Oral History Interview
With
INMAN F. (CAP) ELDREDGE
New Orleans, Louisiana
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By Elwood R. Maunder, Forest History Foundation, Inc.

MAUNDER: Cap, I think we'll skip most of the basic facts of your early history because they're well recorded in this book, but I would like to start off by asking you to tell us a little bit about your going into forestry, and especially your going to Biltmore.

ELDREDGE: As you know, I was born in South Carolina in a little town there that was, I think, larger in the Revolution than it was when I was born several hundred years later. I first went to Clemson and took up engineering, and after three years of it flunked out. I came home and was at loose ends for a while, knocking around, mostly fighting chickens. Then my mother, who was quite an outdoor enthusiast, commenced to read something in the magazines and papers about forestry. She told me that would fit me fine because I was a fisherman and a hunter, you know, so we looked it up and the nearest forest school was at Biltmore in North Carolina, so I went to Biltmore.

MAUNDER: Do you remember, Cap, what your first knowledge of Biltmore was based on? Was it an advertisement for the school, or a circular that they sent out?

ELDREDGE: I think it was probably a report on some speech that Dr. Schenck had made, which carried with it the location of his school, and that was in 1904. The school then was about six or eight years old. It was very small; I think our class had about fourteen or fifteen men. We all were required to have horses, which appealed to me greatly. Schenck himself said it was based on the master schools that were prevalent in Germany, in which a master took a number of young men with him, and they could watch him, hear him lecture, ride at his heels, and pick up forestry in that manner. It suited me to a "T"; the men who were there were most of them slightly older than I and were good lusty fellows, very fond of their beer and given to telling rather lurid tales about this an that, and we were hard-riding and a pretty good, hardy bunch. Doc kept us busy as bed-bugs from morning 'til night, seven days out of the week.

MAUNDER: Who do you remember among your classmates?

ELDREDGE: There was E. D. Bronson for one, known as "Tod" Bronson for some reason – I think because he was a very poor horseman and there was at that time a jockey Tod somebody, so they called him Tod because he wasn't a horseman. He was from New York and was afterwards Chief Inspector in the Forest Service. There was another chap named Philips also from New York. There was a man named Fred Prey, who went in the Philippines Forest Service and was killed there. Then there was a Marcus Shoff, afterwards state forester of Wisconsin[1], I think. The two Burbridge boys, Farbar and Will, were also there. Neither one of them stayed in forestry. They came from wealthy people and opened a hotel in Jacksonville, and as far as I know there's still a Hotel Burbridge there. One of the best ones was a chap named Mosenthal, who as far as I know didn't stay in forestry. He was a musician and his brother was a very famous musician – a violinist. Another one was Bradley (we called him "Canada" Bradley – he came from Canada) and he was a very able man and a very able drinker. Van Scheick was a Chicago man and I never heard of him afterwards. Bob Loftes was on the crew at Cornell before he came to Biltmore. He was big handsome chap and I don't know what became of him either. This one here is "Pinhead" Griffith[2]. He stayed in forestry right along, but in private forestry all his life; he never was in the Forest Service. He died about two or three years ago up in Memphis, Tennessee. You've probably run across his name in some of your research. This young chap here was known as "Filly-be-damned" Damon[3]. He's still living and is in the lumber business up in Concord, Massachusetts.

MAUNDER: Is he in the retail lumber business?

ELDREDGE: He manufactures and sells lumber. This is A. P. L. Tucker. To me he was the color of the class – a great big fellow. He was in forestry for a number of years; he was jailed one time during the I. W. W. carryings-on in Missoula. They were putting them in the bull pen there and he couldn't stand that – he was a great advocator of being able to speak when and where and what you wanted to say anywhere in the U.S. – so he was raked in and put in the stockade as well. He was killed shortly after World War I by the crash of a plane from which he was distributing leaflets all over California about some

[1] State forester of Michigan, according to our records
[2] Edwin M. Griffith

damned radical thing or other. He was quite a mountain climber, went to McKinley with Cook. Was it Cook who went up there to discover that the man before Cook was a liar and hadn't reached the top at all?

MAUNDER: No…..

ELDREDGE: Brown was his name, I think. Well, Tucker was one of his climbers to the top of McKinley. There were quite a few others in my class who never did anything afterwards in forestry. If you couldn't get into the Forest Service you were stymied.

MAUNDER: There wasn't much opportunity any place else?

ELDREDGE: No.

MAUNDER: Do you know of anybody in private forestry at that time?

ELDREDGE: In 1905? I don't remember any now. There probably were one or two scattered about somewhere, but very, very few.

MAUNDER: Well, we have a good book we published on Dr. Schenck a few years ago based on his memoirs, of course, that you're familiar with. I wish you'd give us a little personal picture of the old Doctor as you knew him as a student when you were at Biltmore.

ELDREDGE: When I knew him in the 1904 and '05 he was probably thirty-five years old, tall, slender, with a huge Kaiser Wilhelm mustache, more or less hatchet-faced with a good long nose. He rode two horses and he rode them nearly to death – full speed all the time. He wore a uniform from one of the German forest services he'd been in before he came over here. The breeches came down tot he top of his boots, and then polished leather boots from his knees on down with spurs that I remember were screwed into the heels – not hung on the outside, as we do. He was voluble; he knew forestry very, very well and he taught it in a colorful manner so that you got it. While teaching, he almost invariably (at least at the time I was there) had two or three dachshunds at his feet in the classroom, and a bird dog. The dogs would get to fighting, and without changing the subject or raising his voice he would go to the door and kick them out, saying, "The hell with you damn bitches," and out the door they'd go, but it wouldn't be long before they'd be in again. He had a number of colorful ways of expressing himself. We

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[3] Kennan Damon

thought that he was tops; in fact he was probably tops at that time in the United States as a teacher.

MAUNDER: Was he what you'd call a dedicated teacher?

ELDREDGE: Oh, I think so, yes. Primarily he was a practicing forester; he had something over 112,000 acres under his charge for Vanderbilt, and that kept him busy all the time. He just lectured to us three or four hours a day, and the rest of the time we were strung out behind him traveling full speed while he tended to his duties, which he explained as he went along, and why he did this, and why he did that, and so forth.

MAUNDER: In other words, the Biltmore Forest School was something that Schenck sandwiched in whenever he had time?

ELDREDGE: Yes. He wasn't primarily a teacher; he was a practicing forester – in the act of practicing it, too.

MAUNDER: He was a spokesman for a concept of forestry, was he not?

ELDREDGE: Yes, very much so. His concept of forestry included not only the cultivation, raising and protection of timber, of trees, but their utilization, their processing. He thought – and I think many of us who were his graduates continue to think – that sawmilling and the manufacturing of lumber is just as much a part of forestry as the growing and producing of the trees. That was the main way he differed, I think, from any of the other foresters of his time in this country.

MAUNDER: That concept has come into more acceptation in recent years.

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. In recent years it's blossomed.

MAUNDER: Why do you suppose there was a lack of recognition of this among Schenck's contemporaries?

ELDREDGE: There are several reasons. One of them is that none of the men who taught as of that time, or practiced, had any experience in utilization. It was a crude thing. You produced this stuff and handled it and whatnot, and then you turned it over to the roughnecks to cut it up and ship it around. There wasn't any science or art to it; it was just a process – running a sawmill or driving oxen and pulling logs. Then there was the other thing which I think was just as potent that the people who did manufacture lumber didn't have any concept of forestry or any regard for forestry or any belief in forestry. The two were as different as night and day. There wasn't any kinship; people who were

in lumbering thought forestry was just next door to bird watching – just a long-haired thing, like some new parlor game.

MAUNDER: And they actually debunked it in the early days, didn't they?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Well, there was good reason. In the first place, lumbermen then as now are intensely practical, hard-headed people whose object it is to make money out of making lumber, and as of that time and for many, many years afterwards the tress were already grown. The good Lord grew them and without the aid of forestry! There wasn't any concept that there'd ever be a time when there'd be a shortage or lack of timber; there's plenty over the hill in any direction you want to go. So they had no use for forestry, no real use. It didn't play any part. Foresters can't grow virgin timber, and that's what they were cutting. It's quite understandable. It wasn't through ignorance at all, as a matter of fact. As of that time, fifty years ago, forestry had no part in lumbering – any practical part. Only if you were looking forward to a crop fifty years from now could you see where forestry came in.

MAUNDER: Schenck, of course, saw this a long way off, saw the practical side of forestry and its implications for the lumberman.

ELDREDGE: Yes. One of his expressions that he used frequently was that "the best forestry is the forestry that pays most." In other words, not silviculture for silviculture's sake, not forest management just because it's a process, but forestry that pays most is the best forestry.

MAUNDER: In going through his memoirs and in reading his correspondence, one can't help but be impressed by the man's great feeling of rejection and frustration. He seemed to be greatly concerned with exciting the interest of the lumbermen of this country in forestry and principally in getting these men to send him their sons so that they could go through a practical training in forestry, and yet relatively few lumbermen actually did send Schenck their sons. Did Schenck ever show his feelings of disappointment over this?

ELDREDGE: Not during my time. As of my time he was riding the crest. He was accepted as a topnotch forester among the comparatively few forestry people that we had in the United States, and he was accepted as such among the lumbermen with whom he had contacts. As of that time, 1904 and '05, his relations with George Vanderbilt (which

afterwards deteriorated greatly) were good and he was successful. No, at the time that I knew him there was no sense of frustration, but afterwards that did develop.

MAUNDER: Now, you as a student were learning on the job in a way; at the same time you were giving Schenck some real crew to get some of that work done – planting and things of that kind.

ELDREDGE: Only to a minor degree. We did his mapping, for instance. That couldn't be done with people hired here, there and the other place around Asheville or Biltmore. But his large-scale planting was all done by hired people; his large-scale seed extraction and things of that kind were done that way. We did planting, yes, as part of the business of learning how to plant and what to do.

MAUNDER: How did he get on with the people who worked for him on the estate?

ELDREDGE: Rather easy to work with, but being a German and fresh from Germany, he couldn't understand the independence of the backwoodsman. He couldn't understand it at all.

MAUNDER: Were they just peasants in his eyes?

ELDREDGE: They were people who did things for which they would have had their heads cut off in Germany, or put in prison. They wouldn't have been allowed to do such things. But here they'd take them to court and the juries would turn them lose. I can understand why he couldn't – it takes years to know how to handle the backwoods people.

MAUNDER: And this would irritate him a good deal?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes, and them too.

MAUNDER: He followed Gifford Pinchot in this managerial position on the Biltmore Estate, and somewhere along the line he and Pinchot seemed to have come to a parting of the ways in regard to that particular assignment. Can you throw any light on this?

ELDREDGE: I don't know as I can. Of course, I've read that in his story – that book that you spoke of some time ago, which I helped edit and cut out a lot of stuff, incidentally. When I knew him he wasn't at outs in any serious way with Pinchot. I don't recall any time when he was derogatory or contemptuous or anything of the kind. It might have developed before, but I think it grew into a feud later. I'll say this though: In matters technical, what should be done, he differed from all of the other foresters. You

remember at that time there was Roth, Fernow and Pinchot – those were the three, as I remember. Both Roth and Fernow were German, and he didn't think that they were right more than two-thirds of the time, and he was very outspoken about it. He used to say in class that this was one of the peculiarities of foresters – they always fight each other; they never believe in each other's carryings-on.

MAUNDER: To what extent was there a real exchange of ideas among foresters at that time?

ELDREDGE: The foresters were so few I doubt if there was any exchange of ideas.

MAUNDER: The Society of American Foresters had been born about 1901, is that right?

ELDREDGE: My impression was that it came in with a charter and all that about 1907. I joined up in 1911.

MAUNDER: I believe Schenck was one of the charter members.

ELDREDGE: I don't know. As a matter of fact, I don't recall ever hearing of it when I was at Biltmore. I left there in 1905. You know, there used to be what they called the "Baked Apple Club." You've heard of that, haven't you?

MAUNDER: On Rhode Island Avenue.

ELDREDGE: Well, that developed, I think, more or less into the Society of American Foresters.

MAUNDER: Yes, but I think, Cap, the Society actually came before that.

ELDREDGE: Well, we could check that with Royal Kellogg, because he was one of the charter members, I'm pretty sure.

MAUNDER: Yes. Well, when you got through with Biltmore you took a job with the government, didn't you? Or you first of all did some cruising work?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I cruised timber for Schenck. The Doctor had a business on the side. He carried on what we'd call a consulting forester business now, and every now and then he'd take a job cruising somebody's timber. One of the jobs I had immediately after I graduated from the school was in the spring of 1905 in the south of Florida when two other Biltmore men and I picked up a crew and we cruised about 120,000 acres known as the Miakka Tract. It lay inland somewhat from Bradentown (at that time known as Bradin Town) and extended 120,000 acres of virgin timber. I don't think anybody but Ponce DeLeon had ever been in it before we got there. It took us a month and we never saw a human track in that whole time.

MAUNDER: What kind of timber was that mainly?

ELDREDGE: Pine, slash pine, very small size as that timber gets to be when it gets down to the south end of Florida.

MAUNDER: Who was this job being done for, do you recall?

ELDREDGE: It was being done for a syndicate in Charleston, South Carolina, who contemplated buying it from its owner. I don't know who the owner was and I don't now remember the name of the syndicate, but I don't think they ever bought it. It wasn't logged until at least twenty years later.

MAUNDER: Were there many such jobs that Schenck had?

ELDREDGE: Quite a few, yes. We did one for the Jackson Lumber Company, I think it was called, in western North Carolina in the mountains. That, too, was a very large tract of fifty or sixty thousand acres of virgin timber. Then I think he did some work over in eastern North Carolina. I wasn't on that job. Yes, he had quite a few of those jobs.

MAUNDER: Did Schenck himself usually direct these cruising parties?

ELDREDGE: He usually put a man in charge who was a graduate of his school, gave him written instructions as to all the procedures to be followed. Of course, after the report was written he went over it and edited it and drew conclusions from it.

MAUNDER: And he would produce the final report to the client?

ELDREDGE: Yes. We drew two dollars a day.

MAUNDER: Two dollars a day!

ELDREDGE: And expenses.

MAUNDER: And expenses! You didn't get rich that way, did you? Have the methods of cruising timber changed radically since then?

ELDREDGE: Not for many years. Only in recent years – the last ten years – have we gotten into some very, very different forms of sampling, which is, of course, the basis for timber estimating.

MAUNDER: Were you using the old Biltmore stick in those days?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes.

MAUNDER: Can you recall anything more, before we wind up this tape, regarding your Biltmore experiences that you might want to set down?

ELDREDGE: Not much more than the very pleasant things that we were involved in. About

once every two weeks we had what we called a Sangerfest, at which we had two kegs of beer. We had a long table in one of the rooms where we had our meetings which was big enough to seat everybody around the table with Doc at the head. After the thing had gotten on and we'd had enough of songs and had drunk perhaps half the beer, Doc would play what he called the "key game." He drove a nail in the table and he had a huge golden key, which was evidently the key to his pantry or wine cellar, and he'd put that key over the nail, and in the circle around the nail he'd draw a number of segments with a name of one of the students in each. Then he spun the key and where the key stopped that person had to drink a stein of beer without catching his breath, and they were big steins. After a few spinnings of the key, we sang much better and certainly much louder.

MAUNDER: That was a poor devil that got called on to drink several times in a row!

ELDREDGE: We raked him out from under the table just before we left. There generally were two or three under the table.

MAUNDER: These stories about the drinking bouts you used to have are getting to be legends. The old Doc seemed to go right along with this as well as anybody, didn't he?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. He'd get a bit woozy at times but he always managed to ride away.

MAUNDER: Did this ever lead to any difficulties that the boys got into there in the local community?

ELDREDGE: Well, yes. One reason we started the Sangerfests (it started the year I was there) was because we had gotten into the habit after classes in the evening of going into Asheville to the Eldorado Saloon, in which the barkeeper was known as "Three Fingered Phil." He had lost one finger. We'd sit around the bar there and drink and sometimes by midnight closing time, we'd be pretty lusty, and occasionally we got taken in, arrested. Well, that happened two or three times and we had to be bailed out and all the grief that comes from being young and too loud at the wrong time and all that kind of thing so then Doc thought up the Sangerfests. He said, "If you're going to do your drinking, let's all do it together." So that was the beginning of the Sangerfest, which as far as I know continued to be one of the features of the school not covered in the catalog.

MAUNDER: From your description of the men who were in school at the time you were, the

school seemed to attract men who might have been drawn to it by this camaraderie that they'd heard about.

ELDREDGE: Well, that could have been, or it could have been that they were young chaps like I was. I didn't tell you the full history of why I entered forestry. Nobody knew what it was except us youngsters starting in. After my mother pointed out that forestry was a new thing and might be attractive, I started to read up on it and I read in some magazine or other on an account of the Forest Reserves in the West. It had a picture in this story of a forest ranger mounted on a white stallion with a huge black hat and riding boots and spurs six inches long, and his horse was jumping a log. Underneath it said, "This is a forest ranger." Well, on the strength of that I said, "That's what I want – to ride a white stallion with a big hat and spurs and jump logs." As far as I knew, that's all a forester did.

MAUNDER: A keen appeal to the young man of your time?

ELDREDGE: It was a glamorous thing.

MAUNDER: In other words, the Forest Service in those days was doing a pretty good job of reaching out and recruiting interesting young men, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: Yes, it had an appeal. In my early days in the Service practically all of foresters were lusty men. It was only when I got into research in the last part of it that I discovered there were also some who were scholarly men and not so lusty, but even then I discovered after a while that they, too, were lusty. No, there's something about it. I saw something of French foresters when I was overseas during the first World War and I discovered that they, too, were the same type.

MAUNDER: You went from the cruising job, after you finished school, to the Forest Service itself?

ELDREDGE: Yes. I applied (Schenck had told me how to do it) for a position as a forest student, which is preliminary to becoming a junior forester. They paid $25.00 a month and expenses. So I applied for that job without much hope of getting it, but lo and behold, I did, and I was told to report to Washington on July 1, 1905. That was just three or four months after the Forest Service had been formed under that name and the national forests had been taken over from the old Forest Reserves. So I reported to Washington on that date. The office was in the old Atlantic building on F Street, and I

should say that there were probably 150 people there, counting the clerks and all. I reported to a man named Chittenden. I don't remember his initials, but he was known as "Little Chit." There were two Chittendens. He was chief, I'd say, of management. I don't remember what it was called then but that's about what it was. In other words, he was division chief. He was a very untalkative man, very reserved. When I came in to report and told him who I was and so forth, he gave me a long, cold stare and asked me to go into the next room, where the stenographer was, and wait a while. He gave me a directory of Washington, D.C. to read while I waited – a telephone directory. After a while I came out and he said, "You're going to California and you're going on July 5th with a chap named Bill [ ]. He hasn't traveled much; he's a West Virginia man. He's been a cook in the Forest Service for two years and we stepped him up to forest agent and he's going with you." The funeral of John Hayes, Secretary of State, happened along just about that time, then came the Fourth of July, and on the morning of July 5th Bill and I met in my room at the old St. James Hotel. The railroad station then was right up on Pennsylvania Avenue. They had a big star in the middle where Garfield was shot – a brass star – and the St. James was right next to it. On the Fourth I had run into a roommate of mine from Clemson who had gone from there to West Point, and from West Point he was filched out and went into the Marines. He was down at a camp below Washington on the Potomac taking his training and he'd come to town with three other Marines, all officers, second lieutenants, so we took in the town and had a very happy Fourth of July. We saw everything and went everywhere, indulged ourselves to the utmost, and I finally saw them off on the train to go back to camp. On the train after we got in we discovered that we were in a car with a big sign at the end of it, "For Colored." They didn't want to move into another car, so I told them I'd solve the problem for them. I took the sign out (it was a stiff board, you know) and put it inside my shirt and I went on over to the St. James and fell asleep. The next thing I knew Bill was in there shaking me and telling me it was time to go, he had the tickets and it was time to go. I started to get up and suffered agonies, a great pain in my stomach every time I tried to get up. He came over and felt all around me and discovered this board. Well, I recovered a little after I got the board out.

MAUNDER: What was your assignment out in California?

ELDREDGE: I was a variable member of a crew. There were five of us and we were making a white fir study on the McCloud River in northern California, on the lands of the McCloud River Lumber Company. We spent the whole summer chopping down white fir trees and counting the rings – chopping them in the middle in four foot sections and taking the ring count of every section. Stem analysis is the correct name for it. We spent the whole summer on that. Shorty Kelleter was chief of party. "Shorty" is what he was known as, but he was about six feet four inches, a long, slender fellow. He's still alive and around. He's one of the pioneers in the Service. He was party chief, and he left us after a while and a chap named Bill Durbin, afterwards state forester of California for a long time, took over the crew.

MAUNDER: You were making this study on the white fir on private lands?

ELDREDGE: Lands of the McCloud River Lumber Company.

MAUNDER: Was this a study that was being done for the company?

ELDREDGE: Oh, no. White fir was at that time an absolutely worthless species. It wasn't cut for any purpose. No, we were doing it as part of the general business of accumulating knowledge about trees. It was never published but probably could be found today if you dug deep enough in the records.

MAUNDER: This job you did on the McCloud River Lumber Company land, did you get into contact very much with the people of that company while you were out there?

ELDREDGE: Only in a mild way. We were working about twenty or thirty miles out from McCloud, staying in old deserted logging camps, and on rare occasions we'd go into McCloud for a blowout or something. I didn't see anything higher than lumberjacks, or maybe I ran across a clerk in an office. I remember the hotel there in McCloud, a wooden affair, and there was a very distinct trail that came up the steps and across the lobby to the desk, and from the desk to the men's room, and from there on into the barroom. The trail must have been at least two inches deep made by caulked boots. They must have had to change that floor every year.

MAUNDER: You mentioned a little earlier the management surveys that were made for the Kirbys by the Forest Service. That must have been back about 1903 or '04?

