ROBERT H. KIECKHEFER

Interviewed
By
Arthur J. McCourt
On
February 20, 1976

Weyerhaeuser Company
Historical Archives

Box #12

Interview of Robert H. Kieckhefer in his office at Prescott, Arizona on February 20, 1976 with Arthur J. McCourt, interviewer.

McCourt

Bob, I'd like to get your recollections of the history and background of the Kieckhefer Container Company and Eddy Paper Company in the early days if you could tell me a little bit about it.

Keickhefer

Well, it goes all the way back to the Enterprise Box and Lumber Company situated in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It was incorporated on the 20th day of April, 1900. The principal owner of this company was my grandfather, William H. J. Kieckhefer, who owned 595 shares of stock out of a total of 1,000 shares. The balance was owned by his brother-in-law, Frederick Schroeder, with 135 shares; Charles Kayser, 135 shares; and my uncle, Robert J. Kieckhefer, 135 shares.

Time passed and my grandfather Kieckhefer acquired Mr. Kayser's stock, increasing his holdings to 650 shares while Schroeder's stayed the same. My uncle, Robert J. Kieckhefer, increased his holdings to 215 shares. These three men held their same offices until February 17, 1914 at which time, due to the death of William H. J. Kieckhefer, Robert J. Kieckhefer was elected president with 450 shares, Mrs. Louisa Kieckhefer, representing the estate of William H. J. Kieckhefer, was elected vice president with 400 shares and John W. Kieckhefer was elected secretary-treasurer holding 150 shares; total number of shares still remained at 1,000. This was the way the company continued and it was profitable.

By June 23, 1915 there had developed a difference of opinion between Robert J. Kieckhefer, the president, and John W. Kieckhefer, his younger brother as to the way the company should be operated. The discussions at times were apparently rather heated and in the final analysis, it was up to the boys' mother to decide with whom she would cast her deciding vote. Robert J. Kieckhefer did not wait for that to happen but entered his resignation as president of the company as he wished to become involved in a different business. The end result being that John W. Kieckhefer was elected president on that date.

Beginning in 1916, J. W. Kieckhefer started on a very determined drive to convert major companies to swing from the wooden boxes they had historically used to the so-called paper box, as they were known in those days. One of the first major companies that Mr. Kieckhefer tried to sell was the Carnation Milk Company whose headquarters were then located in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. The head of the company at that time was Mr. E. A. Stewart, a very able and astute businessman. John Kieckhefer, through his contacts with other executives of the Carnation Milk Company had arranged a test by which Carnation cans were put in the paper boxes and they survived all the tests known to business in those days.

After these tests were completed and the boxes had taken a bruising, they were stacked five high in a warehouse and Mr. E. A. Stewart arrived to inspect the results of the test. He never said a word to anybody; never acknowledged J. W. Kieckhefer's presence, simply walked over to a stack of these boxes and pushed the top container off on to the concrete floor. As bad luck would have it, it landed right on the corner, which is the weakest place.

I remember my father saying that he expected to see cans rolling around all over the floor. For some reason or another, the box did not split open and from that moment on we became suppliers for the Carnation Milk Company, and remained their major supplier throughout the business career of my father and also of Elbridge Stewart, son of E. A. Stewart.

McCourt

That's very good, Bob. They moved their headquarters out to Seattle later, didn't they?

Kieckhefer

Yes, and later they moved their headquarters down to Los Angeles, California on Wilshire Boulevard. I called there many times with my father and talked to Elbridge Stewart and have always had a very, very pleasant relationship with him. I had gone to Milwaukee Country Day School in Milwaukee with Hadley Stewart who was my age. We had gone through private boys' school together and have remained friends all our lives. The fact that my father got the Carnation Milk Company business gave him a tremendous selling point with other companies. Obviously the expansion from wood to paper really went very fast. My father used

to think how fortunate he was the box didn't split open, because certainly, nine times out of ten, it would have.

McCourt

What would have happened to a wooden box under the same circumstances, would it break?

Kieckhefer

Chances are, the wooden box would not have split open. It might have, but it would be one chance in ten where this was the absolute weak point of the paper box.

McCourt

Bob, do you remeber any of the background - here you started with the big account, the Carnation account, and I guess that acceptance helped in the midwest tremendously, then you moved to Camden. What prompted the opening of a box plant there?

