

Oral History Interview

Oliver D. Fisher
with
Elwood R. Maunder
(August 3, 1966)

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MAUNDER: This is Elwood Maunder speaking from the home of Mr. O.D.2 Fisher at Sea Rest near Des Moines, Washington. This is Wednesday, August 3, 1966.

MAUNDER: Mr. Fisher, I'm visiting here with you for the purpose of getting from you some of your memories of the early days which may be of some permanent value to us as we study the history of American business and particularly the history of the forest products industry. As you know the organization that I represent, the Forest History Society is engaged in talking with men all over the country who have played an important role in that history - men who have been engaged in the lumbering business or who have been in forestry or some aspect of work that has been related to the forest and its use. You and your family go back a long time in that history. You've had an association in your family with the lumber industry for several generations I believe, isn't that right?

FISHER: I go back--I have correspondence from the 1920s.

MAUNDER: Oh, yes, but your family connection with the lumber business goes back a lot earlier than 1920 doesn't it? Weren't you involved in the lumber business before you ever came out west?

FISHER: Oh, yes.

MAUNDER: Can you tell us a little bit about those origins.

FISHER: I was 10 years at Birch Tree, Missouri with the Cords Fisher Lumber Co. I was assistant manager and I had charge of all the merchandizing. We had a commissary, we called them the stores, in the camp as in the town.

MAUNDER: What is the name of that company again?

FISHER: Cords Fisher Lumber Co.

MAUNDER: Cords. And this was in the town of what?

FISHER: Birch Tree, Missouri.

MAUNDER: Birch Tree Missouri. Where is that in relation to other places in Missouri?

FISHER: Shannon County and Eminence is the county seat and it's near Mountain View and Willow Springs (southeastern Missouri). From Willow Springs out to Grandin there's a branch railroad. Went out to the Missouri Lumber and Mining Co. there. That's J.B. White's crowd.

MAUNDER: Was there any relationship between your company and theirs at that time?

FISHER: Well, it developed into it, yes, where we had a joint sales department in Kansas city.

MAUNDER: In the Saw Mills Exchange Co. or--

FISHER: We had the Saw Mill & Birch Tree and then in Winona was-- part of the time would sell and buy with us. And the Missouri Lumber and Mining Co. at Grandin, Missouri. J.B. White was the head of that and we had offices in Kansas City and White was the manager of all the sales department in the Kansas City office. And we still have offices in Kansas City.

MAUNDER: You still maintain your part in that company, is that right?

FISHER: Yes. I am president of the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Co.

MAUNDER: Tell me, how old were you at this time you were in Missouri working there?

FISHER: Well, I started at Birch Tree, Missouri on August 1 and I was 17 years old.

MAUNDER: Seventeen. That would have been what year? In 18 something, I imagine, wasn't it?

something, I imagine, wasn't it?

FISHER: Oh, yes.

MAUNDER: You don't remember the year exactly? What year were you born?

FISHER: '75.

MAUNDER: Then it would have been about 1902 that you started if you were 17.

FISHER: Somewhere around there.

MAUNDER: And was this the first job that you had?

FISHER: I'd studied engineering at the school at VMI, the Virginia Military Academy. And I was the engineer who went out and surveyed branch railroads for logging. And I kept the books and kept the time of about 100 Irishmen when we were building our railroad.

MAUNDER: Oh is that right? Were these imported laborers from the East Coast?

FISHER: They were {QUERY AUTHOR} fellows. We got the Irish, we called them.

MAUNDER: How did you get them?

FISHER: Well, they enquired at the Cords Fisher Lumber Co. for a job.

MAUNDER: Oh, I see, they'd come out.

FISHER: Then we had the camp offices. I was in charge of a camp for all the time but I was only out there for a year. The camp and kept the books and ran the store.

MAUNDER: What did running the store mean? What did you have to do?

FISHER: Well, I was secretary of the Golden Rule Syndicate.

MAUNDER: What was the Golden Rule Syndicate?

FISHER: Well, there were 22 stores that we had and we purchased jointly. J.C. Penny later came into it.

MAUNDER: He was not one of the original 23, is that right?

FISHER: I've forgotten the year he did start. But he didn't go to market with our stores in the early stages. He had stores scattered throughout the west in Livingston, Billings, Bozeman, Belgrade, Hamilton, and {QUERY AUTHOR} Montana.

MAUNDER: Now were these Golden Rule Stores?

FISHER: Yea, we generally called them that. {QUERY AUTHOR} would be the Fisher Trading Company in Montana. At Bozeman and Missoula, at Fishing Trading Co. at {QUERY AUTHOR} Missoula Burrows at {QUERY AUTHOR} and at Bozeman. And I was down in Birch Tree, Missouri and then we moved to Bozeman, Montana and that's when we went into the flour milling business at Belgrade and I was the manager in Belgrade but living in Bozeman about 10 miles away.

MAUNDER: Would you say that your family started business in the lumber business or was it in the store business?

FISHER: My father started in the store business. He was postmaster and had a store at Orleans, Missouri and when I was two years old, he was running the store in the post office.

MAUNDER: Was this a general store? For hard goods?

FISHER: It was the only store there was in the town.

MAUNDER: It took care of everything?

FISHER: Took care of everything.

MAUNDER: Food and hardware and clothing and everything.

FISHER: Well, to a certain extent.

MAUNDER: And from that--

FISHER: Then they had a little bit of a grist mill that was there at Orleans too and they had water power from Sock River. He had

water power to operate a little flour mill.

MAUNDER: Was that your family's first involvement in flour milling?

FISHER: Oh, no. Father had way back in Canada and Ohio.

MAUNDER: He had been a flour miller before?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: Had flour milling been in the family? Had his father before him been a flour miller also? Your grandfather for example; was he in the flour milling business?

FISHER: I know he was out in Kentucky for a time but he had a general store and a post office in the early days.

MAUNDER: That was your father? Well, then at what point did you-- you said that at the age of seventeen, you became in charge of a mill at Birch Tree, Missouri and you also took care of the store there.

FISHER: I was a timekeeper for the employees out there and I kept the books and I ran the store and I had a calico curtain between my desk and my bedroom and I had my bedroom in my office with the calico curtain between. So that's where I lived and I took my meals at the private residence of Mr. and Mrs. Cords. He was the superintendent of all the {QUERY AUTHOR} Woods Division {QUERY AUTHOR} and his wife was kind enough to let me take my meals over there with the Cords family.

MAUNDER: This lumber mill was how large?

FISHER: This was in the Pine Hollow Camp there. Then I was in charge of the mercantile end. I was assistant manager at Birch Tree and that was my office. That was the main office, Birch Tree.

MAUNDER: Who owned this company?

FISHER: Well, my father was president of it. No, he was general manager and Mr. Henry Cords was president. Originally father bought half interest, I think it was in the {QUERY AUTHOR} with the Cords Brothers. There were five brothers I think. And they had a little operation out about 5 or 6 miles out from Birch Tree and so he bought an interest, about 50% and Mr. Henry Cords was the elder member of the Cords' family and he was the fellow in charge of the mechanical end of the saw mill. He was pretty good on that when the mill wouldn't start the saw mills both at Birch Tree, Missouri and in Fisher, Louisiana. And I would be buying the merchandise and the equipment from the time I was about 16 years old, I think. I remember one day there was a salesman there from a hardware firm in St. Louis--and Henry Cords, he was a Dane, not very good in education in English and he always relied on me. And one day he wanted to buy some equipment for the saw mill and this fellow from St. Louis, the {QUERY AUTHOR} Company, Jim somebody and he was taking an order from Mr. Cords for some stuff and Mr. Cords happened to see me over in the tie yard or close by where they were and he says, well, I'll get Olly over here. He knows all about this. He says, he's 17 years old or 16 years old and 45 years of experience so I do everything through Olly. It was true. I did all the buying for the woods or for the stores or for the mill and machinery and everything else. So that was his story of Olly--15 years old but he had 45 years of experience.

MAUNDER: Had you grown up in that community as a boy?

FISHER: No. I was born at Orleans, Missouri and in about two years moved to Humansville, Missouri. I was in Humansville until about 14 years of age, went through and graduated at the first high school--public school at Humansville when I was 14. Then I went from there

back to the Virginia Military Institute.

MAUNDER: For how many years did you go there?

FISHER: Two years. And I was the youngest and the smallest cadet that ever entered VMI and when I was there, I stood at the head of my class the first year I was there. And I had no difficulty entering at 14 years of age. I graduated from the little high school in Humansville. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to enter. But, no I had no trouble entering at all. I was head of the class when I was 15. then I studied in Stonewall Jackson's old recitation room and studied under the fellow that developed the Merrimac was it way back--

MAUNDER: Oh, you mean had been in command of the Merrimac? In the famous battle with the Monitor.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: In the Civil War.

FISHER: I studied in Stonewall Jackson's recitation room and this fellow, he was at VMI, too.

MAUNDER: Was he a teacher there, the professor?

FISHER: Yea. And then Col. Nickles was the superintendent when I was there. And a very practical fellow and I was the youngest cadet in the school and the smallest cadet in the school but I had the good fortune of being at the head of the class the first year I was there and I'll never forget, I was corporal of the guard the night and day before I was to stand examination. And I was to stand examination at 8 o'clock in the morning so Col. Nickles says well, Cadet Fisher go to the blackboard. I went to the blackboard. I'd been on patrol duty and talked it over with the other cadets--there were three fellows: Herrick from Illinois and {QUERY AUTHOR} from Virginia. I was number one and they were number 2 and 3 in the class of 128 so Col. Nickles contrary to what I anticipated--I'd told him I didn't think I'd need to do any cramming because I was on guard 24 hours a day at the time I was going to have my examination. But, he picked me right out of the bunch, he was making his lecture first thing in the morning for the school and he says: Cadet Fisher go to the blackboard. I went to the blackboard. Develop the--I had it on my tongue a minute ago. What in the devil is the name of that most complicated formula there is in mathematics--

MAUNDER: In any case he asked you to put on the board one of the complicated mathematical formulas.

FISHER: It was the hardest there was. We'd had it 90 days before and I got 100 on it. But, my gosh he--

MAUNDER: Caught you by surprise.

FISHER: Caught me by surprise. I got it all right. Hyperbolic parabola; that was the subject and I had to go develop it on the blackboard. And the engineering--Herrick from Illinois and I and another party--we had our recitation for 10 days ahead. It was to take the measurement, elevation and contour from George Washington's statue at 500 above sea level, follow that by pacing across the James River. As you cross the river you make your study on that and you go up to the top of the hill on the other side of the river and then you come back through there and there's the question of how far you're off when you get back to the starting point. So I was only about 3/100s of an inch off. And I was way up at the head of the class on it.

MAUNDER: This was the final examination?

FISHER: Yea. Cross the James River you know and then up the side of

a mountain and then come back to the George Washington statue. We were down at the gymnasium, standing at the entrance door to the gymnasium and give all the equipment and the shapes and shadows of the gymnasium. Then go {QUERY AUTHOR} in your bedroom and give me the interior of that bedroom; the equipment and all--

MAUNDER: Was this again a part of the examination?

FISHER: It's part of our study. They'd give you maybe 10 days to make up these things, then I'd have to put it on paper. Then he'd send you to the blackboard.

MAUNDER: Tell me, was the fact that you were the smallest and the youngest cadet any handicap to you? When you were in school there?

FISHER: No, I had no difficulty.

MAUNDER: How did the other cadets treat you?

FISHER: Fine.

MAUNDER: Treated you fine?

FISHER: Yea.

MAUNDER: You weren't kidded because you were smaller and younger than they were?

FISHER: No. They were very courteous to me. I was the sergeant in the C Company. I was a small cadet and I was the sergeant from the military end of it.

MAUNDER: Did you carry on your friendship with the boys you learned to know there throughout your life?

FISHER: No.

MAUNDER: None of them really remained close friends then in later years.

FISHER: I don't recall but one man and he wasn't exceedingly close. Herrick from Danville, Illinois. He was 26 years old and I was 15.

MAUNDER: Most of them aren't that old when they enter there, are they?

FISHER: Well, he was.

MAUNDER: Is that right. What do you remember most vividly about your years at VMI. Do you recall any particular professor or teacher you had or anything else that you can think of that most influenced your thinking in your own life.

FISHER: Well, it would be a long story. I was corporal of the guard the last year I was there and I had five cadets on sentinel duty in the rear of the barracks and so forth and so on. They were out in camp. I think five all together. Well, I was the head officer in the officer of the day's office at the entrance to VMI right there at the arch. I had a sentinel in front of the barracks that went back and forth there in front of the barracks and also had one in the rear of the barracks. The rear of the barracks had a sentinel booth where he was anchored. So along about 4 o'clock in the morning, Sergeant Smith - he was one of the big heavy football team, and he was one of the heaviest and stoutest ones on the team. Well, he happened to be the sergeant over at camp and I was this little runt in charge of barracks and here came Sergeant Smith and 5 cadets with him. They came double time from tents at camp about a quarter of a mile away from the barracks but very close to the parade ground to take the barracks. My sentinel in the front of barracks was on patrol there, called the corporal of the guard and I went out there and there was Sergeant Smith coming double time with five. So I went back and I got ahold of my roommate who was a fairly sizeable fellow. He was a year ahead of me but we happened to be friends and he was from {QUERY AUTHOR} Missouri --and so we

were roommates and he was sergeant of the guard and I was corporal and he was lying down on the couch. He had his shoes off. So I got him to put on his shoes and come out and help me. Finally I found that I couldn't push them back and--but I lined up five and ordered a back step retreat. And I order the back step retreat from the end of the beat in front of the barracks and they retreated for about 100 or 150 feet to right across the archway and there my sergeant and myself were in charge bayonets in the archway and we could do as much in 12 feet in the archway as five of them could outside. So they were attempting to come and take barracks. Tommy Marshall who was commandant of the school was aware of all this and he got up and came over at 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock in the morning. So I happened to glance over there and here was Tommy Marshall with his sword. And I had made charge bayonets and I disarmed this fellow Smith, a stout fellow, I'd been taking fencing lessons from an Austrian while I was there at school and I got to be pretty good in fencing. So this fellow had his rifle and the bayonet on it and he was charging and pointed toward my chest. Well I very easily disarmed him and he was at the point of my rifle and the Colonel came over to me and said: well done corporal, well done. That was the superintendent of the school, the assistant superintendent of the school. That's how he expressed his appreciation of my disarming that fellow. I was only just a runt. This to me was a big fat--big head of a team.