ELDREDGE: 1903 and 1904. I think there were down there to summers or two winters – two

different times. Bill Curran was a member of that crew, and that same Chittenden that we talked about. Some of the very early people that we talked about in the Bureau of Forestry were in that outfit.

MAUNDER: Ovid Butler was on one of those surveys. I wonder about those working plan things that were done in those early days. It would seem to me that this was an indication of the fact that the Forest Service was trying to make the American lumber industry forestry conscious, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: Yes. You know, to start with, Elwood, the Bureau of Forestry had no land, had no national forests, and weren't welcome on the forest reserves, which was under the Interior Department with no great friendship in between. So they had to work on other people's lands and the offered their services all over the country. We'd come in and estimate your timber and map the land, ascertain the rate of growth and this and that, and how it should be treated, and white it all out in a plan and give it to you. I don't remember whether the recipient paid any part of the expenses or not. I was never on one of those expeditions, but they did a great deal of that. They did some up in New York, they did some over at Call Lumber Company in Alabama. I think that was about 1904, too. They did this for the Houston Oil Company in Texas, and there were dozens of others, some small and some large. They did one for a company near Charleston, South Carolina.

MAUNDER: Do you remember any of these companies ever taking ahold of these surveys and really moving off from that point to doing a job of industrial forestry in the early days?

ELDREDGE: I think the Call Lumber Company made an effort which probably lasted five to six years, to follow up the descriptions of the plan because I saw it not too many years afterward and had pointed out to me some of the lands that had been cut according to the descriptions of the management plan. I have no doubt that the people up in New York followed it for some time. They probably did it more in the North because they were gentlemen's estates more than lumbering operations, whereas in the South they were lumbering operations and they didn't stay by it very long.

MAUNDER: This was still the period of the cut-and-get-out concept of lumbering?

ELDREDGE: Yes. There wasn't any incentive to follow. The landowner gained nothing if he was going to dispose of the land.

MAUNDER: I've often wondered about this. This seemed to me to be a start in the right direction on the part of a small, growing professional group of foresters making its overtures toward the industry which was the prime user of the forest resource, but then very shortly thereafter there came a real rupture of relations between the forest industry, particularly the lumbermen, and the profession of forestry as represented by the Forest Service. This was before the time when there were any great number of private consultant foresters.

ELDREDGE: There were only one or two. I think there was one outfit up in Maine. As far as I know, that was the only one.

MAUNDER: In other words, the contact which forestry people had with industry managers had been relatively brief and relatively unproductive up to that point, and then there was a rupture between the two. Do you recall what event or events seemed to lead towards this breaking away, this rupture, of the two groups?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I think in a general way. In the first place, Gifford Pinchot was the one man who antagonized the larger interests in the lumber industry in the West and in the South. He did it in part through his perfectly correct management of national forests. You see, we took over from the Interior Department the national forests that had been established, but immediately started on the closing of vast areas adjacent, and in many cases not adjacent at all, to government timberlands all over the West. Now, that didn't apply to the South. The rupture there came from a different thing, I think. That antagonized the lumber industry in the West because they were in position to get control of those lands for operation either by purchase at a dollar and a half an acre or by some form of the many land preemption laws which existed, or by purchase from individual settlers. At that time there was a great deal of skullduggery that went on, undoubtedly. When Pinchot came in, with Teddy Roosevelt behind him, proclaiming these national forests right and left, that set up an awful howl, and right then and there foresters became pariahs. We weren't welcome anywhere. We were decidedly sons-of-bitches.

MAUNDER: So that was one of the main reasons.

ELDREDGE: That was the Western trouble. Now, in the South – about 1912 possibly Pinchot set up, with the aid of a number of Southern lumbermen to start with, some kind of a plan by which all of these lumber men would more or less pool their lands and the

Forest Service would set up rules of practice so that the lands could be logged on a selective basis and on a continuous operation basis and whatnot. I recall at that time a number of Forest Service people were sent all around the South gathering data on who owned how much and where to see how it worked into this grand plan that had been conceived. Now, whether Pinchot conceived it to start with or whether it was conceived by Long-Bell or who I don't know, but that fell through and when it did it brought about a number of incriminations, and smaller lumbermen felt that they were about to be gypped, screwed to death or something. On top of that there was this intensive propaganda – timber famine in so many years, twenty years no timberland, private industry is not to be trusted with the timber resources of this country, timber barons, ghost towns, and all that kind of business. That all festered, especially in the South, and brought about bad feelings.

MAUNDER: How do you feel this affected the development of the profession of forestry in this country?

ELDREDGE: You mean the bad feeling between industry and foresters? Well, I don't know that it affected the development of forestry as a profession because there we had 160 or 170 million acres of national forests. Remember, all the foresters were in the Forest Service or in the state services or teaching, and there wasn't but a handful other than those. So they had plenty to work on. That would occupy their minds, to try out their plans and develop things and all that. Is that what you meant?

MAUNDER: What I was getting at is this, Cap, and I don't want to put words in your mouth: Forestry was just coming into being at this time. It needed two things. It needed public recognition and it needed public support in order to go ahead and do the job which it saw as being needed to be done. This was something of a crusade, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: Yes.

MAUNDER: If you're going to have a crusade, you've got to have an antagonist, and the antagonist in this case was the rapacious lumber baron. Was this a consciously conceived thing in order to get support for public […?], or was it a sincere apprehension of the coming famine?

ELDREDGE: I'd say this whole attitude of Pinchot and the Forest Service was both a sincere

apprehension of a timber famine and propaganda to get them public support. Unquestionably any thinking man who didn't have any axe to grind could only arrive at one conclusion, and that was that our forest resource was disappearing with terrific rapidity, and all over the country – not only in the Lake States, but in the South and West, the areas where the resource was greater. And there was apprehension that the people who had control of these operations had no intention whatsoever of ever doing anything else but liquidating the resource and walking off with the money. At the same time, in seeking a cure for this thing, seeking some way out of it, that is, the preservation of this resource, the prolonging of its life, they had to educate the people of the country as a whole. The people who owned this land and who were devastating it couldn't be expected to vote for any reform or to vote for any appropriation for forestry or for anything of that kind. It wasn't in their interest to do so. So Pinchot, and no doubt Roosevelt, came to the conclusion that they must go to the people, they must set up an understanding of this situation and a demand on their part for a cessation. In other words, they started and education you might say or propaganda campaign. So you have both of these things and they fitted together – on the one hand, the horrid example, and on the other hand the concept that it doesn't have to be at all, you can have the resources not only prolonged but increased with proper treatment.

MAUNDER: Of course, this was also right at that point in our history when we'd been through the tremendous development of the nineteenth century in the full period of free-wheeling, laissez-faire, capitalistic expansion and development – not in just the forest industries, but in all areas of our economic life – and this had produced a tremendous growth, a tremendously accelerated westward movement and expansion of the country, development of its resources at a rate that was just phenomenal, building schools, building railroads and bridges and everything else that went with it.

ELDREDGE: Not only West, but South.

MAUNDER: That's right. Then suddenly the nation began to take stock of itself and suddenly there was the realization that while all this had produced great things, there were also some negative aspects to it all and this is at the point where a counteraction set in, a reaction against all this development. And that brought with it the reform movement which Teddy Roosevelt seemed to just come in and be the great white knight on

horseback, and Pinchot one of his lieutenants with forestry and forest conservation one of the planks in their platform. Is this an accurate interpretation?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I think so.

MAUNDER: Back in the first ten years of 1900 there were some forestry conferences, congresses, held. Do you remember any of the details surrounding them?

ELDREDGE: I didn't attend any of them in that period, and I can't say that I knew very much about what went on. I was just a young squirt working in the woods, what they called a "forester in boots," but my impression was that they gathered as a result of wide discussion of these things. A great number of people, governors and common people and conservation-minded people, ladies' clubs, representatives and so forth all gathered together to persuade each other that something had to be done. These conferences were all stepping stones and steps in the whole thing. It kept on long after that time. It will always have to go on – this business of educating the public.

MAUNDER: You came into the picture in 1905. You were imbued with the idea that here was a wonderful life, a kind of romantic life of a forest ranger. Was there any idealistic attraction involved in this?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes! I think without any exception the young men that went into the Service as of that time believed that Gifford Pinchot was a prophet, a god, that he was unselfish and far-seeing, you know, you get sold on that in forest school. It doesn't come just after you've gone into the Forest Service. As you know, foresters have to think years ahead – not what's next year or the year after, but the next decade or two decades, so you are infiltrated with the idea that things can go either bad or good fifty years from now from what you're doing now. No, we were sold on it heart and soul. I think we were dedicated.

MAUNDER: There was a strong strain of idealism then that ran through the appeal to young men to join the Forest Service?

ELDREDGE: Or after they had joined, if it didn't lead it into them to start with.

MAUNDER: Can you cite anything from your recollections of those early days in the Forest Service which might tend to illuminate this fact? Examples of it among your own colleagues with whom you worked?

ELDREDGE: It wasn't so much a thing that you sat down and talked about. It was something

that you felt. I think this feeling is illustrated by the fact that you were willing to work in a hostile atmosphere where the settlers in the national forests (I'm talking now about the work we did in the national forests and that's the only practical forestry that went on in those days) were against you because you closed up their lands. The cattle men were against you because you were going to regulate them and make them pay, count their cattle and limit where they could go. Sheep couldn't go here and cattle couldn't go there. The lumbermen were against you from the lumberjack up. They thought you were a silly ass – the lumberjacks did – and the people at the top thought you were a misguided zealot. People who work in that atmosphere have to have something of a dedication. Furthermore, we were paid next to nothing. As I said, I started in at $25.00 a month and when I finally passed the civil service examination (which was a two day examination which I took, incidentally, in San Francisco at the time of the earthquake) I was raised to $83.33 a month, or $1,000 a year, and I don't know how long I went on at that rate until I got another one stepped to $1,200 a year. All around you people working as you did got twice as much, and every now and then you'd get an opportunity, an offer. "Come with me, kid. I'll give you twice as much if you'll come and help me do this or that." But you didn't. It was the rarest thing in the world at that time for anybody to leave the service for private employ. There was a real sprit of loyalty.

MAUNDER: This can be explained in large part, of course, by the kind of people who went into forestry, but was Pinchot the focal point of all this himself personally? Did you feel a personal loyalty to the man?

ELDREDGE: Yes. He was a magnetic personality. We didn't see him often, and he wasn't a back-slapper exactly, but somehow or other, no matter how junior you were or how humble your position, in the course of his stay in this little place or that he would hunt you up and tell you that you were doing a great job and were really going places. You knew it was partly politics and partly not, but whatever it was they all thought that he was tops. It wasn't loyalty alone to him, as I told you. It was a deep feeling that you had a part in a big thing for your country, and yet you didn't go around saying that.

MAUNDER: And there was very little public recognition or seeming approval of what you were doing, especially in the area in which you worked?

ELDREDGE: On the contrary, the papers both large and small all over the West (and I was in the West for five years before I came South) never over-looked an opportunity to slant the news or in editorials or sour comments to point out that those misguided zealots from the East are running around the woods and playing havoc from the West.

MAUNDER: Oh, the newspapers attacked you, too?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Portland, Seattle, San Francisco. I don't mean they did it every day but they did it every time they had a good thing to hang it on.

MAUNDER: Then at a later date the press seemed to turn the other way.

ELDREDGE: Oh, it all changed, but I'm telling you now about the very early days. Forestry became a part of the West later on and is now, of course, but it took a long time.

MAUNDER: When did this thing seem to go the other way, when the press, for example, began to take up the cause of conservation and began to champion the forester's cause?

ELDREDGE: Well, that's a little difficult for me to say because I was only in the West for five years, and then I came to the South, and from then on most of my activities were in the South – although not entirely.

MAUNDER: Was this the result of Teddy Roosevelt using the office of the Presidency to champion the cause?

ELDREDGE: No. The lowest ebb in the Forest Service when morale and money and everything else went in a deep dip was in Taft's administration after the Pinchot controversy with Ballinger. Then we were punished, and I mean in every way possible. The Department of Agriculture just sent after our scalps.

MAUNDER: Is that right?

ELDREDGE: There were years there when nobody got a promotion in the Forest Service. It went on from 1910, I should say, until close to 1920 before we came out with or heads up.

MAUNDER: That was exactly the period when Henry Graves was chief forester. In other words, he was head of the Forest Service at a time when it was struggling to stay alive.

ELDREDGE: All he could do was keep it together – not from lack of ability or magnetism or leadership.

MAUNDER: I didn't mean to imply that.

ELDREDGE: It was through the fact that we were people who were not in favor; we were

distinctly out of favor with the government as well as industry.

MAUNDER: Was this all the result of the blowup between Ballinger and Pinchot and Taft's finding in favor of Ballinger?

ELDREDGE: You're thinking now of the attitude of the Department of Agriculture to one of its bureaus. No, I think it probably started before that. The Forest Service was looked upon as an upstart that was too big for its breeches, too fancy, and so forth. We were pointed out time and time again by reporters and others as an example of efficiency in government – the one bureau in the whole Department of Agriculture […..?] no friends, and it isn't too friendly yet, as a matter of fact. We were looked upon then, and I think to some extent yet, as an independent group of bastards.

MAUNDER: Do you suppose, Cap, that this was in part due to the fact that the leadership in the Forest Service seemed to grasp at a very early stage in its history the real implications and value of publicity in telling its story on a mass production basis to the people of the country. And was this secret something that the other agencies in the Department of Agriculture didn't have the key to and this made them jealous perhaps.

ELDREDGE: They may have had the key but they didn't courage or the know-how to use it. That was a great contributing element; that was one of the things that stirred up jealousy and dislike through not only the Department of Agriculture, but the Department of the Interior and many other departments.

MAUNDER: How do you explain this? Was this ability something that stemmed from Pinchot's genius or was this the product of the genius of some other men in the Forest Service?

ELDREDGE: I was far distant from Washington in those days. I wouldn't be able to point out any individual or group of individuals, but Pinchot was the spark, undoubtedly the man with the inspiration. As you know, he was a wealthy man and independent. He didn't depend for his living on that job; if he'd gotten canned at any time it wouldn't have made enough difference for him to change his brand of coffee, so he didn't mind stepping out and taking a chance. And this group that he had around him – well, I don't think there were supermen by any means. I think I knew all of them, but they were dedicated and they were willing to take a chance. You know, a government service in those days was a pretty foggy thing. You still hear and read sneers at government

service and that's a hang-over from those days; it isn't true any more to any great extent.

MAUNDER: Who were the men around Pinchot in the Forest Service who stand out in your memory?

ELDREDGE: Overton Price.

MAUNDER: What would you say about him?

ELDREDGE: I didn't know him well but he was another one of the enthused, dedicated men, very energetic. He had had an informal forestry training but he was an executive. He was a man that could handle affairs and other men, and got around. He was a leg man, good man, very able, and clear-headed and honest, but he wasn't a genius.

MAUNDER: He died under rather tragic circumstances, didn't he?

ELDREDGE: I've forgotten what it was.

MAUNDER: I think it was shortly after the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy.

ELDREDGE: Did he commit suicide? It's been so long ago that I've forgotten.

MAUNDER: Who are some of the other men that stand out?

ELDREDGE: There's a big gap then. Another able man who wasn't a forester at all, Captain Smith, was the fiscal officer, but he was much more than that. He had a very strong personality and backed up all of Pinchot's plays and policies. And Overton Price – the three of them fitted in together very nicely. When you leave that group you drop right down to the young men that had come in more or less as of my time or a little earlier. There was Gervin Peters, a quiet unassuming man but with a great deal of brain power, clear-thinking. There was Mr. Chittenden that I was talking about. I don't know what became of him; he somehow slipped out. Then there was [ ], who was afterwards supervisor of the Columbia National Forest. He left the Washington office, took a big demotion and went out there just in order to get away. I think he had stomach ulcers and God knows what all, but he was a hard-working able chap. And W. T. Cox…

MAUNDER: Billy Cox, he lives in St. Paul.

ELDREDGE: Coxie. Have you got him listed? He could give you some good ones. Then there was a fellow named Homans. He was a little bit further down in rank. Earl Clapp started into the picture around that time as a junior. He came into the Service after I did but I think he was a couple of years older. Nick (E. E.) Carter – he retired five or six

years ago. Now, these are real oldtimers that I'm giving you now – the men that I remember as being in the Service as of 1906 or '07.

MAUNDER: Is there a man down in the South by the name of Muldoon or something like that?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Mattoon. But he was never in the policy-making group that I'm talking about. He was a field man and a very good one. I'm probably leaving out some of the best. Roy Kellogg that you're going to see – he and Stirling were oldtimers, too. They were in the planting end of it at that time, and one of their biggest jobs was planting in Nebraska. They were known as tree planters and they were a little different tribe than the rest of us. With them was [ ].

MAUNDER: Where does Bill Hall fit in?

ELDREDGE: William T. Hall – he was of the same vintage; he was a tree planter, too, although afterwards he was a regional forester and whatnot.

MAUNDER: Ralph Hosmer?

ELDREDGE: Yes, but he was out on the Coast and not too long after this period went to Hawaii and was forester there for the Territory.

MAUNDER: If you think of any others, and I'm sure you will, you can add their names later on when the transcript is sent to you. This is a very interesting story of the beginnings of forestry. Where did you go from your California?

ELDREDGE: I came back to Washington and I had a rather hard experience. I was then working under Nick Carter, and a call came from Alabama from a Congressman, who was a hero of the Spanish-American War and swam across the mouth of San Diego Bay and so forth. What was his name – Bleu? Anyway, he was the hero of the time and the girls all kissed him when he got off the train and so forth. He got to be congressman in Alabama and he sent up to the Forest Service for a group of young men from the Department of Agriculture to come down and follow him from town to town in Alabama primarily to help re-elect him. Well, they came to me and said, "You're a southerner and you're going South with Congressman Bleu." I said, "No. I never made a public speech in all my life and I'm not going to do it," and so forth. I refused. Well, Nick told me that they didn't do that in the Forest Service, and orders were orders and so forth. I said, "If I have to get out, I can't think of a better reason for getting out than

going around making speeches for this so-and-so down in Alabama to help re-elect him." The next thing I knew I was given the mission of going to the Hupoi Indian Reservation in northern California in the dead of winter to make a complete cruise of about 130,000 acres, a complete cruise and map and Lord knows what else for the Indian Service. I was loaned to the Indian Service, and with me were sent five other forestry boys, all of whom were being punished. We called it "The Siberian Expedition." It was a bitch if I ever was on one, with snow up to your neck all the time. We put in nine months for the Indian people and did a damn good job. On the strength of it I was offered the first forestership with the Indian Service, which, thank goodness, I didn't take. But that's where I went from California – back to California, of course.

MAUNDER: Where did you go from there?

ELDREDGE: I think I skipped one on you. Yes, I did.

MAUNDER: You had another job in between?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I did, a very interesting one. In 1906 directly after the earthquake I was sent down to the Sequoia National Forest, of which Bill Greeley was the newly appointed supervisor. I fiddled around there […?] My first job was to cruise map the timber on about 20,000 acres in the Inyo Forest, which was over on the east side. I had a big crew there and we got through with that job and immediately afterwards I was given a job of running out 140 miles of boundary line of the Sierras. The line had been drawn in the beginning from a map and they thought, no doubt, that they were drawing the line in the proper place but it was way out in the desert. There were five of us who started on this thing in the winter and we ran into plenty of trouble. I don't think we saw a tree in the 140 miles. It was all bare land and rough as all get out, up one obsidian ridge and down another. We almost perished on one occasion, but then when we got through with that…

MAUNDER: Excuse me for just a minute, Cap. What was the urgency of running this line?

ELDREDGE: They were having a lot of trouble with sheep. Sheepherders were using the desert. In the wintertime and in the early spring there's enough grass there to sustain sheep but sheep were forbidden on the national forests in that place – that was cattle country. There had been a number of trespasses and some near fights between the cattlemen and the sheepmen and the excuse was always given, "We don't know where

the line is. We can't tell," so I was told to go out there and mark it. I had to build a monument every quarter of a mile and on the top of every ridge and at the bottom of every gulch, in addition, on this line. I had to paint on those monuments in Spanish on one side, "This is a national forest boundary," and in English on the other side, "This is a national forest boundary," because the sheepherders were all Basques from the Pyrenees. So that's what we did. There were places, of course, where there wasn't any rock. Every now and then we'd run out onto a flat plain; in those places we built monuments out of sagebrush piled with sand on top and then a piece of muslin tied on a stick up on top, a flag effect which had the Spanish and whatnot on it.

MAUNDER: How many men did you have working with you to get this done?

ELDREDGE: Five. Four men on the line and one cook and horse wrestler and one thing and another. We'd pack and every other day or every third day we had a dry camp; we had no water except what we could carry in the kegs with us.

MAUNDER: And you had to haul all your provisions?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Every so often we came to a place…There was no place on the way where…You know, at that time they had those twenty-mile Borax teams with a great big wagon and a trailer behind and they hauled them from deposits in Death Valley on down to some place – I never did know where it went – for refining. Our line occasionally hit this stage line or this wagon route and when it did there was usually a place there where they sold water and canned goods so we could load up again.

MAUNDER: But this is pretty desolate country.

ELDREDGE: Oh, it's desert. The aqueduct which goes from Owens Lake or Owens River on into Los Angeles was just being surveyed at that time and on several occasions we paralleled the crew that were running out the other line for the aqueduct.

MAUNDER: Did you ever have a real tough brushes with this people, the sheepherders or the cattle people?

ELDREDGE: I didn't, no. I didn't run into tough doings until I came South.

MAUNDER: Well, you got to know Bill Greeley for the first time in that work, didn't you?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I got to know him very well.

MAUNDER: He was then a young fellow about how old?

