would make a loddepole pine.

(More wisecrack conversation back and forth, already written out but

now shown.)

Ranger enters suddenly carrying a drawing on cardboard, showing the outline of a large badly worn shoe. Goof watches him and Willie, who is tagging along, and calls out to Sap, while crossing his leg in such a manner that the Ranger can easily compare the drawing, which matches.

GOOF: Hey', Senator. We has got visitors. (Then, turning toward the Ranger). We have a little repast here. Won't you boys join us?

RANGER: (Whipping out handcuffs, or, if not available, a short piece of rope)

Yes, we'll join you all right. Your shoe's badly worn, like this sketch.

GOOF: Is I getting a new pair of kicks, Uncle Sam?

RANGER: You need several real healthy ones. Where did you sleep last night?

(Here, follows some wisecrack remarks between Goof and Sap, trying to recall the "enticing designation of the richly redundant retreat at which the "took lodging." The Ranger advises that the hobos are to be taken before a justice of the peace in a certain nearby town, as the pianist starts gently on "The Prisoners Song." The four line up, facing front, with the hobos in the middle, and singing first, in plaintive tones.

#### Prisoner's Song

##### 1

HOBOS--Oh we wish we'd had someone to love us  
Some girlies to keep us at home,  
So we wouldn't had Uncle Sam's rangers  
Chasing us like a dog for a bone.

##### 2

FORESTERS--Oh we wish the same wish that you're wishing,  
That you'd left all your sparking in town,  
"Stead of leaving your flames in the forest,  
They're not always easy to drown.

##### 3

QUARTET--Oh if we just had wings like an angel  
Over these forest trees we would fly  
And pounce down on each careless fire setter  
Until he'd be willing to cry.

OH---Min---N-E-V-E---R AGIN!

(At finish of song a honking is heard back stage, then a rattle and clatter, indicating that the Nutt family has arrived.)

GOOF: Holy Smokes! Dat must be de hack for de hoogoy now.

(Nutt family enters from upper right and crossed over to upper left. Mama Nutt in front, then Pop, as the hobos panic and run across stage to left.

Willie is nervous at lower right, while the Ranger is at rear center. Meanwhile Hazel, in her flashy short skirt outfit was running about the front part of the stage in short, mincy steps, waving her arms and singing to no particular tune, "All the nuts don't grow on trees--Some are squirrel food families like these," pointing to the parents. Pokes cigarette package toward hobo, yelling, "Hey Bill, have a pill." Hobo jumps back, flinging arms up in fright.

MRS. NUTT: Ha-ZELL, Come away from those horrid men. They look positively--Oo-gh (Shudders) (Hazel responds with "Oogh Oogh--Gootsy Gootsy.") (Turning to Ranger) These woods are getting positively overcrowded and with such common folks, too. Can't you do something about that? (Becoming frightened about Sonny's nonappearance, she starts blaming Mr. Nutt, then the Ranger and others for not saving him from the bears, etc.)

CHES NUTT: (Enters with toy gun, looking and pointing up and around, mumbling) Where did he go? It must be in the top of one of these trees. (He has wandered off the front of the stage and looking up sideways around stage drawbacks, still pointing gun up. Ranger comes front, orders him out of the edge of the lake and warns him about shooting on or near camping places.) "But, a goggle-eyed snuf walliper went up one of these trees, and I want to get him before he hurts,--"

(While mama is getting Sonny to lower the gun and come to her, phone rings.)

RANGER: (Repeating message on phone) It's from some Boy Scouts, who found an unextinguished campfire and a partially burned letter addressed to "Miss Hazel Nutt." They think it must have been left by the party which they met on the road when coming in. One of them took down the license of the car, which was --- (Reads it. Pop and Mom become excited and Mom whispers the get-a-way, but as they start tiptoeing off--)

WILLIE: (Steps in front of them) Not so fast! The Ranger wants to talk to you.

(The Ranger tells them to stop at a certain justice of the peace on their way down the road to whom he will phone the charges, so that they may pay the fine at once.)

HAZEL: Well, Ain't that splendiferous. Let's all celebrate with a bonfire.

(All step forward as Pianist starts "Who Threw the Overalls in Mistress Murphy's Chowder.")