Kieckhefer

There wasn't too much competition down there and J. W. saw the opportunity to get in there and be among the very first in that area, and, of course, in those days that was the center of a great deal of the business activity in the United States. There wasn't much going on in the West in about 1920. At that time the hub of business activity was in the Middle West and primarily the East. He sent his younger brother, Herb, down there to handle it and see that the plant ran all right and Herb did everything. He ran the plant and was the salesman and general manager. He continued in that capacity until he retired. He did an excellent job.

Of course, Herb's responsibilities grew with the business and Herb performed admirably. I'll tell this one on Herb - Herb was overseas in World War I and when he returned from overseas he informed J. W. that he was going to take his inheritance from his father and go to the South Seas and buy an island. I was told that Herb really meant this. Naturally the idea of Herb going to a South Seas island was not particularly appealing to my father, so my father told him it was all right with him if he went and got an island in the South Seas and never worked and just lived on his inheritance.

However in the meantime he had to become 21 years old before he got that inheritance and he would probably starve to death, unless he went to work, because my father was his trustee and guardian. Consequently Herb had to go to work - never had a chance to go to the South Seas and I don't think he has gotten there yet and maybe never will. But anyway, after Herb had been out of the service a month or two he settled right down and made an extremely valuable righthand man for my father and also an extremely valuable person for the entire paper industry.

McCourt

Herb sort of concentrated a little bit more in the manufacturing?

Kieckhefer

Yes, Herb did. I think that was his first love. He was the key man in building the plant at Delair and he also continued on in our other plants throughout the United States. Herb was an expert on the machinery; he was the manager you needed to make the machine go at the best and most economical rate. In later years, his younger brother, Walter, actually saw to the acquiring of the property, the building of the buildings and all that part of it. On the other hand, all the Kieckhefers sold boxes and the various paper products they made. They never missed a chance to sell a load of boxes. I remember many-a-time with my father, and I've done the same thing myself, driving across the United States we would come to some town where we had a customer, and we would stop off and call on the customer. We would drop in out of the blue and spend a few minutes with the head of the company and I could guarantee you that really sewed up the business from that moment on. These people were very much impressed when my father would take time to come by, not just to sell the boxes, but because he was interested in people. Many times he would learn things and they were helpful in the further development of our own products.

McCourt

In other words, this customer contact showed the customer that he was important to the business and he communicated with you so you knew if you were doing right by him or where you could improve your service?

Kieckhefer

That's right. I was raised and trained with the simple premise that the customer is king, without him we're out of business and everything else is secondary. You have to, of course, have a good product and a good delivery system and treat your customers fairly at all times - that's the way you got the customers and kept them. But without them, we wouldn't have had any factories or anything else.

As the company expanded across the United States, the Eddy Paper Company was acquired and ultimately became what we always referred to as the midwest Kieckhefer Container Company although it worked under the name of Eddy Paper Company. It was listed on the Chicago stock exchange and there were some outside stockholders but the Kieckhefer interests very much controlled it. They had a little over half the stock in the beginning. Later on when Ed Lansburg of Chicago, who incidentally owned Blatz Brewery in Milwaukee, passed away, we acquired his 25 percent holding in Eddy Paper. Things went along in the box business; we were always looking for new areas to knock the wood box out and put in our product.

I remember in 1939, I moved to Arizona because of my health. My father decided I looked healthy enough and so he handed me what we call the yellow sheet which was just a price list. He told me to see what kind of business I could drum up out here. There wasn't much going on in Arizona in those days. There was practically no industry at all. Milk cartons hadn't come into being yet. Mining was the big industry in Arizona at that time, and still is. Mining, of course, doesn't use paper boxes at all, but an industry supplier was a powder company, Apache Powder Company, outside of Benson, Arizona. I think the rail head was called Curtis, Arizona. Apache was a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Phelps-Dodge Corporation.

Kieckhefer Container had been experimenting with a solid fiber dynamite box which, of course, was substantially cheaper than the wood dynamite box. I was sent a couple of samples of the solid fiber dynamite box which, at that point, was being made at Three Rivers, Michigan and also a price list and told to go out to the Apache Powder Company to see if I could sell them. Well, that was quite an experience for me and it took a little while, I suppose four or five months, before I actually got these fellows convinced that this was the wave of the future.

I knew more than they did about the solid fiber dynamite box because they knew absolutely nothing and I knew right next to that. And then came the moment of truth. We shipped them two carloads of solid fiber dynamite boxes, I don't recall what they were selling for then, but this was a great moment and the Bostitch Company had sold them a simple post-stitcher. When I arrived at Benson, of course, all eyes were on the boxes. Nobody thought much about the stitcher. I could operate a stitcher because I tried my hand at it a few times in our factories, but I certainly was not an expert.