ELDREDGE: Well, I should say he was twenty-four or twenty-five. He graduated a couple of

years before from Yale. He could conceivably been as much as twenty-six but I doubt that he was any older. We used to say he consisted entirely of two long legs and a nose. Others said that he was split all the way up to the navel. He was a long-legged fellow and when you tried to follow him around, you realized that you weren't in his class at all. A very earnest man with a well-developed sense of humor, very likable. His father was a preacher and I knew his father, too. Bill himself never drank or smoked. In later years I know he did because I made a big business of riding him about it after he'd gone about thirty years without drinking to fall into the pit of sin. He was a very able man intellectually and a good leader.

MAUNDER: Promptly recognized for his leadership?

ELDREDGE: From the very beginning. I don't think Bill probably spent more than two weeks in anybody's crew but his own. He was just one of those chaps – democratic, you know. I don't know that I ever heard anybody call him "Mr. Greeley" until he'd become a Colonel in the Army. He was "Bill Greeley" to everybody.

MAUNDER: That work that you did then that you've just described was work under Greeley's guidance?

ELDREDGE: Under his direction. He gave us instructions what to do and then we were on our own.

MAUNDER: And this was more or less of a temporary assignment you'd been put on from Washington?

ELDREDGE: Yes, it was all done from Washington. Just to give you a little account of how things were, I remember the first crew I took over. I'd just come from the earthquake. Actually the examination wasn't too much later, but Bill Greeley told me to going a crew in the Greenhorn Mountains, part of the Sierras, and I had to drive out from Vicalia, oh, about sixty or seventy miles by stage, and when I reached Vicalia I didn't have any money so I hunted up the stage station and told the stage manager what the situation was and showed him my credentials and said with great certainty that the man at the other end would pay my fare. So I rode up on the front seat with the driver, a great big, mean-looking fellow. We changed horses every twenty miles, going along at a lope most of the time, climbing all the time, going up. Well, we got up within about a mile or two of this place where I was going to get off – a little grocery store – and this

driver said, “I’ve got instructions to collect for your passage from the man that’s going to meet you there at the grocery store.”

I said, “That’s right.”

He said, “I’ve also got instructions if there’s nobody there to meet you

I’m going to beat the hell out of you.”

He looked like he was able to so I started praying, and sure enough, purely by chance (they didn’t know what time I was coming) they had sent the cook in from the camp, nineteen miles, with a bunch of pack horses to get grub from this grocery store. It was the only one anywhere near. They’d given him some money to do it with; it was only three or four dollars but it was enough so I went back with him to the camp. The man who was in charge of it was this same man whose name I’ve been desperately trying to remember who was afterwards state forester in California for a large number of years. When he got the mail he opened it up, and he said, “Eldredge, this will interest you,” and he handed it to me. It was a letter from Bill Greeley telling him to five the party over to me and for him to catch the next way out and meet him in San Francisco on a certain date for another job. This was my first party and there I was in charge of this bunch of people, and horses. I had to feed them, direct them and work with them – and not a nickel – four dollars in debt and no way of getting any more. I was still getting $25.00 a month and it had to come from Washington and it wasn’t sent until you sent in the payroll. Well, that was quite a puzzler. I finally borrowed some from this chap that was going out, and then I had a grand meeting all around. I said, “Maybe you’re going to starve to death if you look to me to buy the groceries because I haven’t any money.” So they agreed to chip in with all their checks, plus mine when it came in, and I’d pay them when I got my expense account back. In the meantime they had what they called a Form A in those days (there’s a different name now). It was for an emergency purchase that can’t be bought under any more leisurely manner. Well, on Form A I bought everything from eggs to horse feed, all strictly irregular – not illegal but irregular. That got to be currency around that part of the country because the first man that got paid on, the word was passed back so it was all right. We made out there for three or four months on that particular job before until I got enough expense money back to pay off the crew for having financed the thing. It took, as a rule, something

over a month to get a check back from Washington from the time you sent in your accounts.

MAUNDER: Well, now, these men that helped put up the money, were they rangers or hired hands or what?

ELDREDGE: As I remember, there was a chap named Goldsmith, and another named Hugh Caulkins, and the cook's name I don't remember, and then there was another fellow named James Stone. Caulkins and Goldsmith were both Yale men and career Forest Service men after that although they were just getting $25.00 a month at the time. They were beginners, too – just out of school. The cook got $40.00 a month; he was the high paid man in the outfit. The young fellow Stone had an interesting story, too. He was raised somewhere in Massachusetts, and Jack London, that very popular author of that day, was touring around from one place to another and lectured at the school that this boy attended. I think it was Massachusetts A and M, if there is such a thing. At any rate, this young Stone became very much amused with Jack London – a vigorous man, you know, and the author of vigorous stories, and he must have been a very good talker. Anyway, during the course of his talk he told young Stone, and the whole group, that he was preparing to take this trip around the world in the Snark (I think the name of the vessel was – he wrote it up afterward) and that he was looking for likely young fellows who would like to take the trip with him, at least a couple of them. Well, Stone got it into his head that he had a chance to go so he dropped everything, came all the way out to the Coast from Massachusetts. He was as green as grass, and when he got there, of course, he found there was nothing to it, so he had to hunt up a job. I needed another man and he wrote in and said he needed a job and told me a wild bull story about this and that and the other thing so I thought I had a pretty good man and told him to come ahead. He joined us in camp and he had on the biggest cowboy hat that he could find and a pair of high-heeled boots which [….?] and a yellow […..?] little pale, thin fellow – a buckaroo from the ground up. He got to be a pretty good chap after a while and made a lot of money on the Coast after the earthquake when they commenced to build up in Oakland. He married the daughter of the raisin king of Fresno – he married the princess – and then he got a job flunkying around and helping this man build and sell houses over in Oakland.

MAUNDER: Real estate development. There was a lot of money there, I guess.

ELDREDGE: Yes, there was. I haven't heard from him since that time. I've kind of gotten my assignments mixed up. Anyway, after 1907 when I got through with that Indian job I went back to Washington to write it up and make the map and all that kind of thing, and got that in good shape. Then they had the reorganization of the Forest Service, in which they got away from this thing of people working out of Washington and taking three or four weeks or six weeks to get a hearing or get a check back or anything. They established these regional headquarters and Earle Clapp was assigned at the start to California. I had come in contact with Earle and he evidently was favorably impressed with me. At any rate, he asked for me to be assigned to him because he was to be the associate forester in Five, we called it then – California. At the last minute they changed him over to Albuquerque and when they did I went with him – not of my own free choice but because he had picked me and some others to go with him. So that's how I ended up in Arizona and New Mexico instead of California where I'd had all my experience.

MAUNDER: Is that where you crossed paths with A. B. Recknagel?

ELDREDGE: Recknagel, Arthur Ringland, Early Clapp, Allen Teck, and a whole slew of others.

MAUNDER: Pierce?

ELDREDGE: Pierce came later. Then there was John Guthrie, and dozens of them.

MAUNDER: Allison?

ELDREDGE: Yes, Allison. He was cruising timber all the while I was on the Coconino.

MAUNDER: You fellows used to have a place you stayed – what was it called?

ELDREDGE: Adobe Hall. We were practically all bachelors. In fact, the only married ones, as I remember, were freshly married. There was Earle Clapp and his wife, Helen – a very, very, fine girl – and Allen Peck. I've forgotten his wife's name at the moment but she was equally fine. All the rest of us were bachelors and stayed at this Adobe Hall, and we enjoyed a rather lusty life, too.

MAUNDER: So I've heard. You see, I've crossed this ground once before.

ELDREDGE: I didn't know whether the other fellows would admit it.

MAUNDER: Tell me something about your work down there in the Southwest.

ELDREDGE: In the Southwest I was in charge of timber sales. It was the custom in those days to have two people on almost every job. You had the regional forester and the associate regional forester, and you had the associate chief of management, and the associate chief of this and that, all the way through. So a young chap named Smith (we called him Smitty, of course) and I were in charge of timber sales to start with, and we went all over that country laying out timber sales and marking timber for them, drawing up the contracts and so forth – a very responsible job for young squirts because we made some pretty big sales.

MAUNDER: In other words, you were cruising blocks of timber for the government, weren't you, to determine…

ELDREDGE: Cruising timber and negotiating these timber sales.

MAUNDER: With the lumber companies?

ELDREDGE: Yes – little and big. Some of them were just little Mexicans buying crossties and then there were the Arizona Lumber Company and others around Flagstaff – there were two big ones.

MAUNDER: Joe Dolan – the Arizona Lumber and Timber Company?

ELDREDGE: Yes. Then later I took over what we called a "reconnaissance survey" for the Pecos, a big job. We had about thirty people working on it, on the head of the Pecos River in the Pecos Forest, and it was from there that I went to Florida.

MAUNDER: In this timber sales work was the buyer coming to the Forest Service and saying, "We want so much stumpage?"

ELDREDGE: Entirely.

MAUNDER: Then you'd have to go out and find that stumpage, and then you'd offer it on bids? You'd call for bids, is that right?

ELDREDGE: Well, the procedure was about like this. At that time the Forest Service had not developed an initiative in saying, "We want to sell this or sell that." In other words, there were no plans specific enough to act that way. They do now, but they didn't then. In those days we sat like a storekeeper waiting for someone to come in and buy. A given lumber company would come or write saying that they would like to buy a million feet or five million feet or twenty million feet in our neighborhood there, and they'd picked it out and knew where it was and wanted us to send some men out to

cruise it and draw out the papers and make the timber sale appraisal and arrive at the price. So that would be done, and then it would be advertised for thirty days.

MAUNDER: So that others could bid on it?

ELDREDGE: It was open to bids, to sealed bids. It had bonds and so forth with it and the contracts were open for anybody to examine. In had all kinds of provisions in it about cutting, how, when and where – very well done and very well directed.

MAUNDER: Was it your responsibility, then, to ride herd on the people who were cutting it to see that they abided by the contract?

ELDREDGE: That was the prime responsibility of the local forester on the national forest. Having made the sale you turned the administration of the sale over, but we served as inspectors to see whether the sale was going according to Hoyle.

MAUNDER: What did you find out in most cases? Was it being carried out according to Hoyle?

ELDREDGE: Oh, it was a constant struggle, naturally. It was all new. These lumberjacks way down at the bottom, the people who were actually cutting the trees, didn't know anything about it and cared less.

MAUNDER: They hated your guts and thought you were a smart apple who was trying to tell them how to do their job?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. I'd hate to tell you what they called us, but we called them the same thing so we were about even on that score. Anyway, it was a constant struggle, but it was friendly enough. I mean, there wasn't any feud about it. Pressure had to be kept there, and every now and then you'd have to threaten to close a sale and liquidate the bond, and then there'd be a big furor and everybody'd go back to thinking better about it and doing better. It was just a constant pressure – what you'd expect in any kind of business.

MAUNDER: As it was in the beginning, now and ever shall be?

ELDREDGE: I imagine it's just as bad now as it ever was – except that the people are trained now. The lumberjacks that work on government timber know exactly what they're supposed to do, but that doesn't keep them from going out and cutting down an unmarked tree if it looks pretty good and they think they can get away with it.

MAUNDER: How long were you in the Southwest working out of Albuquerque?

ELDREDGE: Not very long. I went there in 1908 about the first of January and by the fall of 1909 I found myself in Florida. It was a very active year and a half; we covered a lot of territory and did a lot of things and saw a lot of people.

MAUNDER: You went over to Florida to sort of bale out a situation there, didn't you?

ELDREDGE: Yes. I first went on home on leave with the thought expressed to people there in Albuquerque that the chances were I was going to have to go into the service. My home was in Camden and my mother had died some years before and left five girls. My father was doing his best to raise them. He was a hotel man and owned a good-sized winter resort, but he'd had a stroke and things were going pretty bad, so I realized I'd probably have to take over. I took a leave, instead of resigning at once, and hadn't been more than two or three weeks before I found the situation wasn't nearly as bad as it looked. I helped my father make arrangements to get a manager to run the hotel and all that so it looked pretty good, and about that time I got a letter from Ringland or Clapp asking me to go down and take over and start off the Florida National Forest until "Whiskey Highball" Kent, a great character in those days, could arrive and take charge. He'd been designated as supervisor but was unavoidable delayed. This would only take a month at the outside so I said I thought I could get away from home for a month and went down and opened up, held a ranger examination, hired a bunch of rangers and put them to work. We got going in pretty good shape and Kent came down and gave it a good look and went back West somewhere and probably resigned from the Service of something because he never took over, so I was there for nine years.

MAUNDER: Wasn't A. B. Recknagel over there?

ELDREDGE: Reck came down there in the winter of 1910 to make a survey and a management plan for the Chocktawhatchee Forest. He brought a good size crew with him.

MAUNDER: They were a bunch of cowboys from the Southwest who didn't get along too well with the natives, weren't they?

ELDREDGE: Well, I don't think there was any trouble with the natives. There weren't any natives right there in the national forest to amount to anything. No, they did a good job, covered the whole forest, figured it all out and Reck wrote a good plan that we afterwards followed for quite a number of years. I modified it a little bit but not much.

In principle we followed his plan I suppose, for ten or twelve years, and I guess it was probably the best followed plan anywhere in the country as of that time. Pitchland was his chief fieldman. Reck was both in and out of the field; he stayed in a little nearby town where the headquarters were at Dafuniack Springs. That was the headquarters at the start, and that's where I met my wife.

MAUNDER: Oh, is that right? You met your wife down at Dafuniack Springs, Florida?

ELDREDGE: I think I was the first and for a long time the only managing forester, that is, a forester in change of land, timber, south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. In other words, there wasn't any such thing as getting them to a meeting or convention or anything of that kind. If I'd gone to a forestry convention anywhere in those early years, all the talking would have been a dialogue between me and the barkeeper.

MAUNDER: The Forest Service had very little activity then except in the West?

ELDREDGE: It was the only national forest east of the Mississippi at that time. They had then some forestry of some kind (I never knew how much) up at Suwannee, and there were a few foresters in the South. This fellow, Ed Griffith, whose picture I showed you, was cruising timber.

MAUNDER: But he was doing it on a private consultant basis?

ELDREDGE: I was saying there was no private or industrial forester of any kind in the South. A chap named Sidney Moore, a Yale man, was in Jacksonville at that time, and I think he was connected with a lumber company but not as a forester. Big business in that part of the South – the Southeast – was turpentining, naval stores operations, and one of my first jobs and my main job was designing and putting into effect a method of conservative turpentining on government timber. Nobody had ever leased any government timber before for turpentining because this was the only longleaf timber in the whole national forest setup. There wasn't any other. So that's where I got to know Dr. Herty, of who you've undoubtedly heard. Dr. Herty, subsidized or employed by the Forest Service, had designed the Herty Cup and had done a lot of experimental work on a fairly large scale, and I had access to that. In fact, I got to see Dr. Herty himself and drew up this method of operating timber for turpentine that doesn't kill the tree and fives prolonged production and so forth.

MAUNDER: This got away from the old heavy chopping and chipping and the boxes?

ELDREDGE: Yes, and it got to be in common use all through the South even before I left the Chocktawhatchee. The big operators had pretty well left the Southeast. The timber had been cut, but these turpentine people were working on what was left. There were still a number of small operations. In Alabama there were several large operations but I didn't come in contact with those. Of course, over here some of the biggest operations in the country were under way. The Bogalusa Mill, which at that time was said to be the largest mill in the world and cut a million a day, was just being started up. What's the name of the big lumber company that came down from Chicago and opened up the Mississippi?

MAUNDER: You mean the Fentress people?

ELDREDGE: No, a bigger one yet.

MAUNDER: Was it Hines?

ELDREDGE: Yes, Hines. Well, at that time, 1909, 1910 and '11 and '12, all through there – these boys were having a feud with Pinchot because Pinchot was labeling them as "despoilers of public property" and so on. While I didn't have any contacts directly with those people, still there was a large atmosphere of animosity among the larger lumber companies as to the Forest Service. All the rest of the people didn't know and didn't give a damn. Forestry was as odd and strange to them as chiropody or ceramics. They didn't know what it was. And the people right down on the ground, the settlers who lived in the woods, and the turpentine operators and so forth, were completely uninformed and the greatest, ablest and most energetic set of wood-burners that the Lord has ever smiled upon.

MAUNDER: Is that right? The turpentiners or everybody?

ELDREDGE: Everybody from school children up.

MAUNDER: The people in the naval stores field at that time, Cap, were what kind of people? Were they small operators in the main?

ELDREDGE: They were both large and small operators, but they were controlled, financed by so-called factors – naval store factors – of which there were maybe ten or fifteen. As time went on they got smaller in number but larger in size. There were a number in Jacksonville, a number in Savannah, several in Brunswick, and I think one or two further north in Charleston and so forth, one big one over here in New Orleans, tow or

three in Mobile, and two in Pensacola. Now, those factors owned fifty-one per cent or more of the stock in a given corporation, which in turn owned or leased the land, built the camps, employed the hands, processed the gum and sold it. The contractual relationship was a very ancient one; it went back to cotton factoring many years before. In fact, this factor business goes way back one or two hundred years. The factor sold the rosin, the completed product of rosin and turpentine, charged a commission for selling it, sold all the groceries needed to sustain the camp, all supplies of every kind had to be bought from them, and there were about half a dozen other different ways in which they took, it's been estimated, as much as thirty per cent.

MAUNDER: A completely feudal situation?

ELDREDGE: That's right. Yet it couldn't have operated at that time, or for many years before or a few afterwards without it because the individuals who actually went out and made the gum (what we call the camp managers) were very frequently, although not always, a very crude set of people, but they knew how to work Negroes and that was the key to the whole situation. If you couldn't work Negroes you couldn't make gum, and if you couldn't make gum you couldn't make money. So somebody near the bottom had to have that ability and these men had. Turpentine hands (Negroes always) were a peculiar, separate, indecent group of people. As a rule they were as black as a wet rubber boot, looked like they came here right straight from the Congo and had never done anything but make gum or turpentine. They were highly skilled laborers at that job and they wouldn't work at anything else. The pay was terrifically low. An able-bodied man, when I first knew the industry, who made four to five dollars a week was doing very well. That meant he was a good man and could raise a big family. But they were rough niggers. They weren't as bucolic as farm hands or people that work in cities. They were pretty stout boys who'd kill one another right along. They had to be handled and handled just right. You couldn't be rough with them or they'd leave you. They wouldn't fight back; they wouldn't fight white people but they'd just pick up and leave. They were transient anyway.

MAUNDER: They'd move on to another job?

ELDREDGE: So they'd had to be handled by an expert, and these were the turpentine hands.

That was the main job I had on the Chocktawhatchee to start with – leasing these turpentine lands and then enforcing the contracts. If you're talking about many and skillful means of evading the terms of a contract, the turpentine man has them all beat.

MAUNDER: Is that right? He didn't want to use the new technique?

ELDREDGE: To start with they thought that was wrong. They'd been raised on the old saying they had in the naval stores industry that "the deeper you go into the meat the more blood you get." In other words, the deeper you gash the tree the more gum you get. As a matter of fact, you don't because the tree fades out of the picture very soon if there's too great a shock, or when they get knives to go an inch and a half deep. Our stuff at the beginning was a half inch deep and afterwards it got down to a quarter of an inch deep. You only need to go in a little ways. There were scientific reasons for all that but not in the minds of the turpentine people, and they knew, they were third generation. "Captain, I've been making turpentine ever since I was fourteen years old." It was all part of the general struggle that everybody has to make a contract work, and it did. After a while the Negro hands got skillful at it and the camp managers found that they were really getting more gum that way and that it was profitable so in time it worked out very nicely.

But forestry in 1910 and up to 1915 or maybe 1920, was as unknown and as unvalued in that part of the South as it could possibly have been – as though it hadn't existed. Mind you now, that wasn't a country of virgin timber.

MAUNDER: In your book, THE FOUR FORESTS AND THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTH, you make a statement early in the book which I'd like to read to you and have you make some comment on. You say here, "The South as it is today, and as it has been for more than a generation, is a land of opportunity in which people of all classes and races are hard at work to achieve for themselves and their communities a full share of the kind of existence which we like to call the American way of life. It is true that for years the southern states have stood shamefaced at the bottom of the list in the statistics that are designed to measure and compare the prosperity, culture or security possessed by the people of this state and that. Southerners are now facing the distasteful fact, are analyzing causes, and are determined to better the situation, are striving mightily to get on with what needs to be done." This was written back in the mid-forties and published

in 1947 by the Pack Foundation. What do you see as the principle progress made in this direction since that time?

ELDREDGE: Are you asking me about the whole South or with reference to forestry?

MAUNDER: This, of course, speaks of the whole South and the whole economy.

ELDREDGE: I'll tell you, Elwood. We've had since that time, and starting before that time, something that was absolutely necessary and that is a breakthrough in the agrarian way of life – the development of industry and industry payrolls. To compress it all into one sentence – to increase the average income. That's what has happened and it happened very, very largely because of the growth of industry in all parts of the South.

MAUNDER: What part would you say the forest industries have played in this, and have they been the forerunners of the whole development in any sense?

ELDREDGE: I wouldn't say they had been the forerunners, no. I believe I say it in that book, that the South had a temporary period of pickup, maybe the first signs of pickup, after the long period of depression after the Civil War due to the forest industries, but that died out as the timber was cut. That commenced to die out in the twenties, left whole counties and whole states stranded.

MAUNDER: When the virgin timber was gone?

ELDREDGE: Yes. I'm talking primarily about this section – Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Alabama. It had happened already in Georgia. It happened later in Florida because Florida was developed later than some of the states in that early group. The biggest single thing that I know of that has stimulated the South has been the coming in on a very large scale of the pulp and paper industry. It wasn't alone, but coupled with the things that it brought with it in large measure, namely the chemical industry, coupled with it the land they bought and paid big prices for (they paid right through the nose for the land), and coupled with the stimulus that it gave to railroads, truck transportation, taxes and everything else, it was a real massive shot in the arm. As I say, it hasn't been alone. It's been oil and minerals of all kinds, chemical developments, power developments, greatly increased tourism, and many, many other things, but if I were to single out in my own mind the single thing that just had a syringe full of pep it would be the pulp industry that topped it and brought it up and spread it out. There's hardly a half a dozen counties in this region that hasn't had its annual income boosted

tremendously through working for pulp companies, or selling wood to pulp companies, or having sold land to pulp companies to put money into circulation – outside money, Yankee money, real money, not the same old Confederate bills that we used to pass around, money from New York.