MAUNDER: Was this a maneuver that this fellow had just pulled himself on his own initiative or was it a kind of thing that was done all the time.

FISHER: I had taken lessons from this Austrian you know and had gotten it down about as good as he had.

MAUNDER: But I mean was this charge that they were making across the field trying to take the barracks, was this planned or was this something that these fellows cooked up on the spur of the moment?

FISHER: The sergeant, that was his crew. He was just going over and take barracks.

MAUNDER: Was that their assignment to try and take barracks?

FISHER: They took it as their assignment.

MAUNDER: Oh, they took it.

FISHER: They had notified the superintendent of the school that they were going to do it. And Col. Marshall was ready to see them do it.

MAUNDER: I see.

FISHER: So Col. Marshall was there to see that they did do it.

MAUNDER: That's a very good story.

FISHER: He came forward and saluted and said: Well done corporal.

MAUNDER: You were there at VMI for just 2 years. Is that right.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: And then, was that the normal course of study and then you graduated or didn't you?

FISHER: I didn't graduate. It would have been two more years to graduate.

MAUNDER: I see, why did you leave?

FISHER: Well, the Cords Fisher Lumber Company was just getting ready to build a new mill, saw mill, down in Birch Tree, Missouri. And my father never had the privilege of much of an education and he always relied on me for anything technical. It was always, leave it to Olly.

MAUNDER: Were you his oldest son?

FISHER: No. There was Will and Burr who were older than I was. But, he was my pal and I was paid at Birch Tree and I was made Assistant Manager of the company. I was 16 or 17 years old when I started with them in the engineering on the railroad and then they put me in charge of all the merchandise. That's when we organized the J.C. Penny company--not the J.C. Penny Company but the Golden Rule. And J.C. Penny had his store but separate from the Golden Rule crowd.

MAUNDER: Tell me, were you in on the organization of the Golden Rule? What was it called--the Golden Rule--

FISHER: The Golden Rule Syndicate.

MAUNDER: Were you in on that organization?

FISHER: I was supposed to be secretary and take care of all the details for my brothers Will and Burr and we had 6 or 7 others.

MAUNDER: Were your two brothers also in charge of other stores? In other communities?

FISHER: They had Colorado and Montana.

MAUNDER: How were they financed in these stores? Was this something again that your father had a connection with?

FISHER: Yes, the family did. They called it the Fisher Mercantile Company, I believe.

MAUNDER: Fisher Mercantile Company.

FISHER: They had stores at {QUERY AUTHOR} and Great Falls, at Hamilton, I believe. {QUERY AUTHOR} then they started out farther west. My brother Will, he finally came to Seattle and was selling all the flour from their mill retail.

MAUNDER: That was later on though wasn't it? You didn't get into the flour milling in Belgrade until sometime after these stores had been established. Right. The stores came first. Now, who started the stores, was it your father?

FISHER: No, it was my brothers Will and Burr and myself and Dan came along.

MAUNDER: Who is Dan?

FISHER: My brother.

MAUNDER: Your younger brother?

FISHER: Three years younger.

MAUNDER: What part did your father have in all this? Was he putting up the capital for buying all of these stores?

FISHER: Yes, but he was not the president of them, but--

MAUNDER: The boys would really run them.

FISHER: And I was practically secretary of everything.

MAUNDER: Well, what I'm trying to get at, Mr. Fisher, is this. Where did the idea of this chain of stores across the great plains states come from? Who idea was this?

FISHER: Well, the Fisher family. My brother Will had a store in Boulder, Colorado in the university area. And Tom Callahan {QUERY AUTHOR} had stores in Longmont, Colorado. And finally Will and Burr and Dan all were willing to take jobs in managing stores and Will went over to Missoula. Burr was in school part of the time and part of the time at Bozeman and I was in Belgrade and Bozeman and Missoula.

MAUNDER: Well, did the stores get started--was their first beginning in the little town in Missouri where you had a mill? And then they gradually expanded and bought a store here and a store there and a store here across the country. I'm trying to get the

picture of how this mercantile business started and how it grew.

FISHER: We had a buying syndicate which would buy for the store down in Louisiana and Grandin, Missouri--I'd buy for them and Birch Tree.

MAUNDER: Were these all stores in lumber towns, in lumber camps?

FISHER: Those three were. But, I was representing those. Not the syndicate. And they would meet twice a year and spend about six weeks, twice a year going to markets. They had about 22 stores and the largest buying group of stores that went to market in the country.

MAUNDER: The largest buying stores. In other words, you put the biggest orders in.

FISHER: Yes, for the 22 stores--the group--they'd buy as a group. All the way from Texas, Louisiana to Montana and west.

MAUNDER: What I still don't quite understand, Mr. Fisher, is how this group of stores came to be organized as a group. What brought them together? Who was the leader who brought them together?

FISHER: My brother had a store in Millegan, Montana.

MAUNDER: He was a leader of this group?

FISHER: I think so.

MAUNDER: He was the one who said to all the others--

FISHER: And my brother Will. He had a store over in Hamilton and Missoula, Montana. And then Dan had a store in Great Falls, Montana.

MAUNDER: Did each one of these brothers move to these communities and set up their own store on their own or did they have help from your father.

FISHER: My family was in them.

MAUNDER: Your family was --yes, I see. Your family helped them get started.

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: So, it really was a Fisher family enterprise in each case.

FISHER: {QUERY AUTHOR} But, we had a group that always invested wherever we invested. There was the Cords family and certain other individuals.

MAUNDER: Who were the other individuals. What other families interested in these propositions?

FISHER: Oh, it's a little hard to--

MAUNDER: Were the DeLanays and the Pettibones and the Whites involved in this, too?

FISHER: Yes, all of them.

MAUNDER: All of them.

FISHER: But, not in the Golden Rule end of it.

FISHER: No. We went into those with the lumber company and my father was president of the--manager of the saw mill down at Fisher, Louisiana. I went down there once a year anyway. I'd be down there about a week. They had a buyer who would sit in with the Golden Rule crowd at times in buying merchandise.

MAUNDER: How profitable was the mercantile end of your family's operations in the lumber towns?

FISHER: Well, they were reasonably satisfactory as investments. They came in competition--it wasn't any old mine.

MAUNDER: Well, weren't you the only store in the town?

FISHER: No. There were other stores in Bozeman and in Missoula, too.

MAUNDER: But I mean in Fisher, Louisiana for example.

FISHER: Oh, yes there.

MAUNDER: Or in Missouri. Some of those towns. You were the only-- you had no competition.

FISHER: In Fisher, Louisiana they had all the land, 800 and some acres there that covered all the area in Fisher and that was all owned by the lumber company. It had a store. Nobody else even owned a building. They owned all the buildings and everything else. Does now.

MAUNDER: Well what kind of a return did you get on your investment in the mercantile business in that kind of situation?

FISHER: Very satisfactory.

MAUNDER: Very satisfactory. Could you give me any idea of how much of a profit you could anticipate in a given year?

FISHER: It varied from year to year.

MAUNDER: But in a good year how much would it be?

FISHER: I don't know if I've got any figures here or not.

MAUNDER: Was it as profitable as the lumber business that you were in?

FISHER: Oh, that was just part of the lumber company you know and--

MAUNDER: It was all considered part of the lumber company. Is that right?

FISHER: We had a mercantile profit and we had a lumber profit and if we sold timber or logs, why we'd have that profit. This would all be designated. And your books

MAUNDER: But, you were primarily involved in those days in the mercantile end of it weren't you? You were buying?

FISHER: Well, I was in that but I was buying for the--

MAUNDER: For the mill.

FISHER: For the {QUERY AUTHOR}, the operations and all.

MAUNDER: Oh, you were buying equipment for the mill?

FISHER: I was the assistant manager if anything came up. Taxes, I always handled the legal business. The assessments. I handled all that.

MAUNDER: In both Missouri and Louisiana?

FISHER: In Missouri. Not in Louisiana.

MAUNDER: Not in Louisiana.

FISHER: I've been president of that down there but Mr. Quillen has been our manager there for--well, for 50 years I guess. He never worked anywhere else. I think he's just passed his 65th birthday not long ago. And he's never worked for anybody except our {QUERY AUTHOR} Grandin part of Diamond Fisher, Louisiana. The Red Diamond.

MAUNDER: Tell me, your investment in the lumber business down in Fisher, Louisiana--

FISHER: Has been very profitable.

MAUNDER: Yes, has been very profitable and has this been a venture in which you shared the dark ownership with these other lumbering families we mentioned before?

FISHER: Well, they usually, if we started anything, made any investment, well they'd be sure and keep us in mind. The result was that anything we would go into, we'd let them know and they would come in and buy their share of stock.

MAUNDER: Was there any ratio by which the ownership was split up between the families? No fixed ratios?

FISHER: No. From time to time this would develop.

MAUNDER: In some instances the Fisher family would have a majority

of the stock and some of these other companies would have just minor fractions of it. In other cases the DeLanays might own most of the stock in a company and the rest of you might have minor parts.

FISHER: White and DeLanays, they had a larger control of Louisiana {QUERY AUTHOR} Lumber Company, for example. But we had a larger control of the Cords Fisher Company.

MAUNDER: And did you have larger control of the Forest Lumber Company?

FISHER: It was {QUERY AUTHOR} White who was really usually the head of that.

MAUNDER: And what about the Fisher Lumber Company down in Fisher, Louisiana?

FISHER: My father and myself.

MAUNDER: And you had the controlling interest in that company?

FISHER: Well, I don't say we were {QUERY AUTHOR}. We were the officers.

MAUNDER: Well, did you own more than 50% of the stock?

FISHER: I don't think we owned 50% of the stock.

MAUNDER: You don't.

FISHER: I don't know of any of our companies where anybody controlled it.

MAUNDER: In other words in none of these companies did any one family control a majority of the stock.

FISHER: Not to where they used it as--

MAUNDER: As a means of control.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: This is a really interesting because it shows, it seems to me, at a very early period how a group of different families in the industry harmoniously worked together to make their capital accomplish what none of them could have done alone. Is that a fair statement?

FISHER: Well, I won't say it was impossible but I don't think it would have been as satisfactory. Because Father, he was manager down at Fisher, Louisiana, but he and Captain White went down there and Father was made president of the Fisher and Mr. White was made president of the Louisiana Central Company and they worked together and took stock in their company and they took stock in {QUERY AUTHOR}. And {QUERY AUTHOR} somewhere in there.

MAUNDER: There were a number of other companies then, too, in this same area that you were interested in, weren't there?

FISHER: We had the stores scattered all over the country.

MAUNDER: Stores?

FISHER: Retail stores in Colorado and Montana and I don't know. There are so many different places it's hard to remember them.

MAUNDER: Did the mercantile business begin to assume a larger importance as time went on than did the lumber business or where they equal in weight?

FISHER: Well, to me, I was very close to the lumber business from the time I was a child. And I was very--well, I just like I am now. I'm head of insurance companies and the bank and a number of activities here in Seattle. And I'm president of the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company--I'm the head of that.

MAUNDER: What I'm trying to get here Mr. Fisher is whether at a certain time in your career, the mercantile business seems to have become very much larger and spread out much broader across the country and involved many stores and became one of the biggest

buying groups that went to the market, as you say, every year to buy for all of its various stores. What I'm trying to get at is this, this aspect of your family investment becomes of larger importance in terms of volume of business and in terms of profit than did the lumber business.

FISHER: No, I don't know that I would say that. But I've been the --not the retail business but--my brothers Will and Burr and Dan all were managing stores.

MAUNDER: Retail stores?

FISHER: In Montana.

MAUNDER: Are those stores still operating as they were then.

FISHER: No, they were organized over there as Fisher Mercantile Company. And that Fisher Mercantile Company, Mr. Chambers, I believe was his name, finally bought that. And father owned a building there at Bozeman. He built it for a store and then also in the upper floor the Masons wanted to make a two story building of that for the Mason Headquarters in Bozeman. That was the second floor of father's building and still is. They still own that, I think.

MAUNDER: Well, going back again to this association of different families down in Missouri, you as the Fisher family became very closely related to the Grandins, the Whites, the DeLanays and the Pettibones.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: Now I believe most of these families had originally come out of Pennsylvania, hadn't they? And moved out there to that part of the country.

FISHER: Well, the Grandins were from Pennsylvania originally but Captain White, I think, was up in New York State somewhere. And he went west to Grandin, Missouri many, many years ago.

MAUNDER: And they had been in the lumber industry down east, had they not, before they moved out to Missouri?

FISHER: The Grandins were investment people. {QUERY AUTHOR} Pennsylvania.

MAUNDER: What had been the source of their wealth? What had they made their money in originally?

FISHER: Stock in the Northern Pacific Railroad. They would buy bonds. Finally they had to foreclose on, I don't know--70 thousand acres of that fine land there in North Dakota. They had loaned money on it and they had to take it over. They were really the bank in a way.

MAUNDER: That became the great Bonanza Farm land, didn't it? Then they invested some of their money in forest land down in Missouri in the Ozarks, right?

FISHER: That's right. In the Ozarks and down in Louisiana and-- Father and Captain White went to Fisher and the Grandins didn't like the title of the deed that was covering Fisher for some reason and they didn't take stock in Fisher. They went over to Grandin and they had their investments over there and Waverly joined them over there but they didn't join the 4-L. They didn't like the title.

MAUNDER: I'd like you to tell me a little bit more about the people with whom you had been associated back in those early days in Missouri and Montana. You must have known Captain White well. You knew him as a business associate and as a personal friend.

FISHER: Well, he was the president of the Missouri Lumber and Mining Company and he was in charge of the Sales Co. in Kansas City.

Cords Fisher and Winona Co. as well the Grandin Company, and we merged our selling in the Kansas City office and when Captain White of {QUERY AUTHOR} was alive he was head of it. And then Raymond White came in there since.

MAUNDER: Can you tell us a little bit about what kind of man Captain White was. How do you remember him? What sort of a person was he?

FISHER: Well, he was a school teacher in Rochester, New York, I think. The Grandins had him go down to Grandin, Missouri and he was the school teacher.

MAUNDER: He was hired first of all as a school teacher?

FISHER: Yes. He was a school teacher in Rochester, New York, I think, and then Captain White and Mr. Bircher of the Ozark in Winona and Fisher of Birch Trees got together and organized the Missouri Lumber and Land Exchange Company in Kansas City and Captain White was the president of that as long as he lived. Raymond has been president of it since and we have our meetings down there each year now.

MAUNDER: Can you tell me any stories about Captain White that you remember that would help us to understand him and to see him as a real live person.

