

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

**Earl Porter**

with

Elwood R. Maunder

and

Joe Miller

October 1963

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## ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH EARL PORTER

**MAUNDER:** We are making an oral history interview with Mr. Earl Porter of International Paper Company, recently retired from the position of--what is it, Earl, that you were most recently?

**PORTER:** I still am manager of the woodlands department of the Southern Kraft Division of International Paper Company. I've got another year to go before retiring.

**MAUNDER:** Could you give us, first of all, just a little bit of personal history as to your place of origin, your family, and so on? Just a brief accounting that would bring us up to the point where you went to school.

**PORTER:** Well, I was born in Indian Lake, New York, in the Adirondacks. Father moved from there down to a farm which was, between Riverside and Weavertown, New York. It was my grandmother's farm, where we lived, more or less, up until I was nine years old. We sold the farm and moved to Gloversville, New York. I went to the school there up through the first year of high school, and then the sale didn't hold out, so we moved back to the farm and I finished high school in North Creek. But on the farm itself, my dad always paid the taxes by cutting pulpwood. There were just us boys on the farm, and we helped him peel the wood in the spring, cut it in the fall, and haul it in the winter to the railroad, load it on cars for moving to the mills.

**MAUNDER:** Who were you selling it to at that time?

**PORTER:** I'm not sure, because there were several mills down towards Glens Falls at that time, one at Corinth and two or three near Glen Falls. Finch and Prine, I guess, was there then. We sold it, of course, through a wood buyer or dealer as we call them now. At that time, they'd come around and get some fellow in the community and say they needed a certain amount of wood, and he'd go out and make the contracts with the local people there that he knew and buy the wood from them, and they would deliver it to the cars.

**MAUNDER:** The process is essentially no different than the one that exists today.

**PORTER:** Not to any great extent except, of course, in the species and how it was done. Except this was peeled wood, and I've got scars on my knee from peeling wood when I was nine years old and the bark would break through on the bottom side of the tree and hit the knee. But the main part of it was that we were living on a farm and the biggest percentage of the farm was woodlands. It was a source of fuel wood, fence posts, making maple syrup, and we cut logs that would go to the sawmill for lumber for our own use.

**MAUNDER:** How many acres did you have in woodland on that particular farm?

**PORTER:** On the first farm, 150 acres or so, and then we bought an adjoining farm which had as much as a couple of hundred more. Then the house burned down, so we bought the next adjoining farm that had another hundred acres or more. The woods was always incidental as far as income was concerned, because we were self-sustaining. Father used to sustain the farm working during the crop season, and then he would go and work as a carpenter or take the horses and go in the lumber woods in the winter time. It was a seasonal matter. He'd be gone all winter in the woods and the rest of us would go to school. The week after I finished high school, our house burned practically to the ground in the middle of the night. I stayed home that summer, and my fathers and brothers went out to work elsewhere to get some money to buy the adjoining farmhouse. I stayed and got the crops in that year while the rest were off working (except for one brother, who went to normal school). And I had the crops all in by October. I was only 16 years old at the time. A neighbor boy and I were looking for some kind of a job to do in the winter, and we heard that they needed some more men in a log camp up at Blue Ridge and near Elk Lake. So we started out one morning, and we ended up after dark that night at this log camp. That was the latter part of October, and the ground was frozen up there. Elk Lake was where they landed the logs to go down to Schroon River Pulp and Paper Company at Warrensburg. Elk Lake flowed into the Schroon River. There was this little splash dam at the mouth of the lake used for driving logs down the outlet. Well, we stayed in this log camp all winter long. We went in October and came out the early part of April, nearly five months without even coming out except at Christmas time when they closed the camp for a day. We came out the day before as far as Blue Ridge and Schroon River Village.

**MAUNDER:** Was that the typical kind of camp you hear about and read about from the old timers?

**PORTER:** I don't know what might be typical, but I can tell you about this camp I went to. Irving Savage, the neighbor boy I went in with, was 20, I was 16. We left about five in the morning, walked two miles and caught a ride on an oil wagon pulled by mules that delivered oil to stores along the way as far as Schroon Lake about 20 miles away. We then walked two miles to Blue Ridge and hired a horse and buggy to take us three miles further to Elk Lake. The road on could not accommodate the buggy, so we walked following what they called a "tote-road" on which they moved the supplies into camp loaded on a "jumper" pulled by horses. A "jumper" was a wooden runner sled used to haul through mud and woods trails. Dark came about five o'clock at that time of year, but we followed the tote-road about a mile and a half in the dark when we saw a light ahead. We stumbled to it and found the lumber camp as they were called then. We found a door, but could find no knob or latch to open it. It turned out that the latch was made of wood with a string hanging on the outside. Some one on the inside opened the door and we wedged into a smoke filled steaming room full of men.

Kerosene lamps hung on the walls. In a few minutes the door into the dining room opened and the men's room emptied. We washed in a wooden sink with wash basins getting water from a barrel. We followed the men into the dining room, which had one long table with benches fastened on both sides. There were no voices, just the sounds from eating and dishes moving. There were two rooms to the side. One was the kitchen with two great stoves and a woman cook, over sixty years old, who with two helpers, fed over seventy men in the camp. The other room was the boss's office. The boss was Archie LaCrosse, a Canadian Frenchman. He kept the time records and supplies for the men, such as tobacco, socks, mittens, shirts, pants, etc., which were sold on credit. There was a woodshed and room for food supplies off the other end of the building and a bedroom for the cook and helpers. It was a long log building made mostly from materials found in the woods. The floors and benches were rived from cedar logs. The roof was split cedar shingles. The only sawed lumber used was the table tops and the window and door frames, which lumber came from packing boxes in which the supplies had been delivered. The horse barn and blacksmith shop were the only buildings except outhouses, all built from trees found there. The bunks for the men were all upstairs. The stairs went up from the men's room and there was just one big long room. The beams came right down to the floor, and the roof was steep enough so that the snow didn't get too heavy. The beds were made out of poles about one-half to one and one-half inches in diameter put on a frame laid on top of four cedar blocks, and there was a straw tick on top of that and then we had plenty of blankets on top of that. There was just one continual string of beds down each side of this particular room. The only heat was from stove pipes passing through from downstairs. But the logs downstairs were chinked, and from up there you could see right between the logs.

**MAUNDER:** Lots of fresh air.

**PORTER:** There were some cracks between logs there you could throw a cat out. Well, anyway it was after dark that night when we got in there, and the next morning the boss said we could go on out to work. It was still way before daylight. It could have been 4:30. That was roughly the time we generally had breakfast after that. They served breakfast, and then they packed lunches in pack baskets. They gave each crew enough for six or eight or ten men in each basket, and before daylight we left camp. They gave this fellow and me an axe apiece and we started on out and following the crew up on the side of the mountain. They were building roads to be used when the snow came later to cover the roads. We worked on roads where they were staked out and filled in holes so that when the snow came, it would be level enough that they could make their road in the snow and haul the logs down off of the mountain.

**MAUNDER:** Was that the kind of job they gave young fellows when they came into the woods first?

**PORTER:** Yes, well both of us had used an axe before on the farm. They called us road monkeys. This other fellow who went in with me must have been 20 years old, I guess. I was only 16. Heavy snow came in the early part of December. I'd been there about a month and a half, and during that time we never saw the camp itself in daylight except on Sunday. They didn't work on Sunday, but every other day you left before daylight and came back after dark. You would get to the place where you were going to work by daylight, and you worked as long as you could see to swing an axe and then stopped and walked back in. There was no transportation. After the heavy snow came and they got about 18 or 20 inches of snow, they began to smooth these roads out. At that time they gave me a job as chore boy in the camp--I stayed in the camp, and brought in water for the men's room and the cooks. They had barrels of water in the men's room and the kitchen. I'd just fill those up two or three times a day. After the snow came, they started hauling logs. This particular camp is what they call a bob camp, where they hauled the logs on a bobsled--the front end of the logs on a bobsled and the rear end dragging in the snow. They brought them down from the mountains to the double header, as they called it. They rolled back these logs on this double header and then by two sleigh loads from there they hauled them eight miles further and dumped them on the lake to go out when the ice went out in the spring. And so this is the bob camp that we were staying at. So I had to get up and build the fires and wake the teamsters, and they would go and feed their horses. They had two cows there, so we did have fresh milk in the camp. I had to milk the cows and then go back in and help the cooks serve the men. They'd have breakfast about 2:30 a.m., leave around 3:00 and go on to work. The purpose of that was to use the snow while it was there as long as it lasted. The only ones that came in for lunch were the teamsters. As they came by the camp, they would stop and get dinner. The first one would come in about 11:30 and the last ones about 1:00. As they came by, we'd have dinner ready, and they'd stop and eat and go on. The rest of the men who were working in the woods and unloading/loading sleighs and working at the double headers took their lunch with them. They had a cold lunch out there.

**MAUNDER:** You didn't have sled lunch brought out to you that was hot?

**PORTER:** Oh, no.

**MAUNDER:** They used to do that in some places.

**PORTER:** What they'd put in the pack basket was generally a pan of beans, two or three loaves of bread and butter and molasses and maybe we did have a pie or two. There was also boiled salt pork, and when it got cold, it was just hard blocks of about three inches cubes and just as sweet as could be. It tasted good. I wouldn't have eaten the thing before.

**MAUNDER:** It's remarkable what you can eat if you're cold enough.

**PORTER:** Well, it was a staple food and they had a good amount of it. But in camp they did have potatoes most of the time unless occasionally the supply would run out. On Sunday they always had pea soup, and they made it in a wash boiler (if you know what those old copper wash boilers were). Two thirds of them were French Canucks in the camp. There was more French talk than there was English.

**MAUNDER:** Did the French come across the border each year to work in the woods?

**PORTER:** At this particular camp, there were probably only a half a dozen that came from outside. Most of them just moved from one log camp to another and worked seasonally on the jobs that were there. Then a few had farms in the area where they worked in the summer time. They were more or less local people. A few came in and out to some extent, but not many. Well, working as chore boy, I was the first one up in the morning, I'd have to get up about two o'clock, and I was always the last one to bed because I had to fill those water barrels and get wood in to start the fires in the morning. So I'd get to bed about 9 or 10 o'clock and get up at two, and sometimes I never even had a chance to get a nap in the middle of the day. As soon as the men went to work, the camp was entirely empty. I cleaned up, made the beds, cleaned out the men's room, got the ashes out, and so on, and then helped bring in supplies for the cooks and get things together to be ready for the men when they came in to eat. After the snow came, in the early part of January, a thaw came. The men stayed out to fix the roads so as soon as it froze, the roads would be in shape to use. So that's when they start telling about when they started out in the morning, they'd meet themselves coming in at night. From the hours they were keeping, somebody was out there working around the clock. The bunks were all made double width. At least two were sleeping together with hardly enough room to get your feet between the bunks. This fellow I was sleeping with said, "Do the bed bugs bother you?" I answered, "No." He said, "Well, they bothered me pretty bad last night." So I said, "Well, where are they?" And he said, "Do you want to see some?" And he just picked up the straw tick at the corner of the bed. This cedar block as rotten in the middle, and they just boiled out of there. Then again in the winter time, one fellow says, "Well, this is a good camp. This is clean, no lice in camp." One fellow says, "You want to see one?" And he pulled up his shirt.

**MAUNDER:** How do you think it was compared to other camps in New York State at that time? Do you think it was about average? Or was it cleaner than most of them?

**PORTER:** Well, I really don't have anything to compare it with. But, the attempt of the fellows running the camp was to make it livable, and with women cooks, I think it was better than some that had men cooks. In the kitchen and the dining room, we washed the floor until they were almost white, and one day this cook, who drank tea every time she'd stop, she did not drink coffee but always she kept a pot of tea on the stove and one day she was pouring some when the girl bumped her arm, and it spilled on the floor. She washed it up and it left a big brown stain on the floor. She looked at it and

said, "If that stains that floor like that (They couldn't get it out, they didn't have any lye), I'm not going to drink any more tea." And she just stopped drinking tea.

**MAUNDER:** Did they ever make any efforts to get rid of the vermin, the bed bugs and the lice?

**PORTER:** Well, as soon as they found these bed bugs and so on, they took kerosene and put it all around where they were found. That was all they had. They didn't have some of the types of chemicals we have today. As far as I know, I never got any lice on me that I know of. And bed bugs, although they were there, didn't bother me then anyway. One other thing I might mention was that there was a fellow who, in cutting a tree, which kicked off the stump onto his foot and kind of crushed his foot, and he cut his foot with the axe where it glanced off. So he was in camp two or three weeks while that foot was getting well. He talked to me while I worked around the men's room, and he said, "Well, are you coming back here next year kid?" And I said, "No, I don't think so." And he said, "Where are you going next year?" I said, "Well, I hope I can earn enough money here to go to school. He said, "Yes, that's what you think, now, but I think just the same way--every year when I leave this place, I'm never going to come back. I start out from here down to Blue Ridge, and by the time I get half way down there, you know, I'm just as drunk as though I had a quart. I get down there and start drinking and it doesn't take more than two or three days. Here I've got this pile of money to last me all summer, and it's all gone. It doesn't take any time at all. So I hitchhike and get on over to Crown Point, and I'm never going back to that lumber camp again. That didn't do me any good at all." He said he'd sit around the hotel and get a job in the livery or mowing lawns or something that summer and, he'd say "It's warm and nice and you're just enjoying yourself and think you're not going to ever work like you did last winter. You know, it gets along in the fall, it gets a little cool and the frost starts, and the first thing I know I'm half way back up here again." And he turned to me and said, "You're going to be back up here next year." I said, "No, I'm not going to be back here next year. I'm going to use whatever money I get here to go to school." Well, that's the general way that camp was.

**MAUNDER:** In this camp you were isolated. You weren't going to town every weekend.

**PORTER:** There wasn't any way to get there.

**MAUNDER:** Your earnings were piling up.

**PORTER:** Yes. I got a dollar a day and, of course, keep, food and so on. The teamsters got the highest pay. They'd get around \$55 or \$60 a month, and keep for themselves and the horses. So they had the team to use on the farm in the summer. They were the

highest paid people in there. The rest of them varied, depending on what job they were doing.

**MAUNDER:** What about the camp foreman?

**PORTER:** I really don't know what he got. He was a great big Frenchman about six foot three inches tall. Archie LaCrosse was his name. But Christmas, even the cooks went out. We went down to this hotel in Blue Ridge Christmas Eve. There wasn't any lobby in most hotels. The bar room was the lobby. So I went in there with the fellows and sat down, and each one would have to buy a drink. Well, I had promised my mother when I left home not to drink hard liquor, but they wouldn't let me sit there. They'd have to buy it for everyone who was in there. I drank sarsaparilla instead of whiskey. (sarsaparilla was like root beer.) So, I was just about ready to pop, I guess, and then Archie LaCross came in. There must have been eight or ten in there by that time, and he came in and said, "Well, boy, let's have a drink." He went over and got a drink for everybody, and then a little bit of a Frenchman, I don't think he was much over five feet tall, said, "Well, since you bought us a drink, I'll just buy a round now." And then he grabbed hold of Archie and said, "Let's fight." Archie said, "What's the matter with you?" He said, "I can tussle you down." and Archie said, "No." He began pulling and grabbed at him and kicked his shins, and then Archie grabbed and started pushing, and then everybody in there started getting up and fighting and scrabbling, and one fellow said, "Well, it's time we had some fun." I was sitting over on the side. I crawled up on the end of the bar out of the way. They tussled around and fought and hit each other with chairs or bottles or anything they could get a hold of. It seemed to me it lasted half an hour, but it probably wasn't over 15 minutes. And then one fellow said, "Let's have a drink", and they just stopped like that.

**MAUNDER:** What was the proprietor doing in all of this?

**PORTER:** The bartender was behind the bar, but he was just protecting what he had back there and pushing everybody off. Then we went down to Schroon River where they had a dance. The cook and the two girls who help were down there, and I guess there were a flock of local girls who came in. It was a square dance. They began dancing, and then one fellow would grab a hold of another and they'd start fighting. The rest of them would just grab them and take them outside and then stay out there and let them fight it out there. They wouldn't let them fight where they were any women or girls. They kept on dancing until daylight on Christmas morning and then went to mass and eventually started drifting back to camp, got back Christmas, and went back to work the next morning. That was the only time I could get out of the camp itself in that period of time.

**MAUNDER:** Give us a point of reference as to the year. What year was this that you first went into the woods?



**PORTER:** It would be 1915. Came out in '16. There were two or three fellows [who] got real sick, although there wasn't anyone [who] died while I was there.

**MAUNDER:** Was this influenza?

**PORTER:** Yes, they called it the flu. But it could have been pneumonia or anything else. We didn't know what it was. One night one of the teamsters said: "I'm going to get out of this place. I'm not going to stay and die in here. How long you going to stay?" I said, "Well, I have been here a long time," and he said, "Let's get out of here. We'll catch that tote team going out in the morning." So in the morning when the team left for Blue Ridge, we got on the sled that went down to the two-sled camp and got breakfast there. About four o'clock we had to follow a snow plow out down to the unloading ground on the lake. In camp, you never knew how cold it was because the mercury thermometers had frozen a long time before that. This bob sled camp was in between Nippletop and Mount Dix. When the first teams came in for lunch, the sun wouldn't be up yet because the sun in December and early January came up right over the top of Nippletop. So it would be about 11:30 before the sun would come in sight at the camp, and then when it hit across on the mountain on the other side, it would go out of sight before three o'clock. So they'd be coming in for lunch before the sun was really up. We got down to this unloading camp. They had a little shack there with a fire and a stove, and when we started in, I saw a thermometer on the outside of the door which I turned and looked at. I walked on in and said, "When did the thermometer freeze out there?" And one of them said, "It hasn't frozen, has it? And I said, "Well, I couldn't see anything," He stepped back and said, "Oh, there it is." It was an alcohol thermometer, and it was standing at 56 below zero. That's the coldest that I ever saw that I know of. But it was so far down that I hadn't seen it. It was just barely out of the bulb, in fact. It was graduated to 60 degrees below zero, but it was so close that you just couldn't see it. Then this other fellow and I started out across the lake. They had snow plowed clear to the lake and we could get across, and when we got there, the wind was blowing off that lake and I had on some rubbers that froze just as hard as a rock. I said, "I've got to take these things off. I'm afraid I'll freeze my feet." And I jumped up on the back of the sled and tried to get them off. I couldn't get them off, and the fellow with me said, "I'll cut them off." And he got out a knife and cut the strings and pulled them off. I had on three pair of wool socks, I got off and walked from there on out. I believe I'd have frozen my feet if I'd left those rubber shoes on, because they were frozen so stiff my toes could not move. I don't recall the exact date now, but I believe it was the first or second of April when we got out of that camp. Of course, I had the money--(I had made \$40 a month) and that summer I went to normal school down in Onconta and got a certificate to teach. I taught for a year and a half and saved most of the money I got from teaching.

**MAUNDER:** Teaching in what? In a rural school?

**PORTER:** Yes, a rural school at Lenz Lake, but I wasn't old enough to get a certificate except with permission of the school superintendent at Glens Falls. So I got a back rural school where they couldn't get any school teacher to stay, but I didn't mind it because it was wonderful back there. I could hunt before or after school and fish and do as I pleased. I worked for my board at the farmer's place where I stayed, so I was really enjoying it. I could get home every two or three weeks by walking six miles out to the railroad station and catching a train up home.