To my horror, I found out immediately that somebody in our factory had made a mistake on the dimension of these boxes. It was an all-flaps meet box. By that I mean the end-flaps had to touch each other and the side flaps came over the top of them and they had to meet and touch each other. These were the I.C.C. rules. It was obvious to me that everything had gone to pieces and that we couldn't make these flaps meet, at least the fellow who was demonstrating the stitcher couldn't.

I asked him what his experience with Bostitch was; he said this was the first one he had ever sold. He really didn't know too much about it, so I was able to move this young man out of the way and by the use of a lot of muscle and push-pull, I could get the flaps to meet with a load of dynamite in the box. This, of course, saved the day; I never said a word about it to anybody. I worked in that plant for over 16 hours that day and came away with a beautiful headache, which you will get when you do work in a dynamite plant and are not used to it. Of course, I was always worried that a carload of dynamite would blow up or something but nothing happened and they remained a loyal customer of the Eddy Paper Company for many, many years.

McCourt

Were you selling for the Eddy Paper Company...

Kieckhefer

At that time I was selling for Eddy Paper but I was never on a straight salary. I worked on a commission. My father said he didn't want his son working on a straight salary because somebody might think I was getting paid too much. I doubt that would ever have happened but I did find out that when all commission salesmen were getting 5 percent, I was paid 4 percent and when they were getting

paid 4 percent, I was getting paid 3 percent, so nobody could ever say that I was getting the best of the commission deal.

McCourt

You were being rewarded for being a member of the family.

Kieckhefer

That's right. Sometime, along about 1950 I think, I went on the payroll with a $100 or $150 a month salary, and I don't really recall what my title was but it was a very modest one. Then right after World War II, although it had been developed previous to the war, the Excello Corporation's Pure-Pak milk carton made its entrance into the milk packaging field.

The original Excello machines were the old model A machines. They could either be leased or purchased from Excello. The purchase price was not too penalizing so several dairies in Arizona and in the Southwest bought Model A machines and, of course, always kept them because they didn't have to pay a royalty to Excello. They added additional Excello machines as their business grew. At that time Arizona was at the very beginning of its fantastic population growth. It seemed only logical then that I would represent Kieckhefer Container selling milk cartons. This was watched with a great deal of interest by my father as well as by many of his competitors.

At that time there were three other people manufacturing the Excello carton, more about that in a moment. Our paper or bleached board for our milk carton was made at Plymouth. In the beginning it would bulge after a relatively short period of shelf life and while the other competitors' also bulged, ours seemed to bulge more. As a result, it was not too easy to sell our carton. Gradually we improved the quality of our Plymouth board to the point where it was the best in the field and with that came industry recognition of our Pure-Pak carton.

We put up milk carton plants across the United States and the ones I dealt with primarily were Whittier, California; Garland, Texas; and Vancouver, Washington. You might wonder why I would be dealing with Vancouver, Washington, for instance, or maybe Garland, Texas. Well, occasionally we would have a strike at one plant and we would just remove the printing plates from, say, Whittier and

move them to Vancouver and Garland and make the cartons there and ship them in. We took a beating on the freight but the customer, most of the time, didn't even know we had a strike going. It was good business strategy and worked out very well.

I was able to get into the Borden business in Phoenix because Wally Montague was the brother of Ted Montague who was head of Borden at that time or about to become the top man at Borden Company on a national level. Ted Montague had known me as a boy back in Wisconsin and so I got that business, I guess, that way. It at least gave me a toehold out here.

As time went on I learned that one of our competitors had a particularly bad batch of boards that they had run. It happened to be Fibreboard Products Company and they had 100 percent of the business in what was then the largest dairy in Arizona. It was called Webster's Dairy and run by a very hard-bitten fellow named Erle Banks. I don't know how many times I called on Erle, who was curtly polite every time I called, but I was never able to get him to run even a sample of our cartons.

One day I got a call from Mr. Banks, wondering when I was coming to Phoenix and I said it just so happened that I was leaving for there right then. Well, he said, would you mind stopping by my office as soon as you get down here. I said, "I'll be right there; I am just leaving." Actually I had no intention of going to Phoenix that day but I figured something was up so I jumped in my car and ran down to Glendale, Arizona, a suburb of Phoenix, where his main office was located. I had to wait about 20 minutes to get in to see him and I never really got into his office. Here he came with a sample of every product that he packaged in Pure-Pak in their various sizes, half pints, pints, and quarts (they didn't have half gallons in those days) and for his whipping cream, half and half, homo milk, and the regular milk and all. He said, "How soon can you get me a carload of each of these cartons?" I said I didn't know. He said, "Never mind. Take these to California into your Whittier plant and have them make the printing plates. I need help and I need it now."