FISHER: Well, Captain was appointed by the government when I came back--he was, what was his title--a government official and Mr. E.B. Grandin had a home over on Connecticut Street in Washington, D.C. and Captain White and I spent three days there with them and I was lining up an inheritance program for Mr. Grandin and Captain White was there and he'd been on the shipping board and helped them to build some wooden ships.

MAUNDER: When was this, during World War I?

FISHER: I think so. They made wooden ships while Captain White was head of it. And I was three days there in Mr. E.B. Grandin's office in Washington, D.C. and that was in his basement of his home.

MAUNDER: What did you say you were doing for Mr. Grandin?

FISHER: Well, Mr. E.B. Grandin wanted me to come to Washington and I was going back to New York and Washington, D.C. from time to time. He liked me to come out to his house. He wanted me to figure out a program connected with his estate. I sat for 3 days with Mr. E.B. Grandin to figure out {QUERY AUTHOR} for handling his estate for his family.

MAUNDER: I see. In other words divesting himself of certain parts of his estate before he died.

FISHER: Yes, to get it into shape for that.

MAUNDER: It wouldn't all be taken up by inheritance taxes.

FISHER: So I spent 3 days with him doing that. This was attorney's advice without any compensation or anything.

MAUNDER: You were kind of looked upon as the financial advisor, were you not?

FISHER: Mr. Grandin thought so and his wife.

MAUNDER: When it came to investment especially your word was highly regarded.

FISHER: I have in my vault, I think, letters from E.G. and J.L. Grandin, Srs., fathers of the younger men that we knew. They wrote me and said, Olly, this was E.L. Grandin, Sr., E.B. and I have set aside 2 million dollars that we want you to invest for us. I have that written letter in my vault. But, I was working to see that they got into investments to the extent of 2 million dollars.

Finally I was over in London and they were interested in the Metropolitan Building Company that had the lease of 10 acres of school land here in Seattle and the Grandins had put in a million dollars. Loaned it to them. I was in London and that stock went down to \$84 for \$100. For \$100 worth of stock he got paid \$84 and I sent a telegram from New York to have Douglas--that I'd just been able purchase some from one of the big trust companies in Scotland that had its offices in New York. I went down to his office and I got an offer from him to buy a whale of a lot of that stock at about \$98 or something like that and I found a trust company back in Scotland and it had about 5 hundred thousand dollars of that stock and I bought it, I think, at \$84 and it was hard to get at par in Seattle.

MAUNDER: This was the Metropolitan Building stock?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: Well, you invested at least a part of their two million dollars in the purchase of this Metropolitan Building stock, right?

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: How much of the two million did that require?

FISHER: I've forgotten exactly but it was quite a substantial amount and then they had me look over timber down in southern Oregon and northern California. I looked over lots of it. Thousands of acres. Finally, it developed that he wouldn't make the merger.

MAUNDER: When you say that you looked over many many acres of forest land, how did you go about actually doing this?

FISHER: Oh, I had one or two crews that I had engaged all the time and then I'd get additional cruisers so I had 44 thousand acres in Douglas County, Oregon and I had a number of cruisers there.

MAUNDER: Had you bought this land or the options on this land strictly on the strength of the cruise report, or had you been to look at it yourself?

FISHER: I went myself and then I also had the cruisers.

MAUNDER: You were relying not only on the cruisers' reports but you had yourself--

FISHER: {QUERY AUTHOR} about forty thousand acres there in Oregon and I'd arranged for Mr. Bordeau, who was the best judge of timber as such and of logging as such and Mr. Long agreed with me. That he was the best informed man in the whole west and I had a fellow down in Aberdeen also agreed to it. So we got ahold of them and we bought 24 thousand acres, I guess.

MAUNDER: Have most of these acreages that were bought at that time been sold subsequently or have they--

FISHER: They have merged with Weyerhaeuser.

MAUNDER: Were they merged at the same time?

FISHER: No, different times

MAUNDER: They've come in the Weyerhaeuser Company then at different times in the past 40-50 years?

FISHER: {QUERY AUTHOR} how many times.

MAUNDER: For example, you said that you bought considerable acreage in California. Is that now part of that--

FISHER: I cruised large quantities down there.

MAUNDER: You cruised large quantities?

FISHER: But I didn't buy so much.

MAUNDER: You didn't buy much? How much did you buy and what was it? Was it redwood or?

FISHER: {QUERY AUTHOR} Somewhere around Bend, Oregon and then also

down in northern California and that is where a timber company is.

MAUNDER: Arcata, Redwood?

FISHER: I forget.

MAUNDER: And then you also made cruises and bought timber land in Oregon in quite some quantity, right? What were some of the main purchases you made in Oregon?

FISHER: Well, at Klamath Falls.

MAUNDER: How much did you buy there?

FISHER: I've forgotten. That was bought for the companies. I didn't buy any for myself.

MAUNDER: It was bought for the company?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: You mean the Grandins?

FISHER: There were other than Grandin {QUERY AUTHOR}, whichever it might be.

MAUNDER: I'm talking now about the earlier years before you became associated with the Weyerhaeuser Company you bought some land down there.

FISHER: I was always associated with Weyerhaeuser at Klamath Falls.

MAUNDER: Right from the very beginning of the time you were out here?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: I thought the association with Weyerhaeuser only came a little bit later on.

FISHER: My first association with Weyerhaeuser was that I bought 40 acres of land from him up at {QUERY AUTHOR} and then I turned around and made it into a mill site and I had bought it for Grandin {QUERY AUTHOR} put the mill {QUERY AUTHOR} and they needed water for a pond {QUERY AUTHOR} wanted me to take a drive up there and said: we've got to get some water for this Palmer plant--Palmer Everett--and I'd like to have you go up with us--George Long and Willard Warren, I believe.

MAUNDER: Willard Warren?

FISHER: Yes, he and his brother-in-law and he died. Fell out of his chair in his office in Seattle. And so he and Mr. Long wanted to get a pond for three or four hundred thousand feet of timber for a saw mill. I said: why not get enough for a billion and a half feet. He said: what are you talking about? I said: If you'll give me a couple of hours, I'll take you up and I'll show you where you can get a mile and a half where you can float logs on water. It won't cost you over \$150. Well, I got in the car and took them up there. So all we did was put a dam where the water went out of the slough into the river and I did it just by blocking off this outlet of the slough. It backed that water up eight feet deep. Here's a highway up here that can give us an eight foot dam and will cost us only a few dollars. We did that and they use it yet. And just put that dam in there and it backed up that water in that slough for a mile and a half and you could have logs and logs and logs dumped in that mile and a half of slough.

MAUNDER: So in a sense you made the selection of the mill site for Snoqualmie Falls?

FISHER: I bought it. Bought it from Grandin {QUERY AUTHOR} Bought part of the land from Weyerhaeuser to do it then later when we merged Weyerhaeuser finally got it all.

MAUNDER: Why did Grandin {QUERY AUTHOR} never build and start harvesting his timber? Build a mill and really go into the

manufacture of lumber?

FISHER: Well, we were interested in the --had great confidence in the Weyerhaeuser {QUERY AUTHOR} at Snoqualmie Falls.

MAUNDER: In other words you had been more interested in speculating on the rise in the value of timber land than you were in the manufacturing of lumber. Is that right?

FISHER: Well, I wouldn't say just that, but--

MAUNDER: Well, did you go into--until you got into an association with the Weyerhaeusers, you had not built any mills of your own out west.

FISHER: Well, we had that mill site up there and we had a store.

MAUNDER: And you started to build a mill on the mill site?

FISHER: We had two mills. We had number one and number two. We had a third mill as a shingle mill.

MAUNDER: You had two mills on the Snoqualmie Falls--

FISHER: Three really counting the shingle mill.

MAUNDER: Counting the shingle mill. Were these mills that you bought with the property or were they mills that you built?

FISHER: I built.

MAUNDER: You built them.

FISHER: I was in charge of buying and operating. I spent three years up there myself.

MAUNDER: Well, what I'm getting at is were those mills on the ground when you bought the land or did you have to build them?

FISHER: I bought the land from Weyerhaeuser for the company.

MAUNDER: And were there any mills on the land when you bought it?

FISHER: No, there was an old lumber company that had, many many years before, had laid out a mill site and there was about ten acres of land that I was very anxious to get ahold of and finally I found that ten acres went into an estate and that estate was three women down in California and I went down to California and bought that fifteen acres, I guess it was. That was right along that slough and I paid them \$15, I think for it.

MAUNDER: Fifteen dollars?

FISHER: I think it was.

MAUNDER: Totally?

FISHER: I think so.

MAUNDER: For how many acres?

FISHER: Fifteen.

MAUNDER: You paid a dollar an acre then? You were a very good buyer of land.

FISHER: Well that was just stuff there. It was flooded and you couldn't do anything with it.

MAUNDER: But it had a real value to you? Potential.

FISHER: I figured we could use it. And finally we got the Northern Pacific Railroad to build a railroad across the river in that property. I handled all of that for the Snoqualmie crowd. Because it was pretty hard to get a road from Cedar Lake down to Snoqualmie. I wanted to see a main line railroad right through Snoqualmie up there where the station is. So finally I got an arrangement where you could come down from the main line of the {QUERY AUTHOR} and switch right on--right up almost where the office is and the railroad goes in there {QUERY AUTHOR} all the way around up that creek up here. But I did some workup there at--Mr. Long, my brother-in-law--it meant a lot to him. That is getting the railroad across the river. I was back in St. Paul and I got the railroad

company to agree to do that so they could have a railroad right in the big plant across the river. Because Father and others had bought the site on-- the Snoqualmie Town site on the river and I didn't want that. I wanted it right over across the river from Snoqualmie and up where it is. So finally I got--I finally got them to raise about four or five feet of plank bulkhead above the dam so as to push the water back in our slough so it would have standing water--8 feet of water in the slough. I came down to Seattle--from Snoqualmie down to Seattle and I finally got them to agree that they could raise the water from the dam back in the slough and not interfere with the four feet of water on the river. And then I had to get right-of-way and 95 acres of a farm. So we bought the farm and the 95 acres was covered by the railroad. From the mill where they'd come on and get up the slope where they'd get back on 400 feet level above the mill. And the timber--first I'd bought timber from one of the old-timers up there. Then there were little pockets of timber springing up and my gosh it got up there to where it got so high that I had to cut a two-foot path and shove the sticks up there, two or three inches in diameter you know and push it back into the timber that was so close. You couldn't lay it down and I tried to get a two or two and a half feet for us to run our survey line going up the hill above the mill site because the timber had come up so thick. But we got it all right but we ended up just pushing that timber back. Couldn't lay it down but we got up that bushy hill all right with the survey line--about two or two and a half feet wide.

MAUNDER: How do you remember George Long, George S. Long?

FISHER: Well, he was one the greatest friends I ever had, and my wife. We were very, very, very dear friends for a long time.

MAUNDER: What do you think made George S. Long so great a man in his field?

FISHER: Well, George Long was the Weyerhaeuser Company for quite a while.

MAUNDER: Yes, but what about the man made him great in your estimation?

FISHER: Well, he was--back in the Dakotas or somewhere back there he started to work for Mr. Weyerhaeuser and some of the crowd and they knew him way back there before he came west. So that in Tacoma he was the only man--he was Weyerhaeuser Company. He was the only man there.

MAUNDER: Right but did that fact make him great or were there things within his own personal self that could have made him great?

FISHER: His own knowledge. He was brilliant.

MAUNDER: He was a brilliant mind.

FISHER: Right.

MAUNDER: How can you illustrate for me how brilliant he was?

FISHER: Well, he'd had such marvelous experience back east and then in the west and he was the Weyerhaeuser Company. If you wanted anything you went to George Long. He was the boss and they recognized it and everybody else did. And it just so happened that he and I were brought together both with the Weyerhaeuser and Snoqualmie Falls operation. We were just very dear friends.

MAUNDER: I've heard it said by many people that George Long's word was just the surest thing in the world. You could count on it. If he said thus and so then you would never have to worry about it. Without any paper or signature or legal forms, you would know that

that word would be carried out. Can you cite any such story from your own acquaintance with George Long? I'm sure you can.

FISHER: Well, on one Saturday afternoon, Mr. Long wanted me to come over. He called up and I went over. I was going to Kansas City for a few days so I said: Well, Mr. Long I think it would be better-- I'm going down to Kansas City and I think it would be just as well to organize the timber company here today. What do you think would be a good name for it? Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company, I think that would do. And who do you think the officers ought to be? Oh I think probably I should be president and you should be vice president and treasurer. You think that's the way it ought to be? Yes. May I tell them in Kansas City that we've organized and that you're going to be president and I'll be vice president and manager and so forth? O.K. with me. Well, I went to Kansas City and {QUERY AUTHOR} and I {QUERY AUTHOR} and we went up to St. Paul with authority from the people at Kansas City to tell the Weyerhaeuser man, now he's dead--

MAUNDER: F.E. Weyerhaeuser?

FISHER: Well, there was F.E. and then there was--

MAUNDER: John.

FISHER: Well, there was John and then there was another.

MAUNDER: Rudolph?

FISHER: Rudolph. I was to go back and report to the Weyerhaeusers that we had organized the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company and who the officers were and {QUERY AUTHOR} with Mr. Long and when I got there, he says, well, I guess we might as well get it fixed that way then. And I don't know, he got ahold of somebody in St. Paul and I was authorized to go ahead with it when I got down to Kansas City then went back up to St. Paul and they had a meeting the same day we did in both places and quoted the same thing. {QUERY AUTHOR}

MAUNDER: I've been just looking through these correspondence files here and I have one here that dates back to the 1920s and involves some correspondence between various parties in your group over the affairs of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company and the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company. And I notice here in a letter that has been written by Mr. Pettibone, I believe. But there were in that letter carbon copies sent to the following people: R.B.W., San Francisco. It's obviously R.B. White, isn't it?

FISHER: I guess so.

MAUNDER: No, wait a minute. There's R.B. W. in San Francisco and R.B.W. in Kansas City. Were there two R.B.W.s in the group?

FISHER: Not that I remember.

MAUNDER: No. The G.W.D. That would be George W. DeLaney, Chicago and W.H.D., Will Delaney, St. Louis. G.W. G., Cleveland?

FISHER: I don't know that.

MAUNDER: That one doesn't ring a bell.

FISHER: I don't remember at the moment.

MAUNDER: G.W.G. I'll bet it should be G.W.D. That would be George W. Delaney, Jr. Wouldn't it?

FISHER: He was in St. Louis.

MAUNDER: Yea. Well, who would have been in Cleveland?