MAUNDER: What significant changes in the condition of the prosperity in the South would you single out most? You mentioned the growth of the pulp and paper industry. This has brought with it, of course, a much greater urbanization of the South, hasn't it? People have been moving in from the farms to the towns and cities?

ELDREDGE: You mean because of the pulp industries?

MAUNDER: Because of the development of industry generally.

ELDREDGE: Yes, industry generally. The pulp industry has the added advantage that a very considerable part of its effect is felt in rural district without having to go to town, and the people who prospered in part from this are not those who worked in the mill (although they did prosper and the did suck in a lot of country boys) but the old boy who had the farm here with forty acres of timber, and the old boy here that had a thousand acres of timber and went into the business of supplying the wood, contracted labor, and the actual laborers who went out working for anywhere from ten to twenty dollars a day where they used to get a dollar and a half. All that's made a difference, and that's bought a lot of bacon and eggs.

MAUNDER: And a lot of refrigerators and cars.

ELDREDGE: Yes, cars particularly.

MAUNDER: In other words, the benefits of this change in the economy of the South have been shared widely by all strata of people living in the South?

ELDREDGE: Yes, but particularly so with the pulp industry. Take an oil development. A half dozen men drill that mill and then move off. They came from Oklahoma and they go somewhere else. Then two or three men handle a whole oil field, the way they run them now. Then in a city someplace they have an oil refinery. The only thing that's spread around among the people at large outside of this very small number that I've mentioned – other than the capitalists, of course – are the people who lease land. Now, that is a source of income that is spread out. Take any chemical industry that we have in the South. It's very closely concentrated around Lake Charles or Baton Rouge or such

places. A tremendous number of people come in there and they work at high wages and good business, but they're not spread around all over in the backwoods, in the country counties, in the country courthouses, and the taxes aren't felt anywhere so much as they are right here, but in the pulp industry those millions are just spread all around.

MAUNDER: That's very significant. The Negro in the South has been a beneficiary then.

ELDREDGE: He isn't the poor downtrodden creature he's made out to be. This doesn't have much value but it just occurred to me. When we first came to New Orleans we'd been accustomed to paying four dollars a week for a Negro girl. That's what we paid in Georgia although you could get them for three and a half. Of course, you fed them and all that. We came here and I think we paid five dollars a week. This was twenty-five years ago. No we pay five dollars a day. Glad to get them and figure that they're worth it. That isn't peculiar to New Orleans. It holds for all the larger towns and cities all over the South. Nobody is pinched and starved any more.

MAUNDER: In other words, this new development, these changes in the economy have really pulled up the standard of living of a whole population, and perhaps the most sensational rise of all has been that realized by the Negro. If what you say bears out all the way across the board, that would be an improvement of four or five times what it was twenty-five years ago.

ELDREDGE: Of course it is. There's no doubt about it. You can find statistics that'll prove that to you.

MAUNDER: This is jumping back and forth a bit in history, but going back to the early days again. What can you tell me about the people who were most instrumental in bringing the South to a recognition of the importance of its forests? You were one of them. You were right at the heart of it because you were sort of an island, in a sense, here but what other people contemporary with you had a lot to do with bringing about this revolution in forestry and forest industries?

ELDREDGE: I don't think any of us had much to do with bringing it about, to be honest with you, that is, as individuals. Undoubtedly we spread the word, we talked, attended meetings of all kinds and read papers. I'm speaking of foresters now. There were a number of individuals, lumber companies who took early steps later than 1910, possibly about 1920. In this state one of the earliest men was Henry Hardtner up at Urania.

Over at Bogalusa they went fairly early into better forest practices and planting. That, too, was about 1920.

MAUNDER: That was the Great Southern Lumber Company?

ELDREDGE: Great Southern Lumber Company. Then in Alabama I can't think offhand of anybody who did any serious work. The Allison people did a little. T. R. Miller at Brewton, and W. T. Smith up at Chapman were among the earliest in doing something about it seriously. I could probably name a few more. You know them, I think, or you can gather them from other sources. Anyway, it was very gradually that they came into it and they came into a great deal on faith. Dr. Austin Cary did a tremendously fine job in getting interest. He didn't convince anybody to the extent that the day after he left they went out and did something, but he was a persistent old New England Yankee and he'd come back talking all the time and they liked him and enjoyed him. They more than liked him; they thought he was quaint. He generated a lot of interest that little by little in the case of men commenced to do something. Some of it was window dressing, some of it was purely experimental and tentative, but the big thing that made it all blossom – all that such as I had been preaching, and other people like me, and such as these people I've just mentioned had been timidly and tentatively trying out – was when the price of land and timber went up under the impact of the pulp development, when it became economically possible and profitable to hold land for successive crops of timber.

MAUNDER: Wasn't it the research of Dr. Herty in that regard that triggered all that? Or was that only incidental?

ELDREDGE: It was more or less incidental with him. You know, Dr. Herty was a chemist, and forestry to him was an interesting subject, but he main thing was to find [end of tape].

ELDREDGE: Two things that happened to come pretty close together are responsible for the terrific growth and rapid development of interest in the South as a source of paper. One of them was Dr. Herty's experiments and his broadcasting as he did with the utmost energy of his enthusiasm for the fact that good kraft paper could be made out of southern pine. The other was the fact that at the very time when his experiments had

been done and he was broadcasting them to the world we had completed enough of the forestry inventory of the South, the first survey, to publish the results, and the results were astounding. No part of the country, not even the South – certainly not the South and certainly not the Forest Service – had any idea of the amount of timber that we had here and how fast it was growing, how universally it was distributed, and what size it was in. When these two things came out to the interest of the paper people all over the eastern part of the country, plus the fact that they were disappointed, plus the fact that there was no other source for large expansion, why that thing struck the South just like a whirlwind.

MAUNDER: The disappointment in Canada was one over the rate of growth or the tax or what?

ELDREDGE: It was partly that and partly the fact that some years before there had been an overdevelopment of the paper industry in Canada and it had left them by no means bankrupt but with a sour taste in their mouths, and Canada, as I recall it now, was not at all desirous of having the actual papermaking industry in the United States draw nothing but pulpwood out of Canada. People who wanted to expand would look somewhere else than Canada if they thought there was anything, and at that time out came these terrifically significant figures from the South, right there in their midst.

MAUNDER: Were these figures a part of a national survey of forest resources?

ELDREDGE: They were part of what we call the Forest Service Survey.

MAUNDER: What year was that, Cap?

ELDREDGE: I was in charge of it. It started in the South in ’32 and it never will end; it’s recurring, they keep doing it. The figures started to come out in ’34, ’35, ’36, ‘37 and so on.

MAUNDER: And that, along with Herty’s experiments….

ELDREDGE: They coincided. Herty said it could be done and here were the figures to show we had the resources, tremendous quantities of it. It has proved itself out, as you know from your knowledge of statistics, something like eighty-seven or eighty-eight percent of all kraft paper made in this country is made in the South, and the end isn’t in sight, that is, we aren’t saturated as yet.

MAUNDER: In your book, THE FOUR FORESTS, you say that concern over the diminution

of the forest resource here began to grow in the 1920s as lumbering hit its peak and passed it. You've mentioned several people who were the spokesmen for this concern – some of them foresters and some of them industry people, such as Henry Hardtner and others in industry. What was the role that these people played in sounding the clarion call to conservation and what have you, and how did they get their word across to the public as a whole? How was it organized?

ELDREDGE: I may be wrong or misinformed, but I don't recall that any of these chaps who had a leading part in this resurgence, this realization of the fact that timber was disappearing and something had to be done about it, I don't think any of those people took to the press or did anything more besides practicing something right away on their own lands, which of course was the greatest thing they could have done. They actually put into effect some measures to perpetuate their timber. Besides that, about all they did was to attend meetings and make speeches, read papers and….

MAUNDER: But they did organize themselves into some groups, didn't they?

ELDREDGE: Yes. Each state has a forestry association and, as a rule, those people are always a part of those meetings.

MAUNDER: And these associations to a certain extent (I get this from an interview with Hux Coulter, for example) did begin to make their weight felt by their activities with the state legislatures, and out of this activity there began to emerge laws which favored the wiser management of forested land, and there began to emerge, too, a greater concern for such things as fire and things as that kind although that hasn't developed as fast in the South as it seems to have in the West.

ELDREDGE: Well, there are greater obstacles to overcome – both natural and human. Yes, all of those things plus a stepped-up and intensified educational effort from the Forest Service in Washington, from a number of state forest services and from these forestry associations made up of laymen and landowners in many cases. The American Forestry Association back in the late thirties sent people all over the South with moving picture vans and exhibits and went all through the backwoods. You've heard and read about that effort. At the time it didn't look like it did anything but it did. Then there was an effort made, prompted by the Forest Service and state foresters, to get it into the schools, and school textbooks were written. I know they were in Georgia and Louisiana

and I'm quite sure they were in all of the states. They were written by foresters in the Forest Service and sometimes by men in the state forest services. All of us had a hand in it to some extent. Then this business of constant contact by foresters all over with rural people, people right in the woods with them, going to Sunday schools and popping in and giving a talk in a school room, and that kind of thing. Then as time went by they employed more and more people to do nothing else but that.

MAUNDER: And now we're reaping the harvest of all that cultivation and education work.

ELDREDGE: All of which would have been worth only ten cents on the dollar if the economic climate hadn't cleared up and timberland and timber itself hadn't become valuable. If the practice of forestry hadn't become profitable, the harvest we would have reaped would have been a very small one.

MAUNDER: One of the most important things that led to this rise in value of land down here was the rediscovery of the resource which you made as the result of your survey of the land and its resources in the Forest Service, right?

ELDREDGE: That did figure in it, yes. That's part of it.

MAUNDER: After all, the value of the land wouldn't have been recognized if it hadn't been undergirded by these facts.

ELDREDGE: I think I know a fairer way to say it. This land would not have become so valuable if there had not been so many bidders for it.

MAUNDER: That's what I'm getting at.

ELDREDGE: And there wouldn't have been so many bidders for it unless we had the pulp industry, and we wouldn't have had the pulp industry if Dr. Herty hadn't sold them on the idea that it would make paper, and the survey sold them on the idea that the wood was here to do it with.

MAUNDER: All right. Now what I'm getting back to is this: what were the forces which supported this work that was done by the Forest Service in making this survey and Dr. Herty in doing his research? In other words, what pushed these things into being?

ELDREDGE: Two different things.

MAUNDER: That's right. Was it the depression itself?

ELDREDGE: No. In the first place, what pushed the Forest Service and the Forest Survey into

doing this business of inventory was their dedicated belief that it was essential for the future of this country. What prompted Dr. Herty into it was a chemist's desire to publicize something that could be done that had never been done before. Herty is a southerner. I've heard many of his speeches and I know he always brings this in, but it's a side issue. His big thing is: You can make paper out of this stuff cheaper than you can make it up North, or in the West or Canada or anywhere else, and if you do it's going to be a great thing for the South.

MAUNDER: In other words, part of the thing that made Herty run was his deep regional affection. In other words, he was a devoted southerner who was seeking to fine through his work some solution…

ELDREDGE: Exactly.

MAUNDER: This was a factor which you feel was very strong?

ELDREDGE: I know it. I've talked with him so many times in conversations like this.

MAUNDER: All right. Now, what I detect in both cases is that the high octane fuel that made both Herty and the Forest Service run was idealism really, wasn't it? It was a desire to do something for the country?

ELDREDGE: For the people. Everybody in the South who was a thinking man, regardless of his smoking tastes, knew what the trouble was in the South, and any way to cure that thing was uppermost in every southern man's mind – not just Forest Service, not just Herty as a chemist, but bankers, lumbermen, everybody. The man way down on the bottom, the one-horse farmer, the turpentine chipper, the flathead in the logging woods didn't think of those things. All he thought of was the misery of where he was, but the thinking people had that pretty well analyzed. They knew they were behind the rest of the country, and when you came right down to it the reason was that we were a colony. We shipped all of our product out to be processed somewhere else and all we got out of it was stumpage and loading it on cars. Take the same resource and make it here, whether it be oil (as we refine it in Baton Rouge) or sulfur or chemicals of any kind or wood, if we could turn it into the finished product here we'd get everything except the return on capital from the North, but more and more as time has gone we've been able to capitalize on that also in the South. There are a lot of people in the South, just as there are a lot of people in New England and the Lake States, who think regionally.

MAUNDER: And this is a virtue in some and a drawback in others.

ELDREDGE: Well, it can be provincial, but it's the first step in getting anywhere, to realize what state you're in and to have the will and desire to get out of it.

MAUNDER: Tell me, Cap, how did the tax structure in the South affect this whole history of forest land use?

ELDREDGE: For many, many years private industry in the woods resisted all the logic of the proselyters from the Forest Service of from forestry by saying, "We can't afford to do these things because our taxes are too high." They don't say that anymore. That's disappeared. That was because the margin in those days….When you sell lumber for thirteen dollars a thousand, anything was too high. You had to pay labor a dollar and a half a day, and everything was on a basis that was so fragile that taxes could have been, and in some cases were, a deterrent, but they found out that isn't so any longer. What's happened to the tax structure? Taxes have gone up, of course, everywhere but when you've got money to pay taxes, money in your bank and you firm and money in your own pocket at home and money in the laborer's pocket down here, why taxes become a pretty small thing. It's only when you don't have the money or when the expenditure of that money cripples you otherwise so that you can't expand and buy new machinery or something of that kind….

MAUNDER: In other words, while taxes have gone up since those bad old days, they have not gone up in proportion to the inability to pay?

ELDREDGE: I think that's true. When it reaches the point where you can't pay the taxes without punishing your business or yourself or depriving your children of education or something of that kind, then you run into hard times again – a sorry situation, as you might say.

MAUNDER: Do you feel that we're on the verge of emerging into a new period of that kind? You hear an awful lot of crying about taxes.

ELDREDGE: No, people have been crying about taxes ever since Adam, and they never will quit crying about them. Everyman doesn't want to pay taxes. The only time he's willing to pay taxes, and not all of them are then willing, is when we have a national emergency and they feel they're contributing directly to defense or something. But they think in all kinds of terms about our throwing away billions for foreign aid, for fancy

things we don't need, and this, that and the other thing. When it comes right down to it, so far as forestry is concerned, taxes haven't deterred it a bit.

MAUNDER: Even if you consider the fact that local government, state government, did land on the timberland owner very hard back at the time of the cut-out-and-get-out period which only accelerated his cutting?

ELDREDGE: The situation, I think, has changed. That was due, as you might easily understand, to two things: first, the ruthlessness of the operator who cut the timber. He went into a body of timber that was worth – whatever it was worth as a tax base it was worth a good deal to the county, and he cut that down to bare land and then it was worth nothing to the county and the country was deprived of it – of the tax and of the timber – and until something else happened to the land they were forever deprived of it. So they said, not unreasonably, "Now, if these people are going to lead us into that we've got to tax them high as hell while they're cutting it. We'll get all we can to fill our courthouses and our highways and our schools while the timber is standing." Immediately the lumbermen, the landowner, said, "That being the case, we'd better cut it clean as the devil and take every nickel out of it and turn the land back tot he state and let the bastards suffer."

MAUNDER: Was there anything that you see could have been done to change the situation, or were we riding a wave of history from which nothing would have changed us?

ELDREDGE: As I've thought of it, perhaps not too wisely, I don't know of anything that could have been done because of the fact that people were not conditioned to do it. The people who made the taxes in rural counties were very common people. A college man was a rarity indeed. They were farmers from here, there and the other place. They couldn't think big. They had no faith in forestry; they didn't know how to spell the word. It meant nothing to them. If it meant nothing to the expert who cut the timber, how could it mean anything to them. So forestry didn't enter the picture, and if it had, if we had been able to reach their ears and even convince them, that is, the tax-levying group, the lumberman who came here from Chicago wasn't raised in the local county, he wasn't going to lose any schools for his children nor any roads nor any courthouses nor anything. His stockholders in the North (and they were all in the North) were insistent on dividends, a quick return on their money. What can forestry do for him? I

can't think of a bloody thing it can do for him. He was cutting trees down and it would take at least fifty years to get another crop of that size.

MAUNDER: And he wasn't concerned at that time about the investment in plant and machinery, was he?

ELDREDGE: Oh, no. He wrote that off in the first five or six years. The whole industry at that time was based on short life.

MAUNDER: And, of course, it was a gerry-built kind of equipment, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: They built the sorriest kind of towns, the sorriest kind of railroad tracks, the sorriest kind of everything because it was only meant to last – like the definition of a proper bridge to be built by military engineers, "The bridge was to fall down as the last train passed over it."

MAUNDER: Let's go on, Cap, to the World War I period. Can you quickly summarize the period from which we left off in your story down in Florida up to World War I, in which you served as a captain in the forestry division overseas? What happened in that span of time between where we left off, when you met your wife and got married?

ELDREDGE: Nothing spectacular. It was just a job. I haven't counted the years but I think it was eight years. We constantly improved the forests, built roads. I think we put up the first steel fire tower east of the Mississippi. We put up telephone lines, improved our fire protection, carried on a very thriving business in naval stores operation leases, improved our technique to some extent. I built up my family and kept a pack of sixteen fox hounds which I hunted during the wintertime.

MAUNDER: Has this been one of your favorite hobbies all through the years?

ELDREDGE: Not all through. That was one of the few times when I could do it. You know, a forest supervisor in the United States is the only man who can live like a king. That's about what went on, meanwhile attending meetings of one kind or another which got to be bigger and bigger as time went on as forestry got to be talked about more.

MAUNDER: Had the Florida Forestry Association sprung into being yet?

ELDREDGE: Not up until the time of World War I. It came in right shortly afterward. You've probably go that date in your interview with Coulter, but I should say it was about 1922 or '23 or '24.

MAUNDER: In other words, in this period of time before the war, you were plowing a hard,

straight furrow in a field had never been plowed before?

ELDREDGE: Yes, and a very difficult one in that particular forest. It undoubtedly was the poorest chance to practice good forestry of any forest I've ever been on.

MAUNDER: Tell me a little something about the attitude of the people toward fire in the woods in those days.

ELDREDGE: In those days, and not too vastly different now although there's been a great improvement, fire was looked on as an aid to living. Turpentine men burned over the woods so that they were open and their turpentine hands wouldn't be strangled in the woods, bitten by rattle snakes and so on. The cattleman burned the woods because it was necessary to fatten his cattle early in the spring. The farmer burned the woods because the turpentine men and the cattlemen were going to burn and it would burn him up too if he didn't burn first. None of these fires that I'm talking about were the terribly disastrous fires that we hear of and see here in the West. They were ground fires because they had been going on ever since the Indian days, actually. I'm talking now about the lower South, the longleaf slash pine country. There was never wholesale destruction of standing timber unless they were very young – you know, not any higher than this door here and then it might wipe them out. But everybody believed in it. It prevailed, as I said, as a tool in their business among cattlemen, turpentine men, and farmers. It was also used by hunters in the woods and was used always as a fine way of venting spite against anything, anybody, or against the world in general. The big thing about it was that nobody cared. The people in the city didn't care, the people in the small towns didn't care. They were accustomed to having the air full of smoke at certain times of the year and running along on the trains and seeing mile after mile of fire along both sides. The railroads didn't care; they burned up more country. It's a remarkable difference that's beginning to disappear now what a forest country in the South looks like three miles from the railroad than from the railroad train because of the continual burning that came from locomotive sparks that kept it just burned out on both sides and no reproduction could ever get a start in it. Politicians not only didn't care but pooh-poohed it. Old man Talmadge, the father of Governor Talmadge of recent years, was commissioner of agriculture in Georgia and while landowners all over the state, and associations and everybody else were doing everything in the world they could do to cut

down on wild woods fires that old man (he got out a weekly paper from his department) advocated it. He said, "Pay no attention to these wildhead things. It's necessary to burn to keep down the bollweevil," and so on.

MAUNDER: Of course, he was a great person to cultivate the cracker mentality anyway, wasn't he? That's where he got his support?

ELDREDGE: Yes. As I say, the politicians didn't even care. The judges didn't in the courts.

MAUNDER: Of course, you never had down here any really dramatic disastrous forest fires in which whole towns were wiped out and hundreds of people lost their lives.

ELDREDGE: No.

MAUNDER: This was the thing, I think that dramatized the need for fire control in other areas in the country.

ELDREDGE: You see, our woods don't burn that way, that is, they hadn't in the past and they can't in the future, they can't now. When you get 40 or 50 thousand acres, or in the case of Bogalusa over here 150,000 acres of planted forest as dense as it can be, young and tender, that could make a fire that would burn people up, homes up, schools and cattle and everything else. The reason we didn't have those fires in the old days was because we had annual burning and there wasn't any fuel on the ground to make heavy fires. The trees that were there had grown up through fire and were accustomed to it. Their limbs were way high above the ground. It was rare to see a crown fire. But when they got into second growth all that's changed; it can burn. Now we're more dependent than ever on getting public acceptance of the need for fire protection.

MAUNDER: There hasn't been here in the South the same development of cooperative efforts to fight and control forest fires that there has been in the West, for example, has there? You don't have here state forest fire associations or county forest protective agencies made up of private owners and….?

ELDREDGE: No. I don't think we need them the way it's organized. Everybody pays in so much an acre for his fire protection and the federal government contributes so many cents an acre for fire protection and the state contributes and it makes up a fund and the state undertakes fire protection.