**MAUNDER:** So this brought you up to the time when you took a course which led you into forestry.

**PORTER:** I saved enough money teaching. Anyway, I thought I had enough to go to the New York Rangers' School. Well, the war came along, and I tried to get into the Army, but they wouldn't take me at my age. I tried to get into the Navy but they weren't taking any more right at the time. I kept on trying to get into something else. When I tried to get in the tank corps, they said I'd have to have my parents' permission because of my age. My mother refused to give me permission because I had three brothers in the Army and I didn't need to go. She said, "Three is enough." I went on off to the Ranger School.

**MAUNDER:** How much did you think you had to have at that time to go to school?

**PORTER:** I don't know as I can recall the exact figures, but I probably had saved about \$400, which wasn't enough to take me through. I took on jobs after school shoveling snow, cutting wood, lighting lamps, and so on. I was able to save enough through the year to go through.

**MAUNDER:** What made you decide to go to the New York Ranger School?

**PORTER:** Well, I'd worked outdoors, and heard talk, and so on. More than anything, it was because I liked the outdoors.

**MAUNDER:** How had you heard about it?

**PORTER:** Well, I had an older half brother that went there the second of the school in 1914. He and some of the boys in the school had been by our house before that. I didn't have enough to go to the University at Syracuse even for a year. It cost considerably more to get through, and anyway the school was just a big vacation to me. It was awfully hard to study when I got there. All the other boys that came there were the ones that couldn't get in service for one reason or another. They were the youngest group they'd ever had at the school, but most of them were just out of high school and they'd been used to studying. The first month and a half or two that I was there, I'd have to study hard every night to get ready for the classes. These other fellows would

study until 9:00 or 9:30 and be caught up and playing all around. After they'd go to bed, I'd study on till 11:00. But after a month or two, I could study as fast as they could.

**MAUNDER:** What kind of a job did you think you were going to get after you finished at the Ranger School?

**PORTER:** Well, I wasn't too sure, but I figured it would be some type of a foreman's job or scaling or straw boss of something of that sort. That's more or less what I was thinking about, but I wasn't sure what type of jobs were available outside of reach of home.

**MAUNDER:** Were you attracted in any way by a government job in forestry?

**PORTER:** Not at that time because I didn't really know enough about it. The conservation department of the state was the only one of that nature. We weren't exposed to the national Forest Service, except by the professors. Some of them had worked for the Forest Service. We'd read books and so on, but it didn't mean too much. Anyway, the way they ran the school at that time, we were through just before Christmas. Well, during the time I was there, there was a boy name Scott who graduated from there in 1916 that had been in the Canadian Army and the Halifax disaster. He got pneumonia and came home. His parents brought him up there to school to recuperate. Thought he could get out in the woods and away from town and so on, and he was getting all right. He exposed everyone else to the flu. All except one at school got it. This boy Scott got pneumonia again and died there. Out of the rest of the group, there were three more of us who got pneumonia. I was one of them.

**MAUNDER:** They treated you there?

**PORTER:** A doctor came in every two days to see Scott. The next time he came in, I had a headache and they had put me in a room downstairs. He came in and he said, "Well, how are you?" I said, I've got a headache. He took my pulse and temperature and turned around and opened his bag. It looked to me as if his hands were just flying. He mixed something and said, "Here, take this. I'll be back in a minute," and out the door he went. He came back in a few minutes, while he was gone, my head had stopped aching. He took my pulse and temperature again and he said, "Well, that's better." I said, "Better than what?" He said, "Well, your temperature was 105 and your pulse was 120 when I came in."

**MAUNDER:** Earl, you were telling us a story about your running some lines and finding some corners out west with Mr. Graham. Do you want to go on with that story from the point where you were finding that corner?

**PORTER:** This was the first day I'd worked with Joe Graham, and when we ran out the first mile and came out on the section line, the section corners should have been five chains to my left. I went over and checked, and it wasn't there. I looked farther out the line but never could find it and came on back to Joe Graham and told him I couldn't find the corner. He said, "Well, maybe it didn't get marked up, so we'll just offset the ten chains and run our line back. To the west and ten chains over, which was 15 chains from where the corner should have been, we found the corner all marked up just as it should be. Graham thought that I'd just run an angling line, and he said, "Well, we've offset for this corner. Go back and see if we come back where we started over from." So we offset the extra five chains and went back and tallied on through. But when we hit the section line where we had started and we checked back on the section line to the corner we'd started from, it was 20 chains over to that corner. That was the day's work, but he was quite concerned. The next day we ran out the section, it checked out, that the corners on one side were 125 chains off. He got surveyors with a transit from Portius Company to run it out. So we went ahead and worked out that week. He had to go down to California or somewhere else on some other call. He asked me to go out with the Portius and Company men and survey that section and find out where it was. They surveyed it and did find that the section was put in at an angle of 15 chains off for no particular reason that we could ever find, but he was satisfied that I was running compass right from that time on. This engineer, Jones, from Portius Company had another job on the south side of Mt. Rainier to stake out some railroad tracks for the Galbraith Lumber Company, and he asked me to go along with him until Graham came back, so I did. We went to their log camp where we stayed over night the first night. The next day at the end of the railroad, when with our packs, we started to leave the track at the end of the railroad, I heard what sounded like a fellow singing. I said, "John, where is that fellow?" He said, "I don't know where." He stopped and listened, and he said, "He must be right up there." I said, "I can't see him." We walked that way a couple of hundred feet, and then walked back to the end of the track and I happened to look up. He was up topping a spar tree 200 feet from the ground. Well, we went on and made camp in a tent where we spent two weeks. It rained every single day we were in there. Our notebooks had paraffin- treated pages so we could make notes in the rain. We worked right on through Sunday while we were there because there wasn't anything else to do. There were just the two of us, and one night a skunk came into the tent and then went out and brought another one in. When they left we put supplies out of reach. They came back only one other time.

**MAUNDER:** How long were you in that part of the country?

**PORTER:** Well, I went out to Oregon to work for the Forest Service one summer on the Deschutes and the Ochico in April. It was about the 15th of October we were up in the Cascades when we stopped.

**MAUNDER:** That was what year?

**PORTER:** 1919. And the snow got pretty deep, but we tied in the surveys of what we'd done that year with triangulation from down in Fort Rock 75 miles away. We tied in with a triangulation with a 15 mile base line that we measured at Fort Rock down in the desert about two months before that. Then they were through for that year and I went on in to Portland.

**MAUNDER:** What was the purpose of those surveys? What were they being conducted for?

**PORTER:** They called them reconnaissance surveys, which were the mapping and cruising of the Forest Service timber. They didn't have any complete maps of it, so they were making maps that gave the timber types and the location of the creeks, lava rock and contours. We also used aneroid barometers to map in the contours to show the mountains and hills.

**MAUNDER:** And you worked in crews of about what size?

**PORTER:** Well, the whole crew ran from 10 to 15 men, but we ordinarily worked in parties of two, a cruiser and a compassman. The compassman did the mapping and the cruiser did the recording of the tree volumes.

**MAUNDER:** Where were most of you from?

**PORTER:** Well, the crew, or the biggest percentage of them, were boys who just got out of the army. They'd been to France. They had all sorts of tales about the war. There were a couple of young fellows that were high school boys that weren't old enough to get into the army. About half the crew were probably foresters and the others engineers.

**MAUNDER:** Most of them just out of school?

**PORTER:** Well, some had been out three to five years. Their studies had been interrupted by the war.

**MAUNDER:** Where did you go next from that job?

**PORTER:** I had a brother and sister at Fort Stevens, Oregon, at the mouth of the Columbia River, I went down and spent a week or so with them, then went up to Seattle where I got some jobs going out with timber cruisers from there into the Cascades. I worked with them until the snow got too deep in the mountains to cruise. I came back to town and through the Christmas rush worked in a hardware store selling sporting goods. At the first of the year I registered at the University of Washington and went to school during the spring semester.

**MAUNDER:** Earl, would you comment just a little bit on the changing techniques of measurement that you have seen in your years in the woods? You were talking here a great deal about cruising. How would you define or describe the changes that you've seen over the years in this work? Has it changed much at all?

**PORTER:** The system of the lines and tallying trees each side of the line run called strip cruising is still being used. It has changed to the line plot systems in second-growth timber. Presently they use prisms, for measurement of individual trees because this prism automatically checks the trees within the diameter of a plot circle faster than you used to be able to take the plots.

**MAUNDER:** And then to some considerable extent aerial photography enters into the measurement system now, doesn't it?

**PORTER:** More than that, the aerial photography is used for the types of the stands.

**MAUNDER:** But not for measurement?

**PORTER:** For measurement of acreage and lines and where roads are -for the mapping.

**MAUNDER:** How did instruction at the School of Forestry at the University of Washington compare with instruction which you had had previously at the New York Rangers School?

**PORTER:** Well, I was taking courses that were supplementary to their regular forestry curriculum and in addition to what I had done at the Ranger's School. These were regular college courses, and were not of the vocational nature that I'd had at Ranger's School where we had class work in the morning and did the work in the field in the afternoon. But there was very little field work attached to what I did at the University of Washington. Contact with the other students and so on was probably the most important thing I got out of the time I spent there.

**MAUNDER:** Can you tell us a little bit about those?

**PORTER:** Well, there were a couple of fellows there from Penn State. Dan McGrew and Idy Cline. They sound like kind of fictitious names, but one boy's name was actually McGrew. His nickname was Dan, naturally. And Cline's name was really Weldon C. Cline, but they called him Idy just to make the nickname Idy Cline. They finished and got degrees in logging engineering that year. Both of them left and went back East, but Cline came back West and spent the rest of his life out there. He even had a business of his own in logging in his later years. He's dead now. Dan McGrew, I worked with him later back east.

**MAUNDER:** Is he the one who got you the job at Wheeler and Dusenberry?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** So you went right from the University of Washington out to Wheeler and Dusenberry after you finished that academic year?

**PORTER:** No, I worked that summer. That was the summer I worked with Joe Graham, way up into October. There wasn't much of anything else to do that winter. Winter was coming on again, and he wanted me to stay, but I went because that was a definite job, and I didn't have a definite job out there with him.

**MAUNDER:** You got this offer of a definite job from back east. What type of operation were Wheeler and Dusenberry running at that time? What amount of timber did they have and what was the mill production in general?

**PORTER:** Well, they had two saw mills. One cut pine and hemlock, and the other was a hardwood mill. They were cutting virgin timber. In fact, they were working into the last stand of virgin white pine that existed in the east--the Heart's Content tract. The hemlock was virgin hemlock. They peeled the bark and sold it to a tannery at West Hickory. They got more for the bark than the value of the logs--\$24 a cord for the bark delivered to West Hickory, and the hemlock logs were worth less than \$20 a thousand after sawing in the mill. But there was wonderful hardwood timber. The chestnut in one of the stands was just five feet in diameter. In fact, I made a record one winter while there. The lumber sales of the company in February of that year averaged \$220 a thousand. The only sales made were white ash lumber for railroad car frames.

**MAUNDER:** What were your activities while you were with Wheeler and Dusenberry?

**PORTER:** Well, my job there was assistant logging engineer. Dan McGrew was the logging engineer, and I was his assistant. We ran out the land lines, located the logging railroads, and made plans for the logging job. Dan had a degree in logging engineering. I took an ICS course while I was there in order to get enough civil engineering that I could keep up with this railroading engineering technique. I was familiar with handling a transit and a level. And then in 1921 we did some mapping work on an oil field that came in at that time near the Red House. Mapped in all the wells about the area and tied in the wells that came into production where Wheelers had an interest.

**MAUNDER:** Were these wells all on their land or on other land?

**PORTER:** These were on other land that they had an interest in.

**MAUNDER:** What was done for recreation in the town and so on?

**PORTER:** Endeavor was a small sawmill town. Being a small town, everybody knew everybody else and their whole families and so on. So we'd have little small parties at different people's houses. R. R. Chaffee was running the logging show for the company. He was a former professor at Penn State and had taught in the forestry school before he came to Endeavor and he had all sorts of ideas. For entertainment the young fellows around town would go to his house, there were five or six of us all about the same age. All had had some college education and there were enough girls in town that we could have dances. We'd have dances once a month or something like that. While I was there, the company said that they would match any funds that the employees would subscribe and put them into a community building. We had a very nice community building, which had a dance floor big enough for a basketball court. In fact, we played basketball, had a team there. Three of us roomed upstairs in the front of that building. There were a couple of billiard tables in the barber shop. Sunday afternoon we'd have picnics with the girls. Whatever entertainment we had was what we made. We didn't think about it being recreation, as you called it.

**MAUNDER:** That's a word that came into my head under influence of the Congress. You said five or six of you were the same age, and you used to do a lot of things together like playing cards. You even taught yourself Spanish.

**PORTER:** Yes. We were down at Chaffee's one night and we were playing cards. Dan said, "Well, let's do something else." Somebody pulled out a teach-yourself Spanish book and started a Spanish class once or twice a week. We'd talk Spanish and nothing else, and nobody had ever taken Spanish anywhere. It was rather amusing.

**MAUNDER:** This doesn't sound a bit like the old fashioned hell-for-leather lumbering town of the Lake States. Was there a difference in the character of that community from others that you worked in?

**PORTER:** Well, I've been in other towns that were possibly rougher, but these were mostly family people that lived in the sawmill towns. But they'd have some square dances occasionally in some of the places around there, and about half of them would get drunk. There were just certain ones that seemed to have a tendency that way. But again the country was dry at that time so that their home brew was about all there was available. We didn't worry about it at all in general.

**MAUNDER:** Now this was in the early first three years of the twenties, 1920 to 1923. And these were pretty good years for the lumber business, isn't that right?

**PORTER:** Well, '21 was depressed over the country as a whole, if you recall, but the economy built up fast until about '25 and then started down with the land boom crash in Florida. Then the women got to playing the stock market until the values climbed up to '29, when the whole thing crashed.



**MAUNDER:** Well, these years that you were with Wheeler and Dusenberry...

**PORTER:** They were coming out of the depression. They were climbing all the while in the economy.

**MAUNDER:** What was your most difficult problem as you recall in your job there as assistant logging engineer?

**PORTER:** Well, I wouldn't call it a problem. I was just enjoying working and learning. There were so many different things that would come along.

**MAUNDER:** You didn't have any problems.

**PORTER:** I didn't consider it a problem. I'd been there three years when I had three offers for jobs elsewhere, and I went to Chaffee and told him I had some other jobs that showed up and said I didn't just want to walk off to another job without talking to him and letting him know. And he says, "Well, I don't know as I can give you any more money, but, I can give you more work where I can pay you more. We were out at one of the log camps at the time, and he asked me to keep the payroll and take care of the van, which was selling tobacco and socks and gloves and shirts and candy to the men in the camp. I opened up an hour or so after supper, and it was just additional work. I got paid an extra \$10 a month for doing that, and when we went back to Endeavor in the winter, he never did cut the salary back.

**MAUNDER:** I knew R. R. Chaffee in the latter years of his life living out in San Francisco.

**PORTER:** Berkeley.

**MAUNDER:** Berkeley, that's right. And he always impressed me as being a rather mild-mannered and almost scholarly man in many ways. And he'd been drawn away from college work into the lumber industry, and he stayed with them for the rest of his life?

**PORTER:** Yes, when Wheeler and Dusenberry cut out the sawmills where they were, they asked him to go out and look after the west coast property, just the redwood property, that they had out there. He moved out to Berkeley and was there the rest of his life.

**MAUNDER:** What sort of a man was R. R. Chaffee as you knew him.

**PORTER:** Well, my first impression of him was that he new what he was to do, and we treated him kind of like a father. We'd go and ask him about this or that, and he was

always very cooperative with most everything. He did whatever job he had to do very well. He just created confidence in the people around him, including the Wheelers.

**MAUNDER:** He was a good boss, in other words.

**PORTER:** Oh, yes. I saw him six or seven years ago before he died. I was out at Berkeley and saw him there.

**MAUNDER:** What were your impressions of the owners, the Wheelers?

**PORTER:** Well, they were very high-type people. We'd go to the Wheelers' the same as anybody else's house. They weren't any different. In the house everybody mixed together, in the town they'd have dinner parties or dances, and went to all of them.

**MAUNDER:** Well, it sounds like a very happy ship. In 1926 to '29 you'd entered upon a new stage in your career. You went into the consulting business.

**PORTER:** Well, that's after I'd been down to Florida for two or three years.

**MAUNDER:** Oh, I see. That was in that gap from '23 to '26.

**PORTER:** In '23 practically all of the engineering work for Wheeler and Dusenberry had been caught up with. The Allegheny National Forest was being formed within the area around there, and Bishop, who was the supervisor, was looking for additional men to help in surveying the boundary. They had every forest examiner that there was in the United States on that forest running land lines to locate the land that was going into the Allegheny National Forest until snow came so that we couldn't work in the field anymore. Warren was its headquarters, and I worked up field notes for about a month or a month and a half, and I then got an offer for a job down in Florida. I told Bishop I was going down, and he just begged me to stay there and take the ranger's examination, but I'd practically decided I was going to go anyway because I was only on about half salary. It cost more to live in Warren than in any other place around here.

**MAUNDER:** What was the general feeling, Earl, about the creation of this national forest in that area? Was it a generally friendly feeling or was it antagonistic?

**PORTER:** As far as I know, it was generally friendly at that time. They were taking cut-over lands that weren't serving any particular purpose for the owners.

**MAUNDER:** This was all logged-over land.

**PORTER:** Yes, see Wheeler and Dusenberry were cutting the last stand of virgin timber they had. They didn't think so much about cutting second-growth timber then.

**MAUNDER:** Well, go on and tell us about the next stage in your career after you finished that work.

**PORTER:** I went to Carbur Logging Company in north Florida. The camp there was a village of 3,000 people. It was considered one of the largest logging towns in the world at the time--3,000 people doing nothing except logging. They had 135 miles of logging railroads, 16 locomotives, 2 or 3 track machines for picking up and laying track, 10 or 11 steam skidders and mules and oxen. They used balance carts with mules for a lot of logging or oxen in the swamp. It was entirely a railroad steam logging job. We had some other steam log loaders besides, and my job there again was assistant logging engineer. Hitchcock was logging engineer, and I started helping him running out land lines. This was sectioned general land office survey country. We ran out all the section lines and the party lines and mapped them in detail so that we could sit in the office and lay out where the logging spurs were going to go, then go out and stake them out on the ground, and mark skidder sets and the back spars for the skidders to tie to get the timber out, then scale the contract loggers output. They had some scattered spots here and there of contract logging.

**MAUNDER:** You were telling me before about the novel idea that Hitchcock brought into effect.

**PORTER:** Well, he set up this logging plan system which was probably one of the best that was ever laid out in the South. The actual books and maps that he had at that time, are still down there at Foley in Buckeye Cellulose Company office. I was there about a year ago and asked about some of them. We had seen some of the area out in the woods. They had everything laid out four inches to the mile, and it was mapped in detail and indicated every pond and creek and road that existed in the virgin stands.