(Verse)

Each summer people roam our forests, most on pleasure bent,  
But some leave very careless signs to show which way they went;  
Such signs are made by burning snipes and campfires not put out,  
Destroying health and forest wealth, no wonder rangers shout:

Chorus 1

Who lets the campfire spread to sear our sylvan scen'ry?  
Who flings the fag, setting fire to forest green'ry?  
Oh the cad we crave to catch  
Is the man who muffs the match,  
And sadly sears our super sylvan scenery.

Chorus 2

Who lets the campfire spread to sear our sylvan scen'ry?  
Who flips the fag, setting fire to forest green'ry?  
Oh the babe we burn to bag  
Is the flame who flips the fag,  
And sadly sears our super sylvan scenery.

Chorus 3

Who lets the campfire spread to sear our sylvan scen'ry?  
Who flips the fag, setting fire to sylvan green'ry?

It's a careless kind o'craze  
We must woo to watchful ways  
And seek to save our super sylvan scenery.

I put this same playlet on at Lincoln High School in Tacoma, Washington a few years later, after first presenting the proposal to the principal and supplying a copy for his perusal. He appeared quite enthusiastic and assigned teachers from his drama and music departments to take over much of the rehearsal duties and stage setting. He was enthusiastic over its reception and suggested that it be taken to the six junior high schools on two different Fridays, if I would take charge of the 17 or 18 students involved, and introduce the play in each instance, as I had at Lincoln, to all of which I gladly agreed. I learned later, as I had suspected, that the proposal first came from the students involved. But starting at one school at 11 a.m. and taking lunches in the cars, we took care of the other two schools in the afternoons.

The Bellingham high school and three others in Whatcom County were covered a few years later, when I was stationed on the Mt. Baker Forest. In each instance splendid cooperation was received from the respective drama and music departments after I ran through one rehearsal and spent a little time on the simple chorus steps for the Campfire Girls' songs.

MAUNDER: You stated a while ago that you were transferred to Portland after being in Bend close to four years. What was your assignment in Portland?

FROMME: It was in Public Relations again. But this time it was to help George Griffith and to fill in for him while he would be absent on ranger and guard education programs.

To go back a bit, I will mention that I had sorely missed the

absence of Bill Harriman in sheep grazing matters, after he was promoted, and justly so, to Supervisor of the Ochoco at Prineville. I was also starting to yearn for a return to West Coast forest conditions, where I felt more efficient as well as better acquainted with both environment and personnel. I began voicing this to two or three Regional Office visitors, whom I had known for many years, one being Kavanagh, chief of grazing, whom I piloted to various areas on the Deschutes for a day or more.

About the middle of June I was sent to Tacoma to help Supervisor Fenby, who was reported as suffering from rapidly failing eye sight and needing help along general supervisory lines and for public contacts in and around Tacoma and better fire protection cooperation on the part of Yakima Vallete interests. Secretly, I was delighted at this prospect, but mentioned that the only full supervisory position that I thought would interest me more was the Mt. Baker at Bellingham, rated as third class in the matter of business, responsibilities and fire problem. However, there was no opening there or pending. (I could have enjoyed a full PR assignment in Portland with a different Regional Office set up, but felt that Griffith was handling it OK.)

I was on the Rainier Forest four years, until it was decided in Portland or Washington, D.C., that it should be done away as a unit, and that that part on the east and south of the National Park be transferred to the Columbia Forest, and the north and east sections to the Snoqualmie. Tacoma citizens, as represented by the Chamber of Commerce, promptly voiced opposition and Fenby and I naturally went along with them in wanting to be shown why? Meetings were held in Tacoma with C. I. Buck, the new regional forester at Portland,

but the logic for such a change in the interest of economy prevailed. Fenby was sent to the Snoqualmie at Seattle and I to the Mt. Baker at Bellingham, both as assistant supervisors. The clerical staff went to Portland (the Mt. Hood Forest) and Seattle.

Before leaving Tacoma, in personal recollection, I should like to mention several happenings, which give me a very fond remembrance of that community. In the area of public relations, I accepted membership on the local board of directors for the Boy Scouts, president of the affiliated government departments, which met once a month at dinner, in the interest of better appreciation of their separate objectives and chief song leader of the local Kiwanis Club. Incidentally, this latter led to other affiliations of personal enjoyment, such as regular weekly song leader and public entertainment advisor for the YWCA Business Girls, who met once a week for dinner in their own building. I accepted some good natured raillery for this type of public relations from business associates, which was not hard to take. This, plus my stage makeup ties with the local Community Players, active participation with the Elks Club Stocking Fillers (Christmas Charities) and their annual minstrel show, as well as some remunerative association with a tap dancing school teacher furnished many pleasant evenings in the winter seasons.