MAUNDER: This all stems from the legislation of the twenties, the Clarke-McNary and…

ELDREDGE: Yes, it started about that time. The state maintains a detection system, the

suppression system and, by and large, the education against fire. The companies, however, contribute in addition to the money they've put in in times of tough situations; then they throw additional men and equipment into it. We're subject to periodic droughts in the South – not the whole South at one time but Georgia and Florida maybe one time and Alabama and Mississippi another time and so on – and when they come I don't believe the whole Army of the United States could keep down disastrous fires. It's something that we have to face. I've seen it.

MAUNDER: I know. I've flown over Florida and Georgia in a particularly bad fire year and just looked down from the plane and been absolutely amazed by the number of fire sores, little red spots burning through the smoke, a hot box everywhere – not big fires any of them but lots of little fires.

ELDREDGE: I've seen fires that had a twenty-mile front and just virtually destroyed every tree in it. They had to be replanted. That's second growth.

MAUNDER: Do you think there's a real substantial change in the public attitude now?

ELDREDGE: Yes, there is but it's by no means a complete conversion, that is to say, there are still sinners among us and lots of them. Even after we have cured all the honest woods-burners, people who burn from conviction, after all of them have been converted or died, then we're going to have the scoundrels, the spite venters, the sorry people who are against the world, and the thoughtless teenagers and kids. We'll always have careless people, of course. And our climate is such, our timber is such, our land cover is such that we are prone to have more fires than in the mountains with the damp nights and fog and high humidity at times and so forth. When we have drought our woods burn just like timber. The very bushes that grow in the woods in the lower South, palmetto and gallberry, burn as though they'd been doused in kerosene in dry weather.

MAUNDER: Let's take up the story of World War I now, Cap. You were a participant in the armed forces in that war and went over with Colonel Greeley and worked in France. Tell us something about that experience that you had over there and what significance you think it has as far as our own forestry is concerned.

ELDREDGE: Well, it was forestry, too – of a slightly different nature but still forestry. I went over with the Tenth Engineers and our battalion, the First Battalion, was scattered around through the Landes. That's that big gopher mandate forest in southwest France,

south of Bordeaux. There were some six companies down there and they were added to afterwards until they became a very large group of people. We put up mills, mostly small mills, and some of those we increased in size, leasing timber or buying timber rights through the French from local holders. That's heavily timbered country. We cut it and made it into cross-ties and stuff and none of it ever stayed in the yards more than a few days and was shipped right to the front or to other places. It was a day and night operation, seven days a week. We never shut down, everything was steamed up to the bursting point, the saws always speeded up to where they'd spit teeth every now and then and throw a log all the way through the mill. In mills that were designed to cut 3000 feet we cut as much as 20,000 feet. We logged with every different kind of logging you can think of. I think I had the oddest one in the whole bunch in my company. We had a river that ran through the timber and a lake at the end of the river, and after sizing the situation up and talking it over with everybody else above me, we decided to build the mill on the lake, and cut and drive the timber down the river, tow it across the lake and draw it into the mill and there's where it hit the railroad. There wasn't any railroad on the other side. So it was either that or building a very expensive railroad and the French didn't have the steel to build it with. I went over all the figures before we even drove a peg as to the stage of that river. I went back thirty years and with the aid of French people, of course, French officials, we established that that river level never got below a certain point in this last thirty years. They'd kept accurate records on it. Well, another thing we did was to cut timber and put it into the river to see if it would float. It floated in good shape. So we went to work cutting. We started cutting before we finished the mill so that we accumulated a number of very skid piles of logs. One evening one of my sergeants came in and his face was two feet long. He said, "Captain, I've got a terrible thing to tell you." He said, "One of those skid piles of ours broke loose and rolled into the river and they all sank." My God, you can imagine that!

MAUNDER: A river full of deadheads.

ELDREDGE: Well, we wouldn't have been able to log off the mill. We had eight to ten miles of water to be covered to get that stuff from the river bank to the mill and it wouldn't float. Mind you, the first stuff we put in there floated – safe timber – but something had

happened to it. I don't know what. Well, we had a pow-wow over that and decided to cut all our timber from then on and leave the tops on – cut a tree down, in other words, but didn't trim it, left the tops on the such the sap out of the tree – and, by George, that worked! And we let those few piles that we'd accumulated before stay there until they'd dried out enough. But that worked. Nobody had every logged in that way before in France. We should have known that the Frenchmen would have done something like that if they hadn't floated. But that finally worked and we got our stuff through – except the top logs. They'd sink. So along towards the last after the Armistice we had a great river cleaning. We put 300 men on that river, I guess, and we cleaned all those little tops out. They weren't but three meters long, nine feet. And we dried them out, skinned the bark off of them so they'd dry out, and then had a big drive and drove those things out. W had people driving that river that had come from Idaho up there on the Clearwater; my driving boss was one of those boys. And we had a bunch from Minnesota that had driven, and we soon developed a regular driving crew. But then, to top all the misery off, we had a drought that year and the river fell below driving possibility for the first time in thirty years, so we had to dynamite the bottom of the river in order to make trenches through this underlying rock (a kind of iron stone kind of rock, hard pan – it was rock all right). So we did that and then about the time we got through that the French caught on to what we were doing, the French officials, and they came in there and I thought for a while they were going to put us all in front of a wall and turn their guns on us because they said we had taken the bottom out of the river. That Landes region is heavy sand thrown up there by the sea and it's almost bottomless, and over the years this great hard pan, maybe that thick, had formed there and the river sank down but we got the logs out before it did. I don't know what the boys did after we left France, but there were a lot of things we were glad to get out of France on account of and that was one of them.

MAUNDER: What was this group – a battalion?

ELDREDGE: I don't know what you'd call it, but we finally ended up with a division with 2,200 men in it.

MAUNDER: I guess it was the largest single division in the AEF, according to what I've heard. How was this bunch recruited?

ELDREDGE: To start with the Tenth Engineers, which was the first regiment to go over, was entirely volunteers recruited mainly by Forest Service and industry people all over the United States. They came from every state in the union, and from Puerto Rico, Canada, and Alaska. These were lumbermen of all types and kinds – people who worked in the South, in the skidding woods, in big wheel logging , and every kind of way that you can think of. It was the richest material anybody ever had. No engineer group ever gathered so many skilled men as that Tenth Engineers, and they were volunteers – people who wanted to go. And they were tough boys. You don't get to be a lumberman without getting tough. You're not an eighteen-year old mama's boy. And they weren't hard to handle; they were easy to discipline and did their job and were a damn good outfit all the way around. Oh, we had some stinkers in it that went up for some record every payday but they were just alcoholics, you know – people used to having barroom fights and so on – but there weren't many – maybe one per cent, five men out of a company. At any rate, the next outfit that came over was the Twentieth, and then the Twentieth kept adding more and more men, and they were draftees. They had a good, heavy sprinkling of good lumbermen, but they didn't have anything like the one hundred percent or eighty or ninety percent – and they had a lot of people that gave trouble because they were thrown in there against their will. You know how the Army does things; they look through the cards and say, "Put this man in the Twentieth; put this man in the Fifteenth." For instance, before we left the States when we were organizing, I had a bunch of men who came in rated as cooks. Of course, they were very essential. The first thing in the world you start is the kitchen. So I started them off. Well, sure enough, most of them were cooks but there were three head cooks – a cook corporal. I think we paid them $40.00 a month and there was one for each shift. One of these fellows, a nice looking fellow and he wasn't any kid – came around and he said, "Captain, I don't want to cook." "Well," I said, "You're rated as a cook. You've got a rating here as a cook. You have to cook; you can't get out of it just because you don't like it." "But," he said, "I've never cooked in my life. I'm a married man and I never even cooked a meal at my own house." I could hardly believe but I went into it thoroughly and, sure enough, he'd been rated as a cook just because they needed a cook at some recruiting somewhere in Minnesota or Arizona or someplace. The recruiting

officer had just written down "cook" because they needed a cook. Well, that kind of thing went on, too – misplacing and mislabeling people.

MAUNDER: I would like to state a theory that I have about all this experience of the war and see if you find any validity in it. I wonder sometimes whether this experience of drawing together lumberjacks, lumbermen, Forest Service men, and other foresters and mixing them all up together, taking the over to Europe and engaging them all in a big united effort of working together, and then bringing them home and disbanding them, discharging them, sending them back to their separate ways of life didn't have a profound effect upon the course of forestry and forest land management, especially in the industry, after World War I?

ELDREDGE: It easily could have.

MAUNDER: I think it could have. Now, I may be wrong but this is an opinion, a theory that I've had for quite some time. Up until World War I there was no real significant interest in forestry on the part of industry, was there? But there was after World War I. It began to develop in the twenties and thirties for the first time. Nothing really tremendous, but it began.

ELDREDGE: You could be right. It could have been one of the many things that had this stimulating effect. There had to be other things, but when those other things developed then these men undoubtedly could appear, and by that time a good many of them had reached positions of some responsibility. Because these were all young men, you know; hardly any of them were over thirty. I think our average age was around twenty-four.

MAUNDER: I just wanted to throw that in to see what you'd have to say. What other effects did World War I have on the course of forestry in this country, if any?

ELDREDGE: I think it had several. Now, I wasn't in the States during the war so I can't speak from personal experience, but from what I've heard and from what I've figured out we commenced to get the stimulus there for one reason because we had cut tremendously during that period, and we had found out during that period that there was a scarcity of this or that or the other kind of timber here there, or the other place – in the South particularly. That terrific draft that we made on the resource during that period and the concern that people had in the industry, in the army and in government for these

supplies, the tremendous expense that they had to go through to get wood for all kinds of things – ships, airplanes and what not – all of that laid on emphasis on timber supply, turned people's eyes toward it – the people that owned it and the people that used it – and they commenced to get very much concerned about what the future of all this was. Is our industry going to die out or is there someplace in here where we can prolong it a little while longer. Then there was another thing. A whole generation of lumbermen retired or died out about that time, and their sons came in.

MAUNDER: And you got a different outlook.

ELDREDGE: Not only a different outlook, but the necessity of prolonging that industry if they expected to make a living out of it. Father had no trouble. The horizon was distant and between it and him there was a load of timber, but when son got to it that timber was depleted, if not entirely in large measure. They could measure what was left in years – five, ten years. Many times I've known this company or that company to say, "We've got five years cut ahead." When that acme and son was along – he might not even have been at the top but he was in the business – it was just a dreadful thing to contemplate. "Here we have 100,000 acres and just five years' cut left. What are we going to do?" He wasn't the kind of man to say, "Oh, well, we'll turn it into government bonds and buy a yacht." He wanted to be in business, and all that good will, all that market, all that machinery for disposing of the product.

MAUNDER: Of course, he had had a different education than his father had.

ELDREDGE: He'd been subjected to a lot of the stuff that passed off the old man like water off a duck's back.

MAUNDER: He was a less hard-boiled character in many ways. He was more sensitive to and responsive to his responsibilities to his community.

ELDREDGE: Well, I don't know whether that came into it, but many of the second generation were college men, and not many of the old generation were. And you can't be a college man and grow up without thinking of the future of your business. Well, that's pure conjecture on my part.

MAUNDER: How did World War II influence the situation in contradiction to the way World War I had? Was there a difference between the two wars as far as their effect on forestry and forest industries?

ELDREDGE: I think World War I, as we just said, started many people in the industry to thinking, and people who are dependent on the industry for supplies. World War II whipped it into a frenzy; it brought it back out so that there wasn't any further question about it.

MAUNDER: Here in the South World War II brought into being a lot of little sawmills, didn't it?

ELDREDGE: Well, they were here before that.

MAUNDER: But they had died out, and had a resurgence with the war.

ELDREDGE: That could be. The little mill rises and falls with the market. As the saying goes down here, "When the price gets down to a certain level they haul the mill in the back yard and the old man goes running for the sheriff or teaching in the grammar school." When the price goes up, he quits teaching and goes back to sawmilling again.

MAUNDER: And this has been true for a long time?

ELDREDGE: Yes. It's been up and down with the small mills. The big mills have bought tremendous quantities of land and sewed up certain territories, but not everywhere. When they were sawing it all up in Mississippi, Georgia was entirely or almost entirely – there probably weren't more than three or four big mills in all of Georgia – but maybe 1,000 or 15,000 little ones.

MAUNDER: What would you have to say about the general effect of this concentration of control of forest lands in the hands of fewer and fewer companies?

ELDREDGE: I think that so far as the practice of forestry is concerned, that concentration of large ownerships in well-financed hands made it possible to practice forestry. It still is difficult to show how a man with forty acres can practice forestry, or even a man with 200 acres of timberland if he has no other income. It's very difficult to show in realistic figures how he can practice forestry according to the rules of forestry. But large ownerships in going concerns that are able to use wood every day and make a profit every day can practice forestry and only can they do it with continuous ownership. Forestry isn't a thing that can be practiced on small acres tentatively held by transient owners. It just isn't done in this country; the time isn't ready for it. Therefore I feel that the greatest thing that has happened to forestry in the South, the thing that makes forestry bloom, is to assemble many, many small tentatively held ownerships into larger

ownerships held by going concerns who can finance them. The reason that forestry has advanced as rapidly as it has, and it has been marvelously rapid, is because large ownerships can afford to employ skilled technicians and can afford to pay the taxes and wait for the returns.

MAUNDER: Are there any other aspects of this thing? Are there any bad features to this?

ELDREDGE: I confess I don't see any. Take it from the tax angle. It has just been the making of one rural county after another all over the South from Virginia to Texas, that thing of being able to collect taxes promptly, continuously and always.

MAUNDER: Reliably. I suppose the big problem in the past has been just collecting it from individuals who can't afford to pay the taxes, and many of them delay in paying taxes.

ELDREDGE: Yes. Now schools can be operated for nine months instead of five months; merchants can carry better stocks and more of it; everything that depended entirely on income in affected by this business of being able to make money out of growing timber.

MAUNDER: This then has a good effect on the whole economy?

ELDREDGE: I can't think of any bad things. In the vast majority of cases the man who sells his land to a large operating corporation is then enabled to work in the field in which that operation employs men. In other words, if he sells to a pulp company he isn't driven out and has to go to town, or he isn't required to go into some odd section of the world. He can stay right there, have subsistence farming (in other words, raise a part of his product), cut pulpwood or have pulpwood cut and be a contractor and ship it. He makes more money in addition to the fact that he's got some place for his children to go, some place for his children after they've left school to find an operation. We were cursed (there's no other name for it) in the South fifty years ago by the hundreds of thousands of small ownerships, both in farming and in timber. The Department of Agriculture probably wouldn't say this in so many words because they're too tender, too sensitive to the thought involved, but farming isn't profitable on a small scale; farming has to be done on a scale large enough to afford the use of machinery, fertilizers on a large scale. The average farm in certain states in the South used to be as little as forty acres. Now forty acres wouldn't support a family in anything but poverty – I mean forty acres of thin light soil such as we have in our timber country. I'm not

speaking of the Delta or certain truck farming sections. I don't know of anything that's bad about it.

MAUNDER: No dangers of overpowerful control in politics or anything else?

ELDREDGE: No, for this reason: The people who elect our congressmen, both federal and state, are just voters. They're not landowners. They've still got control of who they send out to make their laws, very much so, and they can do it whether they're working for a pulp company or working on their farm or in a store. It's vote for vote, the people that own the land. The directors have only one vote apiece if they live in the state. The president has one vote and when you get below that you get into individuals again who are simply Georgians and vote as they damn please. I don't see any danger there.

MAUNDER: A great potential for higher efficiency and the raising of the standard of living of everyone in the community by this trend and its continuance, is that right?

ELDREDGE: The people in any state in the South, and I think it holds for the nation, can punish a corporation beyond belief. I've seen it done. That corporation has got to have good public relations and that means treating everybody fairly.

MAUNDER: Because as the people get better educated they become more sensitive to their rights?

ELDREDGE: It isn't like it is in the movies – a great old timber baron who rides roughshod over everything.

MAUNDER: To what extent are the efforts to get the small woodlot owner to practice better standards of forestry management succeeding or failing?

ELDREDGE: The current opinion among forestry people who are working on that, and industry people, too, is that it is succeeding, but it's slow – partly because there are so many and because they are so transient. The very instability of land ownership is one of the greatest deterrents to get a small man – a man with 40 acres, 80 acres, 100 acres, or even 200 acres – to practice forestry. He may sell out tomorrow; he may be forced by a bank loan; he may decide to move to town and work in a factory. There's nothing stable about it. His children don't want to stay there. Nobody who's been through a high school is going back to a forty-acre farm, never – not if he's gone through high school.

MAUNDER: To what extent are the small privately owned woodlots supplying the total cut of

pulpwood today?

ELDREDGE: I know what it was a few years ago but I don't know exactly what it is today. A few years ago they supplied seventy-five percent.

MAUNDER: In other words, the big companies are depending rather heavily on this source?

ELDREDGE: Yes, absolutely.

MAUNDER: And this is saving their own?

ELDREDGE: No, because they don't own over twenty percent of the land as it is. A few years back it could be said that they were saving their own for the simple reason that they had to build up what we foresters call "growing stock." They bought land that had been cut over, bare, and they had to plant it in many cases, and in all cases they had to build up timber growth. Well, you can't do that and cut it, too.

MAUNDER: And then, too, some rather bad fire years have hit some of them pretty hard, haven't they?

ELDREDGE: I wouldn't hesitate to say that at least seventy-five per cent of all the wood cut in the South comes from non-company land. You probably can find an individual company that is doing better than that. Bogalusa were one of the earliest pioneers in forestry and they've built up a beautiful place – some 450,000, maybe 500,000, of which probably 180,000 is planted and has now reached usable size.

MAUNDER: Yes, I've seen some of it. Frank Heyward showed me around over there.

ELDREDGE: Well, they're certainly in a position to cut more than twenty-five per cent of their total needs, and there may be a few others, but on the whole some of them take as much as eighty per cent of their cut outside because the lands they've bought and are managing is not over ten or fifteen per cent of the territory they draw from.

MAUNDER: This heavy reliance on non-company owned woodland, is this having any tendency to put an undue strain upon the resources of these woodlands?

ELDREDGE: The pulp companies without exception are very conscious of the fact that they will always be dependent on this outside supply, and as a consequence, this thing that Henry Malsberger heads up – the Southern Pulpwood Conservation Association – is working with pulp mills and with their money, as a matter of fact, to build up in addition to the state and the federal government better forest practices on land.

MAUNDER: That is quite a tremendous operation, that Southern Pulpwood Conservation

Association.

ELDREDGE: And it's being successful.

MAUNDER: It is?

ELDREDGE: Yes.

MAUNDER: Theirs is an educational effort, isn't it, directed principally toward the small woodlot owner?

ELDREDGE: That's right, but there's a world of distance still to go in that. It's hard to realize how much land and timber is owned by small owners – from forty acres up to a thousand acres.

MAUNDER: Cap, you have witnessed, and in some cases had a hand in the making, of several forest surveys, and you have heard a great deal, I'm sure, of the clamor of interpretation which has gone on around these surveys once they were published. You've already said some things about their importance in our forest history. To what extent, if any, have these surveys been used, do you feel, for professional or political purposes?

ELDREDGE: For professional purposes? That isn't very clear to me? Part of it I could answer by itself. It's been used and it's being used more and more to a tremendous extent. You see, I've been in consulting work since I retired from the Service about fifteen years ago, and I've had contact with some of the larger lumber companies and a great many of the big pulp companies, and I know to what extent they depend for many of their policy decisions of the findings of the Survey. They look on it as manna from heaven.

MAUNDER: When I asked you what political purposes they may have served, I was thinking back more to the earlier days and the earlier surveys when the surveys may have been used to sustain the concept of a timber famine theory.

ELDREDGE: They were really not Surveys.

MAUNDER: And they were political in their implications to a certain extent, weren't they?

ELDREDGE: Yes. I wouldn't say entirely made for that purpose, but they were made to confirm an opinion that was generally prevalent, namely, that we were in hard case as regards to future of our timber resource, and the findings of those early Surveys, which are not to be compared to the actual inventories that we've taken in more recent years where you count the trees, thy were used because they findings were so obviously

pointed toward future difficulties so they were used by the Forest Service, we'll say, for educational purposes. But these latter ones are not.

MAUNDER: The latter ones are more scientific?

ELDREDGE: Not only that, but they don't show what the earlier Surveys did. Take our Surveys here in the South. We aren't cutting the full growth yet. The earlier Surveys said that we were cutting four times the growth. They weren't Surveys. I mean to say they weren't actual inventories. Nobody counted any trees.

MAUNDER: Now you're not counting the growth?

ELDREDGE: Now you count the trees, reduce them to volume. You bore into them and get their rate of growth. You calculate from statistics or actual going out and getting it, the actual amount of drain, that is, the amount cut. You balance growth against drain. That shows where you stand.

MAUNDER: How do you account for the difference in the quality of a growing new product and the depletion of an old growth? There's some difference there, isn't there? That's quality, isn't it? And then there's some difference in the species that creeps in.

ELDREDGE: Yes, there's a very interesting difference. The old growth took hundreds of years to reach its size and condition, tremendously strong, very slow growth, dense, and very, very valuable although in its day when it was cut it didn't bring anything like it does now. The timber that's cut now is faster growing, smaller in size, less suitable for a number of things, but is worth three times as much, brings in three times as many dollars for a thousand feet.

MAUNDER: A wider diversity of use, too, isn't there?

ELDREDGE: Wider diversity of use because of the very broad prevalence of wood preserving. You could take a pole or piece of timber that is second growth that couldn't have been sold forty or fifty years ago and creosote it and it'll last forever.

MAUNDER: Then there has been some engineering…

ELDREDGE: Then, too, for a great many structural uses steel has taken the place of wood, and masonry, concrete blocks, so that for many of the purposes that this second-growth timber is not suitable they've got another product that's almost as cheap or is as cheap in many places. Markets have an odd way over a course of years of adjusting themselves. Now we've got more timber than we've ever had probably in acres; we've

got more volume but a smaller size and a different quality. Yet to the landowner it's worth twice, or three times or even five times as much, and to the user it goes into those products for which it's entirely suitable. The uses for which it is not suitable any more but used to be other products have taken their place.