**MAUNDER:** This company was an unusual one, wasn't it? It was formed to log the lands for two big companies, right?

**PORTER:** Yes, Carpenter O'Brian did own the land and timber first and started logging, then sold out to Brooks-Scanlon, who took over their mill at Eastport, Florida, and built another pine mill there. Burton Schwartz, owner of a firm that had put in a mill in 1914 at Perry--the first all-steel mill that had been built in the South. They came over from Louisiana, and Captain Burton was an old steamship captain on the Mississippi River, who when not making a tow would pull dead cypress trees out from along the river, salvage them, and then sell them. Mr. Schwartz was a sawmill man, and he would buy these logs from time to time from Captain Burton, get them to his sawmill, and cut them up. These cypress logs just never rotted. They were called "choctaws," which are dead down cypress logs. Burton and Schwartz decided they'd become partners, and they developed quite a business in cypress lumber in Louisiana. They got kind of caught up with what timber they had in Louisiana. There was plenty

of gulf red cypress down through Taylor, Dixie and Jefferson Counties, Florida, that was intermingled with the pine timber that Carpenter O'Brian had, so they bought this cypress timber and built a big sawmill at Perry. When Carpenter O'Brian with Mr. Schwartz made up a separate company, the Carbur Logging Company, to jointly log the cypress and the pine that was intermixed within the area and put logging under one management, it was named the Carbur Logging Company, the c-a-r for Carpenter and the b-u-r for Burton. Hugh McPhail was the logging superintendent. He had come with Mr. Schwartz from Louisiana, and he was superintendent of the entire job. But the responsibility for logging the pine he gave to one superintendent. Ed Fisher was the one handling pine when I first went there, and old man Charley Borklund, a Swede, handled the cypress side. The pine superintendent changed a few times while I was there but old man Charley Borklund stayed on. He was a tough, efficient, logger and he could handle a steam skidder, engine, or anything to do with the logging job.

**MAUNDER:** And this is when you became an expert on cypress logging, is that right?

**PORTER:** Well, I'd been there about a year when old man McPhail gave me the job of running Tide Camp, which was a separate camp that ran during the war. But they hadn't opened it up since, because the steel for the railroad was tied up. They had to balance the volume of cypress and the pine logs being cut at the mills without tying up too much steel. They had built spurs off to the east of Carbur to get to where it ran stronger to pine, and they were ready to go back and clean up this swamp next to the gulf at Tide City, as they called it, which was pure cypress and large cypress. It ran more than a million feet per forty acres, but it wasn't hard down there to find 25, 50, 60 thousand feet of cypress per acre. I've even seen some that would run well over a hundred thousand feet on certain acres. Not all the way through, because it was interspersed with hardwood as well. I was there about a year logging about 125,000 feet of cypress a day. We had three overhead skidders, one was a tree rig, one was a Clyde universal and the other was a Lidgerwood steel spar rig.

**MAUNDER:** Clyde was made up in Duluth, Minnesota, right?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** And Lidgerwood was made where? Down in New Jersey?

**PORTER:** I really don't know.

**MAUNDER:** Somewhere down east?

**PORTER:** Yes, but...

**MAUNDER:** Did these manufacturers ever send their representatives down into the woods to talk to you about problems of logging and try to work out with you any improvements in their equipment?

**PORTER:** I can't recall ever seeing anybody from the company in the woods at the time I was there because old man McPhail was an expert with all of it. He invented the Lidgerwood self-oiling head block himself that was used long afterwards in the West. They had their own machine there at Carbur, and most of the skidders after four to six years on the job, wouldn't even compare to what came from the manufacturers because every time anything gave way, they would strengthen it or put in double strength. In the machine shop they could make anything at all that they needed and rebuilt the whole skidder or a locomotive or anything else that they had on the job. It was a complete machine shop.

**MAUNDER:** You were telling us earlier some stories about old man McPhail.

**PORTER:** I could tell lots of them, but I don't know exactly which one.

**MAUNDER:** Any of them. Some story that you know about him or start off with a brief description of him, some anecdotes.

**PORTER:** Well, he was a big old Scotsman that could outwork anybody that there was around there. There wasn't anything that he couldn't do in the logging woods from using an axe to running a locomotive or a skidder and probably even in the machine shop. He had a master mechanic in that machine shop, George Reddick, who is still down there as master mechanic for Buckeye Cellulose in their pulp mill. But, old man McPhail was on the job all the while and everywhere. Well, I'd been down at Tide Camp about six months and he didn't show up down there after the first two or three or four months. I came into Carbur one night to get some supplies and some medicine, and he came over and put his foot up on the motor car, and said, "Well, kid, where have you been?" I said, "Tide City." He said, "Well, what are you doing in here?" I said, "I came in to get some medicine and supplies at the supply house. And he said, "I don't believe you're doing a damn thing down there." I didn't know quite what he was getting at. I said, "Well, I send a log train out every day." And he said, "It seems as though I have seen it going by here. You know when that camp was running before, we always had a wreck to pick up or a skidder tip over, a train on the ground, and we probably killed a man once a week anyway down there at that time. Have you ever killed anybody since you've been down there?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, nothing happens down there, so I don't believe you're doing a damn thing." That's the nearest he came to praising me, if you call it that. At the time I didn't know what he was really trying to find out, but the main thing was, I was running the job with the least trouble I possibly could. It was still a log camp. There was plenty of fighting and a quarter boss to keep the Negro quarters straight. They'd dance all Saturday night and most of

Sunday night. You had to have a white man down there to keep them from knifing each other. But as long as there was a white man down there, why they didn't make much disturbance.

**MAUNDER:** What would you have to say about comparing the safety of the woods operations in those days with recent times? What was your record in those days as compared to now?

**PORTER:** Well, as I say, old man McPhail said that they probably averaged a man once a week when the Tide Camp was running the first time. While I was there, we didn't kill a man on the job. There were a few hurt, but when I put the steel into the swamps, we put the steel on dunnage and hauled sand on in and picked that track up in the swamp on the sand and put it in good shape and kept it that way. I had a very good section foreman that kept the track in shape, and we just didn't have wrecks.

**MAUNDER:** Were railroads then the principal cause of death and injury?

**PORTER:** No, probably around the skidders or skidder lines. And limbs falling on timber fallers. There was one fellow killed that way when I was on the job too. The terminology is widow makers. This limb fell and hit him on the head. They didn't have safety hats in those days. We talked safety at that time but it wasn't considered in the same manner as now. There were no programs for prevention of accidents as there are now. But I think we had a pretty good record in general.

**MAUNDER:** What did you have to pay your men in the woods at that time?

**PORTER:** Well, I took over this camp. We paid \$2 a day. We called a day a 10-hour day. It was the common labor rate, around the skidder there were the lever man, the head riggers, and the back riggers and the men handling cable or anyone who was doing something extra--they got other rates that ran on up to \$3 or \$4 a day. The cypress timber fallers probably made more money than anyone else. Several of them made more money than I did as superintendent, but that depended upon their own skill in working.

**MAUNDER:** Were they paid by the...

**PORTER:** Thousand board feet falling and cutting the logs. Some sawyers made more than others, depending upon the skill. Some crews that made the most were those with a white fellow and a Negro partner. He'd rather have a Negro partner because there was much less conversation, and if he'd get a good Negro to work with him, he could make the most money. They could make \$45, \$50 or \$60 a week each, very good wages then. The general system was to start as soon as they'd get into the woods, sometimes they might file the saw first, but ordinarily they'd do that at the end of the day. In the

summer time most of them wore blue denim, and they'd pull off a jumper, (they didn't wear any shirt) and put it in the water and got it soaking wet, pull it on and button it up to keep cool. Then they'd start in sawing, and they'd work right on for five or six hours, very seldom over six hours, then stop and eat, and then they'd file their saw. But they'd very seldom go back and start cutting any more in the afternoon. They were just like an athlete--top performance while working, but it was really a highly skilled job, falling and bucking timber in the swamp, in water, waste deep lots of times.

**MAUNDER:** What was the Negro's pay? On the same scale or on a lower scale?

**PORTER:** On the same scale. They were paid in the same relation to whatever they did.

**MAUNDER:** And were some of them employed as sawyers?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes, and they were paid the same as their partners. They were paid equally for whatever timber they felled. It was equally divided.

**MAUNDER:** How was the tally checked on their work?

**PORTER:** Sub-foremen scaled their logs every day and turned it in. They were paid once a week in cash. All the payroll was once a week in cash on Saturday.

**MAUNDER:** Was there ever a dispute between them and the foreman as to the amount they were due?

**PORTER:** Well, they might question it sometimes, but he'd check back on the scale with them and show them how fairly he had scaled if there was any question on what they had. It wasn't done arbitrarily. Most of Brooks-Scanlon and Burton-Schwartz jobs were run in a very high class manner. In fact, I mentioned \$2 a day when I took over this camp. We paid \$2.25 a year later, which was the highest daily wage paid any place in that country. There were several other log camps. {Query author} and some others north of there that were paying only \$1 and \$1.50 at that time, so we got some of the best labor there was. A lot of it was somewhat transient. They'd go from log camp to log camp across the entire South, west as far as Bogalusa, and on up the east coast, clear up into South Carolina.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, your labor force there was far more transient than the one you had been associated with at Wheeler and Dusenberry up in Pennsylvania?

**PORTER:** Yes, at Wheeler and Dusenberry about half of the crew were pretty permanent. They were more or less local people within that area. The other half migrated. The food was very good there, the wages were fair, but they would go down

to West Virginia because the wages were higher, and they'd stay two or three months, then they would come back and work two or three months there. But they wouldn't stay down in West Virginia because they said the food was very poor. Wheeler and Dusenberry had their own farms, and you could get fresh milk and fresh meat and fresh vegetables on the table the whole time.

**MAUNDER:** Earl, we've been chatting a little bit here about the characters that you knew in the woods in the South in the early days. Could you tell us about some of these men, their characteristics and the things that made them famous among their fellow workers in the woods?

**PORTER:** Well, there was a unique piece of equipment on the job down there. It was a 16-ton Shay locomotive that they used for laying steel. The engineer on that Shay was Casey Jones. He was a little bit of a dried up old man. He must have been about 60. He would get a hold of the John bar and move from one side to the other. He'd have to get clear up on his feet and turn around and brace to move it. He couldn't read or write at all. But the largest percentage of the fellows in that camp probably could not read and write, except for the foremen, who kept the records. They'd never let you know it if they could possibly help it. They had pride and didn't want to let you know. Of course, the bookkeeper knew it. They couldn't write their own name. Well, Casey Jones as a locomotive engineer really seemed like a character. Old man Charley Borklund was probably as big a character. He was a Swede, a very mild acting man ordinarily, but he had the respect of everybody in the whole camp. When it came to picking up a wreck for us on the railroad, he would do it quicker and faster than anyone else and probably do it easier. One time when I was down at Scanlon log camp and, old man Charley was down there and said he had to go into Foley. He said they'd tipped over number one skidder (that was a Clyde universal), off of the trestle out on the east main line, and they wanted him to come up there. So he went on up and that night he was back in camp. I said, "Did you get the skidder out?" And he said, "Oh, yes." And I said, "What shape was it in?" He said, "It was just laying on its back off of a trestle." (That trestle was about seven feet high on the east main line.) And he said, "You know, I didn't get up there, by the time I got through traffic in Perry and Foley, until about 9:00. When I got there, here were....," and he named the fellows and what they were doing. He said they were using their welding torches to take off the water tanks. He asked why they were doing that, and they said that George Reddick, the master mechanic, had told them to do it. He said, "Well, put them back on." And he went off and found George Reddick and said, "Why are you taking those tanks off?" He said, "We've got to take this thing apart if we're going to get it back on that rail." And he said, "Put those tanks back on." And he went ahead and rigged a rolling hitch over the skidder, chained some rails to the truck on the skidder, which probably weighed some 60 or 70 tons and put a triple block on some stumps over on the other side, then waited until they got the water tanks they'd cut loose, welded back on again because he wanted that counter weight. Then he just hitched a locomotive on the line through the



triple block and rolled it back up onto the trestle. He jointed up the rails and ran it off. He said, "I'd have been through about two hours sooner if I hadn't had to wait for them to weld those tanks back on." One time when I was handling the saw crews, I walked by the skidder, on up to the saw crews up the track. Old man Charley was up there where the saws were, and I dropped back to scale pine logs. They were cut ahead of the skidder before they set the lines ahead of the skidder. I came down to the tracks and here was the skidder sitting up there against the sky. There were over five miles of steel cable on the thing. I turned off the track to go out and scale the first logs. I got about 150 feet from the track, turned around and looked, and there was no skidder. It was just like a mirage. The skidder had just disappeared. I turned around and walked back to the railroad and there it was lying over in the pond on the side with its wheels up in the air. Actually it was down in the water. There was no sign of smoke or steam. I walked on down quickly to see if anyone was hurt. No, they were just moving the skidder and caught a line in the railroad crack which gave way on one side and tipped over. I walked on up and got old man Charley Borklund. This was approximately 8:30 in the morning. He came back and looked at it and walked around and said, "Well, we must be sure and get that fire out so that the boiler won't blow up. I'll have to go to the shop and get some blocks. He gave us a few instructions as to what to do and he went off 30 odd miles because he didn't have them in camp. He had to go into Foley and got back about one o'clock. He rolled and rigged that entire thing, and it weighed over 100 tons. They picked it up with a locomotive by pulling through triple block and set it up on the track.

**MAUNDER:** It's a remarkable feat when you get right down to it, isn't it?

**PORTER:** Oh, yea, because the skidder was lying upside down in the water with the trucks wheels up in the air.

**MAUNDER:** Well, that's big enough to make even the West coast loggers sit up and take notice how to handle equipment like that.

**PORTER:** Well, of course that type of equipment was all developed in the South and just adopted in the West.

**MAUNDER:** Who pioneered the new equipment that you seemed to use down there as time went on? Out in the far west an awful lot of the new equipment that was used in the woods was first developed by the gyppo, the small operator.

**PORTER:** The donkey skidder type of thing.

**MAUNDER:** Right.

**PORTER:** We had ground skidders, as we called them, of the same type down there. They were smaller than they used out West because the timber was smaller.

**MAUNDER:** Well, was it the big operators that were pioneering these things or was it the little fellows?

**PORTER:** No, the companies actually did the developing because of the costs involved. Charley Borklund told me one time about a sawmill in Louisiana for which they couldn't get enough logs to mill--they were running two or three days a week. He was hired to log it. They had logged the easily accessible areas close to the mill and weren't geared to get enough logs out of the woods. He built railroads to reach all the timber with steam skidders and within six months could log the mill for 6 days a week mill operations. A good logging plan was the answer. The ordinary system that came into the South for logging is that somebody would get a sufficient amount of money to buy enough timber to run a sawmill for about 20 years. Then the banks would loan them money to build a sawmill to liquidate that timber. Some of the early mills that were built started logging with teams of mules or oxen, but they couldn't go very far from the mill to keep the mill going. Even after they built some railroads and logged with mules and oxen to the railroad, they could only log the easiest places on the hills and open woods. That may have been what necessitated the development of the steam skidder. It would pull logs out of swamps and out of hills fast enough to load enough logs to run the mill all the time. A lot of the original mills were only running two, three, four or five days a week because of the limitation of the logging, and that was what really made it necessary to develop some method or system that would get logs to the mills so they could run full time. In doing it, they had to spend considerably more money in development, they ended up by having equipment that would do it where it was impossible to do it only with mules and oxen. It was developed because of necessity.

**MAUNDER:** When you were talking yesterday, you were telling about your location out there, and about loneliness being one of the main problems for you and others who were working there. We were talking a little bit about what you did for entertainment and compared it with what you did up with Wheeler and Dusenberry.

**PORTER:** Well, we worked six days a week, ten hours a day plus travel time. Sunday was the only time to ourselves. Well, I don't know which was more remote - down at Tide City or Scanlon, as far as that goes. But there was no way of getting out except on the railroad, and so whatever entertainment, if we had such a thing, was in camp. But our main entertainment was really work. Sunday was the only spare time that you had to do anything at all. I'd go hunting or rest. We didn't have to wash clothes as we did in the northern camps because we could always get Negroes' wives to wash for us.

**MAUNDER:** How would you compare the food served in a southern camp like that with the food served in the North?

**PORTER:** It was adequate, I think in both cases, but it was different. In the camps I've been in in the North, potatoes and beans were staples. There was probably quite a bit of pork (in the winter in particular) and quite a bit of syrup or molasses. In the South, breakfast was eggs and grits and fat pork and bacon. At other meals they'd have sweet potatoes and more meat probably than they had up in the North. They had greens--collards and turnip greens.

**MAUNDER:** It sounds as if they ate better in the southern camps than in the northern. There was more meat.

**PORTER:** The food that they gave us was the food that the people wanted in each case. They had different habits of eating in the homes where they'd been raised.

**MAUNDER:** What attention was paid to the productivity of the land after logging? Was there any concern at that time, or was it strictly a matter of logging?

**PORTER:** Well, Burton-Swartz and Bert Scanlon only owned timber. They did not own land, but they had the right to cut the timber. The land still belonged to O'Brian Irwin, who bought it in the first place and sold the timber to them. It was open range for grazing, and a sorry breed of cattle were all over the range. Some of them would even die in the winter from ticks and screw worms or just starve to death. Fire was quite common in the woods. The cattlemen would burn the woods to make fresh grass for the cattle, and there was very little chance of doing anything as far as forestry was concerned, to keep fire out as long as it was open range. In the pine woods, the turpentine industry was ahead of the logging industry three or four years. The logging job had to follow the turpentine job until we worked up a logging plan for the logging job setting forth where it would go and then finally got the turpentine people to work the areas as we planned to log them. Before that they were going ahead, and we just had to log to keep up with the timber that they were turpentineing. It took some time to change it over. But the income out of turpentineing on a percentage basis amounted to enough to pay all their taxes, and that's why they thought they had a pretty good deal. I made some studies that showed they were losing a lot of timber through heavy turpentineing killing trees, they hadn't given any consideration to what was being lost because of turpentineing too heavily. The practice of turpentineing changed quite a bit back in the thirties. Since that time it's been handled on a conservative basis and doesn't kill as many trees. I was a civil engineer to them, I wasn't a forester because they had no use for one. The time was entirely wrong for anyone who wanted to practice forestry to plan or do anything about it. It wasn't until the thirties that we began to get some fire protection in some places and work under forestry practice.

**MAUNDER:** Did you ever encounter any of the pioneer spokesmen of forestry in the South, Austin Cary...

**PORTER:** Yes, I knew Austin Cary. He came down there to Scanlon in 1930 or '31. We had a drought and some heavy turpentine along the Aucilla River, Mr. Foley had brought him down and drove him through woods where the timber was dying. He said, "Well, Dr. Cary, all this young timber here is dying, and I don't know what it is. And Dr. Cary said, "Oh, I beg to differ with you. That's not young timber. That's just as old as any of the other timber you've got around here." It wasn't so large. It was 14 to 16 inches in diameter, but it was smaller than most of the virgin timber. But because of the turpentine and the drought which caused the water table to drop, it was dying badly. In fact we had a township where most of the pine timber died. We had a salvage operation. The sapwood was stained and rotten, but logs were cut having over eight inches of heartwood. Dr. Cary came back down and spent a day or two with me and looked into the rest of the area to see how much bug damage there was. He explained to me that these IPS beetles were only secondary. They came in behind the drought, where the trees had been weakened either by turpentine or the drought or a combination of the two. We went on to what was known as the goose pasture and we found some southern pine beetle in the loblolly pine in the hammock. He advised me what we'd better do with the southern pine beetle. They are much more dangerous than the IPS beetles when they reach the epidemic stage. He said we ought to cut those infected trees as fast as we could and burn the tops and the bark to prevent the beetles from going to other trees. He said there wasn't much to be done about it because they were going to be there always anyway, and they wouldn't bother too much unless the trees were weakened by drought or heavy turpentine. I'd driven to the woods in an old model-T Ford we had, and coming back that afternoon, while we were riding along across a natural bridge, I glanced over and there he was writing in his notebook. I stopped. He stopped writing as soon as I stopped. He said, "Why did you stop here?" And I said, "I thought you were writing something." He said, "No, go ahead." Nobody could read his notes afterwards. I wonder whether he could, all of his notes when he died were left at the University of Florida and I could not decipher them.

**MAUNDER:** I've seen his notes at the University of Florida, and they're the most illegible things you can possibly imagine.