FISHER: Bert Grandin.

MAUNDER: Bert Grandin. Oh, it could have been one of the Grandins then? And then J.L.G. That would a Grandin in Boston wouldn't it?

FISHER: Yea.

MAUNDER: J.L. Grandin. P.A.B. at Fisher. That would have been

your man Bloomer wouldn't it? Your manager, P.A. Bloomer.

FISHER: Former manager. He's dead now.

MAUNDER: And then at Clark, C.E.S. Slagel.

FISHER: Slagel. Clarence Slagel.

MAUNDER: Do you remember some of these people personally?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: Do you remember W. B. Pettibone?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: Tell me a little bit about W.B. Pettibone.

FISHER: Well, he has a bank there in Hannibal. And he has north Missouri lumber yards, retail yards. He's a stock holder with us down south there particularly near Grandin, the [QUERY AUTHOR] Central. He's a director there.

MAUNDER: Had his family been in the lumber business back east?

FISHER: Well, he succeeded in my office. His father's dead now and he succeeded his father.

MAUNDER: Well, had they made their money in the lumber business back east before they came out to Missouri?

FISHER: They've been in the business there for a century. Started out with Mr. Weyerhaeuser and then they went -

MAUNDER: The Pettibones started out with Mr. Weyerhaeuser?

FISHER: Well, he was with the Delaneys--the Pettibones and Delaneys were together at Hannibal.

MAUNDER: Had there been a link between them and the Weyerhaeusers in the early days?

FISHER: Well, they were--there was a bad storm up the river there--what is that river that Weyerhaeuser used to log down the river?

MAUNDER: Chippewa?

FISHER: Chippewa. And--

MAUNDER: Did they loose a lot of logs down the stream?

FISHER: Mr. Weyerhaeuser had a yard up the river and a storm came along and tore out the protection for his yard, the logs floated down and went into the yards of Mr.--what's his name?

MAUNDER: Which one. I don't--

FISHER: Well, he's one of the old-timers there.

MAUNDER: You mean an old Wisconsin? You don't mean Edward Rutledge, do you?

FISHER: No. He and Mr. Weyerhaeuser were associates in the early days.

MAUNDER: {QUERY AUTHOR} Montree?

FISHER: No. Well--

MAUNDER: Was it Orrin Ingram?

FISHER: I think maybe it was. The logs were floating down this river and the floods--and the Weyerhaeuser logs got over into this other party's boom and he set them aside and saw that they were floated to the proper boom down on the Mississippi River. And the friendship was cemented from that time on. They were very jealous of each other before.

MAUNDER: Up to that time, huh? What else do you remember about the relationship of Pettibone to Weyerhaeuser. How did they get--how did they get to know each other?

FISHER: More or less when they saw the affiliation of the Weyerhaeuser crowd there in the bank at Hannibal, Missouri. The partners.

MAUNDER: I see the partners--the Weyerhaeusers came to that bank to do certain business and they got to know them that way.

FISHER: They were with the Weyerhaeusers up there {QUERY AUTHOR} raft that floated down the Missouri River--down to Hannibal, Missouri.

MAUNDER: Yes. George W. Delaney told me a lot about those rafts in the interview that I had with him. He has a boy who rode the raft.

FISHER: I rode the raft down the {QUERY AUTHOR}. I rode the rafts over that rough water down the Snake River about 70 miles. The governor--Good, I believe was the name, the governor of Idaho and the Humburgs.

MAUNDER: Yes. Tom Humburg?

FISHER: Humburg and two other parties and myself were riding horseback over there in Idaho and we went over to this river and got on this raft made up of logs {QUERY AUTHOR} about two and a half feet I would say, so high so you could put your feet up above any water down the river and then you had a back to it so that you could lean back. And we went down there 70 miles in pretty rough water. But we didn't have any trouble at all. Didn't get wet. The Governor of Idaho and Tom Humburg and one or two other boys in the crowd.

MAUNDER: Did you ever know Harry Shellworth over there in Idaho? He was with the Boise Payette Company.

FISHER: I don't think I did.

MAUNDER: He was a great one for taking people from executive ranks out on wilderness tours and fishing trips and so on. Well, Mr. Fisher we've talked a fair amount about the things you've done in the lumber industry. I'm sure there is a great deal more than you could tell us about this part of your life. What do you remember most vividly about your relationship with the original Frederick Weyerhaeuser? You must have had some contact with him.

FISHER: I have a picture in my office of him out at the university--1915 and 1909--

MAUNDER: What university is that?

FISHER: The University of Washington. They had a timber there about 18 inches {QUERY AUTHOR} 34 feet long. They had it on display at this 1915 fair I think it was. And the senior Weyerhaeuser was one of those people in this picture that's on my desk there, and my father and D.B. White and I don't remember the other fellow just at that moment. But there's Grandin there and--

MAUNDER: What sort of a man do you remember Mr. Weyerhaeuser to be?

FISHER: Oh, I just met him to shake hands.

MAUNDER: You never knew him other than that?

FISHER: He was here when I came over and Mr. Colemar and Dr. DeLong introduced me to him. I knew Mr. John.

MAUNDER: Now you knew the boy, his son, better I take it.

FISHER: Yea.

MAUNDER: Did you know the second generation of that family better? J.P. Weyerhaeuser and Rudolph?

FISHER: All of them.

MAUNDER: F.E. and Charlie. You knew all four brothers? Did you know any of them really very well?

FISHER: I knew all of them pretty well. Charlie I didn't know so well. He died when he was on the way around the world I think and then--back over in the Orient. I think he died over there.

MAUNDER: But you knew him less well than you knew the other three.

FISHER: Yes, I just had met him. But John Weyerhaeuser came over to my office one day and he said: I asked father if I could come over

and get some information from you. About what? Taxes. Well, he spent close to a day there with me trying to figure out his inheritance taxes. His brother lived in Washington, D.C. He had me stop off in Washington, D.C. and spend three days with him and Mr. White on figuring out the way to save inheritance taxes.

MAUNDER: You got frequent requests for that kind of help from your friends, didn't you?

FISHER: Yea. I got it from Weyerhaeuser and the Grandins.

MAUNDER: How do you feel you were able to help them? What advice did you give them?

FISHER: My interpretation of the restrictions in the law whatever it might be.

MAUNDER: Do you feel that your interpretation of the restrictions in the law were such as to guide them into a course of action that they ultimately took then to give themselves some tax relief?

FISHER: They used it in their wills and all. Because I was pretty well informed in those days.

MAUNDER: Was your information that you got from your own research or did you have good legal advice of your own?

FISHER: My own studies.

MAUNDER: Your own studies. What did you do in that study? Did you read the laws themselves?

FISHER: Yea. Made my interpretation out of them. I used to try to keep very well posted on all the tax laws. More so than I do now.

MAUNDER: We have a program going down in Oregon right now which is studying the history of the forest tax law of Oregon. We've got a man working on it and he's writing a history of forest taxation from the early years right up to the present time. You say that you kept abreast of all the legislation being written into the statute books in the states in which you were operating and on the national scene as well. You mentioned that you were frequently going back and forth to Washington. Did your trips there involve you in matters concerned with this legislation?

FISHER: Oh, at times it was. Mr. White or the Grandins and then Mr. John Weyerhaeuser. I remember he came over to my office from Tacoma, sat down in my office and wanted to get the interpretation of the new laws at that time.

MAUNDER: Were you an active member of the National Lumbermen's Association or the NAM or any other?

FISHER: I was with the flour millers national association.

MAUNDER: With the flour millers? Not of the lumber?

FISHER: Not of the lumber. We have a man in Louisiana who could go back on that, {QUERY AUTHOR} Bloomer. They were on all the key committees of the lumber business.

MAUNDER: {QUERY AUTHOR} or Bloomer represented the 4-L company then in --

FISHER: They kept us well posted in Louisiana on the tax laws. Two very good men.

MAUNDER: Why did the investment at Fisher, Louisiana turn out so much better than other investments that were made about the same time and by the same group of people in other parts of Louisiana? Such as at Clark and various other places.

FISHER: That's an embarrassing question to answer.

MAUNDER: Well, it can be confidential if you wish. It doesn't have to be public.

FISHER: Well, we just knew a hell of a lot more about it than they

did.

MAUNDER: In what areas did you know more about it?

FISHER: In some areas of the tax laws, particularly {QUERY AUTHOR} timber.

MAUNDER: Well, what did you do that they didn't do? Did you cut your timber on a different basis than they did?

FISHER: They sold their timber. They reserved the right to cut the timber nine inches, I think, in diameter, or larger, when they sold the land to the International Paper Company and also the Standard Company. That's where it went. And this fellow that's supposed to be the richest man in the world has 54,000 acres, I think, leased from us now.

MAUNDER: Is that Paul Getty?

FISHER: No, he's {QUERY AUTHOR}. He's said to be the richest man in the world. Well, he's been handling our stuff down there-- central Coal and Coke, I guess it is. He does it in a very fine way and though he is one of the biggest gamblers in Shreveport I guess. But he certainly is always a fine gentleman to work with on our land.

MAUNDER: What's his name? You don't remember?

FISHER: Oh, I should. I know him so well. It is the man whose name is publicized more than any other man as being the richest man in the world a few years ago--two or three years ago. And Shreveport is his home. He used to keep up with a woman down about two and one half miles from one of our old very dear friends. He's been out here several times. He'd come out these certain two weeks of the year that he'd try to get here and someone has always arranged for him down at the hotel so that he had so many rooms there. A large sitting room and dining room. He'd come down here every year and I think he's still alive. I'm not sure.

MAUNDER: Can't think of his name.

FISHER: It's slipped me just for a moment.

MAUNDER: Well, you haven't completely clarified for me why the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company has made a long term success of its operation while the other brother and sister companies that occupied the same general area and the same general type of timber and the same opportunity went out of business and left the scene. Now, I gather from your answer that the ownership of the other companies just did not see the long term value of holding onto the land and waiting for the trees to come back. Is that right?

FISHER: Nor did their manager.

MAUNDER: Nor did their manager. The men who were employed--

FISHER: They sold all of their land and their timber to the two companies and the 4-L Company was disposing of any land. It kept itself in timber. The 4-L was handled entirely different. My father was handling 4-L and he was a conservative operator against some people over at Clarks that weren't paying enough attention to their business. Too much with other women {QUERY AUTHOR} and they didn't do well. Does that answer it?

MAUNDER: Well, that sounds like a pretty good answer to me. I'm trying to remember who the management was at Clark.

FISHER: Clagle.

MAUNDER: Clagle, that's right. Where was Shepherd a manager?

FISHER: Clagle, No, Shepherd came out here to--

MAUNDER: He was at Grandin wasn't he?

FISHER: Yes, he was a school teacher when he started in Grandin and

then he was with them over there on the lake in Oregon for a little while. And Shepherd had common sense but he was walking out on his wife according to everybody up around Shreveport and when he was up there in Grandin with Long and Pettibone. My gosh, where's Shepherd, he hasn't shown up yet. Well, he'd had lunch and gone to visit with a lady. We were waiting to go out into the woods. And that didn't go very well with them and he wasn't very true to his wife.

MAUNDER: How did that effect his relations with the people he was working with?

FISHER: Well for a time he stayed on the job. That's all been--I don't think he's been in the papers for some time.

MAUNDER: Well, he's no longer living, is he?

FISHER: I guess not. I guess at the moment the new man we've got--what's his name? The boss down there now.

MAUNDER: You mean in Fisher?

FISHER: No.

MAUNDER: Where?

FISHER: Louisiana Central.

MAUNDER: Louisiana Central. There's a man by the name of Isles there. That's the one.

FISHER: He was a fine gentleman. I was very fond of Isles. Mrs. Isles, too. The other one is the one that's representing them down there now. What is his name? A nice gentleman.

MAUNDER: I don't know. There isn't any recent correspondence in these files here. This is all fairly old stuff here so it wouldn't be in this.

FISHER: This year is the only year I haven't attended a meeting at Kansas City in 50 or 60 years. But I didn't think it was wise for me to go down to Kansas City this last meeting.

MAUNDER: Tell me a little about the organization of the General Insurance Company of America.

FISHER: Well, I was over in the Philippine Islands in 1923, I think it was. I got a cable from the Stanley Allen Lumber Company and decoded it and it was a cable from George Long but through Stanley Allen of our company because Long wanted to send it in code you know. It's less money that way. So Stanley coded me and stated that Mr. Long stated that he had gone to Olympia today to file the {QUERY AUTHOR} General Insurance Company of America and you're going to be the head of it. I didn't have stock in the General Insurance Company. That's where I heard that I was going to be the head man of the General Insurance Company.

MAUNDER: Had you heard any discussion of the idea of such a company before you left.

FISHER: No.

MAUNDER: In other words the first notice you had of it was when you got this cable.

FISHER: It was George Long really. George Long is the one that hired the manager and it was the understanding that I would be the head of it but I didn't know anything about it at all until I got that cable from George Long over in the Philippines. So when I got back, Mr. Long arranged for a meeting up in the {QUERY AUTHOR} Building in just a little small office with {QUERY AUTHOR} Dempson and McGoldrick and half a dozen others--Talbert from San Francisco and half a dozen or so of outside business men. I was invited to attend that meeting by Mr. Long, when I got there Mr. Long had the

chair and he wanted to make a motion--I want to elect Mr. O.D. Fisher Chairman of the Board of this company. When he asked me to respond, I said, well I can't be Chairman of the Board. I don't even own a nickle's worth of stock and I've never been in an insurance business like this and so they outvoted me and I was put in as Chairman of the Board of the Insurance Company.

MAUNDER: What were the reasons for organizing the company?

FISHER: Mr. Long was the backbone of it. He wanted to get a company that would study the lumber business from an insurance end and so that they would get everything that was needed to protect themselves with responsible insurance facilities at a reasonable cost and he was the one that got it all organized.

MAUNDER: Was there a feeling among you at that time that the insurance you had from other sources was inadequate and high priced?

FISHER: I don't know just what was in the mind of Phil Weyerhaeuser. I guess Phil was the president then.

MAUNDER: Well, probably not. I think this was before Phil's time.

FISHER: That's right. Well he was a student himself and well informed and he did rely on me beyond measure numerous times.

MAUNDER: What were you going to write? What kind of insurance for the lumber industry?

FISHER: I wasn't going to write any. I was just going to see that they get the proper kind of insurance.

MAUNDER: Well, now the General Insurance Company of America was going to issue policies, was it not?