MAUNDER: There doesn't seem to by any problem at all as far as the pulp and paper industry is concerned. There's not there the threat, it seems to me, from substitute products that there is in the lumber field. Most of the threat lies to lumber.

ELDREDGE: That's right. That's why I think this last peep at the situation what do they call that, TIMBER something REVIEW?

MAUNDER: TIMBER RESOURCES REVIEW.

ELDREDGE: You remember they made a forecast as to what would be happening by 1970, and they said that the demand for paper and paper products would increase by something like twenty-five per cent and that the production of pulpwood and so forth could be met (I'm talking about the South now) and they said that lumber production would be off, or at least wouldn't increase any in the next twenty years from the time they wrote it. It would stay static.

MAUNDER: Is this partly the fault, do you think, of the lumbermen themselves in not defending their markets more aggressively against the challenge of the substitutes?

ELDREDGE: Well, they tried it, you know. They've put up money for it. They have a corporation that operates in Washington and carries on research. We have a whole laboratory in the Forest Service at Madison working tooth and toenail day and night on this business of trying to keep that market and so forth. I don't think it's so much a lack of aggressiveness as the bare facts that there is certain lumber that is produced now in large amounts that doesn't serve the purpose of weather boards, won't stand the weather, rots, warps, twists, and concrete blocks can be made just as cheap. Not very long ago, about four or five years ago, I wanted to build an addition to my summer home down in west Florida, and I made a calculation of cost of building it out of frame and lumber such as the old house is, or out of concrete blocks, and I found that the concrete blocks were significantly cheaper. Lumber was high and concrete blocks were low. You can make concrete blocks anywhere, and there's lots of competition in it.

MAUNDER: And now they're running into competition from the steel people, from the

aluminum people, and, of course…

ELDREDGE: From the glass people. These modern houses have more glass in them than anything else.

MAUNDER: They're saying now that the next revolution we're up against is the plastics age in which the plastics people are just going to run away with everything.

ELDREDGE: They've already driven the wood in boats out of business.

MAUNDER: From what I understand, there's a real threat that they're going to drive some of the metal people out of business. Of course, this may be a good thing because this is a non-renewable resource whereas plastic can be made out of such a variety of things that are drawn from renewable resources, and perhaps this is the Almighty working in his mysterious way his wonders to perform.

ELDREDGE: The laws of economic progress and what not.

MAUNDER: Cap, can we start out today with where we left off yesterday – at the end of World War I. You brought your gang back on the battleship "New Jersey," and I don't know if you related that story on tape or afterwards. So why don't you begin at that point where you're winding up your operations in southern France at the end of the war and tell us the story from there.

ELDREDGE: We came back on the battleship, "New Jersey," which had been used for troops because we were short of transports. We arrived in Norfolk and there demobilized. I went on back to Florida where I spent several months checking over the management plan and modifying it, the plan that Recknagel had made nearly ten years before that time. From there I was transferred to the headquarters office in Washington of Region Seven. Franklin Reed was then the chief forester for the region.

MAUNDER: Was Henry Graves still chief forester?

ELDREDGE: No, I think Bob Stewart had taken over about that time. I'm not too sure but I think Graves had turned it over to Stewart. At any rate, then I served for two years or more in this regional office as chief of management, which in effect had charge and direction of the care and sale of the timber resource on the national forests in that region, which then ran from New Hampshire all the was to Florida and west of the Mississippi, to include the Arkansas forests and the forests in Minnesota and Michigan.

One of my chief functions was the stimulation of the local foresters in making management plans for the disposal and care of their timber. I covered all the forests in the region numbers of times and found that, as a general thing, the local foresters were simply waiting like shopkeepers for somebody to come and buy their timber. The management plans that we initiated in that period were designed to ascertain what timber should be sold and at what times and in what sequence, and then to go out and seek buyers for those particular tracts we wanted to dispose of. This was quite successful. After two or three years with Region Seven…

MAUNDER: Let me interrupt for just a minute. Now, this was the region in which there hadn't been a great many national forests up until the Weeks Law was passed, but then after 1911, I believe, when the Weeks Law went into effect there was a gradual building up of national forest lands in this area. Had this been a continuing process over a period of time as through the twenties?

ELDREDGE: Yes, and it's still continuing with annual appropriations from Congress. It's slowing down, however. Among the forests in the region only three were forests that had been made out of unappropriated government land, namely the forests in Florida (the Choctawhatchee and the Okala) and the forests in Arkansas (the Arkansas and the Washataw) – four altogether. The other forests were small, having been purchased under the Weeks Law, but they were large enough to be operating units and each forest had its quota of officers and guards and whatnot.

MAUNDER: There was a period of time, Cap, you said earlier in the interview, when the fortunes of the Forest Service went in some decline right after the Ballinger-Pinchot event. At what point did the Service begin to see its fortunes rise again?

ELDREDGE: That would be hard to say. It took a long time to get over that period of doldrums. I know that in 1920 it still existed, that is, our inability to get sympathetic treatment from Congress, or to get very friendly treatment from our own Department of Agriculture. I should guess that it was probably as far along as 1925 maybe before the Forest Service commenced to receive sympathetic treatment.

MAUNDER: So these years immediately following the war when you were doing the regional management work were in this period when the Service was in a sense suffering from a shortage of funds?

ELDREDGE: Yes. Shortage of funds which, of course, meant shortage of labor, manpower. We were primarily doing a custodian job instead of an active, aggressive job.

MAUNDER: Wasn't this very depressing to the career people in the Service?

ELDREDGE: It was, and we lost a great many able young chaps that just didn't see any future and dropped out to go into one thing or another.

MAUNDER: Was this in any sense the result of political activities? Was this the starving off of an agency…

ELDREDGE: I think so in a large measure. We had stuck our neck out under Pinchot and we got rapped on the knuckles, and the rappers continued to rap for a good many years thereafter.

MAUNDER: And this was as true under the Democratic administration of Woodrow Wilson…

ELDREDGE: There wasn't any Democratic administration until Wilson. That's right, Wilson was right in that period. Yes, I think so.

MAUNDER: In other words, Congress continues to pursue the same policy?

ELDREDGE: Yes. It wasn't an active animosity expressed in denunciations or anything of that kind. It was just a failure to meet our requests for money.

MAUNDER: Omission.

ELDREDGE: Yes. We didn't have too many friends in the West in Congress. Our friends primarily in Congress were more or less eastern people. The South wasn't interested one way or another.

MAUNDER: The secretaries of agriculture in the cabinets of the various presidents in this period, did any of them show any inclination towards…

ELDREDGE: Well, the famous Tamagen Wilson, who was secretary of agriculture for Lord knows how long, was actively antagonistic. After that there wasn't any active animosity from the top. There was just a feeling in the whole department that we were an orphan child, or maybe an infant prodigy of some kind that ought to be slapped down every time it started bawling. There was a lot of jealousy in a way, and we just didn't get the support.

MAUNDER: Going back again to your work in that period, you did a great deal of traveling

around the country, first of all in regional work, and later on an even wider front. You took over the same kind of work only on a national scale. Can you tell us about that and what it involved?

ELDREDGE: There were two of us in that work – John Preston and I – and our immediate chief was Nick Carter (E. E. Carter), a New England man who was really the spark plug in the whole business of handling the resources on the national forests, an extremely able man but a New Englander and a very conservative man. Our job (John's and mine under the direction of Carter) was to stimulate these national forests all over the country to get the lead out of their pants and start selling timber. At that time there was an awful lot of timber still held – virgin timber, still uncut – by large lumber companies, and as a rule in the West that timber was on the front of the national forests while the national forests timber was in the higher mountains. In other words, it was more available for utilization than the timber back of it that we owned. But at this place or that place this front had thinned out so that prospective buyers commenced to be interested in the government timber behind. But through the long years of custodian management such as our people on the national forests had become accustomed to they had lots of lead in their pants. They just waited for customers. The whole idea that we were selling and putting into actual practice was to examine certain areas in each national forest. We called them "working circles," picked out in the first place because they needed to be cut, and in the second place because they were near enough to transportation to be likely to find a purchaser, and there we'd draw up a plan of management. The plan of management was designed to have that timber cut in such a way that it would be replaced at the end of a rotation so that there was a never-ending supply of timber from that particular region. Having done that, then we set out to find buyers, and from then on into the process of making sales of the timber.

MAUNDER: Let me ask you a question about that. Who did you find the most cooperative in working with you in the establishment of "working circle" plans for the planned cutting of areas of the national forest?

ELDREDGE: Of course, in each region we worked with the regional chief of management and then directly with the forest supervisor. Now, some of the forest supervisors were pretty hard to get at. They just hadn't got the idea and had to be sold on it.

MAUNDER: You mean that they were preservationist-minded?

ELDREDGE: Yes. They just never had done this thing and they were getting along all right and they were just going to hold it there until hell popped. Others, of course, younger men, caught the idea right away and saw that there was an opportunity to really practice forestry with an axe. You can't practice forestry without an axe, you know. You've got to harvest it if you want to grow another crop, or if you want to grow continuous crops you have to keep on harvesting as well as reproducing. We found a great difference between regions. In some regions the chief of management and most of his supervisors were pretty hard to move. In others they were pretty alive and quick to catch on. It depended a great deal on our efforts to sell the thing.

MAUNDER: Was there any feeling of urgency in Washington in the headquarters office for showing the government that the national forest lands could produce a greater income to the government?

ELDREDGE: Bill Greeley was then chief forester when I took this inspection job and he was very urgent on it. It wasn't anything that I thought of by myself, or that Nick Carter necessarily thought of my himself. Greeley was the moving element in getting this timber into use. It wasn't an urgent time. There was still, as I had said before, lots and lots of timber in the West privately owned that had to be cut before they got to our timber higher up, so there was time but things had to be started, the idea had to be sold and the efforts to do this thing had to be initiated so that they'd be prepared to handle what was inevitable, that is, an increasing demand for government timber.

MAUNDER: The return of funds on sale of government timber all goes into the United States Treasury, of course, doesn't it?

ELDREDGE: Yes, but it doesn't all stay there. Twenty-five per cent of it is returned to the states and to the counties from which it was cut to be used for schools an roads in the national forests, and then at that time there was an additional ten per cent that was returned to be used by the counties for whatever they chose to do.

MAUNDER: Did any proportion of it go directly back to the Forest Service for the carrying on of its work?

ELDREDGE: In later years, starting about the time we're talking about now. There was a

certain amount that was collected from the purchaser, added in other words to the purchase price that he paid that was returned to that particular area to put it into shape for reproduction and dispose of the inflammable brush that was left on the ground to reduce the fire hazard.

MAUNDER: In other words, this was one means of overcoming the deficiency of public funds that were put at your disposal through Congressional approach?

ELDREDGE: Yes. There was a very narrow use for it unfortunately because it should have been narrowed down. It went back to the specific area from which the trees were cut.

MAUNDER: Who did you find your most willing customers to be when you started looking around for purchasers for this land?

ELDREDGE: Naturally it was those who were nearest to it and most nearly out of timber, who needed more timber, and there were such people almost everywhere, but not in large number.

MAUNDER: Were these the so-called "gyppo" operators?

ELDREDGE: The bulk of the timber sales in number were made to little chaps who didn't have any timber of their own, who had portable mills, or if they did have some timber they'd cut it out and needed more, and the greatest number of sales were made to those people. On the other hand, there were some tremendously large sales set up to run for periods of ten years or so that were made to large established plants who needed this timber to bolster their own timber supply.

MAUNDER: Can you tell us about some of these early working plans?

ELDREDGE: You've got my memory all buzzing now. I may be able to think of some of them later. There was one near Burns, Oregon, of a very large sale of 20,000,000 or 30,000,000 feet over a period of five or ten years, but I've forgotten the name of the company. It was a very well-known name at the time; I think he's dead now. Then there were several sales of that type made on the Coconino Forest to the big timber company at Flagstaff, and another at Williams of that type, that is, a continuing sale for ten or twelve years. The price had to be re-appraised every so often.

MAUNDER: And the cutting was supervised by inspectors of the Forest Service?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. All the timber was marked and carefully administered. The timber

sale administration in the Forest Service has always been good. There are rare instances where the man in charge would perhaps let the company get ahead of him in some manner or another, but ninety per cent was just excellent.

MAUNDER: Was this initiated under Greeley as chief forester?

ELDREDGE: No, it started long before Greeley. It started in 1905 when we took the old forest reserves over. No, it was a gradual thing by the time Greeley got into it. He was a western man to start with and had served a long time. You remember I told you that he was supervisor of the Sequoia, and he served many places after that in the West so he was imbued with the idea that this thing couldn't be locked up in the West, that it had to be put out and used to overcome in part the antagonism that existed, but mainly to serve the purpose for which national forests were created.

MAUNDER: And to stabilize, I suppose, the economy of the community?

ELDREDGE: Yes. You see, when a big plant gets pinched for timber of its own and can get access to government timber in the neighborhood, why they can keep that economy and it may be the big payroll of that whole section of the state. But there have been conflicting elements all the time and always will be on the national forests. In the first place, there is the necessity and the desire on the part of the Forest Service and on the part of the forest industries to use the timber on the national forests set up by law and policy that that is a thing to be accomplished. Then you have the cattlemen. The cattlemen in many instances want to run the cattle or sheep in places where running them would delay or maybe destroy any early restocking after cutover, or even before cutover. That's particularly true in the Southwest in Arizona and New Mexico. Then there is the water interest. All through the West the valleys below these mountains – the Rockies, the Cascades, the Sierras and whatnot – depend on water that comes from the national forests. They are tender about having these watersheds devastated. When you cut old growth timber in many, many locations you have to cut it clear, clean, cut all of it because it's all ripe at the same time. Trees that you might leave would be few and far between and blow down and so on, but in doing this you threaten to some extent, or at least you do in the eyes of the ardent irrigationists, the watershed possibilities so there you have another element, all of which have to be weighed. Last but by no means least annoying (I say this; the Forest Service wouldn't) are the

wildlifers, the recreationists, and the wilderness trappers and the customers of the national parks who want to make all national forests national parks by use if not by law. So you have all of those things, which in some places have prohibited the sale of timber. They are large areas (I don't mean a spot), areas of millions of acres or half a million acres or so to which the Forest Service doesn't dare fell timber on any practical basis because if they did, these people who travel around in short breeches and backpacks and Alpine hats all through there – the Sierra Club and the this club and the that club and some women's outdoor society – put up such a holler to their congressmen that they threaten to turn into a national part to prevent it being cut. That existed a few years ago and I'm damn sure it still does, probably worse. That's true even in the Appalachians here. The Appalachian Trail and the Smoky Mountain National Park and the fact that we've got a dense population on both sides of it has made the whole Appalachian Mountain chain an outdoor recreation area in the summertime. People flock there from all over the South, even from here. It's getting so now and has been so for some years that the foresters have to sneak in to cut timber. That's not quite the way to put it, but they have to hide it so you don't see if from prominent trails and places where these folks can see it. If they do they start writing their congressmen right off the bat, "These people are gutting our country."

MAUNDER: I know in reading the professional and forest press these days I get the impression that these people are arguing, and very vehemently, that with the rapid expansion of our population and the current level of public use of the public forests, they need more area in which to expand their facilities for camping and recreation in order to accommodate all the people who want to use them for that purpose, and so it's going to be even greater in the future, and that's their chief argument for pressing their claim for forest use.

ELDREDGE: You see, that costs them nothing, but a paper mill which costs them 35 or 40 million dollars to build that is dependent on that area for pulpwood and the people who have been getting their livelihood from that mill in various ways – maybe 5,000 people – it costs them something when they're prohibited from cutting in there in order that the lads from the cities can go up in there and throw sardine cans all over the ground. In other words, there's a clash. There always will be and it's natural.

MAUNDER: The clash is not only between the rival groups, but it exists right within the agency of government itself, the Forest Service. I imagine that there are strong recreationists in the Forest Service who are defending their side of the program.

ELDREDGE: That's true, but within the organization you wouldn't have much to overcome. In other words, the recreationist would be one man and you'd have all the rest against him, and he wouldn't be powerful enough to do anything more than say, "I've got a lot of people behind me. Now you'd better watch out." Then there's another group, in the West at least, and I think they're in some parts of the national forests in the South, too – the wilderness area people. They are really a selfish group, if I ever saw one! They're practically willing – in fact, not willing but clamoring – to get as much as a half million acres in many cases set aside so that no timber ever will be cut in it and no roads every put into it, and nothing ever done in it to change it from a wilderness in order that a very few people – a very few because Tom, Dick and Harry can't afford to hire a Rocky Mountain guide at a hundred dollars a day to furnish horses and ride these pack trails. Only a very few people can do that, but those few people are most vocal and they have had these wilderness areas set aside. Now, the Forest Service has found it possible – in fact, any government agency has to respond to the will of the people, whether it is expressed through Congress or whether it just comes through the press.

MAUNDER: Cap, in this tape let's finish up your period in which you were with the government Service and you left that to go into other work. This last stage of your work, in the early twenties, that is, with the government was in the country as a whole and took you away from home a great deal of the time?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I found that life was getting pretty hard. I had a family and five children and boiled shirts and to cover the country as I was supposed to it took at least five months away from home every summer and shorter periods during the winter, so I was not too hard to convince that I might look outside for a better opportunity in the way of pay and employment and outlook as well as a chance to stay at home. I'd gotten to the point where I thought that the top of life itself would be to own a delicatessen and live upstairs above it. At any rate, along the end of '25 I was approached by the president of

the Western Papermakers Chemical Corporation of Kalamazoo, Michigan, who was in the process of buying a large tract of forest land in southeast Georgia.

MAUNDER: Who was that gentleman?

ELDREDGE: He was William Lawrence, a real captain of industry if I every saw one! His firm manufactured heavy chemicals for industry and chief among those products was rosin size that goes into the manufacture of practically all paper, and his firm at that time sold probably eighty to eighty-five per cent of all the rosin size that was used in the United States, and also shipped abroad to a number of different countries. They had bought this forest area in Georgia, which at that time amounted to about 70,000 acres – a very fine pine timberland but very badly cutover and misused. His company wanted to put the land under management and grow for future crops of naval stores producing timber as one of the sources of his rosin supply. His offer was very attractive for the reasons I have mentioned and I moved to Fargo, Georgia, shortly after Christmas in 1926.

MAUNDER: What was the attitude of your colleagues in the Forest Service on your decision to leave the Service?

ELDREDGE: Bill Greeley called me into his office and said he didn't blame me a bit. He wanted me to stay and he thought that if I'd stay a little longer things would pick up and look better. He said, "For instance, if Nick Carter should pass out of the picture, you'd be the obvious man to take his place as assistant chief forester." And I said, "Bill, I've known Nick for a great many years and I think he'll live to be a hundred years old. There's no chance there for me." At any rate, I went away with the blessings of the Forest Service and remained as always a very close friend and loyal supporter of the Service, which I had opportunities to follow out from the outside through congressmen and senators in the appropriations fight every year. I went down there and my job was, I soon found, first of all to set up fire protection in order to restock vast areas of badly cutover bare land that resulted from exploitation for lumber and later for naval stores. We had the area surveyed, mapped and cruised by a whole class of the Pennsylvania State Forest School at Mount Alto. They did an excellent job, and on the basis of their findings we built up a management plan which indicated just what timber we should cut, what areas we should hold back from cutting, what areas should be turpentine and

this and that. When they bought the tract from the turpentine company we had ninety-six crops of turpentine timber in operation, seven turpentine camps with thirty miles of standard gauge railroad. Each crop of turpentine timber contains 10,000 cups so that we were probably the largest operator at that time anywhere in the South.

MAUNDER: This was all left to you by the previous owners?

ELDREDGE: Left to us – a badly cutover and a badly exploited turpentine area.

MAUNDER: You inherited all their help?

ELDREDGE: We inherited all their hands. And I built up my own organization. In the first place, my main assistant was Bill Gettemeier, whom I got from Mount Alto – a young chap who had been two hitches in the Marines and was a pretty sturdy lad, and it took just that to handle that country at that time. He's now president of the company, done an excellent job. Well, that was the job ahead. I was fortunate, very fortunate indeed, that my company didn't expect me to show any profit in the early years of operation because they didn't want to mess up the income tax situation. In fact, I had the feeling that operating in the red was a tax relief to the company's many operations elsewhere.

MAUNDER: This was a wonderful situation. You could go ahead and do a lot of experimentation, I imagine.

ELDREDGE: Yes, it was a forester's dream. W did a lot of back yard experimenting, not the kind that a true research man would accept, but it was empirical and perfectly good for what we did. For instance, we put in several thousand acres of French turpentine system, which is ver different from our won and very much more conservative. We operated that for several years but didn't continue it on the grounds that it was too difficult and too radical a change from methods, but I did put into operation the method of operating, the conservative chipping and whatnot that we had developed on the Florida National Forest some twenty years before.

MAUNDER: This required retraining all of your hired hands?

ELDREDGE: Yes. We were in a rather unfavorable location from quite a few angles. This Fargo, the town that had been left by the original lumber operations, we had to buy it lock, stock and barrel, and when we bought it we bought a lot of grief. Fargo for years after the abandonment by the cumber company had become a sump into which all the hard characters of Florida and Georgia retired when pursued by the law, and the place

had a very bad reputation and was know as "Bad Man's Fargo." Traveling men, drummers who came through to sell their goods, made a point of never spending a night. It was the center of perhaps the largest illicit distilling of moonshine anywhere in the state, and probably anywhere in the South. They shipped their liquor out in trucks that went some of them as far as Cincinnati on a greased trail all the way. In other words, they stopped every night at some place with the knowledge of the sheriff and were able to make these long trips without being help up by the law although they were frequently hi-jacked. I remember that when I took over within the forest there were nineteen stills within ten miles of Fargo, that's not counting those that were operating elsewhere, but nineteen illicit stills.

MAUNDER: It was a pretty large production.