**PORTER:** Well, he could read them. We went back into camp, I took him out to my house so he could have a bath. I thought maybe he wanted to go get the red bugs and ticks off. He went ahead and bathed, and when he got through, I bathed and changed and came out in the living room. He sat there in his socks. He hadn't put his shoes on. I said, "Do your feet hurt?" He said, "Oh, no." and when my wife had dinner ready, he came and sat down at the table, and he never put his shoes back on. He was really quite an individual. I remember four or five years after that when I was in Lake City, Florida at the branch hotel, I saw him sitting at a desk in the lobby. I went over and I said, "Dr. Cary, how are you?" He said, "Oh, hello," and turned right around and went on writing as though he did not know me. I went across the lobby and started talking to someone else. He finished whatever he was writing, then got up and came over and just talked

about everything. The story about him though that tickled me as much as anything was told to me by Harold Newins, who started the forestry school at Gainesville, Florida. He told me about his experience with Dr. Cary over at Oregon Agricultural College when he was teaching out there. Harold Newins went on his honeymoon through the canal to the West Coast and ended up in Oregon teaching. He said while he was out there, he heard Dr. Cary was coming to the college. When he came, he asked him to come on out and stay at his house. He took him upstairs to his room and left him. Professor Newins changed clothes and came down the back stairs into the kitchen. His wife was standing in the middle of the kitchen just wringing her hands, and he said, "What's the matter?" And she said, "I don't know what to do." And he said, "Well, what is the matter?" And she said, "Dr. Cary is in there sitting down at the table eating his salad, and the guests haven't come yet. I don't know what to do." So he said, "Don't you worry, I'll go in and talk to him." He went in and said, "Dr. Cary, dinner's not quite ready. We're waiting for others to come." Dr. Cary said, "Oh, yes." And he just kept on eating his salad. Newins said, "Dr. Cary, we've got some more guests coming. You don't have to start eating now." Cary replied, "You know, let me tell you. I was lost one time for two days out in the woods in Oregon. The only thing I had to eat was a little seven-inch trout that I was able to get out of a hole in the creek, and I ate that raw and without any salt either. I promised myself that when I was hungry and I got where there was something to eat, I was going to eat." He came into my office on the third floor of the post office in Gainesville, Florida, the day before he died. He walked in the door, and I looked up and saw him. He came over and sat down in a chair, and he was breathing a little heavy. I said, "Dr. Cary, why are you breathing heavy? Have you been hurrying?" He said, "No, I came up those stairs." And I said, "Well, there's an elevator." I was on the third floor. He said, "Yes, but it was somewhere else and I couldn't wait. And he'd walked up those three flights of stairs. He sat there and talked for half an hour. He said he was going to Starke with some of the boys from school. Well, the next night about six o'clock, Newins called me and said Dr. Cary died that afternoon out there at the school. He was trying to get back to the forestry school but got into the horticultural building and walked up stairs to the second floor. Somebody came along and said, "Where is the forestry school? I thought it was up here?" And he answered, "No, it's over there. And he pointed out a window toward another building Dr. Cary turned around and started to go back to the stairs but just slumped over against the wall and died. They took him on back to Lake City funeral house. They had the funeral the next afternoon. There were only about 35 people there. He had friends all over the whole South, I know, but word didn't get to very many people, so there weren't very many who got there.

**MAUNDER:** He's getting to be quite a legend, isn't he?

**PORTER:** Of course. They named the University Forest after him, and put a big Maine boulder out in front with a plaque on it, and planted 71 or 72 (or whatever age he was) slash pine trees around it.

**MAUNDER:** How important do you feel he was in the whole development of the South as far as forestry is concerned?

**PORTER:** Very important. Of course, he had a specialized job. He had a free-lance function and could do as he saw fit. He went from lumberman to lumberman. He didn't fuss about what they were doing. He'd sit down and talk about this and that and ask why couldn't you do this or that. And he'd give very good reasons within the things they were doing as to how they could continue to do what they had been doing. Mr. House of the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company at Century, Florida converted all of his property into continual growing forest property, which was almost entirely because Dr. Cary would come by there and suggest this or that. So he ended up with a property there that is worth several million dollars, when other sawmill people cut over all their land and quit.

**MAUNDER:** What year was this that this man House decided to make a continuous growing property?

**PORTER:** I don't know that you tie it to a year, but Mr. House is still living. You could talk to him.

**MILLER:** Was it in the 1920's that this happened?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MILLER:** Well, earlier than the 1920s no one thought of forestry as you're talking about it--productivity of land after logging. It just wasn't possible. What would be the ability of this individual to accomplish this with his company land as compared with other individuals?

**PORTER:** Well, in the community where his timber was, there were not as many cattle on the open range. And a large percentage of his stands were long leaf, and the fires in long leaf didn't hurt nearly as badly. He just continued to leave some trees where they were. I've seen other examples where people tried to do something with forestry. Jefferson County, Florida, the Standard Lumber Company at one time decided they'd leave two or three seed trees to the acre in one area. But lightning, wind or fire got those trees, and the reproduction never really got anywhere. There were certainly some elements of a try at something one way or another. But they had some systems of fire control, there was very little that could be done in a constructive manner.

**MAUNDER:** How was it that the southern landowners (I'm speaking now of the companies) were unable to organize cooperative fire protection such as began in the Pacific Northwest in about 1909 among owners of large acreages?

**PORTER:** Well, comparatively speaking, I don't know as I'd say. The turpentine industry preceded the logging in the South. They'd stay three or four years ahead of the sawmills cutting the virgin timber, they came out of North Carolina and out of Texas down in south Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, and then there wasn't any other place for them to go, so they began then turpentinizing second-growth timber. The turpentine practice was to rake and burn. Well, first they'd burn the woods, hang the tins and cups on the virgin timber. Before 1900 they cut boxes in the tree to catch this gum. Then Dr. Herty came up with this clay cup and began the practice of getting the gum into a cup. Each year thereafter they would rake around the tree with a hoe, get all the trash away and burn the woods again. They had quite an investment in the work and cups and tins, which would be burned if the fire got to it. The kind of fire protection they had was actually to burn the pine woods.

**MAUNDER:** Then too, they had a different attitude in the West towards grazing, didn't they?

**PORTER:** They didn't have quite the same problem out there as in the South. There wasn't a tradition of burning the woods to bring on grass. A fire in the western woods, when it got dry enough to start and with the openings they made with logging, got so hot when the dry winds came in that they'd burn the stands to the crown. But, in most of the southern pine woods, the fires would run through them year after year, and they stayed more or less open. When they burned the grass every year, it very seldom got up into the crown. They didn't build up enough fuel on the ground, except in some hammocks and a few places, that the fire would get to the crown to completely destroy everything as it did in the West. There wasn't the risk and hazard to the people down there.

**MILLER:** You mean Carbur Logging Company allowed people to use their woods for grazing and then allowed them to burn those woods over in the spring time?

**PORTER:** Yes, if you'd call it allowance. The cattle men were there first. They were using it before, and they just continued to use it. It was open range to everybody.

**MILLER:** No, I'm speaking of the lands such as those that were logged by the Carbur Logging Company. You mentioned the Carbur Logging Company was logging the timber off and that somebody else owned the land in fee simple. I'm speaking of these lands that were owned by particular people. You mean then that cattle men were allowed to just come on to those lands and graze?

**PORTER:** Well, there was nothing much they could do about it. It was their right to use it, so they thought, and there wasn't anything the landowner could do until there was a law, which was only recently passed, that changed that situation. The cattle and hogs that were on the open range were an important property of those people.

**MAUNDER:** People weren't allowed to protect their property down there the way they were...

**PORTER:** No, not like you can for your garden or house.

**MAUNDER:** Not your woodlands.

**MILLER:** You mean there was a law on the statute books forbidding a private owner.

**PORTER:** There was no law to protect.

**MILLER:** But, if he were to protect his land in some way--maybe this was impossible to do.

**PORTER:** Practically, so, yes, because there were too many individuals with cattle on the range. Talk about some characters in that country, there were a few things I've seen down there. Hitchcock told me somebody had left a note on old man McPhail's porch and told him to get the pine superintendent at Carbur out of that camp in a month. He got a hold of Franklin and wanted to know what to do. And he said, "Well, I don't know." He asked a few foremen who had sent the note, and they didn't know too much. Franklin kept on trying to find out who it was who sent this note, and one day he got a hold of a 19 year old little, short fellow named Bill Towles and he said, "Bill, you know everybody in this whole country, and you know who sent this note asking me to get out of Taylor County, and you're going to tell me." And Bill said, "I'm not going to tell you at all." Franklin said, "Yes, you are." Franklin was a great big fellow about 220 pounds. The next day Franklin started on him again. He said, "You know and you're going to tell me." Bill said, "No, I'm not. If you want to know so bad, I won't tell you, but I can take you to where the fellow lives." Franklin said, "All right. Take me now in my car." Franklin had his half-brother in the car with him. Bill Towles got in the front seat with Franklin and told him to take this road and another road and they went out in the woods just winding on roads here and there back out around Cypress Pond, and came upon a trail which went through the woods and out around in front of Martin Towles house (who was Bill's brother). And Bill says, "Stop here just a minute." He opened the door of the car, and Martin walked out on the porch. Bill turned around and said, "Come on, get out right here." Franklin said, "What for?" And Bill answered, "You wanted to go see the fellow that sent you that note." The Towles boys pulled Franklin out of that car and beat him up, and they told his half-brother in the back seat to stay in there or they'd beat him up. And they said, "If you aren't out of Taylor County by sundown (this was in the morning), you're never going to leave Taylor County." He left and was across the river and out of there before night.

**MILLER:** What did they have against him?



**PORTER:** Well, he'd been messing around with some fellow's wife or something. He was probably kind of a stinker anyway. Well, he left and he didn't come back for maybe five or six years. When he did come back, he went down to Buck Town and worked in a log camp a little while there, then set up a little gyp joint down near Nutall Rise where a couple of roads cross in the woods. He sold whiskey and had dances or whatnot. He came home one night and his wife shot him. He'd just start beating her up, and she killed him. These Towles owned more cattle than anybody else did, I think. They just sold out recently to Buckeye Cellulose, who have a pulp mill on Brooks-Scanlon's old sawmill site.

**MAUNDER:** Did you ever have any experience with the moonshiners?

**PORTER:** We found stills in the woods but we never reported them. When we were running lines out in the woods, we'd just keep on going and pay no attention. One afternoon I was staking out some railroad. We'd left a car over in Strickland's yard south of Covington, and we'd run this line of stakes a mile or a mile and a half back up in the woods. Instead of going clear back and out the same way we'd come in, I said, "It's only a half mile across here to the pine woods. We can save a mile and a half or two miles walking. We came out at the edge of the pine woods, onto a cattle trail and alongside a creek and came around a titi pond, and there was a boy sitting in a little fenced-in place. He was tending fire at the still. It was Strickland's boy from the same place we left the car. We looked at the boy, he looked up at us, and we said hello and kept right on going. We went out, got in the air, started down the road, and had gone just about a mile below Strickland's house when we met the game warden, who also worked for the sheriff, going towards Strickland's. One of the boys said, "I hope he doesn't go raid that still, or we'll be blamed for telling on him." Two days later we found out that he had gone right on up there and raided that still. We never said a word. We looked for Strickland to try to latch on to us, but he never said a word about it one way or the other. We hadn't told anybody, but it looked as if we had.

When Bill McCain, who cruised the timber of Carpenter O'Brian for Brooks-Scanlon before they bought it, was cruising up at the township line right by the Stricklands' house, he said he got up to Strickland's rail and Strickland, who was in the field, said, "Get back over that fence." And he had a shotgun and he said, "And what's more, you just get out of here." Bill McCain, who was quite a talker, tried to talk to him. Strickland said, "This is my land. You're not going to cross my land. In fact, that's my land you're on out there." Bill tried to reason with him about what he was there for and so on, and said, "No, this is mine, take off." He was really a squatter, and the land he fenced he still claimed and owned. But the survey was on the west side of that township. There was an extra five chains, a tally that somebody dropped in the original survey, and there was a strip five chains wide that didn't appear in the regular description until you ran out the township line. The Strickland's claim on that whole strip five chains wide and six miles long is amusing because the way he was putting it,

it wasn't on the record to anyone else. We'd run across plenty of stills out there but never had any particular trouble except usually they'd want you to drink some of the stuff.

**MAUNDER:** Did they make pretty good moonshine?

**PORTER:** Well, they sold it pretty raw ordinarily. Some of them would age, put it in a keg, and put charcoal in it, depending on the market they had. That's still going on right now.

**MAUNDER:** Was it made in any quantity and shipped out in quantity, or was it just local small batch stuff?

**PORTER:** It was mostly small and for the local market. Another time I was with Bill McCain down at the mouth of the Wasissa River. We walked down through the hammock to Nuthall Rise and about two miles through the woods. We'd asked a fellow to meet us down there that afternoon. We found there were five or six 50-gallon barrels of mash. You could smell it before you got to it. There was no still running or anything. This was just left to nature.

**MAUNDER:** This is Elwood Maunder speaking from Mobile, Alabama on February 7, 1964. I'm making the second of a series of interviews with Mr. Earl Porter, who has recently retired from an executive position in the woodlands department of the southern division of the International Paper Company. You were born in what community?

**PORTER:** Indian Lake, New York.

**MAUNDER:** And the date?

**PORTER:** November 28, 1898.

**MAUNDER:** And your parents' names?

**PORTER:** My father's name was Asa Porter and my mother's name was Margaret. Her name was McCarthy before she was married.

**MAUNDER:** And your father's occupation?

**PORTER:** At that time he worked in the woods like a lot of people in the North, and he farmed. He was a carpenter several times too, actually.

**MAUNDER:** He was a basically a farmer though, I take it?

**PORTER:** Most of the woods workers at that time farmed in the summer and worked in the woods in the winter.

**MAUNDER:** And when was he a carpenter?

**PORTER:** Well, a farmer is a jack of all trades, but he had worked in construction of houses in a good many places. Later in Gloversville he worked almost entirely down at the locomotive works in Schenectady as a carpenter.

**MAUNDER:** I see. Your family had been resident there for many generations?

**PORTER:** Well, my father's family came into that community with the original ones from Vermont, and my mother's family came up the Hudson River with the railroad construction. The railroad was built to North Creek, and there it stopped. They homesteaded and stayed there.

**MAUNDER:** But both sides of your family had been in this country for a long period of time?

**PORTER:** My mother's family (her father and mother) came directly from Ireland.

**MAUNDER:** Her father and mother came directly from Ireland and migrated up the railroad?

**PORTER:** Yes. She was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

**MAUNDER:** I see. And your father's family had gone back further in American history?

**PORTER:** Yes. On his mother's side it went back to Governor Bradford of Connecticut.

**MAUNDER:** Is that right? Where did you go to school, Earl, in the early part of your childhood?

**PORTER:** Well, the first school I went to was at Riverside, New York. Riparius was the post office. Our farm was in three school districts. We went to school there sometimes and then we went to Weavertown sometimes, depending on where we thought the best teachers were and the transportation was--well, there wasn't any transportation except walking anyway. And then we sold the farm so my older brother could get to high school. There was no high school in the area at that time, so we went to Gloversville. Some of my older brothers got through high school, and then the farm we'd sold backfired and the owner wasn't able to pay it off. So we moved back to the farm when

the housing boom in Gloversville dropped off some. We lived on the farm, and I finished high school at North Creek.

**MAUNDER:** But you had originally moved away from the farm in order to provide a better access to high school education, is that it?

**PORTER:** Yes, for my older brother. And I started high school in Gloversville.

**MAUNDER:** You did describe to some extent the work you did on your father's farm. Especially work in the woods on the farm cutting logs and things like that.

**PORTER:** Yes, there was some timber land, as most farms have all over the country. Most farms have reverted to timber land entirely now on that type of original homestead farm. If you needed any lumber, you'd just cut the logs and take them to the sawmill, get the lumber cut and take it home to use for anything. He generally paid his taxes by cutting pulpwood for cash. We'd cut the pulpwood in the spring when it would peel, peel it, and then in the fall when the crops were in, we'd get it together and after snow came cut it up and haul it to the railroad or river for shipment to the mills.

**MAUNDER:** You mentioned a young friend who went with you and worked in a lumber camp one winter, but you didn't give his name. Do you remember who he was?

**PORTER:** Irving Savage.

**MAUNDER:** And how old were you fellows at that time?

**PORTER:** Well, I was only 16, and he was probably 19 or 20.

**MAUNDER:** Do you remember the name of the company which ran that camp that you worked in?

**PORTER:** We really worked for a jobber. His name was Robert Bibby, and he had a job to put out so many logs or wood for the Schroon River and Paper Company at Warrensburg. S-c-h-r-o-o-n.

**MAUNDER:** He was a logging contractor, in other words.

**PORTER:** Yes, they called them jobbers. He hired his own crew, and he cut and delivered the logs to the lake. From there they were driven down the Schroon River to the mill.

**MAUNDER:** Do you remember approximately what year this was when you first worked?

**PORTER:** That was in the winter of 1915 and '16.

**MAUNDER:** Then later on you went to the Rangers School in New York.

**PORTER:** Yes. When my brother and myself graduated from high school in North Creek in 1915. Our house burned the week afterwards, and my older brothers and Dad all went to work somewhere else. I stayed at home and kept the farm until the crops were in, and when they were in, I had no job. So that's how I came to go to the lumber camp that winter. The money I earned that winter in the lumber camp, I used to go to teachers' training school in Onconta that summer. Although I wasn't old enough to teach, I got a permit to teach at 17. I taught for a year and a half at Lenz Lake near Stony Creek.

**MAUNDER:** That was elementary school?

**PORTER:** Yes, it was a grade school. It was the district school there.

**MAUNDER:** And you had all the grades?

**PORTER:** Well, most of the schools had all the grades, but I had only from two to four pupils in that class, so I only had about three grades. The money that I earned there, I used to go to the Ranger School at Wankena. It was part of the New York State University.

**MAUNDER:** Do you remember some of the fellows that were in school with you at the Ranger School.

**PORTER:** Yes, I think I remember most of them.

**MAUNDER:** Have you kept contact with them for a long time?

**PORTER:** Well, there's only one that I've had contact with, and that is Gordon Bade. He came from Lyons, New York, and I worked with him following that, two different times. The first time was with the U.S. Forest Service and the next time was in our own business there. Following that he got married and went out to Arizona and has been there ever since. He's retired from the Forest Service.

**MAUNDER:** How do you spell his name?

**PORTER:** B-a-d-e.

**PORTER:** One other fellow from there, Wilber Bradder, spent most of his career afterwards in the state of Vermont with the State Forest Service. I've seen him a few times.

**MAUNDER:** Bradder?

**PORTER:** That's right. In fact, I went up to the Ranger School last summer, and his boy had finished there and was over there at a meeting.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, you formed some friendships in the school there that were lifetime friendships. Have you subsequently, in your other work, hired men who were graduates of that school?

**PORTER:** Yes, I think we have hired about 12 or 15 fellows from the Rangers School. A good many of them went to Syracuse or Michigan and elsewhere and got additional degrees.

**MAUNDER:** After finishing Ranger School?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** We had gone along with the story of your time with Brooks Scanlon as a logging engineer in Florida from 1929 to 1933, and it was about at that point that we ran out of time on the interview in Washington. So I would like to pick it up again from that point and ask you to bring us along through the years after you left Brooks Scanlon. First of all, I presume that you left Brooks Scanlon in 1933, perhaps because of depression conditions? Is that true?