As soon as I left his office, I went to a pay phone and called up O. C. Christmas, who ran the Whittier plant, and told Chris what had happened, that the Fibreboard cartons weren't running at all, which I just assumed, and that Mr. Banks had

thought of me in his moment of trouble. I packaged up the samples and put them on an airplane. What I actually did was give some money to a stewardess to stick them on the plane, went back to the phone, called Whittier and told them to meet this plane and that the stewardess would have a package for them. We got it over there in the fastest possible time.

Chris did a great job on getting this done and then in a matter of days we handed this man his first cartons. We didn't ship him whole carloads of each one, we shipped him a half a carload of this and a half a carload of that, thereby making a full carload, so he got the full carload rate. As time went on and as our relationship developed, all we would do was invoice him and he would pay the invoice long before he ever got what we were shipping him. I guess this proved he trusted us implicitly. Mr. Banks became a great supporter of the Kieckhefer product and of the Kieckhefers.

My father got to know him later on and thought he was a great guy. He was also an avid hunter and every fall I would go down to Glendale where Mr. Banks, his son and I would go out and have the greatest White Wing and Mourning Dove shoots you can possibly imagine. Later on in the fall, he would come on up to our ranch and go antelope hunting if he had a permit for that, or to do some goose and duck hunting. We had a fine personal relationship as well as a great business relationship.

It just didn't end right there. As time went on he was able to help me secure business in El Paso, Texas and in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was the most aggressive merchandiser in the dairy business in the state of Arizona. It became apparent that whatever Erle Banks did, everybody else would immediately do. So it became relatively easy to sell our cartons because they figured if Erle Banks' Webster Dairy used them, they had to be the best and so, everybody else wanted to buy our cartons.

This situation developed before the experiments were done on the so-called pitcher pour spout on the milk carton. The way that idea originally came up - my father and I were sitting in the bar at the Hassayampa Hotel (Prescott, Arizona) one day drinking a bottle of beer before lunch. They had a bartender there who had to make an egg nog for a client and we watched him remove the staple from the top of the carton and pop the spout out. It was done very clumsily. I looked at my father and he looked at me and I said, "Do you see what I see?" and he said, "Yes."

We came back to my office which was only about 100 feet down the street and got a piece of plywood out of the garage to do the work on and had one of the secretaries go down and buy six quarts of milk, empty the milk out, and wash out the cartons. We took the staples out of the top and saw that this pitcher pour idea really worked. We slit the carton down the side seam and left the bottom and did the original engineering for this thing, performations, scoring, etc., right there in my office.

After that, modifications were made on it by Herb Kieckhefer and others back at our labs in the East, so my name doesn't appear on the patent and neither did J.W.'s. But we're the fellows that came up with the original idea. Although I must make it clear that Herb did modify it and made some technical improvements on it which, of course, would have been impossible for us to do since we were only working with pocketknives and a ruler.

Then there was the problem of how were we going to sell this. We made some cartons (a very limited supply) and I took them down to my friend Erle Banks' dairy. We ran it on his "A" model machine, the one he owned, so he wouldn't get into any trouble with Excello and neither would we, and our idea really worked. It was one of the few things I've ever seen developed that worked almost 100 percent perfect from the very first run. Then we went around, Mr. Banks and I did, and he staged some tests in the various chain stores that he supplied and it was instantly apparent that we really had something.

We did not manufacture any more of these but I went back to Detroit by myself and met with the Excello Corporation's bigwigs. Our competitors were also there and I produced this carton and was loudly denounced by our competition who wouldn't admit that it was any good and also by the Excello officials who thought it was terrible. They still had the pull-tab on the side of the milk carton and they had a little tab you had to pull down with your finger so it would pour a little better, but it didn't pour as well as our opening. They threatened to take our license away and I remeber one of the Excello officials jumped up and down on the floor like the fairy tale character Rumplestiltskin and I thought he was going through the floor, but he didn't.

I had a full day of being verbally abused. Just the fact that these people got so upset about it convinced me even more that we had the proper opening. So I went from there to Delair and talked with Herb and my father. I reported what had happened so we planned a strategy to see how we could promote this carton because we had determined that we had a 13 percent cost saving in its manufacture, in addition to the carton being a better pourer. We figured out that there were a bunch of "A" machines pretty well scattered throughout the Southwest where we had 100 percent of the business, so I then went back out into the hustings. I went to the dairies in my area and they immediately saw the advantage.