ELDREDGE: Very large production, large enough to ship truck after truck out, and pretty good liquor, too. It could be cut almost fifty per cent and colored and sold under proper labels as Scotch whiskey, or bourbon or rye or what-would-you-have. Not all the time, but there were times there when it sold at four dollars for five gallons – a five gallon jug. That was the unit of shipment – five gallon glass jugs. And you could take it, as I said, and make ten gallons out of it and still have pretty good drinking whiskey.

MAUNDER: What did you do to clean up Fargo?

ELDREDGE: Boy, don't tell me! For the first four or five years we really had a time, but time cures all things. These things would kill each other – they were tough, they were bad – and no law, no sheriff within twenty-eight miles. We were the law and to a large extent I was the law. We had a quarter boss who you hire who is usually a pretty tough cookie, and we had one of the best – Big Joe Watts. Joe had about seven notches, not counting anything but white folks, and every one of them had justification for it. He'd been a police officer, a sheriff and a deputy sheriff and a quarter boss and so on. He was a real character, the only man I've every known who didn't know what fear was. The main thing was that one man would kill another, and then the man that did the killing would have to take to the swamp, to the Okefenokee. He didn't dare come out or the family and friends of the unfortunate one would kill him, so we got rid of two people every time one man was shot, so that helped.

MAUNDER: What happened to these people who went into the swamp? Did they just go in

there and live the rest of their days?

ELDREDGE: No. They were perfectly safe after they got into the [ ]. I don't think anybody has every been taken out of the [ ] unless he was dead.

MAUNDER: How did they live in there?

ELDREDGE: Well, there were stills in there and still people in there, people like himself – refugees, bad refugees. Just the mild refugees were in Fargo. There were a lot of people killed but it cured up. I was there nearly seven years and by the end of that time we'd gotten rid of all the bad characters. I think we did a pretty good job. We never had any open war, although once or twice it was kind of tough.

MAUNDER: Have the normal authorities gradually taken over?

ELDREDGE: No. Its' a funny thing. You know, in the turpentine woods if a law officer comes into a turpentine camp you immediately lose some of your hands. They pull out because the turpentine Negroes are largely transient and they get into trouble in various places with the law, so they move out and go to a camp in some other region, and when the law officer shows up you have trouble and commence to lose your hands. So every time the new sheriff was to be elected, he appeared at Fargo in my office and said among other things, "I can promise you one thing. We'll never come to Fargo unless you send for us. We'll never have a deputy come into your territory unless you send for us." There was a perfectly good reason and they all did it just that way. We didn't have a single law officer in that place.

MAUNDER: There was no law officer in the town of Fargo.

ELDREDGE: Not only in the town of Fargo but all that area which got to be 200,000 acres after we continued to buy and fill in.

MAUNDER: And it was never necessary for you to call upon the law for anything?

ELDREDGE: No. For instance, when we had a man killed, a white man, we didn't send for the coroner of the sheriff. I'd go out and pass up and down the little street in Fargo and got together five or six chaps – the man who ran the filling station and the chap who ran the grocery store and so on, and drive over to where the man was killed and interrogate all the people we could and come back and I'd write it out. "We the six white citizens over twenty-one in the county of Clinch (or Orgaluss, as the case might be) had sat upon the body of John Hicks and we discovered that he had come to his death by

gunshot would in the hands of parties unknown." Signed by six names – that was it. It was sent into the coroner and cleared the records and that was it, all of it. We never found anything but that.

MAUNDER: And they never sent anybody in to investigate?

ELDREDGE: No, that closed the books, and that was good in many ways. It could have been bad but it wasn't. We weren't hunting trouble; we were trying to keep peace, trying to keep our operation going. We weren't juries to find somebody guilty of murder and pursue and stop our business and whatnot.

MAUNDER: Did the relatives of the deceased ever press for any….

ELDREDGE: The relatives of the deceased would never tell us who did the killing. We never could have found out, that is, in that kind of thing. We could have hired detectives. I can remember four or five places where there was a man dead, and here was where he was when he was shot, and the shot came from over there. "Who did it?" "I haven't the slightest idea, Captain. He didn't have any enemies." The booger was in the 'shine business and some trouble came. It might have been a woman, any one of the things that make people kill one another. But they weren't anxious to go to the law; probably their own records weren't any too clean. That was a nice way to get rid of it.

MAUNDER: A real rough, tough, frontier situation, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: It really was.

MAUNDER: And is it still carried on in that fashion there?

ELDREDGE: Oh, no. I left there in 1932, twenty-seven years ago. It's an entirely different place now. You know, St. Regis leased in and they've built up a great big place. It's positively urban there now.

MAUNDER: Well, that's a very interesting sidelight, Cap, that story of Fargo in the twenties.

ELDREDGE: That's a part of the history of forestry because every pioneer – whether in the West or the South or where (possibly in New England) – had to go up against something like that. He had to get control of the situation, and those who tried to get control by force never succeeded, or at least extended the time tremendously, but those who took it easy and understood the people and understood the situation and could talk the language just gradually built up. One of the things I found when I got down there, and I expected to find it, was that while we owned the land and paid taxes on it and

were granted the privilege of cutting the timber, that was all we had. We didn't have any other control. Anybody could go in there and run cattle or trap and hunt or trespass, or even squat and build up a homestead. We didn't have control; there wasn't any fence around it – it was too big to fence. So as a step in that direction I notified the world through the press and word of mouth that the company was going into the cattle business, which is quite logical. I said I was going to import five purebred black Angus bulls from Tennessee and take two or three hundred head of local stock, piney-woods cows and fence in a large pasture and grade up this stock and sell beef, a further use of the land. So we enclosed 44,000 acres (we called it the "big pasture") with wire fence all around and put 250 head of scrubby piney-woods cows and these five bulls in there, and had no idea in the world of trying to make any money out of it. There wasn't any money to be made out of it – not for a corporation although an individual would. But because we had a good reason for the fence it was never cut but once, and the man that cut it came to me in the dead of the night along about two o'clock in the morning and knocked me up at my house to tell me he'd just cut my fence because the revenuers were behind and he had to get his still out of there in a hurry and he wanted to tell me about the fence so I could send a ranger in there in the morning and get the fence fixed before my cattle got out. That's what you can do by appealing to reason. Everybody in that country thought that was perfectly all right. "If they're going into the cattle business they've got to fence it or the scrub bulls will get in there to the cows." And they never cut that fence but that one time, and that was urgent.

MAUNDER: How did you cattle venture turn out?

ELDREDGE: Oh, we got a slew of little black Angus calves and gradually brought it up, but after I left there the company sold the whole stock to a local cattleman. We weren't making any money because we were using rangers and other people who had plenty of other work to do to look after the cattle. To make money in the cattle on an open range of that kind – 44,000 of practically open range – you have to do it personally. The owner has to get right out there and almost see very cow every week, and know exactly what to do and when to move them.

MAUNDER: But the rest of the area was just being grazed and used by natives any way they wanted to?

ELDREDGE: Except that we gradually stepped in to control the hunting by giving permits; we didn't sell them; we gave them away but they had to have them. We had lots of deer in there, good hunting, and these hunters would get permits and on the back of the permits was said that they'd be careful with fire, report any fire that they saw, and so on. Then I took care of the trapping. That's a big trapping country and at that time coonskin coats were collegiate and coonskins sold for four or five dollars apiece, and that country was as full of coons, by George, as you can imagine. So these trappers – I mean real, honest-to-God trappers, not correspondence school trappers – had been in the habit of trapping this whole country and they'd been shooting each other and one thing and another because their territories were intermeshed, and they'd steal each other's traps, so I divided the country up into trapping areas with natural boundaries around them and sold the exclusive trapping rights to each area. So each fall I'd have an endless time in my office with these boys – tough, backwoods fellows, you know, wild as broncos on the western plains, long hair, smelled like skunks. They weren't accustomed to talking much, and I'd say, "Well, what's on your mind, Mr. Williams?" "Well," he'd say, "I thought maybe I'd see if I could get me a trapping territory," and then it'd take a full hour, or sometimes two hours, to sell that man a fifty dollar trapping territory. You find the top man in the organization spending two hours selling a trapper territory but they all had to go though the same process. "There weren't any coon tracks in that territory. They'd trapped it out and it was bare." They wanted to get the price down, you know, but eventually they paid the price. It worked, it worked fine and they quit stealing each other's traps and shooting each other from behind, and they caught more. We were getting control, little by little getting control one way or the other without calling on the sheriff or the Marines.

MAUNDER: Do you remember any of these characters vividly?

ELDREDGE: Oh Lord, yes! I don't remember their names.

MAUNDER: Were they all pretty much alike – real backwoods folks?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. They were backwoods trappers, couldn't read nor write, most of them.

MAUNDER: Were most of them married people?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. They were all right. I mean they weren't prison characters; they

weren't criminals. The biggest jog was to get some kind of control on this moonshining business.

MAUNDER: How did you do that?

ELDREDGE: I'd had some experience in that in the Appalachians in the Forest Service where the same problem holds, so I did that rather well I thought.

MAUNDER: You used the same methods that you'd used in the Forest Service.

ELDREDGE: No, not exactly the same methods. I couldn't because they were government people and I wasn't. What we did was to get the word around – and it travels fast among the 'shine element – that the company didn't want any liquor on its land, it wasn't going to turn anybody in, it wasn't going to cooperate in any degree or any way with the revenuers, but we could not have liquor made on our land because of the fire risk, and if we found any stills on the land we'd destroy them. For instance, there was a chap named John Henderson, who had a little store on a dirt road that ran through the middle of the forest on a forty-one acre tract that he owned, and John was a 'shine 'stiller and the store was more or less a front.

MAUNDER: What do you mean a 'shine 'stiller?

ELDREDGE: They made illicit liquor, moonshine. It's not called "moonshine" but "shine." And John had been up before the law on one or two occasions so he was pretty sensitive. If he went up again he might get booked for a pretty long stay in jail. And John had stilled so many times on his forty acres that revenuers could smell it as they went by on the road. His forty acres just stank with his fermenting mash. On one occasion I was heading for Valdosta – the road went right by John's house – and the ranger from that district had told me the day before that there was a still in Carhouse Swamp, which was our land – it went right close to John's – and he said he thought it was John Henderson's. I said, "Well, I'm going by there tomorrow and I'll tell John to take it out." So I did. I stopped at the little store. There were tow or three old boys picking in guitars sitting on the porch of the store and John came out. He was a good friend of mine; I knew him well. And I said, "John, the boys tell me that you've got a still in Carhouse Swamp and you have to take it out." "Oh," he said, "Captain, I've quit stilling. I haven't had a still in six months. I can prove it." And he called these old boys, who were his actual stillers, and he said, "You tell the Captain if I haven't gone

out of the stilling business." And they said, "Yes, sir, Mr. John has quit stilling. He hasn't had a still around here in a long, long time." I said, "Well, John, if it isn't your still, forget about it, but I just wanted to tell you to move it out if it was yours. You know how it is with the company. We can't have stills on our land." So I went on to Valdosta fifty miles away, and that evening coming back I passed by John's place and John ran out from the store and I said to myself, "My goodness, now we're in for trouble now," because John was waving this big black hat and calling for me to stop, and I though he was still mad about having been accused of stilling. I said, "What's troubling you, John?" He said, "I just want to tell you that I've got ten barrels of mash at that still and it's got four days to run. If I have to move it now I'll lose the whole ten barrels. I just wanted to know if you wouldn't let me have four or five days before you make me move the still." I said, "John, you told me this morning that you'd quit the liquor business and that wasn't your still." He said, "What else could I have told you?"

MAUNDER: And so did you give him four or five days?

ELDREDGE: I told him to go ahead.

MAUNDER: And then he moved it off?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes, he moved it.

MAUNDER: Because if it wasn't moved you'd give him the dynamite treatment?

ELDREDGE: We'd destroy the still.

MAUNDER: Did you actually ever have to dynamite any stills?

ELDREDGE: Never had to. They always moved them.

MAUNDER: But they knew that the company meant business. Did you ever have any fires that were caused by the moonshiners?

ELDREDGE: Yes, I think so. They were just like any other humans; they have to drop a match. I think there was one occasion when we knew that they purposely set a fire in order more or less to stave off the revenuers – make the woods so open they could see the revenuers coming.

MAUNDER: If this was such a red hot moonshine area, the revenuers must have been in there thick as thieves looking for them, weren't they?

ELDREDGE: They came in quite regularly and the chief revenue officer of that region was

stationed over in Claycross, and he was very much feared by these people. He'd shoot you, they said. These weren't violent people in the sense that you see in the movies or that used to be up in the Carolinas and Virginia where they'd get out and shoot it out with the revenuers. They didn't shoot the revenuers but the revenuers would shoot at them if there was any provocation, and they were scared of them. As one old stiller told me, he said, "Captain, there's a trimble in every drop." On one occasion the revenuers raided just across the river – not on our property but on the property of a fellow named Norman. Norman was a county commissioner and he owned about 15 or 20 thousand acres. He was a turpentine man and he also financed four or five stills on his land, and he had these chaps running the stills. Well, the revenuers came down there and found one of the stills and destroyed it and then set fire to the immediate locality to burn up what was left, and the fire got out and burned up maybe 1,500 acres of land. Fortunately it wasn't ours. Norman came over to see me and he told me about it, and he was just as mad as the devil. He said, "I just can't understand how the government can do things like that, burn up my land." Of course, he didn't acknowledge ownership of the still, that didn't worry him, but burning up his land….He had gone into forestry, convinced that if we could do it he could. Well, I was very sympathetic and I told him that I didn't think it was right and I was going to write in about it, I didn't know who to write to so I wrote to the secretary of the Treasury Department and told him how these chaps had come down and found the still and destroyed it, and I gave him the names of the people, of this bad egg – the head that they were all scared of. And I told him that they had burned 1,500 acres of valuable timberland, and then I went on to say that the government through the state was actually paying for the protection of this land, as it was, and that I, too, was a large landowner and I thought it was a disgraceful thing and something that should be stopped. I made it just as strong as I could. I wasn't in the government service any longer and could talk big to congressmen or anybody I wanted to. Well, I got a letter back in due order stating in effect that they had taken my letter very much into account and that I'd hear further from them. This little town of Fargo's street was just like the ones you see in the movies in these westerns, hardly anybody standing around on the streets but somebody on the sidewalk and as occasional man walking across the street and somebody riding a horse – you know that scene? Well,

about three weeks after I'd gotten that letter somebody came into my office and told me there were some men to see me, and I said, "Don't they want to come in?" "No," they said, "they'd rather see you out there." So I went out there and here was a chap in khaki with a big old pistol on one side of him and two or three others in a car. He introduced himself and he was this wild boy, this bad egg, this revenuer. He said, "I'd like to see you privately, if I may." So I told him to come inside and left the others outside. Meanwhile I took a look around and here was an odd sight – nobody on the street but people peeking from the buildings and looking around from across a porch, and while I was looking I saw a man jump into a ford car and go dashing off into this direction, and further down the street another man jumped into a car and went dashing off in that direction. The revenuers were in town. He came in and he brought this letter out. The letter was from his boss in Washington giving a copy of my letter and a copy of the secretary of the Treasury's letter – a hot one, too – and his boss' letter told him to go down and see me in Fargo and apologize to me and give me every assurance that he'd never do it again and that if I didn't accept his assurance he would be discharged from the service. Boy, that was something! I told him that "this didn't happen on my land; it happened on Mr. Norman's land across the road, but you could have set it on fire. I'm going to get Mr. Norman and if he accepts your apology and your assurance I will, too. If he doesn't, face the consequences." So I sent for Norman and he was as fidgety as can be. I could tell that he had his piston in his shirt front where they usually carry them, and he didn't know whether to come in shooting or what. I said, "Sit down, Norm. This is Mr. So and So. He's the head of the revenuers up here and he's got a letter he wants to show you." So Norm took the letter and read it and the man said that he was sorry to have caused all that damage, that it was unintentional, that he didn't have any idea of doing that. He said, "I want to assure you that it never will happen again. We realize for the first time how much value is at stake on these things at it'll never happen again." We stood around and nobody said anything for a while and I said, "Well, Norm, what about it? Are you willing to accept his apology and his assurance?" There wasn't any way out for Norm. You know, he had four or five more stills around. So he said, "Why, I think we can let bygones be bygones, Captain." So I said that was all right with me too and that I was glad to have met him and hoped we'd see him

somewhere else some other time. So he went off. And that built my stock up – to bring this terror to stillers in to apologize to one of them was something.

MAUNDER: And this story made the rounds in short order, I imagine. And Mr. Norman went right on stilling as before?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Nobody stopped him, couldn't afford to stop him. A banker in Valdosta where the company banked told me that one of these stillers had banked over $100,000 in his bank from nothing but stills. He didn't operate a still [ ]; he had four or five or six. $100,000 – and an ignorant fellow that couldn't read or write.

MAUNDER: Has this stilling continued to this day, do you think?

ELDREDGE: I wouldn't be surprised. It's just as profitable now with the high tax on legal whiskey it's probably more profitable.

MAUNDER: What do they make this whiskey out of?

ELDREDGE: They make it out of cornmeal and sugar, mainly sugar. They buy tremendous quantities of sugar and they put that in and it ferments for four or five or six days, then they put the mash into a kettle and distill it. It's all very temporary because they might have to move overnight, and cut my fence to get out to boot. It was good business; it was economic. There wasn't any way those people could make a living otherwise. I had one man that worked in the outfit (I wish I could remember names; it would give it more validity) and this fellow was a logger and a good one. He had two yokes of oxen, about twelve oxen, and we used him to pull cypress logs out of the deep swamps – couldn't get them any other way. He'd been distilling. When he first came into the job he said, "I used to work for the old lumber company." I said, "Well, what did you do?" He said, "I was a logger." I said, "What are you doing now?" He said, "I'm in the whiskey business, but I don't like it. I'd like to get back to logging because I like it." Well, we came to terms after a while, and took him on. In about six months he came around and said, "I'm sorry, Captain, to have to tell you this but I'm going to have to quit logging for a while." I said, "What's the trouble?" He said, "I've run up so high a bill in the commissary for ox feed and groceries and supplies and one thing or another that I can't meet it out of what I'm making off of logging. I'm going to have to quit for a month or two. I'll let you have the oxen and you can find somebody to run them, but I've got to go stilling again to make enough money to pay off my commissary bill."

MAUNDER: You must have never lacked for good whiskey while you were down there in Fargo. Didn't they bring you in a five gallon jug every once in a while?

ELDREDGE: No. I didn't drink very much there. I did my drinking outside when I'd go to meetings in Jacksonville, and Valdosta and various other places.

MAUNDER: What kind of meetings were they?

ELDREDGE: Forestry meetings, turpentine meetings, and so forth – the kind of meetings where most everybody does a little drinking in hotel rooms.

MAUNDER: I'd like to ask you a few questions about the turpentine and naval stores people. They were organized into trade associations the same as other groups are. Can you tell me something about that association and your knowledge of its origins?

ELDREDGE: It's an old association. I believe it was called the Naval Stores Association. It was made up of turpentine operators and turpentine factors, naval stores factors. They met at once a year for big meetings which were either held in Jacksonville or at Savannah, and there'd be maybe 500 people there of all grades, that is to say, managers and woods riders and factors and presidents of turpentine companies and so forth. They'd carry on what you'd expect any group of industrialists would. We'd have papers, of course, read by foresters and others who strutted around on the stage, but the real meetings were carried on elsewhere where they decided on what they'd do about this or that. I remember one man when I was down on the Florida forest there. The association goes back quite a ways. This chap was an operator in the forest there and he came back and I said, "Well, how was the meeting?" (I didn't go to it.) "It was fine," he said. "What did you finally work out?" I asked him. "We decided we'd quit stealing on another's hands." That's something that has always prevailed in the naval stores industry and still does, I think. One operator would go across the county and steal the hands from another operator, entice them away one way or another. He said, "We agreed that we wouldn't steal one another's hands. We'd quit that."

MAUNDER: Decided in a smoke-filled back room?

ELDREDGE: Oh, yes. Certainly not on the stage.

MAUNDER: Nothing that was publicly announced?

ELDREDGE: Oh, no. I said, "Is the meeting over?" He said, "Oh, no. The meeting is to go

on another day. I hurried back because I wanted to stop two places on the road and pick me up some hands." This was a fellow named Shaw, I remember now. He was finally killed.

MAUNDER: It was a pretty rough business, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: That was kind of a tough part of the state.

MAUNDER: Who among the operators stands out in your mind as being the real leaders?

ELDREDGE: A chap named Judge Harley Langdale. He eventually got to be the biggest operator in the South and I guess he is today. His son, who is a forester incidentally – went off to Georgia and got his degree – has taken over the business. They're millionaires now, both of them. They own a tremendous amount of land and a tremendously large operation, and he was a real leader, and he adopted all our forms in processing and was the largest user for man years of the turpentine timber that we leased on the Suwanee Forest.

MAUNDER: In other words, the product went to him? You sold gum to him?

ELDREDGE: The scheme we worked out was that we designated the timber – all this in contract form – we agreed beforehand the general territory in which he was to operate and the approximate annual size of his operations, the number of crops he was to operate. Then we designated each year the particular lots – lots of 490 acres – that he was to operate, put his cups on, chip. Then we were to get twenty-five per cent of the sale receipts for the product. In other words, he sold the product and we got twenty-five per cent of this, and then a sliding scale arrangement made in there so that if the price of naval stores went up, the price went up with a top limit at that time of thirty per cent. I think it was twenty-two per cent to start with, but it could go as high as twenty-eight per cent.

MAUNDER: What about the size your own company was eager to have for its own production?

ELDREDGE: They bought this stuff on the open market. We shipped very little rosin directly to them. That was all worked out cost-keeping wise so that we could get more selling… They used very low grade rosin in making size and we were making high grade rosin. There was a very small percentage of low grade so it was more profitable to them, the company, to sell our stuff on the naval stores marked in Savannah and Jacksonville than

it was to ship to them. We also shipped to the Pittsburgh Plate Class Company. They were large buyers; you know, they, too, make heavy chemicals or did at that time. There were several other large buyers. We shipped in carload lots, tank car turpentine. We were a large producer for quite a long time.