**PORTER:** Yes, actually Harold Foley, who was manager, of Florida operations at that time, called me into the woods one day and asked if I knew Harry Baker and Al Folweller (Florida State Forester and his assistant). I told him I did. He said, "I want you to take a couple of fellows up and introduce them to him." Those fellows were Major Tucker and Harry Goodrich. He said that they had some jobs up there and might offer me a job. He said, "If they do, why you can go, but not for good, because we want you back here. Of course, as you know right now, we've got four people that can run all of the logging that we've got. He said, "We're only running one camp and the mill 40 hours a week, and we can't use them all." What happened was that old man McPhail retired and turned it over to Hitchcock to run the job. Old man Charley Borklund was put in as skidder foreman, they turned over the saws to me. We just had to take care of the people at that time. Brooks Scanlon was just very conscious of their people and trying to take care of them any way they could under the circumstances.

**MAUNDER:** I take it that the Foleys were a very fine bunch of people to work under?

**PORTER:** They were very human, yes. So I went to Tallahassee with these fellows and introduced them up there. They were starting CCC camps at the time, and they were interviewing people to help with the management of those camps from a project standpoint of the work that they might do.

**MAUNDER:** They were actually in the process of setting up the camps and bringing the boys in, or was this before the law had actually been...

**PORTER:** No, the Florida Forest Service was establishing camps in Florida. And they were interviewing people so as to have personnel to man the supervision within the camps themselves.

**MAUNDER:** Before the boys arrived.

**PORTER:** Yes. Well, they interviewed several people the day that we were up there, which was a Wednesday. Friday Harry Goodrich called me and said that three of us who were up there were to report at Eastport (A bunch of boys were arriving there Sunday). That camp was the first camp within the state that they had brought in. All three of us went over there and stayed with those CCC camps. That was when I left Brooks Scanlon. Supposedly I was, in a sense, only loaned, as Harold Foley had told me.

**MAUNDER:** Now, what was your first job with CCC? What were you, what was your title?

**PORTER:** Well, Harry Goodrich and I were given jobs as project engineer, they called us. We laid out projects that the boys would work on.

**MAUNDER:** And these were the first such plans in Florida. I presume they were among the first in the United States. Is that true?

**PORTER:** Well, among the first, yes. They were some other camps started within that month.

**MAUNDER:** Now, what were these plans that you laid out?

**PORTER:** Well, within the state they were limited to the work they could do. The projects had to be laid out so that they would provide work for the boys. The camps that we were handling for the Florida Forest Service were developing fire controls systems and methods for prevention and control of forest fires in the state of Florida. It was in cooperation with the private land owners who had contracts with the Forest Service for fire control on their lands. So it was a public job from that standpoint, although it was on privately owned land.

**MAUNDER:** Your plans in the initial stages anyway were restricted pretty largely to fire control.

**PORTER:** Yes. Laying out fire brakes, access roads to get in to fight fire, and the construction of fire towers and facilities so that fire control organizations could function in the control of forest fire.

**MAUNDER:** Fire, then was still the principal problem of the southern woods?

**PORTER:** From the forestry standpoint, yes. Up until that time they had just been logging the virgin timber, and then the naval stores were starting to operate on some of the second-growth timber when the virgin timber was disappearing. Fires were quite prevalent and common in fact.

**MAUNDER:** How much of an impact did the CCC have in dealing with the fire problem in the South? Do you think this was an enterprise of some importance in the history of dealing with fire problems?

**PORTER:** Yes. Within the South it provided tools that had never been available before for fighting fires. And it also called the problem to the attention of the people and the landowners themselves. But the financial return from their trees was not enough for them to spend too much money on fire protection at that time.

**MAUNDER:** The problem had been talked about and there had been conferences and congresses held.

**PORTER:** There were Forest Services set up in most of the southern states at the time, and they were the vehicle within which the CCC had to operate on private lands. Most of the land in the South is private land.

**MAUNDER:** But these agencies of state government were still rather poorly supported in terms of annual budgets, in manpower and equipment, and so on.

**PORTER:** About all they could do would be to have educational work and get contracts with the owners whereby they paid part of the cost and perhaps furnished observation for fires. But their budget was very meager.

**MAUNDER:** Well, then they must have seen this CCC as quite a great help for their work.

**PORTER:** Yes, it was an opportunity to expand and it brought to the attention of the people as a whole that their industry could get legislation or appropriations to expand the activity.



**MAUNDER:** Who was then head of the state foresters?

**PORTER:** Harry Lee Baker was the State Forester of Florida.

**MAUNDER:** And how much did Harry have in the way of staff back in those days before the CCC?

**PORTER:** His staff itself, including his district foresters scattered throughout the state, were about 10 or 12 people, and he had maybe a half dozen in his office. The rest were scattered in the field.

**MAUNDER:** That would include fire wardens?

**PORTER:** No, in addition they might have some fire lookouts and wardens. And they had a nursery at Raiford where prisoners raised the tree seedlings.

**MAUNDER:** Of course, then, a good part of the planning that you laid out for the CCC was in the nature of building trails and roads?

**PORTER:** Fire brakes and telephone lines and fire towers.

**MAUNDER:** And in the long haul this work may have possibly contributed something materially important to the great expansion of the pulp and paper industry after the depression or even before the end of the depression. Because didn't this tend to open up the land to pulp and paper operations more than it had been?

**PORTER:** Well, they had a little feeling of security that there would have been protection for any timber they owned. Prior to that there was practically no protection, and since it was open range, the cattlemen would burn the entire area and they couldn't reproduce a continuing crop of timber. It was a really a springboard for developing the practice of forestry. But the pulp and the paper industry really followed that phase. Although there were a few pulp and paper mills scattered throughout the South, most of the early ones were set up to use waste from sawmills. The slab edgings limbs, and wood, and so on were available close in, and they had to get it from close in because of the cost of transportation. There weren't transportation facilities to move very far. The forest survey that Cap Eldredge made was the first factual survey made in the South of the timber supply that existed. It put down on paper the volume of wood and timber that was available for use, knowing that there was really an attraction to the paper mills, that there was this much wood there. They had no facts prior to that time to know that there was that much timber available within the area, even though the reproducing of it and so on was somewhat questionable.

**MAUNDER:** Wasn't there also a problem of how to get this material out of backwoods areas to mill sites? There was all this pulpwood growing. But the South was still, in the thirties, an area that was relatively undeveloped and without very good road systems, wasn't it? There were roads here, but not nearly like those we now have.

**PORTER:** Well, there were dirt and clay roads, and the railroads were left from the sawmill industry, the nucleus of them. But the techniques used now have been entirely developed since that time. The improvement of the roads and the cars on the railroad system and so on did reduce the labor cost considerably and the cost of transportation to the mills. The system has been constantly being perfected right up to this point.

**MAUNDER:** What I'm trying to get at here is this. The depression was a period in which there was a lot of work made for people by CCC and WPA and one relief agency or another. This was also a period in which the federal government moved in with funds to help the states build roads and do things which needed to be done at the state level. All of this tended, in some respects, to change the physical face of things down here and elsewhere in the country, too. But here in the South in particular it opened the country up more, it provided new roads, it provided cheaper means of transportation for the new industry that was moving in. I just wonder to what extent you see this as being a factor of some importance. It may be one good thing that came out of the depression, I don't know. I'm trying to find out if this is something you see as a real historic factor.

**PORTER:** Yes, there's no doubt the expansion moved in. It was a combination of many things. Jobs for the people were the chief thing that was needed. And then, of course, the agricultural activities--row cropping and that type of thing--were not too much for the younger generation that was coming along because a farm would only support so many. When the children tried to find new jobs, they had to look elsewhere. And the mills had always provided a source of employment for a part of them. But money, not only the federal money that came in but the industry money that came in, was important. I'm not in favor of federal money too much because it's created an inflation that leaves an uneasiness on the part of industry and people and everything else because people lean on Washington and they lose incentive to do things within their individual states and homes. Well, now you can stand on the outside and criticize that awfully quickly and say, "But they're not doing it themselves. We'll do it for them." That's just like going to Africa and pulling somebody out of the jungle and trying to do something with him when he doesn't want it or isn't ready for it or anything else if you go too fast. There were a lot of real smart people that were ready to follow through with things as soon as the opportunity arose. These things that you mentioned provided an opportunity to expand. And they have expanded real fast. With the climate and long growing seasons and less cost for fuel and housing and those types of things, they are able to do things cheaper than they're done under the strenuous circumstances that they have to face in the northern country. It could be done easier

and cheaper with better results because you can do it on a continuous basis and you don't have to do it seasonally. All these things together really helped. People saw the opportunity and moved in with a little business of this and that--the fillings stations and garages and grocery stores and movie theaters created jobs for the younger generation coming on. So many went into business for themselves. The small business is really an important part of the whole thing.

**MAUNDER:** You have a feeling then that this tended to slow down the pace of migration of people out of this region?

**PORTER:** Oh, very definitely. There wasn't any place for them to go.

**MAUNDER:** And this gave them a new opportunity?

**PORTER:** Yes, and they took a hold of it very well. With the cotton crops falling out so that they had to mechanize to stay in competition with other planters, the pulp and paper industry moved in and expanded so fast that they took up the unemployed labor. People who were working with cotton and who had a meager living are getting a good living now working in the pulp and paper industry. Of course, there are always some that won't work.

**MAUNDER:** Have many of these people given up the ownership of their poor farm lands and gone to work for industry?

**PORTER:** The generation that owned their own farm are probably continuing to live on them but work at other jobs. They commute.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, dirt farming.

**PORTER:** Yes. And then the other thing is the expansion of population. The children themselves have gone to the towns and villages away from the farm because there was nothing else for them to do there.

**MAUNDER:** What can you tell us further, Earl, about the years when you were with the CCC? You were an engineer, a project superintendent, a coordinator of CCC camps. You were all were things, weren't you?

**PORTER:** Yes, it was progressive. It was over there at Eastport. The engineers laid out the projects for the jobs to be worked from that camp, and they trained some project engineers there and moved them then to other camps. They put out some 20 odd camps in the state. Major Tucker was made coordinator of all of the camps to start with. Harry Goodrich and I were given camps as project superintendents elsewhere.

**MAUNDER:** Where?

**PORTER:** Sebring, Florida. There was a camp down there setting up fire control for Highlands County. I was there a year and then went over to Hillsborough County as they moved a camp to Tampa to work on the fire control system there. Then they asked me to take a camp that was at Green Cove Springs to Sarasota at Myakka State Park. We developed the Myakka State Park on the Myakka River.

**MAUNDER:** How many fellows were involved in these camps?

**PORTER:** Well, in each camp there were 200 boys, and then there were the Army personnel, generally two or three sergeants, to handle the projects. They usually had about six or eight superintendents and engineers. The boys did all the rest of the work. Then they had some what they call "Lems," which were local experienced men who were enrollees in the camp. But they gave them another \$15 a month, and they acted and functioned as foremen with the crews and helping out on detail.

**MAUNDER:** You were superintendent of a project which had more or less to do with overseeing the work that was actually done out in the woods. The military, I presume, had control over the discipline and the housing.

**PORTER:** They were responsible for the boys--feeding and housing, and the using of service, as they called the working side of the thing, were responsible for the boys when they took them away from camp, to work, that the Army fed them.

**MAUNDER:** Where did most of these kids come from that you were working with down there?

**PORTER:** Well, the camps that I was actually in charge of were all Florida boys.

**MAUNDER:** City boys?

**PORTER:** No, they were from everywhere. When I first went down to Sebring, I got in on Sunday. Monday morning I was supposed to go to work, so I just took the boys out in the woods. I lined them up to see who was there. I found four boys that had worked for me before, and I took them out and put them to work laying out the projects--chaining and staking out fire break lanes that we started to work on at that time. A good many of the camps that we had, they came in from other--I mean within the state. Later when I was working in the camps, all the state camps there, later there were boys from all over. Some were from Brooklyn in the North and Alabama and Florida. Some camps were World War I veterans only.

**MAUNDER:** So you had experience working with youngsters from all over the country. Is that right?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes.

**MAUNDER:** Did you find that there was any great difference in, let's say, working with kinds from Brooklyn and working with others whom you were more familiar with down there?

**PORTER:** Yes, their attitude was entirely different. They were just there and didn't seem to have any sense of responsibility for doing anything at all. They would just do what they had to do, but local boys who had been raised down here enjoyed working seeing how much they could accomplish. There was a big difference. For one thing, the city boys had no background of training for that type of thing. For another, they didn't have the attitude that they were responsible for anything at all, not even being there. They had to really change their attitude. But most of them within three to six months got the idea that they could do something and took hold.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, it did have an impact on their character?

**PORTER:** Yes, it changed their outlook because most of these boys, with the exception of probably some of the Florida boys, never worked very much in their life. They never had the opportunity. There had never been a job in those depression years for them. It wasn't their fault.

**MAUNDER:** Did you derive any insights in to how to inspire these city kids? What did you find was effective in bringing them around to a different attitude?

**PORTER:** From a standpoint of discipline and understanding, the Army or Navy or whoever were managing the camp carried on quite a project of education and pictures on patriotism, reasons for doing the work, what the fire control meant, how the timber was used and the purpose it served. But it took a period of time before they seemed to realize that it had a very definite purpose, and there were some that never did. The Army discharged quite a few.

**MAUNDER:** Well, there are always incorrigibles.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** You feel that there were enough of them that did get the message and probably profit by it?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes.

**MAUNDER:** What would you say of the total pattern of the CCC? Do you think that using the Army to manage the disciplinary aspects of the camp and so on and the mobilization of civilian forestry specialists to do the planning and overseeing of the actual work in the woods turned out to be the most effective way of doing the job, or are there better ways, do you think?

**PORTER:** Well, under the circumstances, it did work out very well as soon as the parties understood what they were trying to do. Of course, they were starting from scratch with no precedent to start with. There was a lot of confusion, but as soon as their responsibilities were definitely outlined, it worked very well, I'd say, officially. But the Army and the Navy activities you can't say are efficient. They're doing a job and serving the purpose of clothing and feeding and so on, but here's no direct economic return from it. We attempted to develop the projects in an efficient manner so that the things we did would have an economic value in the future in the building up of the country, and it definitely did in the greatest percent of the cases. However, with the labor and working from scratch, it didn't develop the same efficiency that a fellow actually in business would have developed or as quickly. Of course, we were spending dollars that weren't coming back.

**MAUNDER:** That's right. You were employing very unskilled people to start with to do the work, whereas if you had been doing this in business, you would have only hired skilled people, people who were at least knowledgeable about working in the woods.

**PORTER:** But, we did set up systems for training and doing the different things.

**MAUNDER:** Did any of these boys ever stay with you or come back to work with you later on?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes, they have jobs all over, the whole group of them. They've become very stable citizens.

**MAUNDER:** Perhaps this set some of them off on a course they've followed all their lives.

**PORTER:** Yes, I know a lot of boys as a result of this program got interested in the outdoor work, took forestry afterwards, and followed on through. And a good many went into other fields of engineering and so on. But one of the biggest things was for them to have something to do. Six months after the camps started in Florida, the warden at Balford State Prison Farm talked to a group of the supervisory personnel and said that he knew how much good the program had done. He said that prior to the starting of these camps, 75 to 80 percent of the inmates at Raeford were less than 25

years old, and as soon as they put these camps into effect six months later, the new inmates coming in dropped to less than 20 percent.

**MAUNDER:** That's giving them something useful to do.

**PORTER:** Yes. They get in less trouble.

**MAUNDER:** Do you see any possibility of using this same kind of thing again in the face of the rising number of unemployed young people in this country?

**PORTER:** I don't think it would be adaptable because you've got a different factor entirely. You've got a very prosperous country at the present time, and a large percentage of the unemployment is natural, I think. Five or six percent is not unnatural, from the standpoint of today's economics.

**MAUNDER:** Earl, I'd like to just start out in this last stage of our interview by reviewing just a little bit of what's gone before and getting you into a new area in the interview. You spent the years 1938 to 1963 in positions of high responsibility in the International Paper Company. You were first of all, as I understand it, assigned by an old friend, Joseph E. McCaffrey, to take his place as the district superintendent of International Paper at Camden, Arkansas. Is that right?

**PORTER:** That's right.

**MAUNDER:** And that was in 1938. Some time later, however, you became general superintendent of woodlands for the company here at Mobile, Alabama. Now when did this actual change from the job at Camden take place and you moved over to Mobile?

**PORTER:** That was in 1941.

**MAUNDER:** Do you remember the conditions under which that change took place? Was there a general movement upward among the people of the company because of retirement, or what was the change?

**PORTER:** The importance of the woodlands as such was being recognized to a greater extent because of the need for raw material for the increased number of mills that they had. It became necessary within their thinking of management that they should have a woodlands department in the Southern Kraft Corporation. Mr. C. O. Brown and Joe McCaffrey were putting together this organization. They called me in from Camden, Arkansas, to look after the company lands and N. R. "Zeke" Harding, district man in Panama City, came out to Arkansas and took my place out there.

**MAUNDER:** Would you say, Earl, that industrial forestry really began to go into high gear about this time?

**PORTER:** As far as the Southern Kraft Corporation, yes.

**MAUNDER:** When would you date the beginning of industrial forestry here in the South? What do you think of when you think of the beginning of industrial forestry?

**PORTER:** Well, prior to that time there were a good many sawmills and other paper companies that did have foresters in their organizations to look after what they had. These date in some companies clear back to the early 1900s.

**MAUNDER:** What do you think of as being the real pioneers of industrial forestry here in this section?

**PORTER:** Well, Walter Damtoft was probably the finest man that functioned in that category as such.

**MAUNDER:** He was with the Champion Pulp and Lumber Company?

**PORTER:** He was the Champion man, yes. He's the first one that I recall that was dealing directly in that category. Of course, I don't know all of the details of the other ones, but when the state studied their forestry organizations, there were foresters developed within their organizations who went out into industrial fields. But there were a good many foresters also working for lumber companies in other capacities--in logging or selling of lumber. They had a knowledge of trees and what they got out of them.

**MAUNDER:** They were hardly more than just logging engineers, weren't they?

**PORTER:** Well, there were some logging engineers. They were a good many lumber salesmen who were foresters.

**MAUNDER:** But there was quite a difference between the employment of a forester to do this kind of thing and to actually launch into a program of industrial forestry.

**PORTER:** Well, as far as responsibility for the management of the forest, yes. But the value of the forest prior to that time was not such that forestry was justified as much as later when it had become more valuable.

**MAUNDER:** Champion Paper Company was in one sense, one of the real pioneers, was it not, in seeing the first need for this and in employing a trained professional to begin to mold a program of forest land management?



**PORTER:** Probably so.

**MAUNDER:** Do you think of any other companies that were very nearly at the beginning of this thing? When did International come into the picture?

**PORTER:** Well, of course, at Bogalusa, as an outgrowth of the old great Southern Company they were the first ones to launch a heavy planting program. And they stayed with that and got the first people within the planting program. They were not professional foresters but there were some others that came in soon in the early days because of the plantations they had put in over there. That's Crown Zellerbach now. And, International's first holdings and development were tied in definitely with the mills that they acquired at {QUERY AUTHOR} and in the acquisition of timber land at that time. This made it necessary for them to borrow money to build the mills. They brought down some of the foresters out of their organization in New York. You remember Brinkerhoff. There were about four or five that were down on that survey of lumber company land, which was the first operation that they followed through with.

**MAUNDER:** Would you say that the International Paper Company had an interest in industrial forestry which had already been established in the North before it was applied to its operations in the South.

**PORTER:** Oh, yes.

**MAUNDER:** How much sooner was it done by the company in the North.

**PORTER:** Well the time element, I wouldn't really be able to know.

{QUERY AUTHOR} would be able to answer that because he worked in the New York office in the late twenties.