All of the above, until I met Eleanor, the older sister of one of the Lincoln high school girls, who was in my playlet "Forest Fires Follow Family." She was quite a bit my junior, but, following high school graduation, worked a year or so as cashier of a downtown movie house, then decided to take training as a beautician. She had passed the state exams and was working at this trade when I met her

at a Masonic Lodge Annual Charity Ball, through a younger sisters' introduction mentioned above. We were married in the fall, five months later, and I managed to coax a few hundred dollars out of the defunct Tacoma Building and Loan for a honeymoon south to visit my parents in San Diego.

This was the year 1932, just after the '31 financial crash, which practically cleaned me out of my meager \$7,000-8,000, all in two Savings and Loan Associations in Portland, except for a few hundred in a Bend, Oregon bank, which went bust because of careless loans to {QUERY AUTHOR} men, so reported. In any case, Eleanor is still with me, in spite of the fact that she still feels it advisable to pursue her trade as beautician, but only on a part-time basis and as an owner operator in an extension to the rear of our residence here in Pomona.

Perhaps I am due to state briefly what happened to Ruby, my first wife, since I have brought my personal life into this forest history. She stayed in Olympia, true to her word, given to me when we were transferred to Olympia from Grants Pass. She wept some tears over giving up our attractive new cottage and many warm friends there and remarked with considerable accent, "this is the last move I'm going to tolerate from the government. We'll have to stay put this time, or you'll have to go into some business of our own, preferably mercantile, where I can be of some assistance." Well, she eventually got into the mercantile business, but with a different man, and she had her position as bookkeeper-typist in a small balcony at the rear of a "Gent's Furnishing Store," where she could keep an eye on sales progress, if any, and rush down to assist whenever her husband, the owner, or his male clerk or clerks had

more than they could handle conveniently; much as she was doing in her father's general merchandise store, when I first fell for her in the little town of Priest River, Idaho, 22 years previous.

Her new husband was a brother Elk of mine, to whom I introduced her at an Elk's Lodge dance and invited to the house for a little repast. He had a car, of which I didn't, as there was no road to the east or north sides of the Olympic Forest at that time nor to Quinault Lake on the West side, except through mud and broken pucheon or new gravel. His generosity and companionship was very much enjoyed by both of us throughout the eight or ten years just prior to my transfer to Portland and Bend.

Just before leaving Olympia, I had a confident but congenial talk with our mutual friend, whose father had recently passed away, leaving the store entirely in his sole ownership. I told him that I knew Ruby thought a great deal of him and if this feeling was mutual, they both had my consent and best wishes. Also, that I intended to let Ruby think the matter over until the end of the year unless she wished to act one way or the other before that time. If we decided through correspondence on a divorce, I would drive to Olympia and attend to that action amicably with her.

And so it happened. There were some slightly moist eyes and Ruby and I divided up the mutual belongings of some 20 years marriage, but we had been living apart for nearly a year, discussing the situation by letter correspondence, so the parting was quite friendly, and the three of us toasted each other's happiness with promises to keep in touch by correspondence, if not through an occasional visit. When I married Eleanor in Tacoma six years later, we called on them at the store within a couple of months and had



dinner together at Crane's much advertised oyster house.

My nine to ten years as assistant supervisor of the Mt. Baker, 1934 to '43 were the happiest in retrospect of my Forest Service career, except for some ailing health, centered in my knee joints, initiated by dropping into the glacier crevasse on the Mountaineers Olympic Outing of 1920. There was always some agitation for placing Mt. Baker, Mt. Shuksan and the Lodge into a National Park. Supervisor Pagter assigned that problem especially to me, and I made it a point to get well acquainted with the Mt. Baker Lodge Company directors, with the result that we were working in close harmony on all related plans for better development and use of the lodge, Heather Meadows and nearby Austin Pass thereafter.

I was assigned, particularly to recreation possibilities, summer home surveys, "show me trips," County Fair exhibits (on which we had done nothing heretofore) and public contacts in general. When I started giving fire prevention talks to the 15 or 20 high schools within or adjacent to the Mt. Baker Forest, most of which had never been contacted in this manner, Pagter asked if I had any objections to his writing the principals afterward, as to their reaction. I think some such suggestion had reached him from Portland on the use I made of topical parody songs or other laugh-evoking methods for putting over this serious problem to high schools or junior colleges. All the replies were favorable, some quite enthusiastic, and requesting more of the same.