MAUNDER: Judge Harley Langdale was very prominent?

ELDREDGE: Very prominent and very important, a very able man and an honest man – as far as a turpentine man can be honest.

MAUNDER: Who else would you single out down there?

ELDREDGE: Among the factors there was somebody named Nash, who was the president of the Columbia Naval Stores Company. They were factors but they also owned turpentine operations. All factors had to eventually own some of them because they'd foreclose on these chaps that couldn't pay their bills. Then there were John Pace and Will Pace, the Pace brothers. They finally got to be millionaires, too. They were in the [ ] business, one at Jacksonville and one at Pensacola. Then there were some Jewish people at Mobile, very prominent factors. Also in Jacksonville there was a Consolidated Naval Stores Company, the president of which at the beginning was Walter Coachman, whose corporation owned two million acres in Florida. He was a very fine man and a very able man, and a very wealthy man. He was a high grade man – not one of those who came up from the bottom, so to speak. He was in the citrus industry and everything else in Florida; he was probably top man in Florida along in the twenties. There were many others I could possibly dig up. Taylor Lowesteen was the name of the firm in Mobile. The Taylor part had disappeared, I think. They were Lowesteen and Brother and so forth, very able factors. I don't know whether they're still in business or not.

MAUNDER: What's been happening to the naval stores industry? Has it been on a decline?

ELDREDGE: It's revolutionized. No industry that I have ever heard of has more radically changed than it has in my lifetime, in the last twenty-five years particularly. Where as there used to be something like 1,200 turpentine stills in operation in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi with a few in Louisiana but quite close to the coast, that's been reduced now to probably not over 300. Don't take my statistics too seriously. This is because they now have what they call "central stills" and the operator now

works his timber, gets the gum and ships the gum to this central still, which instead of being a crude kettle with a fire under it and a work which condenses it and runs it out in the end like a moonshiner's whiskey still is a steam still, the most up-to-date finely engineered technical apparatus. It not only gets more product out of the gum but it's a better product and more individual items out of it.

MAUNDER: It saves all the byproducts?

ELDREDGE: Yes. They really do an excellent job and the one-time operators are now just producers of gum.

MAUNDER: Have the big chemical companies got into this in any great degree?

ELDREDGE: Several of them, but instead of making it out of gum they make it out of wood – stumps.

MAUNDER: Hercules Powder Company.

MAUNDER: Perhaps we can move on now from your period in Fargo with the company and take you through the next step in your career.

ELDREDGE: In 1932 the depression, which had been gradually approaching in the wood products industries, came to its climax and we had shut down practically all operations at Fargo at Suwannee Forest and instead of operating had leased out our turpentine business and had gotten down to a very small scale of operations. At that time the Forest Service approached me to know if I would take over the directorship of the forest survey of the South, which was just starting. Well, I discussed this with my people in the Superior Pine Products Company (that was the name of the operation that ran this forest), and finally decided to take this job, leaving in my place the assistant, Bill Gettemeier, who has developed into an excellent man. It sounded like a challenging job although there wasn't any increase in pay, but the big thing was that I had a family of girls growing up in a pretty rough spot. W were sending them off to high school when they got to that age and off to college when they reached that age, and so on, but it was not a very pleasant outlook to think of eventually marrying off a bunch of girls in a place like Fargo was at that time. This job involved moving to New Orleans so I took it. We moved over here then I took over this forest survey, which was a pretty big thing, biggest thing of its kind that had been done up to that time. We had all the states

from South Carolina (a part of South Carolina) over to Texas, including Arkansas so it was a big job and a challenging job and a job I very much wanted to do because there was that feeling all the time that we were overlooking our resources in the South. Here was a time to find out what resources we did have and to publish it to the world and see what might come of it.

MAUNDER: How did you go about organizing your work? Did you inherit a staff of people?

ELDREDGE: The preliminary work of ascertaining just how to do this survey had been done before I took over, thank goodness, because that took two or three years of intensive work. Finally we worked out a system by which we ran compass lines ten miles apart across each state from the Tennessee line southward to the tip of Florida, and at every 660 feet on these lines we stopped and took a plot, a quarter acre plot, and in that counted all the trees and took all the other information that we needed, and there was a great deal of it. It had been worked out statistically that for a survey unit, which is a matter of some twenty of thirty counties, that gave us figures of accuracy that were adequate, plus or minus five per cent which in timber estimating is adequate. Then we had to employ men and train them. At that time some of the best timber men in the South were available because the bottom had dropped out of everything – I mean the privately employed fellows, men that had their own businesses, timber cruiser and timber experts of one kind or another. So we got them all together and they had to pass an examination and be graded and all that, but that had been done shortly before I took over so I had these names.

MAUNDER: This was not conceived as a relief employment measure?

ELDREDGE: Oh, no. The thing had been cooking for a long time, but it had not been conceived as a relief measure although it turned out that way. As it was we got some very high grade men at some very low pay, men that had been accustomed to making $8,000 or $10,000 a year while we were getting them at the rate of $1,800 and $2,000 a year and glad to get the job. We built that into an organization. A crew consisted of four men, and we'd have seven crews under a supervisor, and it all added up to about 140 men in the woods. We started in the east over on the Atlantic and worked it all the way until we got to the prairies of Texas. I counted up afterwards that we did something like 40,000 miles on foot. Some of the boys even went so far as to calculate

how many gross pairs of shoes were worn out. We crossed every river in the South, in some cases as many as thirty times. Take the state of Georgia, for instance, it was about 300 miles from top to bottom. Well, that took thirty lines across there and we crossed every damn river in Georgia thirty times.

MAUNDER: As I understand it, your lines ran north and south?

ELDREDGE: East and west.

MAUNDER: I see. The lines ran east and west, and you started in the east and a party of four men with its leader would follow its line right straight across the South, is that right?

ELDREDGE: Not quite. It amounted to that, but actually they'd go all the way across the state of Georgia, and then they'd go back to the next line.

MAUNDER: In other words, they'd go across the state east to west on one line and then back west to east on the next line below it?

ELDREDGE: That's right. And there'd be maybe five crews or four crews working in that particular area.

MAUNDER: And you worked it out state by state?

ELDREDGE: State by state.

MAUNDER: And you'd complete one state before you'd tackle another?

ELDREDGE: No, we had one group in Mississippi, one in Florida, one in Georgia and so forth. We divided the territory up so that the whole thing was going on at the same time and we'd get results more or less simultaneously.

MAUNDER: And you were tabulating all the results in New Orleans?

ELDREDGE: Yes, we bought IBM machinery, I guess the largest installation in the city and one of the largest in the South. You know what I mean – you punch the cards and shovel them through – a tremendous process.

MAUNDER: How large a staff did you have working on that job?

ELDREDGE: About forty.

MAUNDER: What percentage of your time did you have to spend in the field, Cap?

ELDREDGE: I should say about a third of the time. I followed the crews around more or less to keep up morale and keep everybody buddies, that kind of thing.

MAUNDER: This was a totally new approach to forest survey, wasn't it?

ELDREDGE: Yes.

MAUNDER: Was the same thing being done in other areas of the country under other direction?

ELDREDGE: Yes, but not exactly the same way. Each region had its own problems. The Pacific Coast, for instance, had an entirely different way. They didn't go on these lines all the way across.

MAUNDER: Because of the rugged terrain?

ELDREDGE: And the tremendous mass of timber per acre. You know, out there 40 or 50 thousand feet to the acre is common, while with us a matter of 2,000 feet would be more nearly average – 1,500 feet often. You see, in taking these plots across here some plots would fall in the middle of fields, some plots would fall in the middle of swamps, some plots would fall in the middle of one type of timber (pine) and another plot would fall in hardwood timber. You can see very quickly that you can work out a proportion in there so that by the time they finished a survey unit or state, you had the proportion of area in fields, in forests, in types, everything – even in cities, towns.

MAUNDER: And this work took you how long to complete?

ELDREDGE: We started it in '32 and we virtually finished it, that is, the field work, in '36. During that time we covered nearly 200,000,000 acres. That's a Paul Bunyan job.

MAUNDER: Then how much longer did you take digesting your statistics and writing your report?

ELDREDGE: Of course, we were getting some of this stuff out as fast as we could analyze it. I mean we didn't wait until the whole thing was finished to put anything out. No, we started getting out data right away. That was one of the things that I insisted on because I knew how much it was needed. I wanted to affect industry right quick. Incidentally, after I took over and before we got very far along in the thing, I visited people that I knew in all the different industries in different parts of the South, telling them in effect what we were going to do and asking them what they would like to have out of it. To give you an instance of it, I wasn't at all impressed with the pulpwood setup. The pulpwood business hadn't started. There were a few mills in the South but they were of no significance – just isolated things. Timber people didn't think of them at all. So I went over to see a chap in Georgia who had a pulp mill. I said, "What do you want out of this?" after I had explained what we were doing and what figures we could put out,

and what degree of accuracy we could probably achieve. He said, "Above all we want to know this volume expressed in cords as well as thousand board feet, I know and you know that there's an awful lot of pulpwood here in the South. If that can be known to the pulp industry it's going to have an immediate reaction." Well, I did just that. We hadn't proposed to do it except as a kind of a side issue, a little paragraph down below saying in effect that if the volume was multiplied by so and so it would make so many cords. Instead of that, we went very carefully, got advice from several different pulp people on just how they wanted it – by species, by sizes, by location geographically, and so on, by stands per acre (whether it's practical to operate or not). So we got all that into it and that's what brought the pulp industry eventually – the fact that we got just the information they wanted.

MAUNDER: That would stimulate their interest and their purchase of land?

ELDREDGE: Yes. It was something that they could visualize. If there are so many billion feet of saw timber in there, that doesn't help much, but if you can say that there are actually so many million cords of pine and of oak and of cypress, and that a certain percentage of it is below eight inches, and a certain percentage is eight to twelve inches, and a certain percentage is twelve to fourteen , then they've got the picture right off the bat, that is, the timber people did.

MAUNDER And right alongside of that was developing Dr. Herty's research?

ELDREDGE: All the while that was going on Dr. Herty was at work turning out his paper results. I visited his little place very frequently – his little experimental paper mill in Savannah. I'd known him before that time, known him for many years, very fond of him.

MAUNDER: To what extent did the pulp and paper people who were already in the South help this whole process along?

ELDREDGE: Everybody was skeptical to start with, everybody. Nobody had ever thought that big, nobody. You can understand that in the sawmill industry because the sawmill man, no matter how big he is, thinks only of the timber that's available to him within transporting distance of his plant. He doesn't give a rap what's over in Alabama or Tennessee or even in his own state but sixty miles away so he's not a big thinker in that line. He thinks small. The little sawmill man only thinks in terms of what he can move

his mill to the next day within ten miles of where he is, but the pulp people are big thinkers. They have to be. When you put 3- to 40, or even 50 or 60 million dollars in a plant that requires 2,000 cords of wood every day out of the 365, you've got to think in great big terms.

MAUNDER: Who were the first ones to see the picture, the potentials?

ELDREDGE: The pulp people.

MAUNDER: But which particular people?

ELDREDGE: The International Paper Company, Southern Kraft, the Mead Corporation, West Virginia Pulp and Paper…

MAUNDER: Who among these companies were the men with the vision?

ELDREDGE: In the Mead Corporation it was George Mead himself, the chairman of the board, the man who made it, the man whose name it carries. The people below him were all producers of paper; they thought the Lord brought the wood in for them and they paid one of the Lord's agents but they didn't concern themselves very greatly about where it came from or how much there was there – within reason. But George Mead is a big thinker; he's thinking twenty years ahead and has some concept…He had some six plants in the United States but none in the Deep South then. The Gaylord Container Corporation were one of the early ones to sense the desirability of this.

MAUNDER: Was that Mr. Goodyear?

ELDREDGE: No, the man who headed up that outfit then in the South was named Curtis. I wasn't acquainted with the top boys at that time.

MAUNDER: Who in International Paper Company?

ELDREDGE: A chap named Friend. He headed up their southern division. They had mills then already established at Mobile, Panama City, and three mills in Louisiana so they were big, and, of course, they've gotten tremendously bigger since, tremendously bigger.

MAUNDER: Was he responsible in the main for creating in the minds of the company the understanding of the potential down here? You would credit Friend with that accomplishment?

ELDREDGE: Yes.

MAUNDER: Wasn't there a Dane by the name of Reiss or Riess?

ELDREDGE: Yes, there was. I'm trying to remember where I knew him, who he was with.

MAUNDER: How about Mr. Cullens?

ELDREDGE: Cullen was on to it. And the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company, they got in behind it very quickly. That isn't the right way to put it. At that time we had government money entirely, but what we did have to have was continuing appropriations.

MAUNDER: And these companies bucked for them?

ELDREDGE: Yes. Mind you, I was in government service, and in government service it's a hanging penalty for anybody who tires to buck the budget, tries to get outside influence to contact senators or congressmen or any appropriations committee. That's defendu [?]; that's not done. In fact, you get shot for it, or strangled.

MAUNDER: Or excommunicated.

ELDREDGE: So you couldn't do it that way. But I did it through these friends who were sold on the idea that it was a good thing, that good would come of it. They all had to take it on faith, those that did. But Herty was my chief man. Every year previous to appropriations time and when the fight was starting in Congress I'd go over and sit in with Herty and we'd make out a long list of congressmen and senators and other people who could approach congressmen and senators, and what senators and congressmen they'd get, and I'd sit down and dictate the letters – the form of the letters – and Herty would have his stenographer type them and he'd sign them and send them to these various sources. For instance, at that time the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, who had headquarters in Knoxville or someplace around there, were financing a part of Herty's work and were very keen on it because Herty started off on his thing with newsprint, not kraft.

MAUNDER: Finding a cheaper source of newsprint for southern users?

ELDREDGE: Yes. And they were all behind him, and not only that but they liked him and had faith in him. He was the type of man that could accumulate that sort of thing very effectively. So we got into the Newspaper Publishers Association. I went up to see their secretary and he got in behind congressmen and senators and we just boosted up that thing. When we started we had only money enough in the survey to carry about two crews and we built that up to where we had something like twenty-four crews out

of money that we [….?] One of the people who helped us a great deal was Senator [ ], as well as Senator George and Senator Pepper. We concentrated mainly on those who were in the Appropriations Committee.

MAUNDER: They were the key people to reach?

ELDREDGE: By 1944 we had published all of the results of the first survey and had assisted a number of large pulp companies in getting located in the South. By that time I was about ready to call it a day so far as government operation was concerned and retired on July 1, 1944 with every anticipation of enjoying a very quiet, relaxed life from then on, but in just a few days I commenced to get long distance calls from various northern firms asking me to assist them in getting located in the South so I started a line of work which continued for the next twelve years as a consultant. This work kept me very busy and yet had little or no routine in it, and it was also quite profitable so I enjoyed it immensely.

MAUNDER: You were mainly engaged in locating and making purchases of forest lands for…?

ELDREDGE: No, I didn't do any purchasing. What I did was to make resource studies and reports on the available timber supply in a territory within which a pulp mill could be located. It was not easy to find locations for mills of the huge size that were then being contemplated, mills producing up to 600 or 700 tons of pulp per day.

MAUNDER: I noticed in your book, FOUR FORESTS, in one section where you raise the question why the people in the southern states down here didn't put up money in a bond issue to purchase lands that could be put to trees and eventually attract thereby a large pulp and paper industry. It's here on page 61. "The people of Georgia could well afford a bond issue of five million dollars with such a sound bases for amortization as this, but that is the smallest part of the matter. A half a million acres of planted forest in central Georgia would furnish a sufficient proportion of their wood requirements to justify the establishment of four large modern pulp and paper mills costing eight or ten million dollars each and giving, in the aggregate, year-round employment at skilled labor wages to approximately 6,000 people." And you went on from there to elaborate on that. Did the people of the state of Georgia do anything about that?

ELDREDGE: No. It apparently wasn't necessary. The mills came down without any such

local assistance. They had the capital and the will to do it and they moved right in , and in that particular region that I mentioned in there – central Georgia – as of the present time there are at least four mills, instead of the price of eight to ten million dollars, which was prevalent as of the time that I wrote that book, they cost actually from 30 to 60 million dollars now, partly because they are much larger that the mills I had in mind, but mainly because of the tremendous increase in the cost of all that goes into a mill.

MAUNDER: Then the development has come about not so much as a result of the energy of these people of the state or the government of the states attracting new industry down here but largely because of the enterprises of these companies themselves, is that right?

ELDREDGE: Exactly, entirely.

MAUNDER: Well, Cap, we've had a long chat during these two days and I wish you'd just sum up the story of the development of forestry and the forest industries here in the South in some summary statement.

ELDREDGE: It's just fifty years ago in 1909 that I came to Florida from New Mexico to start the operations on the Florida National Forest, and in that time I have seen forestry grow from practically nothing to a size that's almost unbelievable. As of 1909, as I said before, so far as I know I was the only practicing forester in charge of lands south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. At the present time in that sane territory there are more than 3,000 technically trained foresters employed. As of the first ten or fifteen years of this fifty-year period all of the foresters in the South were employed by government, either federal or state. At the present time three-fourths of the foresters now employed in this region are employed by industry. The extent of forestry in the South was small, if it existed at all, in 1909, and now it covers the whole region and in most of that region with more intensive management than was ever thought of up to that time. The saw timber and lumber business and the naval stores business were the two main forest industries in the early days of my career in the South. The mills were still coming South, from the Lake States and the North generally, and buying up large principalities of forest land and investing huge sums in their operations. They cut rapidly, they brought a period of comparative prosperity to the South, but they cut out eventually and by 1920 the lumber business, insofar as it was measured by big mills,

was commencing to decline. Mill after mill closed up, tore up their steel, junked their mills and blew the locomotive whistles for the last time and moved out. Some went to the Coast and some just simply liquidated and bought yachts and whatnot. Then there was a considerable period after 1920 in which the forest industries in the South were not very active, but not too long after that the first pulp mills commenced to appear and by 1940 or 1936 there were twelve mills in the South. There were only a few of them of any great size; the rest of them were mills that cut along in the neighborhood of 300 tons per day. But as the information concerning the resource in the South commenced to be spread about and the knowledge that Dr. Herty published as to the availability of southern pine for making of paper and paper pulp, a new movement started and spread rapidly and mill after mill was set up. Practically all of these mills were large mills, considered huge mills at the time – 600 tons or more of pulp capacity. As of the present time there are sixty such mills in the South, many of them cutting as much as 1,200 toms per day. These mills spread over the South from one end to the other, and from the Gulf up to the mountains. They are mainly pine mills and they produce mainly kraft paper, although two mills now make newsprint and more are in contemplation.

MAUNDER: Those two are the Southland and…?

ELDREDGE: Southland and Cousa River in Alabama. The use of pulpwood in 1936 was less than a million cords per annum. As of the present the annual output of pulpwood amounts to more than 25 million cords per annum. (I'll have to check those figures.) Another measure of the progress of forestry can be found in the number of acres that has been under intensive technical management. This has grown from probably less than a million acres in 1936 to in the neighborhood of 12 million acres as of the present time, and when I say under management I mean under intensive management by trained technical foresters. In addition to this, many many more million acres have been put under improved fire protection and some degree of forest management. These are the holdings of smaller landowners. It has long been recognized among landowners generally that fire was the greatest deterrent to longtime forest management. Over a large portion of the South, specifically the pine regions in the South, fires have always been of almost annual occurrence, making it difficult to obtain prompt and complete reproduction after cutting. Tremendous efforts have been made by all agencies, federal,

state and industrial, to improve this situation, and the improvement has been obvious and spectacular although it will always be a problem because of the very nature of the climate and the land and the timber involved. Just as in France in the Landes region which I saw in World War I after more than 100 years of forest management and education and a population wedded entirely to protection from fire, they suffer annual fires of great intensity from time to time in dry weather. The fire situation has been improved because of organized effort, because of money spent by federal and state agencies and by private enterprise. It has been improved in part by education in the schools. It is being improved in part by education in the schools. It is being improved from year to year by the stricter enforcement of laws against burning, and as new generations of people come in and old generations are buried the sentiment for burning among rural people will decrease. It is no longer considered by anybody as a deterrent to investment in land for purposes of profitable cropping.

In answer to your question as to the relationship between government and industry in forestry matters, I can't answer very briefly. At the beginning, as I told you, industry was either indifferent towards forestry or ignorant of it or antagonistic toward it because of its implications. This animosity developed mostly in the West because of the establishment of national forests. Then there was a longer period following that in which the forest industries commenced to use the national forests and the relationship became more pleasant and more obvious. Then came a period in which there was much active work done by the Forest Service from Washington towards looking towards nationalization of private land ownership to the extent of regulating management of those lands. This line of thinking aroused intense animosity all through the private landowning field. Both the large owners, lumbermen, pulp people, and ordinary small people who owned timber didn't relish the idea at all and were actively opposed to it, and as a consequence the Forest Service as a group lost the good feeling that the industry had built up. This didn't apply to forestry as a whole or as a profession; it was only to an organization. In more recent years since the Forest Service has abandoned this propaganda for regulation the era of intense ill-feeling towards the Service has abated very considerably. This only applies, as I say, to the Service. So far as foresters and forestry are concerned the relationship of industry has become one of blood

brotherhood. The forester at last is a part of the industry, and his findings and his principles are not commencing to govern the industry, certainly among the larger landowners.

After some twelve years of consulting work, which as I say I enjoyed immensely, I finally concluded – having reached the age of seventy-five -- that I would go about cultivating my grandsons and teaching them the noble art of fishing, and I didn't care to be interrupted by calls from high-up people to come and look them over, look over the lands or anything, so without any reluctance whatever I decided to fully retire and enjoy complete relaxation and let the younger generation take care of the world.