**MAUNDER:** This is an area in which Mr. Hinman, of course, could supply some answers too.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** Now, Earl, you recall when we first talked to you up in New York, there were some questions about your career in the company. What we need to know about this portion of your career is perhaps best expressed in the following question from the Journal of Forestry: "Probably history will say that the period following and immediately preceding World War II, was of greatest significance to the forestry profession because of the phenomenal increase of industrial effort in the growth of wood crops and the management of land. If so, history will perhaps also observe that the period was one of the most poorly chronicled of all the significant periods in

forestry history, not as to results, but as to the details of how the job was accomplished and how technical forestry work came to be integrated into the activity of industry." Now have you anything that you can tell us about that period that will help to give us some little better detail, some of the ways in which forestry began to move in this period. Especially in the companies such as International Paper. How did it come to be integrated into the activity of industry? How was this idea sold?

**PORTER:** Well, with the cutting out of the virgin timber in the South in particular which I'm more familiar with, a good many of those companies moved west. What they left in the South was somewhat limited. They attempted to liquidate everything they had. But there were a few companies that had enough timber to carry on for a longer period of time by changing their method or system or cutting slower. This slow-down was the result of the lack of markets during the thirties. It slowed down a good many. And of course, Brooks Scanlon moved the mill over to Foley in Taylor County from Eastport. That was an economic necessity because the cost of moving the logs from there to Eastport was becoming prohibitive. By getting closer to the woods, it made the operation possible. When they moved over there, they thought they might run that mill 10 or 15 years. But when the depression hit, they dropped back to a day shift and sometimes even a 40 hour week, which slowed down their activities and left the timber supply for a greater period of time. Mr. House with the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company at Century, Florida, kind of got the idea that they had a perpetual type of forest they could move on indefinitely. His ideas and theories of that probably came from Dr. Austin Cary, who was a free-lance logging engineer for the United States Forest Service and circulated among a good many of the companies in the South in a very diplomatic way. He was not a pressure salesman (I mean of forestry sales). Then during the depression years, the CCCs had developed a greater activity in that line. But when the forest survey was made by Cap Eldredge in '33, '34, '35, that accumulated quite a lot of foresters into the area. They became familiar clear across the South with all the ideas, and their interest and their availability in the field made people available. Probably in the twenties if they started looking for foresters down here, they would find a few. But they were, of course, tied up with their work. There just were not many people available with the training and education. The facts that were put together in this survey gave information that there was still (even though the virgin timber was gone) an abundance of timber, and it was still growing. They thought the naval stores industry would pass out with the virgin timber. But there was still a market, so they continued to produce turpentine and shifted into second-growth timber. Of course, there were a few people who tried to corner the market on naval stores at the end of the virgin timber time. The Gillikens lost their fortune because they went on down into south Florida, but the virgin timber down there would hardly produce enough turpentine to pay its way under the circumstances. There's a great amount of labor necessary for turpentine. That was a limiting factor. They couldn't or didn't pay enough to really interest quality labor, and yet the people had lived all their lives in it and they worked on out. So it was a carryover in between the saw mills and the

playout of virgin timber and the coming in of the paper mills. But after that timber was turpentined, there was no use for it. The trees were standing there in the way, so the pulp mills made a market for those trees. They began to attract capital and more permanent installations. And with that large investment in plants, it became necessary for them to find ways and means of having a continuous supply of timber in the area. To accomplish this, foresters were put to work to develop ways and means of maintaining and increasing the timber supply. That has made possible the miracle that we have had within the last 25 years.

**MAUNDER:** Well, you've mentioned a number of reasons why this change came about in the management of timber lands in the South. You mentioned the incoming of pulp and paper on a large scale and the natural desire to want to undergird this investment with a growing crop and continue over a long haul to supply it with its needs. There was, on the other hand, an improving market. Obviously the depression was beginning to wane and business was beginning to pick up. There was a tremendous growth in the per capita use of the product. And there were other factors, I'm sure.

**PORTER:** The war demand.

**MAUNDER:** The war demand. And perhaps the delayed reaction to the long period of education that Dr. Cary had spread among a lot of people down here. Selling an idea is not always one of selling it and seeing it blossom into action right away. Much of what Dr. Cary had done was probably only now beginning to come to real fruition. Would you think that might have been a factor, too?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes, that was very important. He planted the seed in a good many people and he did it in a subtle and diplomatic way. He made friends with people rather than coming in and says, "You should be doing this. You should be doing that." He'd say, "Well, this is what can be done," and left it with them, and by doing it that way, planted the seed in their minds.

**MAUNDER:** Do you think there were other factors? It seems to me that the southern states were beginning to recognize the economic plight into which they had come by depending upon cotton and other commodities that were beginning to play out. There was a recognition on the part of these states that new sources of economic strength had to be found and cultivated. Naturally the forest was one of these, and states began to employ their own people to boost this new side of the economy.

**PORTER:** The strengthening of all of the state forestry organizations was very important in providing a base of information in each of the individual states. They encouraged the development of the forests, and most of the states that had these possibilities put on what they called an industrial forester. His entire time was spent visiting plants and others coming in to advise them what conditions they were up

against. As I mentioned the other day, McCaffrey handled that job in the state of Florida for a year or more.

**MAUNDER:** What would you say the role of the schools of forestry were at this time? How much influence were they on this?

**PORTER:** Part of their program in the South and maybe in the North was the visiting by the students of all--the operations of logging and handling of products that they could. Those schools supplied a large percentage of students from the South who were familiar with the people and could work with them much more diplomatically than those coming in from outside. So there was a source of supply of men to do the job that was necessary to be done, as far as that goes. They are not practicing forestry in the South because of any aesthetic idea because it's nice. They practice it because it's an absolute necessity to take care of investments that come in here, and it's developed over a period of time. I know I made the statement 10 or 15 years ago that the South was ten years ahead of the Northeast in forestry because they didn't have the push, the sheer necessity to practice it. And it was probably 15 years ahead of the West, because the West was still working on virgin timber and had no necessity to practice forestry as such. These gaps will close and maybe are closing more. But it was just a necessity to grow the timber down here in order to maintain the existence of the plants, the mills, the jobs, and everything else.

**MAUNDER:** What role do you think the Forest Service had in all this development? Did it have any impact upon the thinking of industry which cause industry to move more rapidly into industrial forestry?

**PORTER:** The Forest Service and the Forest Service experiment stations had information that the private operators would seek to apply to their own operations. There were extension foresters, and experimental forests in every state, and this was a source of information that could be used and put into action. They set up local advisory committees of their citizens as a source of information. They were really very helpful as sources of information. And the schools were furnishing the scientists to work. They had to work closely with what was going on and use this information to educate the students in such a way that they could apply the knowledge that was known. And all the forest schools have their own research.

**MAUNDER:** Of course one of the things we're concerned about here and we're putting these questions to you, Earl, is because we want to see the history of industrial forestry in the South written. Now, what kind of information will be needed to do that story and where will it come from? What questions should it seek to answer? What were the main problems of a company operating as I.P. was in Arkansas in 1938? What were your basic problems?

**PORTER:** Well, in the thirties the basic problems were the management of lands-- taking care of trespass and taxes and fire and determining the amount of money we could spend on them, taking into consideration the value of the timber that we could sell or use from them. The forests would pay their way as a part of the business and at the same time be insurance of a portion of the timber supply for the mills, if and when they were in real difficulty, and thus avoid excess inflation of prices or values or limited market of timber. We never anticipated having enough timber to furnish all the mill needs because there was an outside open market for timber from all the small landowners and sawmills and others that had timber lands as well. Of course, in the South 60 percent of the timber land is owned in small acreages of less than 400 or 500 acres, and so it gets rather complicated with the enormous number of land owners. But the timber is available.

**MAUNDER:** What percentage of the pulpwood that supplied your plant in Camden came from your own lands and what percent came from other sources back in 1938 when you first came with the company? Do you remember?

**PORTER:** Oh, there was less than five percent that came off the company land. They bought the rest of it from the open market.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, what you were selling off your land was primarily timber to the lumber mills.

**PORTER:** Yes. We were cutting pulpwood from the tops, thinnings, and damaged timber following those logging operations. We were building up the growth of the forest and avoiding the losses that would develop from insects and disease. Just the tops left in the woods after the sawmill logging operation.

**MAUNDER:** You were thinning the tops out and using as much as possible for pulpwood and then burning the rest of it, is that right?

**PORTER:** No, we didn't burn it.

**MAUNDER:** You didn't burn it?

**PORTER:** Oh, no.

**MAUNDER:** Well, what did you do with it?

**PORTER:** Well, the rest was just limbs and unusable top but in the South we don't have to burn the slash like you do in the North or West because with the humidity and tropical climate, it deteriorates and rots down to nothing in a couple of years. It isn't any great hazard.

**MAUNDER:** Approximately only five percent of your pulpwood at that time was coming off your own lands.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** What has happened to the picture in the years since then? Have you begun to make greater use of your pulpwood supply gradually, and how has this pattern change?

**PORTER:** Well, we're using more because under the systematic management of the timber, we create more trees than can ever develop into saw logs anyway. But using thinnings that were before just rotting and falling to the ground, we're using those trees now as pulpwood. At the present time it's developed to a point where about 20 percent of the company's supply come from its lands.

**MAUNDER:** How do you think these percentages are likely to change in the foreseeable future?

**PORTER:** With the limitation on the volume of stumpage that they figure necessary from a standpoint of insurance, the percentage needed is increasing as additional mills come in. And increased holding of the timber lands by competitive industries using timber for the same purpose. It will increase, but the general consensus of opinion is that they never want to grow more than a maximum of half of the timber that they may need unless conditions change considerably.

**MAUNDER:** What would you say was the place of forestry in the management structure of your company back in 1938 and how has it changed over the years while you've been with it?

**PORTER:** Well, at that time there was a requirement of the bankers that there be some kind of timber supply behind the plant to which they'd loan their money so that they wouldn't be entirely dependent upon the open market before the building of the mills. The International Paper Company paid up all their debts in '42, and since that time their timber land has been limited to what might be required as insurance in case of hard times. They will then be buying from the outside and using their own lands up to the limit. The general thinking is that most of the lands will grow about half of the timber to go into pulpwood and the other half into saw logs and other type of higher value stumpage products.

**MAUNDER:** What I was getting at with my question, Earl, what place did the forester play in I.P.'s management structure back in 1938? Did he have any real influence on the policy of the company or was he just a hired hand out there in the woods doing a job

that was designed almost in advance for him? How did the forester begin to rise into a position of more and more influence on major matters of policy?

**PORTER:** Well, in the thirties you might say that their assignments were a little bit indefinite. They were to take care of the forest land and sell what was there, but they were not told exactly how to do it. They had to make their own plan for doing it, because the management did not have the knowledge of what they could or couldn't do. When we came into the war, we actually ran into a shortage of manpower and equipment. They didn't have enough wood to run the mills at 100 percent capacity and even some mills, the Bastrop {QUERY AUTHOR} mill, for instance, even closed down in '42 because it couldn't get enough pine in there during that time. Most mills ran to 95 percent during the war. Many times they'd run the mill just off the railroad cars and trucks coming in each day. There was no inventory whatever, and it was just that close as to whether the mill would run or not. Because of the war effort, everybody was doing everything that was possible. Under those circumstances it was called to the attention of the management that the forests were necessary to run their mills. And so following the war they definitely recognized the forestry department to a much greater extent. They'd been able to build some of the growing stock in the lands to the extent that the actual money return on the sales was of quite a value to the company, at this point probably a seventh of the income of the company is coming from the timber lands.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, the proof of the pudding is in the profits?

**PORTER:** That's right, it's with results that you get from the forest that you're able to develop the confidence of management in the financial importance and value of the forests.

**MAUNDER:** And so foresters as such had risen in company management to positions of real power and prestige?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** Would you say that the forester is in the ascendancy of his power, or has any other section of the management structure moved in and taken a position of greater importance from the forester?

**PORTER:** No. They have reached a level where the development of the company now is a coordination of everything. Marketing as it is being taught in the schools at the present time includes everything from the raw material on through to the sales. It's all marketing, and manufacturing is all part of the entire deal. The forester is just a member of the team of management to get in the best results for the company as a

whole, and they sit in on the discussions of what they will make, how they can make it, what can be done with this, and what they can do with the timber that they have.

**MAUNDER:** But no longer is it necessary for the foresters to beat their heads against the walls in an attempt to get what they are seeking. They now have influence at top management level. Back when you started out it wasn't always easy to sell management on doing something that you felt was necessary.

**PORTER:** It isn't the same thing, however, as an investor out there doing it on his own. It becomes a part of the entire structure: raw material, manufacturing, and sales are all a coordinated effort to make the best product for the least money for the greatest distribution to the people for the least price.

**MAUNDER:** What would you describe as the attitude of top management in your company toward experimenting with new techniques and new equipment in your forest operation?

**PORTER:** Well, there are variables within the management as it's moved along. It's just sort of an evolution of progress really as to what you can get, but most of the time we've been able to work with things within limit. But we had to tie them to results which could be seen within a reasonable period of time to justify them. We never asked for money except to be used for direct results which you could see. You have the same competition from research and development as the other phases of businesses.

**MAUNDER:** Do you think that I.P. has been progressive and daring in its manner of attacking research problems and testing new techniques and new equipment, or has it been inclined to wait and see how research developed in this field and then take on those things that had already proved themselves? In other words, have you been a pioneer in this business, or have you been tending to follow the trends?

**PORTER:** Well the general opinion within the South and I'm in a little difficult position to view the thing, is that with our southern woodlands we've gone ahead and done a lot of things that the company hasn't done elsewhere in our woods development by just a little of this and a little of that as you could work it on in. The rest of the industry in the South considers that we've done more than they have, however. And we've had a lot of cooperative projects with them to develop a certain amount of understanding in the needs within the field. There's a long ways to go yet, but there's been a continual change. It's hard to tell just when the right time is for the change to come in. We have developed a good many systems and methods that fitted into the utilization of chips and waste from mills. We pioneered in that, although the others wouldn't agree on this.

**MAUNDER:** You mean the other companies wouldn't?



**PORTER:** Yes, the other companies don't agree with that entirely. But we went to Sweden and got our debarker, brought it over into this country, and got it into operation when there wasn't anything available over here. Being a bigger company, it's hard to get a comparison. But we got a bunch of chip installations into the sawmills and made a real effort and survey to work it in.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, to get the sawmill to provide you with their waste material?

**PORTER:** Yes, but you have to really convince them that they should do it. The first time I tried, they just didn't want to spend a nickel on it.

**MAUNDER:** Who was the first one you approached on it?

**PORTER:** Well, I approached two or three small outfits back in the late thirties before the war, but that never developed into anything.

**MAUNDER:** Do you remember who some of these mills were?

**MAUNDER:** The Southern Lumber Company is the one that put in this debarker that we bought in Sweden. That's Potlatch now.

**MAUNDER:** Over in Warren, Arkansas.

**PORTER:** Yes. They put in the first one that we bought over there, and they found it inadequate. Then they got another one up here at Chapman, Alabama. But we never got chips from either one of those mills because as soon as they had something, some of the other competitive companies bought the chips and paid a price beyond their value at that time.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, you convinced them that they ought to have the debarking machine?

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** And once they got them, they found a higher priced market for their chips?

**PORTER:** Yes. In those two incidents that I mentioned. But then those machines were not built ruggedly enough for southern pine. We got the Continental Gin Company in Birmingham to manufacture according to our standards here and with the patents that we got from Sweden. They made about 20 of them that we put into sawmills.

Following that, there were a good many other local companies that developed different types of debarkers and chippers that could be used.

**MAUNDER:** When you say you got them put into about 20 sawmills, does that mean that you put them in at your expense so that they would provide you with chips? Or did you get them to buy the equipment and put it in themselves?

**PORTER:** We arranged to get the equipment manufactured at Continental Gin so that it was available to them. We bought the equipment for their mills, they put in the installation as such, and we just took a mortgage on the equipment which they paid out as a part of the price of the chips that they delivered to our mills afterwards.

**MAUNDER:** Didn't you have long-term contracts with them?

**PORTER:** Yes, we made five-year contracts with them. At one time we had over \$2,000,000 in that kind of equipment.

**MAUNDER:** Did that prove immediately satisfactory to I.P. in every respect?

**PORTER:** Yes, with the controls we had to put on. Of course, we had to get each of the mills to work it into their installation. We had to put installations into our mills for the handling and storage of chips and getting them into the system. This was separate and apart from our general means of getting raw material. That was one item that we probably pioneered in, although as I say, the other mills wouldn't all admit that we did the pioneering. But I know personally that I did it. Another pioneering step was the development of mechanical wood yards or a local market for wood by putting on the railroads or barge landing locations where we would buy pulpwood delivered on a truck. These wood yards, as we called them, are markets for pulpwood which is delivered by truck by pulpwood producers or dealers. These yards are either at railroad sidings or barge landings, and when the wood is delivered in those locations, we have mechanical means for unloading the truck and loading the barges or loading the railroad cars. This system of bulk handling of pulpwood was developed by Tom Bush. He put them into effect all the way across the South. International now has some 110 or 120 of this type of locations. Altogether there are maybe 600 similar setups now that the other mills and companies have accepted the ideas. There are a good many yards that are put in by wood dealers themselves. They put in mechanical equipment to handle it rather than the manual system that was used prior to that time. And with the volume of wood increasing so greatly in the South, without this innovation it would be physically impossible to have enough people to handle pulpwood manually as they did back in the early forties when there were only about 4,000,000 cords of wood being used in the South. Now there's 23, 24, or 25 million cords (six or seven times as much) and there's just not that many people to handle that amount of wood. Without this system, it would have been physically impossible to move the amount of wood that is

being moved at the present time. In other words, the present mills could not exist without that kind of system. And there is a big boom to the railroads because with the special rack cars that they have provided for this purpose, we can give them full capacity carloads in these wood yards at all times. So they are hauling at full capacity loads instead of picking up one or two or three cars at a siding scattered all along the railroad. Each time they stop at one of these railroad sidings they may pick up anywhere from 5 to 20 cars in one switching. Most mills unload wood within 24 hours from the time they receive, so they get almost twice the use of the railroad cars that they did prior to that time. It's a big saving to the railroad, which has resulted in their maintaining a low freight rate for the movement of pulpwood. And that economy and the economy in the operating of these woods yards is just one of the big assets that have made it possible to continue to expand the production in the South.

**MAUNDER:** When was the first of these?

**PORTER:** The first was a barge landing for loading company barges at Wilmington, North Carolina, put in in 1947. Then we put in one or two more at barge landings. In 1951 we put in the first one on the railroad because there were some things that had to be worked out to get a supply of railroad cars and loading equipment suitable to unload these trucks and put it on the railroad cars. It took a different type of equipment than it did for loading barges. The first one of those we put in was at Bucatunna, Mississippi, for the Mobile mill. The only kind of suitable equipment that was available at that time were cranes mounted on rubber. We brought 14 or 15 of those in immediately and put some of them across the entire South.

**MAUNDER:** Whose ideas was this in the first place?

**PORTER:** Tom Bush is responsible for the idea and its development. My influence has been in getting them spread clear across the South and working out some of the details of operation, buying the woods on the truck instead of on the car and coordinating it into the system of our requirements. So that at the present time, more than 90 percent of the wood we get comes through the mechanized wood yards. We figured it up here a few years ago that if we attempted to get wood in 1960 in the same manner we were getting it in 1950, the cost outside of the freight itself would have been increased probably 25 percent--in other words \$4 to \$6 more than it was as a result of the economics resulting from the use of this system of wood yards.