FISHER: Yea, but that would be only a drop in the bucket you know. They wouldn't take enough insurance to cover all the Weyerhaeusers. One risk. No, really if General Insurance wanted it they'd get some of it, whatever they wanted but they wouldn't want to get all of Weyerhaeuser's business.

MAUNDER: Well, what I'm trying to determine is what kind of insurance this company was going to provide the lumber industry.

FISHER: Fire.

MAUNDER: Fire insurance principally. On the mills?

FISHER: And their yards. And you take the--well, they had a lot of retail yards here.

MAUNDER: Well, you knew nothing about running an insurance company and yet you were made chairman of the board. What instructions did you get from your Board of Directors to start with.

FISHER: What Board?

MAUNDER: Well, you had a Board of Directors didn't you, of this company? You were Chairman of it.

FISHER: I was in the Philippines when it was organized. Long was running it.

MAUNDER: Well, here is an article that appeared in the Sunday Times of March, 1924 which has the number that had to do with this company being formed and shows a picture of you as the Chairman of the Board of Directors and a Hawthorne K. Dent as president and then a picture of the officers of the company which are growing steadily it says and a year ago there were only four people employed. Now what can you tell me about the beginnings of this company of which you were Chairman of the Board.

FISHER: That was in '24?

MAUNDER: March 16, 1924. It says here that consequently at a meeting of subscribers held on Feb. 28, 1923 the following Board of Directors was elected. O.D. Fisher, Chairman; Messrs. Calvert.

Ives, Long, Middleton, Humburg, Martin, McCleary, Simpson, Dent and George J. Osgood, Vice-president of Wheeler, Osgood and Company, Tacoma.

FISHER: George Long selected all those.

MAUNDER: George Long selected all of them? In other words the subscribers held a meeting and elected so and so but they were really chosen by George Long and the election was just merely a formality. How was this venture capitalized? Who put up the money for it?

FISHER: What are the groups--the name of them there?

MAUNDER: Well, it says there's a finance committee here. A finance committee was appointed consisting of Mr. McVay, Mr. Lord, Mr. A.R. Arnold, M.A. Arnold, president of the First National Bank, Seattle, L.L. Crosby, president of the First National Bank of Everett, E.G. Ames, Vice-President of the Seattle National Bank and Hawthorne K. Dent, a Seattle Insurance man nationally known for his familiarity with all details of the fire insurance business. He was selected as president of the company on May 2, 1923.

FISHER: Well, George Long selected the key quality companies along the Pacific Coast. He got them interested--George Long --and he got Hawthorne Dent of {QUERY AUTHOR} and Hawthorne Dent was a very wonderful fine salesman. So Hawthorne through Mr. Long's request and influence was put in a beautiful position with all of these companies along the Pacific Coast.

MAUNDER: And these companies all took their insurance policies out with this General Insurance Company of America.

FISHER: That's right. It all started with George Long getting Hawthorne Dent and Hawthorne Dent becoming the outstanding insurance man on the coast.

MAUNDER: I see. I have a good friend you know very well - Robert E. Slaughter back in Stillwater.

FISHER: Yes indeed. He's ill now in the hospital, isn't he?

MAUNDER: That's right. That's where I saw him. But he's been an active member of this board of directors of the General Insurance Company of America since it started. He was then in Yakima.

FISHER: He's only missed two meetings now that I can recall. He hadn't missed any meeting until one of his friends who was very close, McDonald, I believe died and he went to attend the funeral. And that's the only time up to that time that he hadn't attended the annual meeting for a long time. He'd come out all this distance for these meetings. But he didn't attend that one for the funeral. I think he was a pallbearer.

MAUNDER: Well, you've known Mr. Slaughter then for many years. Have you had any other business connections with him besides General Insurance of America?

FISHER: Well, it was principally that. He used to attend our meetings.

MAUNDER: This group which organized this company was evidently largely a lumber group wasn't it?

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FISHER: Yes, it was.

MAUNDER: I see a good many names on the list here who are lumbermen.

FISHER: And some bankers there.

MAUNDER: That's right but bankers with strong connections with the lumber industry. Right? And this company has been a very great success, has it not? The General Insurance?

FISHER: I'd say so. It certainly has been.

MAUNDER: In the beginning its market area was purely these western states wasn't it? In the Pacific Northwest?

FISHER: No, I think they went into Canada, British Columbia anyway.

MAUNDER: Now it extends all over the country.

FISHER: Oh, they're getting to be pretty near a worldwide organization now.

MAUNDER: Is that right?

FISHER: The Weyerhaeusers have merged with big companies in various other countries all over the world. In Europe, South America.

MAUNDER: Would you say that this company is then another of the real accomplishments of the mind of George S. Long?

FISHER: Well, he was an awful good leader.

MAUNDER: What other things do you associate with George S. Long's career as being of the greatest importance to the Pacific Northwest.

FISHER: Well, George S. Long was the Weyerhaeuser Company. George S. Long has the Weyerhaeuser Company. He and I were the only people of the Weyerhaeuser Company that have attended meetings {QUERY AUTHOR} over in Tacoma for some time. And Mr. Long learned the lumber business back in the Central States and he knew timber. He knew how to organize the cruisers. He knew everything that could be known about organization for lumber and timber companies. He was a man that was respected by everybody that he had anything to do with. His word was the gospel all the time.

MAUNDER: Was he a--I've only seen pictures of the man. He's always pictured wearing these very high stiff starched "brother Jesus" collars and he looks very austere, very cold, very impersonal.

FISHER: Just the reverse.

MAUNDER: But you say he was very different.

FISHER: Very.

MAUNDER: Well, just describe him. Give me as good a word picture as you can of that man as you remember him.

FISHER: Well, he knew more about the lumber business than any other man that I know. And he was honorable in all of his dealings with any and everybody and he had the confidence of every businessman that was in the lumber business on the Pacific Coast.

MAUNDER: What personal trait would you single out?

FISHER: If you talked to him, he talked business. He wasn't a play boy or anything like that.

MAUNDER: What do you mean by that? He wasn't a play boy?

FISHER: Well, I mean that he talked business all the time.

MAUNDER: All the time talking business. Didn't he ever have time to play games like you have out here? Was he ever a shuffle board player or a crap shooter or a card player?

FISHER: I don't know that anybody else ever got him out with the crowd like that but I did.

MAUNDER: You did. When you got him out with a crowd like that--

FISHER: He enjoyed it.

MAUNDER: Was he a jolly person?

FISHER: Yes, he was good natured.

MAUNDER: Good natured.

FISHER: Highly respected. Everybody respected him.

MAUNDER: Yea. I don't think there's any question about that. I think every one of us has tons of evidence that he was honorable, respected, able, well informed.

FISHER: He was the Weyerhaeuser Company to the public.

MAUNDER: And he was the Weyerhaeuser Company to the public. Now, what we're trying to get from you, Mr. Fisher, is something more personal about the man. What kinds of habits did he have? What were his relations to people in the community? How did he respond to children, for example? Was he the kind of man who had a human side? We know him so well as a business man. We're trying to make a human being out of him, too, and that's what I'm trying to get from people I've talk to who knew him. Something in the way of stories, anecdotes about the man that will put a little more flesh and blood on his frame for us. To see him as a real person. Can you tell me anything about George S. Long that will help me see him more clearly?

FISHER: Well, he was business I think all the time.

MAUNDER: How did this effect relations with his wife and son? He has a son, George S. Long, Jr.

FISHER: Another bright young fellow. About a year ago I was over at Tacoma and we were down on the waterfront there at a restaurant for dinner and George, Jr. said Mr. Fisher, let's go in and get some seats to ourselves. Well, there was big crowd there--200 to 200 people, but he selected a seat that he thought we could have to ourselves. He had the seat and then I went over to where he got the seat, but there was a string of people to shake hands with us so that was Junior. So the people did respect him a good deal like his father. They had high respect for him because, here I sat there with him, way off from the crowd {QUERY AUTHOR} practically all of them to come over and shake hands.

MAUNDER: Well, I'm going back again to George S. Long, the elder, the man you were associated with. How did he conduct his business during the day? You say he was business-like. Do you recall how he would conduct his affairs during the course of a day. Where you ever there to observe him in the office for any length of time.

FISHER: Well, if he wanted to talk with me he'd say: Well, I'll drop by and pick you up and we'll drive up to Snoqualmie. Then he'd take me up to Snoqualmie.

MAUNDER: Would he drive?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: He'd drive the car and you'd ride along with him and talk.

FISHER: And take, when we were trying to locate the large mill, I got the president of the Milwaukee Railroad Company. I was quite well acquainted with him and we got everything that we asked for and we got also through the vice-president of the Northern Pacific--got an agreement from him that he would see the Northern Pacific built a railroad across the river to the plant and we'd get so much of a handout for the origination of tonnage to the railroad.

MAUNDER: You mean so much of a rebate.

MAUNDER: Well, it was for developing the business. We had the business and we'd turn it over to them and we got what you might call a rebate but we didn't look at it like that. That's service. So I was with the position with the president and the vice president of the Northern Pacific Railroad back in St. Paul. As well as the president that came out here {QUERY AUTHOR} west of the Missouri River. Fellow by the name of Williams I believe. And he was the one that told me that he was coming up to my office at 11 o'clock tomorrow and we'll tell you the day that we'll start building the railroad into the Snoqualmie Plant because we've got to cross the river. So 11 o'clock tomorrow. So I went in and we happened to be where the crowd was for lunch over at the club. He saw one of these fellows over at the bar and he was the vice-president of the Northern Pacific so we got ahold of him. Then after he had two or three drinks, we left the bar and went back then to the lounge and here comes the real tough people out of the elevator. And it's hard to tell the work I do but it's certainly very pleasant and the appreciation of the railroad and the efforts of the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company and the tonnage that they were giving them. Well that was an evening with the railroad and I was the one that got the railroad to go in there and I had it that they would put the railroad track right where Mr. Willard Warren of Pellem put it at 8 o'clock next Monday. And they did put it right where Mr. Warren-- both for the yard, across the river and also for the main line from up there about ten miles from Snoqualmie at the junction of the Everett branch. And all of that was done just by a little talk there in St. Paul.

MAUNDER: And all of this made it possible of course for the company to cooperate and get the product down through--

FISHER: Two railroads, instead of one. Well, I was so intimately acquainted with the president of the Milwaukee Railroad that that was no detriment.

MAUNDER: Your wide connections in the field of business have been a great asset to you and your companies all through the years haven't they. I mean your acquaintance with many different people and many different industries.

FISHER: It hasn't been anything very damaging.

MAUNDER: No, it certainly hasn't--

FISHER: I was the only man to stay on the board of the bank for 60 years. I've never heard of anybody else.

MAUNDER: You've been on the Seattle board that long? Sixty years? Again, I hate to keep coming back to this over and over but I'm trying for more information that you can give me about George S. Long. Was George S. Long a religious man? Was he a strong churchman or not a strong churchman?

FISHER: I was trying to tell a story that he told me. Oh, yes, Mr. Long of Kansas City was always quite a religious fellow.

MAUNDER: R. A. Long.

FISHER: And they had George Long's name mixed up with R.A. Long. Well, it made it a little embarrassing for George Long because they'd expect him to give a religious talk and he wouldn't do it.

MAUNDER: You mean he'd be called upon to say a few words of prayer?

FISHER: I guess so. He was telling me about it and they had him mixed up with R.A. Long.

MAUNDER: Was he a temperate man?

FISHER: Oh, I think he was. I don't think he {QUERY AUTHOR} or anything like that. He was just a good, honorable business man and was nice all the time to everybody.

MAUNDER: Well, he certainly seems to have been the most--the single most important person in that area.

FISHER: He was the best known and most highly regarded lumberman on the Pacific Coast.

MAUNDER: He certainly started an awful lot of things that have proved to be very worth while out here and that's what makes him the subject of a lot of pressing inquires because we want to know more about the man. We want to be able to get insights into his personality, into his character that only people who knew him can give us and that's one of the things we want you to test your memory for as much as you can--details about Mr. Long and about other men with whom you were associated through the years in the wood industry.

FISHER: I never had a more dear friend--business man than George Long.

MAUNDER: You never had a closer friend?

FISHER: I think he respected me and I certainly respected him. And he would put me on to--well everything that I was on. The insurance company and Weyerhaeuser activities. George Long was the one that sponsored me {QUERY AUTHOR}. He sponsored me for the insurance company. He was the one that went down to Olympia and filed the articles of the association of the General Insurance Company. Cabled me in Manila that he'd done it. And you're going to be there--

MAUNDER: Period.

FISHER: That's George Long.

MAUNDER: He evidently was the kind of man who made decisions and expected people to abide by them.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: Without question.

FISHER: And he wouldn't make a decision if he didn't think everybody would be profiting from his decision.

MAUNDER: Did you ever know him to make a mistake in a decision he made.

FISHER: Well, I'm just trying to think of that. It was a good one. I was in Kansas City and we went up to the directors of the lumber company down there. And Kansas City authorized me to go and tell F.E.Weyerhaeuser that they had suggested that I should be chairman of the board or vice president or something in the insurance company. I guess now I'm the only one. I think I'm still, oh what do they call it--beyond the senior director or anything like that. I'm the only officer there is. They call me the senior counselor at the present time. That's the only one that I know of who has any connection with the Weyerhaeuser Company {QUERY AUTHOR} mixed up because I'd never been a director.

MAUNDER: I don't know what {QUERY AUTHOR} title is. He's retired now as chairman of the board.

FISHER: Well, he's only 26 or 7. Twenty-seven, I guess now.

MAUNDER: Thirty-three, I said.

FISHER: He's only 20 some years.

MAUNDER: Fred K., F.K.? Oh no, F.K. is--are you thinking of the same Fred K. that I'm thinking of back in St. Paul. The former president of the company and former chairman of the board.

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: You said he's only 27?

FISHER: Isn't he only 27? Isn't he the oldest Weyerhaeuser?

MAUNDER: Yes.

FISHER: And the oldest one is 27.

MAUNDER: That's what you said. He's 27.

FISHER: I say so.

MAUNDER: Twenty-seven. How do you figure that?

FISHER: That's my recollection. Martin Clapp is only, oh, I've forgotten. I heard it the other day. He sat right next to me at the meeting of the General Insurance directors. Last Thursday and he's one of the board members of the General. But, Norton is the youngster. His wife, we knew her when she was married to a gentleman up on--live two or three blocks from our home in Seattle. Then he died, I guess. Then she married Norton and I've known her from a long time when she was married and lived a couple of blocks from our home. But I think Norton must be her third husband, I guess. I think the other two died. And Jane is a fine lady, too. She's a dear friend of mine.