I also made it a practice to address or show forest service slides periodically to luncheon clubs, women's clubs and other adult groups, but in more prosaic vein. I was about to say more, serious, but either or all methods were plenty serious.

I received an unusual reaction to one showing of my Olympic slides. This was before the Everett Chamber of Commerce, at an extending meeting for consideration of the proposed transfer of much of the Olympic Forest to National Park status. A quite full account of this address was in the Everett papers, and thus reached the attention of Congressman Mons. Wallgren in Washington. Everett was his hometown. I received an official letter from that gentleman (later governor at Olympia) quite promptly. I can't recall the wording at this late date, but it was to the effect that he couldn't understand how a government employee could be so indiscreet as to oppose publicly a change in government administration for which the president of the United States had already voiced approval, and had plans for early examination in person. I answered at once stating that I had served as forest supervisor of the area in question for 13 years and was well acquainted by traveling over much of it on foot, and felt that I had a perfect right to express my personal views as to its best treatment regardless of opposition views.

About this time I received a call from Regional Forester C. J. Buck to come to Portland on a several weeks detail to help round up opposition to this proposed change to park status. I was assigned to contacting labor unions, affiliated with the logging industry, in particular. Soon, armed with specially colored maps, statistics and my personal knowledge, I called on loggers' unions in Portland, Tacoma, Grays Harbor and other Olympic Peninsula ports, obtaining interested audiences everywhere with this threat of loss of thousands of future jobs in timber harvesting, as well as public revenue to adjacent communities, now possible under the Multiple Use Principle of National Forest Administration. My largest and most

responsive audience was at a Union Loggers Convention at Raymond on Willapa Harbor.

I was also requested to attend the conference banquet at Signer's resort and the Forest Service fire equipment demonstration at the Snider Ranger Station at the time of the President's visit to Lake Crescent and the north and west sections of the Olympic Forest and Peninsula in 1940. Incidentally, I had the pleasure of giving up my warm hotel room at Signer's Resort, on the day of the banquet conference, to the Frank Boettinger family, while the four of them were assembled in my room to help speed the takeover. They had found the cabin assigned them too chilly. I drove to the above mentioned ranger station for lodging after the banquet conference between Regional Forester Buck and President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

After the president and his retinue were properly parked for viewing the fire equipment demonstration midmorning the next day, the fire pump refused to cooperate, even though tested satisfactorily just prior to the arrival of the august audience. The consequent delay and background activity caused Ranger Floe's saddle and pack horses to become so excited that he had to get out of view at once. Regional Forester Buck, who had been sitting with the president in the front seat of the head car, slipped around to me, saying that the president wasn't paying any attention to Kavanagh's well prepared loud speaker speech, hidden from view, and requesting that I get the president's ear, if possible, to explain the intended demonstration, apologize and offer to supply any information he might request.

Well, I got the president's ear for perhaps a minute. He smiled and nodded automatically, then interrupted with, "How's the

road to that hotel where we are to lunch? Do they serve pretty good eats?" A couple of hours later, when I reached the Quinault Lake Hotel, Mrs. McNeill, the hostess and chief cook, was beaming beautifully. She burst forth with "Oh! The president was thrilled with our cooking. My! Did he eat! He took seconds on almost everything."

I enjoyed several other details to the Regional Office during my final assignment to the Mt. Baker. Once, to help again in P.R. for a couple of weeks and in timber sales, under Fred Ames (also during his absences) on at least two occasions of a month or so each, during winter months.

In Bellingham, I served on the Whatcom County Planning Commission, was president of Kiwanis one year and the same office in the Bellingham Theater Guild for three years; headed the makeup department and did some directing and acting at quiet forest intervals, etc. During three or four changes in supervisor, I was acting supervisor for a week or more at a time, as well as during their "get acquainted travels." I conducted several "show-me" trips and some timber sales promotions.

Upon my retirement in the spring of 1943, I was soon rooming in west Seattle, for lack of suitable living quarters for Eleanor's companionship, while serving as student-teacher in the Drama Department of the University of Washington. Took an acting part in one play at the University Showboat, erected on and to the shore of Lake Washington, which played for six full weeks, every night, except Sundays. Since I also worked in the Drama School library, the opening shift at 8 a.m., I was never so busy before or since. Moving to Southern California the following spring, I got into stage

and street makeup, which I am now trying to get out of at the age of practically 88.