**MAUNDER:** This is a function of automation, is it not?

**PORTER:** Yes. But, it does two things. The economy of operation makes it possible to continue to get wood that we wouldn't get otherwise. The increased number of mills wouldn't be able to function if they couldn't get wood. They could get it for less in the North or the West or somewhere else, probably, than they could in the South. But with

our big supply of timber, we can do it here. That is one of the conditions that made it possible to do this. You've got to keep doing it cheaper than they can do somewhere else if you're going to be able to maintain the position and use of the timber that grows in the South.

**MAUNDER:** This would be, then, one of the real benchmarks of southern industrial forestry's accomplishments?

**PORTER:** Very much so.

**MAUNDER:** In the last 25 or 30 years.

**PORTER:** The other companies just fought it to the last. They were not going to put it in. They even took it to the O.P.A. during the Korean situation in Washington, insisted that we were raising the price of wood, and tried to get them to take action. They just fought the progress. They wouldn't have been able to get their own wood as it exists at the present time..

**MAUNDER:** Why did they think this was increasing the cost?

**PORTER:** Well, the price was frozen, you see, and they claimed we were paying more for the wood. We weren't violating any price that existed at that time, but because we were performing part of the operation, we bought the wood on the truck for less money than the price that was authorized by O.P.A. But they refused to accept it because it was innovation.

**MAUNDER:** And the O.P.A. did not rule against you?

**PORTER:** No. We wouldn't have done it if it were a violation. We try very hard not to violate any laws that exist in any way.

**MAUNDER:** Well, I got the impression from something you said that these other companies had almost brought charges against you for violating something or other.

**PORTER:** Yes. that's right. They did.

**MAUNDER:** But they were not held as being valid, I take it.

**PORTER:** No. Not when it was explained and they really understood it, but it just shows some of the things that you buck against in progress.

**MAUNDER:** How quickly did they follow in your wake after the rulings went in your favor?

**PORTER:** It was probably five years, and then they didn't entirely follow the same system we set up. They wanted to give the money to the pulpwood dealer and let him run the wood yard. They didn't want to do it themselves. We wanted to do it ourselves and are doing it ourselves because we have better control, get better quality wood, and get closer to the woods when we buy it ourselves. Every truckload of wood that shows up at a wood yard is only the distance from the stump to there, and if you can tell that fellow then whether the quality will fit the market or not, it's much easier for him to keep it coordinated than if you don't look at it until it reaches the mill. By the time it goes through two or three hands, you don't know where it originated from. So we're getting much better quality wood with no more effort for the individual who is producing the wood. It facilitates his understanding of what is necessary to make quality and prevents his throwing in trash and limbs and knots and other things that are not usable, because it costs him more to handle than it does to handle good wood. It's a question of understanding and education.

**MAUNDER:** What other things do you think of as you look back on your career with the company as being of nearly equal importance in terms of real benchmarks of accomplishment or change?

**PORTER:** One innovation in process at the present time is pulpwood harvesters. Tom Bush has developed that, too. Of course, he had to be encouraged to keep going with that because it's been a rather long, slow process to develop something that didn't exist before. It's really a reality, but it will take five or ten years before we get acceptance for its use, I'm reasonably sure. It has been called automation which takes away from labor, but I think it makes jobs rather than takes away from jobs, since it puts into effect and uses something which otherwise would not be possible to do at all. As mills in the South couldn't exist if it weren't for the wood yards because there's not physically enough people with the caliber and character to handle that wood.

**MAUNDER:** Well, now what are these harvesters likely to do to the pattern of things? You're still going to have wood yards with the harvesters?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes, they're part of it.

**MAUNDER:** Are the harvesters going to be contracted to go in and cut a farmer's wood lot, for example, for him?

**PORTER:** Well, the actual system and details as it will develop are probably unknown at the present time. They will work themselves out as they go along. But the way we picture it, one man with this harvester will go into the woods, cut the tree, cut the limbs off, cut it into pulpwood, and carry that pulpwood to the road siding or the landing and put it on a truck. Or he can lay it at the side of the road and load the truck when he and the truck are there at the same time later.

**MAUNDER:** With the wood never once touched by human hands. All the work done by one man operating one cutting and limbing and bucking and loading machine.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** And all you have is the operator of the machine and the operator or operators of trucks which run back and forth to the wood yard.

**PORTER:** Yes. And when he gets to the wood yard why another machine will pick it off the truck.

**MAUNDER:** And put it on a car, a railroad car. All of this will allow the volume of wood being harvested and put through the mills to increase greatly, but aren't the total number of people employed in the woods operation being reduced?

**PORTER:** No, with the greater volume it will continue to hold its own.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, because of the increased volume, the number of men who will be employed to operate these harvesting machines and drive these trucks and run these trains is going to be at least as many in number as had previously been engaged in that same process of flow of the raw material from woods to mill.

**PORTER:** There may not be that many working entirely within the woods operation, but there will be within the total operation involved in making the product--the added mills and the added transportation, volume-wise. It's the volume that makes the difference. Just as I mentioned, from 4,000,000 cords to 24,000,000 cords. In a little over 20 years there are still more people being used, and not only that, but they are getting paid more money and their conditions are much better. Their living conditions and their health is better because they're not pinching fingers and cutting feet and so on.

**MAUNDER:** And there's far less waste of the raw material.

**PORTER:** Oh, yes. And the status of the wood worker is equal to anyone else living within his community. With the transportation you have in the South, they're accessible to all of the things that you have. Well, in the big cities you might say you have some of the art museums and those things.

**MAUNDER:** Cultural advantages and urban life that you didn't use to have.

**PORTER:** No. But they're accessible. They have the means of getting there with the transportation and the wage that they're getting and the vacations. Of course there are some other things involved in these efficiencies that developed in the production and handling of wood. The power saw replacing the buck saw, and the cross cut saw has

been a big item. The better roads--more accessible everywhere. Better trucks and better tires. All of those things have contributed to being able to get the product moved for a reasonable figure, which, of course, didn't last because the actual cost of material has gone up probably five times too in the meantime. But it would be clear out of hand to a point where you couldn't afford to buy it at all if we hadn't attempted to develop these types of things.

**MAUNDER:** Tell me, Earl, do you feel that your industry is as research-minded as other industries, or do you think it is as strongly motivated to do research as it ought to be?

**PORTER:** Well they could do more, I think, as far as that goes. I think I can pin it down by saying in the product field and that type of thing, there's much more that we could do with our woods. But compared with the lumber industry, we're way ahead. The lumber industry has had funds for research and development that they've never used. They've had money in Washington for years which just stood unused because they never could agree on what products they'd go ahead with. They're making 2 by 4's and 2 by 10's and 1 by 6's the same as they did way back. They're putting some research into preservation and paints and that type of thing to make it go farther, but from a standpoint of the making of the product, they're still very much the same.

**MAUNDER:** Would you like to see your industry make much bigger steps?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes. I feel they'll just have to if they're going to maintain their position in the country in the industry, they just can't stand still. The plastics will take over. Of course, they're beyond the volume of plastics at the present time, but if plastics got into volume production and acceptance, they could really give us a problem.

**MAUNDER:** Earl, back in the thirties, there seemed to take place a real change in this industry and its attitude toward each individual company and toward their competitors. It began to be recognized that the success of one company, at least to some extent, depended on the general good health of the industry as a whole. Perhaps a part of this arose out of the experience of the industry codes that existed during the New Deal period. There came on at this same time a greater activity within the industry, within its own trade association groups--the NAPPA, the APA, the Southern Pulpwood Conservation Association, and then later on in the forties with AFPI. I wonder if you could comment a little bit about this trend that began, it seems to me, in the thirties.

**PORTER:** Well of course the thirties was depression. You might say things were going backwards, and yet all they were trying to do was struggle and get out of the depths that they'd dropped to following the '29 crash. Now of course there had been associations prior to that time. There were associations like the Southern Pine Association. I don't know the actual date of the American Pulp and Paper Association,

but the American Pulp Association itself originated in the early thirties. Its purpose was just to discuss the supplies of timber and wood and so on that existed with the playing out of the original timber in lots of areas. Actually it was just getting together and comparing notes of what these timber supplies were and what the problems of the industry itself was faced with. In doing so they recognized that each one individually was rather weak and together they were stronger, although their efforts would not be combined except on common problems divorced from their corporate setup as far as that goes. The Southern Pulpwood Conservation Association was originated by some of the members of the American Pulpwood Association who had a problem with some threatened legislation that would prevent them from continuing to function in the forest. The government was trying to get public regulation of all forest land. This would limit the use of the timber that the mills owned themselves, and the manner and method of what they could do with it. Being told how to manage what they had alarmed some of these people.

**MAUNDER:** SPCA came into existence, you say, because of the threat of regulations?

**PORTER:** In a sense. The publicity of the pulpwood industry in the South was much greater than it was anywhere. The lumber industry said, "They're going to cut all the trees. We won't have any trees." The naval stores industry said, "They cut all the trees and we won't have any to turpentine." That was the general attitude. Others thought the pulp mills would cut every single tree because they could use a tree six or eight inches in diameter; they were going to cut every tree that existed and there wouldn't be any trees for the other forest industries. So there was a fight within the different forest industries. At the same time the Forest Service and New Deal setup said, "We'll regulate all the forest land and do away with this foolishness," which would indicate they would nationalize the whole forest industry. So a few of the members of the American Pulpwood Association were in Washington and got the idea that they ought to review this situation in the South, where it was getting bad publicity locally and statewide and county wise, and so they arranged for a meeting in the South. Howard Galloway was one of them there. With Mr. Friend's sponsorship, he called a meeting of all the forest industries across the South and invited in all the public agencies--the states and the Extension Forest Service and the U.S. Forest Service--for advice on what they could do with these things. They were criticizing the pulp and paper industry, so they would ask for advice on what they could do.

**MAUNDER:** Where was this conference held?

**PORTER:** At New Orleans in 1937. They sent out invitations. At this meeting we got the opinions from all these different types of agencies of what we could do. They subdivided the South into four districts or regions and then had regional meetings. They came up with what they thought they might do as minimum forest practices--



ways that they could function and take care of their own lands and encourage the others to take care of the timber land.

**MAUNDER:** You mean this was an attempt on the part of pulp and paper people to allay the fears of the lumber people and the railroad people and of other industries in the South with regard to the plans of the pulp and paper industry for the use of the forest resources.

**PORTER:** Yes. All the larger lumber mills were invited, but very few of them came. They just weren't going to have anything to do with it. Following that, they had meetings across the South. They had another one in Jacksonville the next year in '38, and in '39 (I think that was about the same time we dedicated a mill at Fernandina with the Container Corporation of America). They had the meeting in Jacksonville and actually organized the association. They came up with minimum cutting rules that they would use as recommended by these other agencies and, in a sense, something that they thought could be workable. The rules differed in each of the four regions. Virginia said they wouldn't do what they were doing in Florida, and Florida said they wouldn't do what they would do in Arkansas, so they broke it down into four regions. They hired Frank Hayward, who was then state forester of Georgia, as manager of the association. He was there until the end of the war.

**MAUNDER:** Why did Frank leave?

**PORTER:** Pulpwood production for himself, down at Waycross, Georgia.

**MAUNDER:** Wasn't he working with Gaylord?

**PORTER:** Not then. No, that followed this other. No, when he left the association, he went down to Waycross and set up a pulpwood production organization of his own. He owned some land of his own prior to that, and he thought he'd get into production. But it didn't work out in the manner in which he thought. Vertress Young of Gaylord Container approached him to go over and work for him when it looked like he couldn't chip out. He was there as long as Vertress was in charge. He's still there as far as that goes.

**MAUNDER:** No, he's gone. He's retired.

**PORTER:** He's there, but he's retired from Crown Zellerbach. He stayed with Crown Zellerbach only two or three years after they took over Gaylord Container Corporation.

**MAUNDER:** His land is not too far from Bogalusa.

**PORTER:** No, it's over in Georgia. Unless he's been able to trade and get some from somebody near Bogalusa. The land he had was in Georgia, he leased it to Continental Can, the last I heard.

**MAUNDER:** Well, in other words the Southern Pulpwood Conservation Association got its start as an organization which was going to try to set up some ground rules for themselves for the cutting of pulpwood in this area.

**PORTER:** Whether it was pulpwood or anything else as far as that goes. What they did was set up on the principle of maintaining and increasing the supply of timber in the South. They didn't specify whether it was pulpwood or anything else. They recommended growing saw logs and poles and pilings and all of the other things. The lumber industry now understands the situation, and they don't fight it anymore. But for the first few years they did. Now they sell their pulpwood to pulp mills and buy saw logs from the lands owned by the pulp mills.

**MAUNDER:** For a number of years there was real antagonism between the two branches of the forest industry in this area.

**PORTER:** Yes. And they set up to publicize what the pulp and paper industry was doing so that the people would know what it was. They put the information into newspapers and pamphlets. Well the Forest Service said to themselves, "Is this whitewash, or are they doing these things they say they're going to do?" So they assigned a man (Clinton Smith) with no other responsibility except to find out what they were doing. And within three years time the records that he took across the South convinced the Forest Service that the cutting practices improved by 5 to 15 percent each year during that period of time. The pulp mills were doing what they said they were doing. And when he convinced the Forest Service and when the publicity came out, the people accepted the pulp mills everywhere. But they didn't publicize anything but what they did. They didn't say, well, we're going to do this or we're going to do that. They just out and did it and then publicized what they were doing in maintaining and increasing the timber supply in the South.

**MAUNDER:** I take it that the threat of government regulation has long since waned now in this area?

**PORTER:** It's voluntary regulation, is what it amounts to.

**MAUNDER:** And I get the impression that today you enjoy a very happy relationship with government agencies. At your recent meeting you--

**PORTER:** We got a citation.

**MAUNDER:** You got a citation from the chief forester of the United States. This certainly is evidence of no real conflict between the government and business down here.

**PORTER:** Well, the timber survey that came out in '53 showed that the pulp and paper industries' company-owned lands were managed in a better manner than any other forest lands--even better than the Forest Service themselves. So those are the types of things. Of course they've influenced the management of an awful lot of other lands--of small land owners and so on by example and demonstration and actually marking some of their timber and showing them what they could do.

**MAUNDER:** This is an area, though, in which education seems to move at a much slower pace. You're not getting the same degree of managed timber on the small wood lot that you are in the large well--integrated lots. Isn't there some feeling of despair about the rate at which this is increasing?

**PORTER:** There is in some people's minds who don't know the facts. And of course McCardle, when he came out with the first timber resource release out in Portland, said, "Well, of course, we recognize that there are some 15 or 20 percent of these small lands where there's no interest on the part of those individuals to do anything. Where they've got 10 or 15 or 50 acres in an area without a market, there's no incentive particularly for them. We don't even expect to get results on those particular types of lands." A fellow with 100 acres can't do the same thing as a fellow with 5,000 or 6,000 acres. One of these small land owners the other day mentioned how he was really going to take care of his, but he said they couldn't do the same thing the larger owners can, and he thought they ought to keep the record differently. That was at a Forestry Council meeting in Montgomery, Alabama.

**MAUNDER:** But do you feel you're getting a real improvement in the management of farm wood lots in the South?

**PORTER:** On the majority of them. On the progressive ones, those that are in a condition that they want to do something. The conformers are coming along, but in anything that's produced, there's always some 15 percent that never catch up with progress. And there's a bunch of nonresident owners that have land out there that have moved off the farm out of the country into town, and they don't really practice much forestry.

**MAUNDER:** They're too far away.

**PORTER:** Yes, and the economics of keeping a caretaker on the land doesn't allow for the things that they need to do.

**MAUNDER:** During World War II, the imports of pulp and paper in this country were severely cut. How did this affect you in your end of the industry--the wood procurement end? There was obviously a larger drain on your woodlands. What role did you and other I.P. men play in the wartime mobilization of the pulp and paper industry?

**PORTER:** Well, all we could attempt to do was just run at full capacity. We didn't add too much to the plants, but we were too short of personnel and equipment to be able to run at capacity.

**MAUNDER:** Well, didn't this put a strain on your inventory of pulpwood logs?

**PORTER:** Our inventory ran out. Of course we operate in the South with practically no inventory anyway--less than two weeks inventory everywhere. So we got on down to no inventory at all.

**MAUNDER:** What did increased demands mean in terms of heightening the temper of your operations in the woods?

**PORTER:** Greater pressures. We had to go out and find other ways and means and get out of the areas where all the labor was already tied up with shipyard and construction operations around camps. We just had to go other places to hunt for wood.

**MAUNDER:** Did you face a serious drain on your manpower in the woods?

**PORTER:** Oh, yes. It just disappeared because it wasn't recognized that it was needed. They left to go to war or for higher wages of government paying jobs.

**MAUNDER:** The pulp and paper industry was not considered a high priority.

**PORTER:** It wasn't recognized at all during the first year of the war.

**MAUNDER:** What did you do in the way of individual company effort and as an organized industry effort to impose upon government agencies a recognition of your importance?

**PORTER:** Well, we were filling the gap the first year by using second-hand trucks and second-hand equipment. Everything else was frozen and taken away (wages and everything else). We had no leeway at all except to fiddle around with what we had until we got some relief.

**MAUNDER:** Did you send representatives immediately to Washington and argue your case regarding manpower and supplies and equipment?

**PORTER:** Well, we did have people here. I don't know that they were sent immediately, as far as that goes.

**MAUNDER:** Did you send representatives of APA and APPA?

**PORTER:** Yes, to advise them what condition we were in. It developed over a period of time. I think that the first year it was hard to realize that we weren't going to be recognized at all, and we were being crowded for lumber and sawmills and everything else that we used for timber.

**MAUNDER:** Were you personally involved in any missions to represent the industry in this case?

**PORTER:** Only in the local meetings where the forest industry was discussing the problems of how we could work out the demands of lumber we were pressured for--releasing saw logs to saw mills, avoiding cross hauling, etc.

**MAUNDER:** What about in the matter of the drafting of men in your woods operations? Did you try to intercede on their behalf in an effort to forestall their being taken off the job for military call?

**PORTER:** No, in general we considered that if they were called, they were necessary. We didn't attempt to waylay anyone.

**MAUNDER:** No matter how important they were in the in the chain of command?

**PORTER:** That's right.

**MAUNDER:** Even some of your key people, like McCaffrey, got pulled off into service rather early. What about the efforts of industry to control prices and production during the war? Was there a voluntary effort on the part of industry to do this?

**PORTER:** Well, in general they attempted to abide by the law, but periodically they had to approach the OPA to obtain increases, especially in pulpwood, since the price when it was frozen at the beginning was \$4 or \$5 a cord. It was physically impossible to produce it for that price. When the labor they had was drawn away to the shipyards and the building of camps and that type of thing, it was impossible to replace. So the costs, with the inflation of a lot of other things that were not under control, just got out of hand. And so periodically we had to request the OPA for an adjustment of wages and prices for wood.

**MAUNDER:** And that situation has had a permanent influence on the cost that has developed since that time, right? You've never gone back to a ...

**PORTER:** Well, the inflation of all values and factors has made it impossible to go back to the same cost.

**MAUNDER:** How would you compare what a woods worker was being paid in the early years of the war and what a worker was being paid in another industry in the South? Hasn't the gap between these two narrowed as a result of this war experience, or has the gap gone back to approximately what it was in those days?

**PORTER:** Well, the control of the minimum wage has closed that gap. Prior to the war 40 cents was the minimum that had to be paid for woods workers, and of course there were plenty of more skilled jobs that were paid beyond the minimum. Since that time, of course, it was kicked up to 75 cents as a minimum in the late forties or somewhere in there. And, of course, it went up to \$1.00, I guess it was now. And up to \$1.15 and this year it will be \$1.25. It's \$1.25 now. So with those required minimums, the woods workers now are getting as much and in some cases more than what they are in the lumber industry, which is the nearest competitive one for the woods workers. Of course the paper mill workers get more than most of the workers in the South, except maybe oil drilling workers. The average income of most people in the mills run well over \$5,000 a year.