MAUNDER: Well, Mr. Fisher I tell you. I've got to go from here back to Tacoma this afternoon and stop in at the company offices and then go from their out to Camp 6 for a program they're putting on there. It's a cocktail party actually on behalf of Camp 6 and they've invited me to be present.

FISHER: Well, I enjoyed your visit here. I'm glad you could be with us.

MAUNDER: Well, I've enjoyed it, too. I must say that it's been a little hard on such short notice to put together a coherent, well organized series of questions. I've had to come at you with questions in a rather disjointed way here, jumping from one thing to another. But, I do think we've covered some interesting ground and while we wouldn't want to keep all of that interview, there are parts of it that we would and that will be useful.

FISHER: Well, I've been in a good many activities in my life.

MAUNDER: You certainly have. I think you've crammed into a lifetime what would take half a dozen men--keep half a dozen men busy.

This is Elwood Maunder speaking from the home of O.D. Fisher in Seattle, Washington on Saturday, December 10, 1966. This is the second in a series of interviews being made with Mr. Fisher in connection with a series being done for Weyerhaeuser Company. We're looking at your Christmas card, Mr. Fisher, for 1966 and you're right now in the process of making these out and mailing them.

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: How many do you send out?

FISHER: We print 150 of these.

MAUNDER: One hundred and fifty. And they go out to friends all

over the country?

FISHER: Yes, and the world.

MAUNDER: How long have you been making personalized Christmas cards like these?

FISHER: Oh, as long as I can remember.

MAUNDER: Way back--all through the years you've done it that way.

Is that right? And you compose your own poem each year.

FISHER: That's right. We're all interested and handle it with our own staff.

MAUNDER: Down there at the mills. Flour mills, right?

FISHER: That's right, and this one here is just put down right down at the office.

MAUNDER: Well, you're 91 years old now. You just passed your 91st birthday. Is that right?

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: Well, I gather from this that as you look back over the years you, and particularly the last year, you see it full of problems of wars and politics and lots of other fuss. How do you see this last year of 1966? What is your general view of things as you see them in the world today and as you compare them with the times gone by that you lived through?

FISHER: I don't know that I have any special picture about it.

MAUNDER: Well, do you think the world's getting any better or any worse than in years gone by that you've seen?

FISHER: Well, I think if we're holding our own we're doing pretty well.

MAUNDER: You take then an optimistic view.

FISHER: Well, not a pessimistic one. We're in touch with all parts of the world in our business and we find that it's rather encouraging, I think. You take over in the Orient, in Europe, in Scandinavian and down in Mexico and we're in touch with most of the world.

MAUNDER: Are you speaking now, in touch with the world through your business?

FISHER: Yea.

MAUNDER: Are you speaking now of Weyerhaeuser or Fisher?

FISHER: Fisher.

MAUNDER: Your operations now are in all of these countries? Do you have mills there?

FISHER: No.

MAUNDER: You don't. What do you--but you ship your product that is manufactured here to all of those countries?

FISHER: Practically all of them.

MAUNDER: You do. Have you built any flouring mills in other countries other than this one. Do you have any mills anywhere else. You don't. Weyerhaeuser has been building in other countries.

FISHER: Yes, now they're--they're practically all over the world. I'm on the committee that handles that with Weyerhaeuser.

MAUNDER: You are.

FISHER: I'm quite familiar with all of them.

MAUNDER: It's quite a different picture of trade operations these days to what it used to be in days when you were first starting out, isn't it?

FISHER: That's right.

MAUNDER: What would you say are the most important things that have happened to change the patterns of the business man's operations in

the last 50 or 60 years as you've observed them. The changes that have taken place. What things have been most influential do you think in making for these vast changes?

FISHER: Well, that's a difficult question.

MAUNDER: It is a difficult question but you're a man who has had a wide range of experience.

FISHER: Contact. Personal contact with these different organizations practically all over the world. Scandinavia and Weyerhaeuser of course did get a strictly world-wide organization.

MAUNDER: You're more and more into the foreign market with your products?

FISHER: Well, they cover a considerable part of the world. Weyerhaeuser scattered now too {QUERY AUTHOR} I'm on a committee on that. I think they're doing a good job.

MAUNDER: What do you think the business man is doing today in this area that he didn't do or wasn't able to do 50 years ago that makes a difference?

FISHER: That's a difficult question to answer.

MAUNDER: Well, it's a lot easier to do business these days with foreign countries than it was years ago.

FISHER: That's right. We've entertained our connections in various parts of the world. Recently it would be Japan, India and Mexico and we've had them here in Seattle entertaining them and all that.

MAUNDER: You mean that you've had business men from these other countries here?

FISHER: Yes, we've had them and have entertained them here in Seattle.

MAUNDER: In other words it's a matter of better communications with other business men in other countries.

FISHER: Yes. They're personal friends.

MAUNDER: And establishing working and business relationships with them.

FISHER: And that will apply with John Lock's {QUERY AUTHOR} organization. He's in pretty close touch with that.

MAUNDER: He's the president of the company now, is he not?

FISHER: Yes. We've entertained out at my daughters, Mrs. Lock's, some of these groups for dinner. It makes a close personal acquaintance that you don't get if you just travel around to their place of business. We had some Japanese out at my daughter, Juanita's place. I think she gave a dinner and {QUERY AUTHOR}. And they're just part of our family. We try to keep that close personal acquaintanceship.

MAUNDER: And you have these friends or business associates in Japan, in India, Sweden. Where else do you think of have--

FISHER: Scandinavia and--

MAUNDER: Do you see this as one of the biggest potentials for future growth of your business?

FISHER: Well, we have connections practically all over the world.

MAUNDER: What I'm getting at is, are the products that you are connected with in the lumber industry and paper industry and the milling industry--is a larger percentage of the total that you produce going to be shipped abroad to foreign markets in the future do you think?

FISHER: Well take the Official Flour Mills Co., they're pretty well scattered.

MAUNDER: Is the volume of what you sell totally being taken up more

by foreign purchasers now than before?

MAUNDER: Well, I'd like to talk to you here today if we can a little bit more about your early days and some of the people with whom you were associated in various lines of work. We're particularly interested in this series of interviews of course in your experience with the Weyerhaeuser Company and the lumber industry before that. Back in the south and in the Inland Empire I believe, in Snoqualmie and other places.

FISHER: We've sold our land down at Fisher, Louisiana. That's been turned over to one of the large companies with headquarters out here.

MAUNDER: I see. Which one was that?

FISHER: I wish I could remember some of these names.

MAUNDER: This just recently happened?

FISHER: Well, it was the last few months.

MAUNDER: Boise Cascade.

FISHER: Boise Cascade, yes.

MAUNDER: And you were talking at lunch about certain things that I think might be interesting to get you to recount now and get on the tape if you will. You talked about cruising experiences that you had with Walter Mayberry. And I wonder if you'd just tell me a little about that. Where did you first met Walter Mayberry?

FISHER: I've forgotten. Let me see.

MAUNDER: Was he a cruiser you hired to help you.

FISHER: No. I wanted to get hold of him to go out in the woods with me. I was sitting at the dining table one evening at dinner, Mrs. Fisher was there and I think, I've got to get hold of Walter Mayberry. Nobody that I know of would know how to get ahold of a bunch of horses and I need five horses, saddle horses. A gentleman is going with me down to look at some timber in Oregon and Walter would know everything about it and get the horses and have them at the hotel when we got down there. And so while I was telling her that the telephone rang. And I said Elly, I'll bet that's Walter Mayberry. He knows what I want and he's calling me way down in Oregon somewhere. That's Walter Mayberry and he knows I want him. She followed me out to the telephone and I say Walter, why in the devil are you calling me and you're way down in Oregon? Why are you calling me? Well, Mr. Fisher, you've been looking for me, well, I guess a half hour or more and I'm working in this construction gang way over here in eastern Oregon close to 500 miles away and as I know you're looking for me and trying to get ahold of me, I just thought I'll call you and there's a farm house close by and I just came over to get them to let me use their telephone to try to tell you that I'll have the horses down at the hotel for you when you get down there. I hadn't told him a blooming thing and he's down in Oregon and calling me from a farmhouse and he had the horses there.

MAUNDER: How recently had you been in contact with Mayberry?

FISHER: Nine years.

MAUNDER: Where did you know him before nine years ago?

FISHER: He worked three years with me out in the woods when I was making a cruise of the timber up there and I was buying it for the Grandin Cords Lumber Co.

MAUNDER: Is that where you first got to know him?

FISHER: Yes, he was with me and we had a little canvas cot and we had it also so we could put it up over us at night. We'd take the hemlock boughs and put them on the ground. Then we'd put a canvas

over that and Walter and I slept under this little cot of ours. We were safe there. For about three weeks we had that for moving around up there in the woods and the young bears would come up there and try to get some of our food. And they did do that, too. So Walter would go into Snoqualmie once or twice a week to pick up stuff that we could live on and eat and he was the cook and he was the bottle washer and everything. So that's Walter Mayberry.

MAUNDER: And you were cruising timber land that you were buying for the Grandin Coast Lumber Co. Now Grandin Coast had already some land that you had bought out here, hadn't it? And what was this, additional land that you were adding on?

FISHER: Additional land.

MAUNDER: How much--you see you and Walter were out cruising this land for three months. Is that right? Or three years?

FISHER: No, he was up there with me for three years. I was travelling all over the woods to find out all I could about where we could put in railroads--logging railroads. And Walter, I had him with me so that we'd make maybe two or three miles in a day.

Because I'd be studying for a--I'd go to a corner of the section and then I'd pace off the quarter of a mile of, we'll say, to the north. Then I'd pace off another quarter of a mile to the left. Then I'd go up parallel to this other one and I'd go all the way around the section. I'd take a quarter of a mile inside of the boundary of the section. Then I'd--I'd remember getting up there and getting onto a big log, a big tree that had fallen from the wind and was pointed up about 18 inches to two feet above the ground and it had caught on another log and was against it so that there was about 18 inches or 2 feet there that anything could crawl under. So I told Walter I wanted to get out on this trunk here so I needed a pole, a long pole about 10 feet long or more because I'm going to try to go out on this tree. It will be up in the air and I've got to do down the side of that tree and land down on the ground and I don't want to go back and try to go down through the woods to it because I might have difficulty. I want to go to it through the air. Well, I got up there and here was a little, what do you call it--a little animal.

MAUNDER: What kind of a little animal?

FISHER: The youngster, the offspring.

MAUNDER: Oh, a cub.

FISHER: A cub, yea. So I skidded down off this tree that was lying on the ground up there six or seven feet high. I held on as best I could and I had this long pole and with that I could sort of guide myself. This little animal was right down under that tree and I wanted to get down and get my hands on the little animal and I got down there, I made it and {QUERY AUTHOR} I think I'd better go out to Section 10 and I figured on a way to go around a bluff below where I was. Well, it was uncanny the way--Walter Mayberry and I, we'd send him to town to get something we could eat and I'd stay out there maybe two or three weeks at a time. And finally I wanted to buy some land--I wanted some of Weyerhaeuser. So finally I made a deal with them on Section 23 and got about 400 acres of stuff lined up above the bluff of Snoqualmie Falls and that was to the advantage of the new lumber company that was doing this development at Snoqualmie Falls. But out there in the woods Walter, he could wade through the woods and get into town and bring the provisions out and I didn't have to do that.

MAUNDER: Do you ever remember any cases in which this mental

telepathy worked between you and Walter out in the woods? When you were cruising?

FISHER: I don't know how to get my hands on it, but up in the attic here I have lots of stuff.

MAUNDER: Are those the Walter Mayberry records that you were telling me about?

FISHER: Some of them. I've got others besides Walter Mayberry.

MAUNDER: You do and do these recount some of these experiences that you had with him.

FISHER: Well, there's he and others.

MAUNDER: I wonder, would it be possible for us to get those records and listen to some of them?

FISHER: No, I don't want to go into that. I've got a storey way up in the roof of the house here and I wouldn't bother monkeying with them.

MAUNDER: They'd be very much right along the same lines of what we're doing, Mr. Fisher. That would be very important to us if we could have a chance to listen to them. How long ago did you make them?

FISHER: Oh, it's been quite a while.

MAUNDER: Quite a while ago. But when you did that you probably had very fresh recollections of some of those details and that would be very important to have now. What are they on, platters?

FISHER: They're put away in the top floor of the roof of this house but I wouldn't want to monkey with them.

MAUNDER: Well, what are you going to do with them?

FISHER: Well, they're stored away up there.

MAUNDER: But, are they always going to stay there?

FISHER: I hope so as long as I leave them there. I want them there.

MAUNDER: Won't they be of any use though? Couldn't they be put to some use?

FISHER: I want them there for my records in case I should need them for anything. I don't want to take them away from there at all.

MAUNDER: No, I wasn't suggesting taking them away. I was suggesting listening to them. Can't you play them here? Put them on the record player and play them? No? Do you ever listen to them yourself?

FISHER: Yes, I don't want to disturb them at all because there's a bunch of stuff there and I've got to finally get a big box and put most of it into that big box and then cover it over. It's a real chore to get to and I have valued those very greatly for any future needs and I wouldn't want to move any of them.

MAUNDER: What future needs do you see as possibly developing for the use of those records? I wondered what did you put down on those records? Some of the stories that you've been telling at lunch and telling me. What's on those records?

FISHER: Well, the timber company has all of them. I turned them over to them.

MAUNDER: You turned the records over to the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company?

FISHER: And their people have it over there and I've forgotten the fellow's name that had charge of that department.

MAUNDER: Bernie {QUERY AUTHOR}

FISHER: Well, Bernie is {QUERY AUTHOR}, but he's not the one that handles it.

MAUNDER: Is it in the library or the archives of the company or where?

FISHER: I've forgotten what you call that particular {QUERY AUTHOR}.

MAUNDER: Well, what are the things you have up in the attic here?

FISHER: Some of that stuff.

MAUNDER: Some of the same stuff?

FISHER: Yes. But I wouldn't go up there and monkey around to get it. It's a chore.

MAUNDER: Tell me a little something about this house. Did you build this house?

FISHER: Yes.

MAUNDER: When was that? How long ago?

FISHER: Remember the world's fair here?

MAUNDER: 1915. Yes, I wasn't here then but I know of the fair, The Seattle Exposition.