**MAUNDER:** Considerably higher than the average in the woods.

**PORTER:** Yes, it's higher, but I would say that's a relative thing.

**MAUNDER:** Earl, would you care to comment upon the impact of World War II upon the pulp and paper industry in the South. Perhaps you could describe some of the influences that it had upon the industry that have had rather profound effects in recent years since the war.

**PORTER:** Well, in the woods operation in particular the inflation and the expansions and the need for products from the woods was accentuated to the extent that they were better understood by the whole organization. With the inflation, the values kicked up 10 times what they were. The increased products and the type of products that were developed during the war--grades of paper and grades of material--made an increased number of products that were available and made expansions within the needs of the people. They found out new things that there had been no use for in particular before. For instance, there were types of cartons to package anything and everything. Following the war there was the same incentive to buy additional things. The packaging in paper containers of foods and materials and machinery and parts and that type of thing developed with the higher cost of transportation--paper containers were used instead of wood and metal or heavier equipment because of the freight transportation costs of those kinds of materials. Where formerly lumber and wooden boxes were used, they developed cartons and containers that would carry the same

thing during the war, and a good many of them were waterproofed. And the change in communications requires an enormous amount more paper. It developed a demand for a greater number of products, so the expansion and capacity was developed to take care of that. Or the capacity had to be developed before and have the product there to fill the market.

**MAUNDER:** You weren't able to do much expanding of production capacity during the war because of the construction problem.

**PORTER:** Yes, construction materials were entirely unavailable for much of anything. The only places we were able to make expansions was where they were real short of certain items that were necessary in the war effort. We had one expansion at Georgetown, North Carolina, which was as a result of the need to make additional container equipment.

**MAUNDER:** Was that military...

**PORTER:** No, it was packaging of food for shipment in waterproof containers.

**MAUNDER:** After the war, Earl, there was of course a rapid falling off of the demand for paper products from the military, but there was a tremendous backlog of demands from the civilian market and was a fabulous growth in the amount of printing and packaging and all the rest of it in this period. What did you find was the situation for you after the heavy drain of the war years had passed and you were propelled into a new post war economic boom, so to speak? What effect did this have upon you in the paper industry in the South?

**PORTER:** Well, it required the same type of expansion that developed. We had a big relief in manpower and availability of equipment to meet that demand, and we developed new pieces and types of equipment for use in the woods particularly that were unavailable before. It was through that period of time that the use of power saws and better trucks and tractors, fork lift loaders, and pulpwood loaders were developed. But the adequate manpower was the thing that did it.

**MAUNDER:** Coming back to work.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** And that made a big difference, especially to you in your end of the business.

**PORTER:** Another thing is that the boys who came back out of the service had considerably more experience and exposures to a lot of things that they'd never seen or heard of before.

**MAUNDER:** More mature, you mean.

**PORTER:** Yes. Well, they'd been handling trucks and equipment and communications and things that they hadn't been used to before. They were adapted to use that kind of equipment.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, you had a more skilled labor force.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** What brought the new demands on you for harvesting an ever-growing crop of pulpwood?

**PORTER:** Well, the inflation of the values of the raw material itself and increased price in stumpage was an incentive for the land owners to do more in the management of his timber as far as planting and timber stand improvement and fire control and all the factors of removing the culled hardwoods and the stuff that was just in the way out there. The market for his timber at much higher prices than he'd ever experienced before gave him the incentive to do more than he'd ever been able to do before. All of the land owners. Not just the company lands.

**MAUNDER:** In other words, you had more landowners who were ready to sell wood off their land than you had ever had before?

**PORTER:** Yes, and willing to grow more too.

**MAUNDER:** You mentioned the fact that hardwood was coming in here. One of the big developments of recent times has been that hardwood can be used in the pulp manufacturing process.

**PORTER:** Yes, the use of hardwood for pulpwood has increased very fast within just the last few years. It's only been within the last five or ten years, to any great extent. And now it's gone up to the limits of what the land can produce. But the knowledge of the management of hardwood is much more meager than is that of pine, and it's much more difficult. There are so many more species and varying types of lands and sites where the hardwood will grow. Another thing is that the hardwood has been highgraded for lumber and furniture for uses in veneer in the past to the extent that the hardwood stands are full of a good many culled and low-grade trees and species. They're knotty and crooked and rotten from insects and disease following fires, and



those trees stand in the way of the good and usable trees getting in. So there was quite a period of time of timber stand improvement--killing and girding and a process of eliminating cull hardwoods out of the stand. They were highly criticized by the wildlife people for doing it; they seemed to think they were going to kill all the hardwood. But there was never any intention on the part of the foresters to kill all the hardwood, by any means. It was only the culled trees that had no use from a commercial standpoint nor value to the human race as far as that goes at all. And there's plenty left for wildlife food...

**MAUNDER:** Meaning the woodpeckers.

**PORTER:** Well, it's beyond that.

**MAUNDER:** This is perhaps another repetition of the problem you had earlier with the lumbermen back in the thirties. Are you not now in the position of having to convince the recreationists and the preservationists and a lot of like people that what you are doing is not necessarily at variance with their own purposes?

**PORTER:** Well, we're fairly along the way with that because we took the story to the outdoor writers and the people that were there. We got them into the woods and showed them that managed forest is much better for game and fish and wildlife than an unmanaged forest because it creates a great amount of food. A managed forest creates considerably more food for game than an unmanaged one. In fact, a virgin forest with a closed canopy and so on provides almost no food for them. Just having a tree there doesn't make the difference because they've got to have sunlight and other foods and shrubs and berries and things that do result from a managed forest.

**MAUNDER:** You foresters have had to become public relations men in a way, have you not?

**PORTER:** Oh, very much so. And of course we have hired some foresters with wildlife degrees too so that we are able to explain these conditions to the outdoor writers who are influential and to the sportsmen. A lot of the public seem to think that because the land belonged to the paper mills or the lumber companies that the land wasn't available to them. All they had to do was stop and think that they'd always hunted and fished on that same land, and only a very small amount of it was ever posted so that they were denied access to it. We had to convince them that this land was available to them for recreation and always had been. Much more so than national parks or areas that had federal restriction.

**MAUNDER:** Well, I think what with the last 60 years or more of this century we've witnessed a tremendous revolution in the character of the North American forest and of the forest products industries. We've seen a fabulous technological revolution both in

the woods and in the mill, and we've seen the whole pattern of the changeover from the kind of business operation that existed back in the 19th century to that which exists today--the big highly concentrated corporate form of business operation. We've seen a tremendous development of the professionalized services within industry--the profession of forestry being one of these and the professional business manager, of course, being another. At the same time, Earl, there has been quite a tremendous social revolution here in this part of the country and all over the country. Certainly marketing has undergone some very radical changes, and the forms that marketing has taken have changed very radically. There has been certainly a public relations awakening within the realm of business and a sort of a policy of enlightened self-interest that's begun to take shape in this industry and others. All of this has been part of what you and I probably call the making of our country, and, in your case, I would say the making of a new South. This is a new community almost, quite different from the one that you first encountered when you moved into this area, when was it, back in the early twenties. I hear now when I come down to the South a certain amount of nostalgic reference to the old ways of life down here, and yet I detect that this old way of life is giving way to a totally new way of life here in the South. And with it there comes a whole new urban kind of development, a whole new cultural life. There are all kinds of things at work in the South's life that are making her change. I just wonder if, in looking back over the years from the present point of vantage that you have now as you enter retirement, whether all of this has any particular meaning or if there is anything at all about it that you'd like to say in comment?

**PORTER:** Well, of course, there's been a lot of change, but it's been progress and it's moved faster, probably, than in some other places, if you can make a comparison. It really seems to me that the attitude of the people toward change is really a matter of acceptance. They don't seem to question the change, they shift on and they don't seem to worry too much about having to do something like they did 50 years ago. I get the feeling that up in the Northeast, those people live in the past and they don't change nearly as fast as they do down here. You find that the merchant setup down here--if the store front doesn't look right, he goes ahead and changes. You go up to the Northeast and they've got the same front on their store that they may have had there 40 or 50 years ago. It just has an ancient look. And they change their clothes much more often, it seems to me, than they do up there. Their styles move faster. Their clothes can't wear out that much faster down here by any means. But it seems to change much faster. Go to one of the little towns in particular and all the store fronts are squared up and refaced and changed from what they were 10 years ago even. And in a lot of the northern towns you can't see it at all.

**MAUNDER:** Well, when you say northern towns...

**PORTER:** I'm talking about...

**MAUNDER:** You're talking about New England.

**PORTER:** Yes.

**MAUNDER:** It's certainly not true of my part of the North where the face of the store has changed the same as it has down here.

**PORTER:** Well, what I'm trying to say is you used to try to say that the South wasn't anything like the North or the West or somewhere else, and now I think when you move from one place to another, you can't see an awful lot of difference as far as progress is concerned in relation to things. They're just as far along. Some things have progressed much farther, and yet there are still the poor. There isn't too much wealth, as such, because the tax situation doesn't allow them to do some of the things that they used to do in the past when they didn't have the heavy tax burden. Anything that anyone does is tied around the tax situation that they have.

**MAUNDER:** Wouldn't you say, though, that there are a far greater number of people in the South today who are, if not affluent, certainly quite comfortably living, whereas there didn't used to be nearly as many in that category here?

**PORTER:** Percentage wise, yes. There isn't any reason for anybody to suffer as far as that goes because there's plenty to do for anyone, although some don't have enough ambition to do anything. As they say, we always have the poor and the negligent and lazy, I guess, but the percentage, I believe, is pretty small. The opportunity is there, all they've got to do is take it.

**MAUNDER:** Do you see this progress that's being made in the South on the economic level in any way related to this great discussion we're having in this country today over civil rights and the developments on that front? Do you feel that the South is moving as fast as it can be expected to? I shouldn't just say the South. Do you think the nation is moving fast enough on this civil rights matter?

**PORTER:** Yes, well, of course, everybody's got opinions on this civil rights. But the civil rights has been unfair to the South in the manner in which they've tried to push it down their necks. Things that would have happened all on their own, and as it is, it's developed a feeling and a lack of confidence between races. It's just moved all together too fast for the conditions that exist, and it's developed a degree of dislike and, in some instances, even hatred and discontent that didn't ever exist before. There's an unrest, there's no difference in the attitude of the condition that exists, but...

**MAUNDER:** Well, isn't it a fact though that since the turn of the century, there has been a growing unrest among the Negroes for a greater degree of civil rights? I mean this is not something that just...

**PORTER:** The rights have been there for them all the time, and they've had them all the time. They're not being depressed and pushed around as the newspaper fellows and the writers and the broadcasters try to put them out. It isn't nearly as bad as they say. Someone just told them that that's so, and the biggest trouble that's being caused is by those coming in from outside and making disturbances. They're not being denied...

**MAUNDER:** What about the Negroes themselves? Your own people in the Negro ranks who are taking a leading part in all this. Are they just trouble makers? Have they no strength on their side in their arguments? I mean like Martin Luther King and some of these others.

**PORTER:** He's a fanatic. He's a plain out fanatic if there ever was one. He's just unreal. He's just as bad as Clayton Powell. He'll get up and say, "Break the law, it's fair to break the law." It's just wrong to encourage people to break the law. There's a certain amount of injustice and what not in the past, but the same thing exists with white people as well as colored. It isn't a question of race. The thing is, it's just been trying to move too fast, and the other thing is that you cannot mix socially in the same manner that they are trying to urge, because the Negroes have lived, a good many of them, in a condition of slavery where they developed habits and ways that they don't get away from to a certain extent. You don't mix with them in the house any more than you mix with white people that you can't respect because they are prostitutes or are not married and have illegitimate children. You can't mix socially with them and you don't do it with whites either.

**MAUNDER:** Yes, but a white prostitute or a white gangster or a white dope runner is not obliged to eat in a different place or to stay in a different hotel.

**PORTER:** But you don't sit down and eat and invite him in your house.

**MAUNDER:** But you may be sitting right next to him in the--what do you call it downstairs in the...

**PORTER:** But you don't sit down at the same table with him or next to him at your own knowledge, ordinarily.

**MAUNDER:** Yes, I know, but it seems to me that the arguing for civil rights is not that they have to sit at the same table with you but they can sit in the same bus or they can stay in the same hotel or eat in the same restaurant. They don't necessarily have to sit down with you. They may be in the same room, but they're not at your table.

**PORTER:** Well, but that's what they want to do though. That's the whole thing, and that's what they're talking about clear beyond any reason.

**MAUNDER:** What they're trying to do is to have the right not only to come in and be served in the same restaurant with you, but come over and sit down at your table?

**PORTER:** Sure.

**MAUNDER:** You think that's what they're driving at?

**PORTER:** There are some of them that way. No, the biggest percentage of them are just as fair as you and I are, as far as that goes. What I mean is the greatest percent, the run of the mill down here, understand where the thing is but the disturbers that have come in from outside and have incited a good many of them, and there's a lot of communism in that thing. There isn't any doubt in the world.

**MAUNDER:** Oh, I don't doubt it either. I'm quite sure that there is. Communism will take advantage of any opportunity to stir up trouble and pose in the role of the great benefactor and liberator of all mankind. We've got a thousand and one evidences of that, but I think there's danger in attributing to the communist forces an unmerited part in this that they don't really deserve because we're opposed to the change that is being proposed.

**PORTER:** No, but they plant the seed and they make the disturbances--these demonstrations and so on and sitting down in front of an establishment and preventing them from serving their purpose and closing the business out. That is unfair. If they conduct themselves properly, they never have any trouble. It's just moving too fast, that's all. And these things they set up around these colleges with integration are the biggest farces you ever saw. This disturbance in New Orleans. They take a group of people out there and stage something. They actually did that in the streets over there in New Orleans. They were going on there two years ago. The newspaper men and the radio men got out on the stage--now you stand over there, now you do this, you yell. That's exactly what they did over there. That's not foolishness, either.

**MAUNDER:** There's probably a good deal of humbug involved in this, but don't you think, Earl, that there is a point here that the young Negro of outstanding intellectual ability has, that he wants to be able to go to the best school where they have the best teaching, the best equipment, and where his ultimate degree is going to mean the most. If I go to school somewhere, I want to go to school where I'm going to get the best kind of training in my special field and where the degree I get ultimately is going to be the one that I can use when I go out into the world to make my way. And I imagine that a smart young Negro looking at his future professionally is going to look at it very much the same way. And if the best medical school in the South is Tulane University, I don't know that it is, but if it is, then he's going to want to go there. And as an American, has he not got the right to go there? That's the question. Do we have different classes of citizenship?

**PORTER:** There sure is, just depending upon how a fellow conducts himself. That fellow can go. He can go to the school he wants to if he conducts himself accordingly. They're not being denied anywhere. Here's Springville College right out here. There's been Negroes out there for 20 years and nobody ever said anything about it. They come to town, and they're gregarious. They don't like to be entirely alone. But I'm not saying that it's entirely wrong. There's been an awful lot of injustice, but a big percentage of that is just sorry whites that are the cause of it too. Sorry whites are causing a lot of this darn disturbance now as well. They make it worse.

**MAUNDER:** I get the impression that to a very considerable extent the business leadership of the South is taking a progressive view on this thing. The group that's really reacting the most violently against civil rights action is the poor whites who feel an economic threat to their condition. It's not the professional and business class as much that is putting up the biggest front here. It's the poor white and it's the rural South that is opposed to it more than it is the urban South. Is that a fair...

**PORTER:** Well, it's hard to be that broad because there's a lot of places in the rural communities that are predominantly Negro and nobody thinks anything about it one way or the other as far as that goes. Macon County where they're having this trouble now is predominantly Negro and these over in Texas, there's Negro farmers and Negro county agents. It's the whole idea of it, that you ought to do it over night and too fast.

**MAUNDER:** Now, what do you mean by overnight? The Civil War was fought in the...

**PORTER:** Yes, but you cannot have somebody over there and somebody over here and change them overnight. And that's what they've been trying to do. They come in and say, "You do this tomorrow." Well, that isn't necessary at all. There's a large percentage of the schools down here which had school facilities set up for the Negroes. There's no need for taking white students over to the Negro school and the Negro students over here and put them in the white school.

**MAUNDER:** Yes, but we're not talking about a problem that is the South's problem. We're talking about a problem that is a national problem. We've got this problem that is just as great up in New York and Chicago and Detroit.

**PORTER:** Because they've got more Negroes.

**MAUNDER:** Yes, they've got more Negroes and they've got a bigger population problem up there in lots of cases than you have perhaps here. But when it gets to the point of segregating these people within different schools, it's pretty darn hard and impossible to do. And the matter of segregating them in neighborhoods too. This is going to become increasingly more difficult, it seems to me. Now, when I was a kid

growing up in Minneapolis, I lived for part of my life in a very fine residential part of Minneapolis out on the south side. I remember at one time a Negro couple moved into our block and nobody got thrown for a loss by it. They had one child, as I recall, a little girl just about a year and a half younger than I was. She went to school and there was no big flap. When I went to high school, I got into another part of the city in which there were a great many more Negroes. So I was going to school with Negroes in high school, and when I went on to the university, there were Negroes going to school there. And this just seems to me to be an inevitable thing. During the war when I was in military service in combat, whites and Negroes were all thrown together in the same compartments of ships and fought side by side in battle actions that I took part in. You got back into the...

**PORTER:** It's no different in the South. That's why I can't quite figure it out. Why do they say the South? There are schools together, I tell you. They're in the same school out here in Macon.

**MAUNDER:** Isn't that the exception though?

**PORTER:** No.

**MAUNDER:** Well, how many other schools can you cite?

**PORTER:** You take the northern part of South Carolina in the poor communities where there's only one school, they both go to the same school. But the segregation as far as living is concerned, the Negroes do themselves in lots of areas because they're gregarious, they want to be with themselves as such. And they build the school by the community. What bothers me now is that they want to take them out of the district. Whoever lives in this district should go to that school. There's no reason to take them out of this district and haul them over there. That's what they're trying to do now. For instance, Murphy High School has been white for a long time and here's a colored school over there, and they take some kids from down here and put them over there. And it upsets the people, but I don't know as there's any answer. All I was trying to say was that the thing was moving along very well on its own. But when they force them to do things, it makes it worse instead of better. As a result right now...

**MAUNDER:** How do you feel about some of your own white leadership down here? I've been up to this SPCA meeting in Atlanta with you people and I was reading the Atlanta Constitution while I was there. I was reading the editorials that are written by the editor of that magazine--he has a column right on the front page every day. He seems to be much in favor of these changes and in favor of the civil rights program.

**PORTER:** Nobody's against it at all.

**MAUNDER:** Oh, yes, I get from reading other papers down here that they are very much against it.

**PORTER:** They're against enforcing it, and there's politicians trying to play words on it and that kind of stuff.

**MAUNDER:** Well, I mean the civil rights bill that has just recently been passed in the Congress. They protected by law that certain things cannot be done. For example, this law made a provision that there cannot be discrimination against a Negro who wants to be served in a certain business enterprise. He cannot be denied.

**PORTER:** I know, but that's just what isn't right. If a fellow's running a business, he's got a right to run that business as he sees fit. That's what bothers me. It doesn't give the individual the right to do what he's always done in the past, to run his own show as he sees fit with the law of the land. You keep on adding to the laws of the land until nobody wants to be in business, that's what it amounts to. It just isn't fair. Well, we're running off on something else.