FISHER: I remember I had Captain White of Kansas City and my father. They came out here and I had them out on the walkway. And I think I told them, I've got five lots, the equivalent of five lots. I had to tear down, oh, I think 3 or 4 or 5 houses. There was the {QUERY AUTHOR} house out on this point here and there was an alley, a 16 foot alley and I got the city to vacate that alley and then out beyond that there was another house, a 5 room house. Then there was another house on the other side. I don't know there was either four or five houses on this place. And I tore {QUERY AUTHOR} down and then I put in a 14 foot wall down here and I got the city to permit me to put in a high wall down there encroaching a little on the street--about seven feet. That wall was to hold the land that we filled in here and that is right down below.

MAUNDER: Yes. I can see it.

FISHER: You can see the wall. So I got--it's about 14 with the railing and all--feet. I got the city to permit me to go out seven feet into the street and make that wall there and then that gave me enough room to make the slope up at the bottom.

MAUNDER: How much did you have to pay for a piece of land like that back in those days.

FISHER: The part the city vacated--they didn't charge me anything. But I had several people that I had to buy from at different prices. And right in front here I had--oh, 1,2,3,4 I guess it was five people I had to buy property from and then I wanted two or three other lots for a home and also yard for my father and mother. And they had to tear down some more houses over there because they didn't fit. So we got it lined up the way we wanted and then we out in that big house next door. That was father's and mother's home and my sister finally took it over after father died and mother died. And then it went to the children and the children sold it to the fellow that lives there now.

MAUNDER: So you've lived here then for--

FISHER: 1915. That's when we came out and were finishing up. I think it's when that world's fair was out here.

MAUNDER: Well, now you look right out your window here at the tower of the most recent worlds fair don't you?

FISHER: Right on top of all of them.

MAUNDER: Yea, is that the same site where the world's fair was in 1915?

FISHER: Well, we have the big area down there. The television

company you know--Fisher. They got it. They got a whole block there where our studios are and then we got another block or two adjoining. We've got a great big area down there. It's not very visible today.

MAUNDER: Very hazy. It's getting worse.

FISHER: We can see the top of the building down there--the studio. And then we have a thousand feet of frontage on the other side of the lake there where those moorings are we've got a thousand feet right over there.

MAUNDER: You were telling me a story that I'd like to repeat for the tape, Mr. Fisher. You were telling us at lunch. It's how your extrasensory perception worked for you at the time of your father's death. Would you tell that story? Where were you at the time?

FISHER: I was down in Springfield, Missouri. I was planning on going down to the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Morris Thompson was there with me from the Centennial. Then we had another one we had set over in Georgia and then another one farther up in Virginia. Three different locations and Morris Thompson--we'd have these different locations.

MAUNDER: What were they, warehouses?

FISHER: Yea. And in the upper East Coast, not New England, but--

MAUNDER: New Jersey.

FISHER: New Jersey, yes and then from there down to the Gulf and then down along the Gulf along the way around into Texas. We had property scattered all along there.

MAUNDER: And you would use these for storing your flour, is that right?

FISHER: Yes, for our products.

MAUNDER: Flour and other products.

FISHER: Well, flour was our main product.

MAUNDER: And you would ship this around by sea I take it.

FISHER: By the boats you know going up and down the coast up into New England by water. We had shipped around during the war. Shipped around to Virginia and then the Navy would pick up our products down in--on the water front down--I have forgotten the name of the port. We didn't make it for ourselves. It was on the Atlantic Coast there and the Navy would come in and pick it up and take it over to England and I was in London and making arrangements there with the government and--

MAUNDER: Making arrangements with what government?

FISHER: British.

MAUNDER: The British government. Did you sell them flour?

FISHER: Yes, and they'd go--oh, from the East Coast and then be crated over there to the south of London.

MAUNDER: South Hampton?

FISHER: There were about two or three different ports we went to there and also we went around up into Scotland.

MAUNDER: You were starting to tell me a story of how you had been down there in the South lining up some new warehouse facilities.

FISHER: That was for ourselves.

MAUNDER: Yea, and then you got a message. Remember that story I'm talking about.

FISHER: Well, that was when I was in Memphis. I was going to go the next morning at 9 o'clock we were going down to the Gulf with Mr. Morris Thompson to try to figure out a place there to build a building and where we could take care of the Centennial Milling

Company as well as the Fisher Flour Mills Company. But, I don't know. About 11 o'clock I left by billet with Mr. Thompson and I said: Morris, I'm going down to the office and I'm going to change my plans. I'm going to leave here between 11 and 12 o'clock about midnight and I'm going up to St. Paul and I'm going to make reservations from St. Paul to Bozeman and Belgrade, Montana and they will stop the train at Belgrade and Bozeman for me to get off at those two places and then I'm going to want to get into Seattle at a certain time in the morning. And that certain time was to come up here and I came up here and knocked on the front door, pushed the button. Mrs. Fisher came to the front door and told me I'd better hurry and go over to my father's bedside. He's very low. And I went from there over to father's bedside and that's when I put my hand over to him and he shook it and whispered: You did get here, you did get here, and died holding my hand.

MAUNDER: Now, you had no telephone or --

FISHER: Nothing at all.

MAUNDER: Telegram from home to let you know that he was ill? Why didn't they let you know?

FISHER: I don't think they realized--

MAUNDER: They didn't realize how sick he was.

FISHER: I don't think so.

MAUNDER: How did you know he was sick?

FISHER: I didn't know it until I came back.

MAUNDER: You didn't. You just--what made you come back. You just had a feeling you had to go back.

FISHER: Well, I thought I better go back there. They might all be needing me.

MAUNDER: You didn't know what they needed you for? Or who needed you. You just knew that you had to be back.

FISHER: I knew I had to be here. And Mrs. Fisher, when I got to the door, she told me that--not to take the time to come in. I put my bag at the door and right from there over to father's bedside.

MAUNDER: Now you were telling us that you had a similar experience when your mother passed away.

FISHER: That's right. I got down into California, the northern part of California and I got off the train. I was going to San Francisco. But, I got off the train in northern California and they stopped the train and let me off at a stop station and I took that train back to Seattle and I was on the way down there--had the ticket and everything to go on to San Francisco. But I beat it right back here after I got down as far as northern California towards San Francisco. And I beat it back here for some reason.

MAUNDER: Was your mother sick before you left?

FISHER: Not seriously.

MAUNDER: But she was.

FISHER: She was sick. The same as father when he was lying there waiting for me to get there.

MAUNDER: Did she know you were coming? Had you wired back here telling them you were coming home?

FISHER: I had not and they hadn't wired me.

MAUNDER: You didn't wire ahead to let them know you were coming?

FISHER: No. I just made up my mind that I was going to get back here and I did it just in time.

MAUNDER: What do you think all this is really? What do you think went on?

FISHER: Well, they just call it mental telepathy is all I know.

MAUNDER: Have you always had this? Do you remember any examples when you were a boy?

FISHER: Well, I had most wonderful examples from Fisher, Louisiana and all of a sudden I told our manager down there that--well, I've got to make some telephone calls. Well, I called and I said I think I'll go over and see the Tennessee Valley Authority--they had their operations up there. Well, I think I'll go over there and see just what its all about--whether or not we couldn't get some iron ore over there and get some business out of it. So I took the train up to Fisher, Louisiana and got connections into Memphis and from Memphis went over to this place down on the river and it was about 40 miles from where the Tennessee Valley operation was. And I thought I'd go down there and see if I couldn't get an operation of iron ore, shipping iron ore.

MAUNDER: What made you think there was any iron ore there?

FISHER: Well, there was--

MAUNDER: Had you heard there was?

FISHER: Twenty miles from Tennessee Valley, there's where I learned that there was iron ore, and I got in touch with a gentleman in-- what's the name of the place. I knew him when I was president of {QUERY AUTHOR} Federation and he came over from Kentucky to Chicago and I met him there and I had a

hunch that he had been transplanted to a place down there in that area that I'm speaking of. So I just took a chance and went over there and I got ahold of what they call their manager of iron ore development of this concern down in Memphis. So we made a deal with that fellow and then we got him to go in with us and we got into some developments in that Tennessee area in iron ore by the land over in--my father's brother worked in connection with one of those furnaces down in Tennessee and I went down there. And I got hold of a fellow by the name of Henry {QUERY AUTHOR} Layman and Henry's father developed practically all of those furnaces in the Birmingham district and I spent a day with his son over there in Tennessee and so it finally wound up that we got this fellow in Tennessee to go up to Birch Tree, Missouri where we had iron ore mines in two of the places there in that area and we got him to line up what we should have for a blast furnace and so with his help we built a blast furnace down in the Current River.

MAUNDER: So you got into the iron business then?

FISHER: So we got into the iron business down in the Current River.

MAUNDER: How long were you in the iron business?

FISHER: Well, we finally sold the property that I had down there to John Lock and the family.

MAUNDER: That's your son-in-law.

FISHER: Yea. So they finally needed owning some of that iron ore business down there.

MAUNDER: And he's still mining ore and smelting it.

FISHER: No. They finally made a deal with Tennessee Valley Authorities and sold our worthwhile development there in Missouri.

MAUNDER: Well, I wonder if you'd like to talk a little bit about some of the men that you may have been associated with over the years in the lumber business with me this afternoon. Maybe you can spin me a few stories about some of them. You've known Fred Weyerhaeuser and Phil Weyerhaeuser, haven't you, for a long time?

FISHER: And their father.

MAUNDER: And you knew their father, J.P., Sr.?

FISHER: Frederick Weyerhaeuser.

MAUNDER: Did you know the original Frederick? How long did you know him? Did you know him intimately?

FISHER: Well, he died in 1915 and I knew him in 1914 and between that and the time he died.

MAUNDER: So you only knew him for a very short time. But you did know his sons.

FISHER: Oh yes, all of them.

MAUNDER: You knew all of them. Do you remember anything particularly about them that--what would you have to say about the Weyerhaeuser family in general as you've known them over the years?

FISHER: Well, I've been, of course, very close friends with every one of them. And they certainly have been marvelous to me. I don't think there's any man living that has had the consideration or appreciation or whatever you want to call it that I've had from the Weyerhaeuser crowd.

MAUNDER: Is that right?

FISHER: That's from the president, management all the way back to--in my office I can show you George Long, the original founder hanging in my office.

MAUNDER: Yes, I've seen that picture.

FISHER: And I've been exceedingly close to all the Weyerhaeusers.

MAUNDER: Which of them do you feel that you have known best?

FISHER: Oh, I don't know. I guess all of them.

MAUNDER: All of them. Tell me a little about Phil Weyerhaeuser.

FISHER: Well, of course, there's been more than one Phil.

MAUNDER: Well, I mean the one who died several years ago and who was head of the company for a long time.

FISHER: Well, the last one, Phil Weyerhaeuser. I gave a party out to my country place out at Sea Rest. I invited the directors and all the officials of the Weyerhaeuser Company to come over and play shuffle board and anything they wanted to play out on the lawn. But, I've got a wonderfully fine shuffle board court {QUERY AUTHOR} and numerous times the Weyerhaeuser Company would stop the program about 4 o'clock in the afternoon or 3:30 and beat it over to my place and get out on my playing grounds and they'd have games and I remember the last one that Phil was on, he came out--he was one of 22 I believe in my home for dinner that evening. In the afternoon we were playing out on the playgrounds. Then in the evening playing cards and there were eight at one table playing poker and Phil was there at that time and--that was on a Thursday evening. Well on Friday he went over to Port Andrews area and then he went from there to his wife--no, this was the only Weyerhaeuser woman--and they drove up to the country club north of town and he came in there from a boat and she took him from there over to Tacoma. That was on a Thursday. Well, Friday I think he was over at my place and I think he died the next day.

MAUNDER: Is that right?

FISHER: That was the last place where he was at any parties.

MAUNDER: Was he noticeably ill?

FISHER: Not in my home, no.

MAUNDER: He wasn't? He carried his illness very bravely didn't he? And he was, I believe, aware of it for a long time.

FISHER: Yes. He'd known it for six or eight years that it was coming on.

MAUNDER: But, he never mentioned it to anybody did he?

FISHER: Well, some of us knew it. But, he didn't advertise it.

MAUNDER: What kind of a business man was he to work with?

FISHER: Fine. Very good.

MAUNDER: Can you tell us a little bit of how he ran that company?

FISHER: I just think he was a good manager. The man that's there now is the same way.

MAUNDER: You were sitting on the board of directors all the time that he was president of the company weren't you?

FISHER: Well, I was--George Long and I were the Weyerhaeuser Company for about three years. We were the Weyerhaeuser Company officially and in every way. And he was at Tacoma and I was at Seattle.

MAUNDER: I think we covered part of this story, Mr. Fisher, earlier on in the interview so we won't repeat that. But I wanted you to tell me a little bit more about the more recent years when Phil and F.K. ran the company. I'd like to hear a little bit more about what you have to say about these two men.

FISHER: I don't think any man in the world can be treated nicer than I was treated by them. I want to say that.

MAUNDER: Right. I agree, that's true.

FISHER: I was over at the country club at the first dinner they ever had at the new country club. I didn't know that there was going to be a dinner or whatnot or that I was going to be a party to the program. I had the chauffeur with me and I got over there about five o'clock in the afternoon. Then I was {QUERY AUTHOR} around there in the club house and lo and behold here comes up John Graham and Mrs. Graham and my two daughters and I didn't know what it was all about and finally Norman Clapp {QUERY AUTHOR} and he makes about a 10 or 15 minute talk and then he says O.D. and he put me on the platform and I had about a thirty minute talk and had about 300 there and most of them were women. And I didn't know there was going to be a party at all and here it was. Everyone of them, when they came up and shook hands with me and greeted me and whatnot. It was an O.D. Fisher party. And I finally noticed the whole evening was devoted to me.

MAUNDER: They really treated you wonderfully, didn't they?

FISHER: And nobody could be treated finer or more generously than me.

MAUNDER: You were telling me a little bit about your experience in cruising and you mentioned doing some cruising down in Oregon. Now you bought some timber down there didn't you in the Medford and Eugene, Oregon area.

FISHER: Oh, we had about forty thousand acres I think down there.

MAUNDER: How did you go about buying that?

FISHER: Well, I had cruisers.

MAUNDER: Who were the cruisers who did the work for you, do you remember?

FISHER: Oh, I don't remember their names just off hand. There were about five.

MAUNDER: Was this a part of your function with the company to go around and try to find new land.

FISHER: Well, I was sort of the boss of the company and he just gave every authority that was possible to me.

MAUNDER: You were the boss of what company?

FISHER: Weyerhaeuser.

MAUNDER: of Weyerhaeuser. This was when, in what year?

FISHER: The year of the World's Fair, I guess. '15, was it?

MAUNDER: What was George Long doing then?

FISHER: Well, George Long was the official head of the company.

MAUNDER: And what was your position?

FISHER: I know that I was elected head of it and I was attending our meetings in Kansas City and then I was invited to come to St. Paul and they were having meetings there and I think--I don't know which one of the Weyerhaeusers now, the oldest one, dead long ago--they wanted to make somebody head of the company and this Mr. Weyerhaeuser was the oldest one over there moved that O.D. be given that job.

MAUNDER: Which job?

FISHER: The head of Weyerhaeuser.

MAUNDER: Now the head of Weyerhaeuser would be the president. Were you elected president then?

FISHER: I was the Senior Councilor. Senior officer.

MAUNDER: Oh, I see.

FISHER: Finally when they ceased to have any officers, they still have me on I think as a Senior Councilor now. I think I'm the only one there is.

MAUNDER: OH, I see. I get you.

FISHER: That's my title. Senior Councilor.

MAUNDER: And how long have you been Senior Councilor?

FISHER: Well, ever since they legislated they would not have the same old officer lineup as before. It was several years ago now.

MAUNDER: Several years ago.

FISHER: Because I was Senior Councilor there and there were two of us really.

MAUNDER: Who was the other one?

FISHER: Well, he's dead now and he lived in St. Paul and we were the two Senior Councilors.

MAUNDER: What was the other man's name?

FISHER: I was trying to think. He was over in St. Paul and he died back there. He had a home down in Florida.

MAUNDER: Was he a member of the Weyerhaeuser family?

FISHER: Yes. I've got it here somewhere. I don't know just where right now and his picture and all.

MAUNDER: Let's go back to this business of your work for the company in buying land. You cruised a lot of land down in Oregon. Forty thousand acres you said, is that right?

FISHER: Yes, 44 I think.

MAUNDER: Is that land still owned by Weyerhaeuser?

FISHER: I think so.

MAUNDER: How has it turned out as an investment?

FISHER: Fine.

MAUNDER: Was it good timber?

FISHER: Well, it was desirable timber all right.

MAUNDER: How does that timber compare with other timber that you bought up in the northern part?

FISHER: Well, it was not the same kind of timber as at Snoqualmie. That was the best timber, up around Snoqualmie, that Weyerhaeuser ever owned.

MAUNDER: Did you every buy any timber down in California?

FISHER: In northern California.

MAUNDER: Was this bought after you had made cruises of it?

FISHER: Well, we had a general cruiser for all the company that made a survey of it down there.

MAUNDER: How did you happen to get into this work? Did the president of the company or somebody say O.D. we want you to go and look for some timber for us down in southern Oregon and--

FISHER: Well, George Long of the Weyerhaeuser Company and I were the Weyerhaeuser Company.

MAUNDER: You and George Long together?

FISHER: For several years. The senior Weyerhaeuser. I met him in '14 and he died in '15. So George Long and I were Senior Councilors there and then it came along--the present organization was selected and then they--that's all been upset and I'm the only one now I guess because I'm a Senior Councilor.

MAUNDER: How about F.K? How about Fred Weyerhaeuser?

FISHER: I don't know just what title he really--

MAUNDER: Well, he's been the chairman of the board and was president, of course, before that. He followed after his brother Phil's presidency for some time and was president during those years in which--

FISHER: Well he'd been the active president. I've been a senior counselor without any activity really but the counselor has always attended the meeting of the directors.

MAUNDER: Do you see the history of the Weyerhaeuser Company as developing in any certain pattern under different presidents?

FISHER: Well, it's a worldwide company now and I've been sitting in the committees. {QUERY AUTHOR} in Europe, Scandinavia, down in Mexico. Anywhere in the world.

MAUNDER: Do you associate that international growth of the company with the presidency of any one man?

FISHER: Well, I think it's a group of men, the executive officers and Norton Clapp is the leading one.

MAUNDER: The leading one. The one who has had most to do with expanding the company's influence and activities abroad.

FISHER: Recently, yes. Since Fred died.

MAUNDER: Fred didn't die. You mean Phil don't you?

FISHER: Phil, yes.

MAUNDER: It was under Fred's presidency that the company achieved a number of very important mergers with various companies in the wood field around the country. The Eddys and the Hamilton people on paper I believe and wasn't it during Fred's presidency that the--the other big outfit down east that manufacturers boxes and paper board and all that sort of thing.

FISHER: Fred was the head of that.

MAUNDER: Fred was mainly the big push behind that trend in the company.

FISHER: Well, I don't know. Back east those that came into the company when they took over the paper plants and--

MAUNDER: {QUERY AUTHOR} Eddy is the name I was trying to think of. He was I think the engineer of that merger was he not?

FISHER: I don't remember that.

MAUNDER: You don't remember that. Well, I thought maybe you'd have some recollections about the internal affairs of the company having been on the Board of Directors.

FISHER: I was in on all of those meetings and still go there but the official fact is that they've all been done away with, you might say.

MAUNDER: The official factors have all been done away with. What do you mean by that?

FISHER: Well, I don't know.

MAUNDER: What did you have in mind?

FISHER: Well, Norton Clapp and Fred Weyerhaeuser--George Weyerhaeuser is the active one.

MAUNDER: He's the president now.

FISHER: Well, George--he was kidnapped you know.

MAUNDER: Yes.

FISHER: When he was four years old. I happened to be in an attorney's office over in Tacoma. Judge Cushman's offices. Don Graham was there with me and so we recessed our hearing with Judge Cushman because the sheriff was bringing in a little boy that had been kidnapped, George Weyerhaeuser. And the kidnapper--Mr. and Mrs.--came in with little George and when he got to me jumped over to one side and came up and jumped onto my lap. Little George was on my lap about two feet away from them--the kidnappers.

MAUNDER: He recognized you as a friend?

FISHER: Oh yes.

MAUNDER: What did he have to say?

FISHER: Oh, we just kidded each other. Nothing special.

MAUNDER: How long had he been missing?

FISHER: I've forgotten just how long they did have him kidnapped. Not very long. I won't attempt to say but it wasn't any great while.

MAUNDER: What did the kidnapers look like?

FISHER: Oh, just ordinary people.

MAUNDER: What happened to them?

FISHER: I've forgotten whether they were sent to penitentiary or not. I think they were.

MAUNDER: Do you find in your remembering of the things in the past that there are certain periods of time that are more clear in your memory than others?

FISHER: Oh, I don't know.

MAUNDER: You remember your boyhood days more clearly than let's say more recent times. This very frequently happens to us you know. I find this is true in my case. I can remember things farther back better than I can just recently.

FISHER: Well, I went to VMI, the Virginia Military Institute to school. I.D. Elliott, cashier of the {QUERY AUTHOR} Bank at Humansville, Missouri--he said that I ought to go back there and he made the arrangements to go there. I was the youngest cadet that ever entered VMI. I was only between 14 and 15 and so we arranged that I would get back there about a week or two before school started. I wanted to get acquainted and I knew that if there was any - having fun with the new cadets, rats they called them--that I wanted to have mine over before the newer ones came. So I went back prematurely and as I walked through the gate that divided the Washington University and the VMI grounds and here came five fellows I think from the barracks at VMI. And they were coming, marching double time and they came up to where the VMI and Washington University grounds came together and they halted right in front of me. Well, I said, what can I do? They said, why don't you come with us and they took me down to the guard house, put me through the ratting exposition and all the fun they wanted to have and I had a good time. MAUNDER: What year was this that you graduated?

FISHER: Would it be '23. I know I went right through school there.

MAUNDER: Well, it couldn't have been '23.

FISHER: They had a little fair going on in Chicago and I came back by there. But, I don't know. It's been too long ago. That's been 60 or so years ago.

MAUNDER: Yea, it's been more than that.

FISHER: It's hard for me to remember.

MAUNDER: It's been 70 years or more ago. Do you remember your first job in the woods?

FISHER: Well, I was down in Birch Tree, Missouri. I was very active. We had some ore mines and I was in charge of that and then we had a railroad which was a chartered railroad and I was looking after that.

MAUNDER: Was that right after you got out of school?

FISHER: I guess it was my last year at school. I think I was 16 or 17 years old when I quit college.

MAUNDER: You quit college. You didn't finish.

FISHER: Two years I went. Not four.

MAUNDER: What did you specialize in when you were in college.

FISHER: Mathematics. I was number one in the class. There were 128 in the class.

MAUNDER: What made you quit?

FISHER: I went into business with the Cords Fisher Lumber Co. Father was head of the companies in Louisiana and Birch Tree, Missouri and Fisher, Louisiana. And from the time I was 10 years old, I would take on any heavy job that fell on the shoulders of my father. He didn't want to go into any detail and wasn't really qualified to going into details and mathematics and all that.

MAUNDER: Didn't he want you to finish college though?

FISHER: Well, at 17 I finished.

MAUNDER: But, you didn't finish the full course.

FISHER: Two years I went.

MAUNDER: Two years and then you quit.

FISHER: And I'd finished the--what do you call it, the highest in school, in public school, I'd graduated.

MAUNDER: Were you valedictorian?

FISHER: Yes, I was valedictorian of the first high school class at Humansville, Missouri. I was the valedictorian and a lady was the salutatorian.

MAUNDER: Well, Mr. Fisher, you've had a widespread experience throughout this country over the last 91 years and you've been engaged in all kinds of business enterprises all the way from lumbering to milling, flour milling to insurance and iron mining and banking and railroad. Looking back over such a varied and rich business career, what do you consider to be the most important things for a man in business to keep in mind? What things do you look upon as being the main guide posts in your life?

FISHER: One thing, I never make a recommendation to what somebody else should do. If they wanted to ask me what I'd do in a certain condition, I'd tell them. But, I've always made it a point never to direct people to do things.

MAUNDER: Well, that's all right for what other people have to do but I'm talking now about what you'd do yourself. What are the principals that you're guided by--that you've been guided by in what course of action you've taken. I'm not asking you for advice. I'm asking you for your philosophy of life and business.

FISHER: I don't know. For some reason I've been put in as senior officer of a good many companies.

MAUNDER: Why do you suppose you have?

FISHER: I don't know.

MAUNDER: Do you have any idea?

FISHER: I wouldn't talk about it if I did.

MAUNDER: Well, I can't get much out of you then can I, in the way of information, if you won't tell me.

FISHER: No. I never boast or anything of that kind.

MAUNDER: Well, I'm not asking you to boast. I'm asking you to tell me what guide posts you've used in your career as a business man. What do think are the important things that have guided you?

FISHER: Now why should I be elected the director of the First National Bank of Seattle and have been between 60 and 70 years--the oldest director of the bank? Well, why should I have been elected president, {QUERY AUTHOR} chairman of the board of the insurance company? Why? I hadn't been in the insurance business. Well, why should I be at the head of the company down in Louisiana? You'll have to answer that one.

MAUNDER: I think we can divine why you were--why other people chose you. I'm not asking you for that. I'm asking you to tell me what principals guide you in the course of action that you follow once you get in these positions. What are the things that you look to as guide posts. The things that make you do what you do in these jobs. Are there any factors, any forces in your life that--are there any principals that you believe in more than others that apply?

FISHER: Well, usually I'll have my secretary make up a program that I should take care of and I go ahead and do anything I need to do to bring things up to present to what needs to be done. I go ahead and do it. That's all there is to it. Now here, I'm going down to Portland Monday on December 12th. When is that?

MAUNDER: This coming Monday.

FISHER: I'm supposed to go to a Fisher Broadcasting meeting Monday in Portland, Oregon at one p.m. Instead of having a meeting at the station on Sandy Boulevard, a room has been reserved at the Sheraton Hotel at Lloyd Center. I'll be in charge of that but--

MAUNDER: Now what are you going to be doing down at Portland at this Fisher Broadcasting meeting on Monday?

FISHER: Well, we'll have--the last time I had to take charge because their chairman was sick and I'm the president and he's chairman.

MAUNDER: How many radio stations and television stations are included in the Fisher Broadcasting Co?

FISHER: Well, we're in Portland and here in Seattle.

MAUNDER: What's the station in Portland?

FISHER: Channel 2 down there.

MAUNDER: What is its name?

FISHER: Oh, what is it? Fisher Television Co.. I believe.

MAUNDER: Fisher Television Co. Well, that's interesting. And you drive down there. Your chauffeur will take you down there on Monday.

FISHER: We'll go down there Monday morning and have lunch down there and then have a meeting in the afternoon and then come back for dinner.

MAUNDER: You keep pretty darn active don't you. You don't stop running because you're 91 years old. I see that I'm about out of

tape here now and I also see that it's pretty late in the afternoon and I'm going to have to take my leave and get on down town because I have to get back to Portland tonight. I notice that there is some similarity between the layout of this home and the one out at Sea Rest. Did you plan them to be very much the same in design?

FISHER: Well, it was very different when I bought it and I had {QUERY AUTHOR} both front and rear and side and rebuilt it in a way.

MAUNDER: But the room, the main living room in there is very much like the one in Sea Rest as I remember it. And then there was a porch or something wasn't there also on the front?

FISHER: Only twice as large as this one.

MAUNDER: Did you design this house yourself when you built it?

FISHER: Well, I supervised it. The architects--Louis Feezer was the architect, and he had designed a building like this for Mrs. Shaw in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And most of the house was very similar to the Shaw place. It was built back there and designed by this architect and the clock out there--his brother designed and built that clock. It's a beautiful thing. And Louis Feezer designed the home here and next door and I think Louis Feezer is about the best architect in the country. He designed the National Bank of Commerce quarters down there and they had sandstone for their entrance so he was working out here and he says: Well, he says, you've got to have half a carload of sandstone to come out here from Indiana and it won't cost you a cent. The bank won't accept any pay for the other half of the car and in that half of the car we can bring out all the stone for the house and we can bring it out on that car and it won't cost anything. The National Bank of Commerce wouldn't accept any part--they didn't have to pay a car price for a half a car in order to get the car load rate. So all that front then was designed by this Louis Feezer and he had designed this house in Pittsburgh for Mrs. Shaw.

MAUNDER: Well, it's a beautiful home. There's no doubt about it. You were telling me I think J.C. Penny was here recently.

FISHER: Well, he was out here a year ago I guess. He was sitting on the couch in there and he just happened to be looking around and he says: Olly, you've got a beautiful home. He's expecting me down in Palm Springs in a few days but I won't be there.

MAUNDER: This will be the first winter in some years you haven't been there, won't it?

FISHER: Well, my daughter won't be able to go down I don't think. If she's able, I'll go with her. If she isn't able, I won't go.