Then we started running these pitcher-pour cartons, as they were called in those days, for the people in the Southwest. We also took a load of them back to the national dairy show in Chicago and ran them there, but Excello made us stop the exhibition. This caused quite a stir. So we decided we had to do something else to force Excello to adopt this opening.

Dad, Herb and I sat down again and went over our manufacturing figures very carefully. We decided to set the price for the pitcher-pour at five percent less than the regular price for the old-type carton. And we did. You can imagine the furor that happened then. We almost lost our license to manufacture milk cartons, but legally we were within the terms of our agreement at all times. Just inside the agreement I want to say, right up on the edge of it, but we hadn't stepped outside of it.

Like everything else, the minute the dairy realized they could buy their cartons five percent cheaper and they had worked so extremely well down here in the Southwest, the pressure became so great that Excello gave in. It was a very simple conversion on the machine; just a relocation of the stapling head was about all they had to do. That was the way we achieved a good industry position in the Pure-Pak carton business.

Under the terms of our license with Excello, we gave them our patent. That was fair enough because we had the lead time over our competitors and the know-how on exactly how to make these cartons. We increased our volume quite a bit and it turned out to be an extremely profitable thing. That hummed along for a long time and so did the dynamite boxes; there wasn't much else going on in the Southwest.

There were several things that caught our eye though. In those days there was an immense amount of citrus growing in the greater Phoenix area. We spent a lot of time trying to figure out how we could put the citrus into a corrugated box. I well remember working on the citrus breakthrough with Bob Scoutten, who is still employed by the company on the West Coast. The first breakthrough came on lemon boxes.

We tried them under every set of circumstances and finally, the best box was a telescope box. This box has a top and a bottom which gives you two side walls and two end walls on the boxes for double stacking strength if you want to store them that way. It also made it easy to display the oranges in grocery stores and it gave the grocery two boxes to send home with the housewife instead of just one. Many tests were done on a run on the West Coast. As you know, they store this fruit for quite awhile in these cool warehouses and it's damp on the West Coast, all of which had to be reckoned with in regard to paper weights, glue, etc.

We really didn't experience any critical problems on this. All the people we were dealing with were Sunkist growers. Then it was a hop, skip and a jump into oranges and citrus all over the country. This worked out to be very profitable for us and all through those years we had great rapport with Fruit Grower Supply which was Sunkist.

We looked around for more markets and we thought of grapes. We built a wonderful grape box but it really never has caught fire. It was a perfectly fine package but cost savings were not that dramatic and we couldn't put it across. We made tomato lugs and things like that and they've been a steady commodity. We went from citrus into apples and also pears, but apples are the large volume of deciduous fruit, and that became a very profitable business up in the Northwest.

Those were difficult days selling in the Northwest because everybody had their own little co-op that they bought through. Competitive problems with them were almost unreal, and consequently, we never did get as large a share of the apple box business as we might have, simply because we were very careful about whom we dealt with on matters of credit.

Beyond that, living in Arizona, which is one of the major lettuce growing areas of the United States, and having many friends in the produce business, my father and I always cast covetous eyes at those lettuce crates. We felt if we ever got that wooden crate knocked out, we'd really have something.

A fellow called Rex Brunsing came up with a patent, which was more or less valid at that time, and became less valid, I think, as time went on; it was the vacuum cooling of lettuce. This consisted of putting two thirds of a freight car of lettuce into a tube and drawing a vacuum on it so that in 20 minutes you had the heart of the lettuce chilled down to 32-1/2 degrees. In addition to cooling the lettuce, it did several other things. Lettuce is subject to leaf burn, as they call it, and various kinds of molds and similar problems. This process absolutely sterilized, or stabilized, the lettuce by drawing the vacuum. Whatever the condition the head of lettuce was in when picked, that's the way it was a month later. Also, as you know, lettuce gets worms in it and the drawing of vacuum exploded the worms and there's no way any housewife could ever find a worm. We went to work with Brunsing. Obviously the vacuum cooling process would mean the end to the large ice business that had developed in all these vegetable growing areas.

At that time lettuce had been shipped in wood crates. They would cut the lettuce in the fields, bring it to a packing shed which was located alongside a railroad spur, pack the lettuce in wooden crates, put it into a freight car that had bunker icing on each end, and then spray it over the top with chipped ice to cool it down. They kept spraying more ice on it from time to time at various stops as it traveled East or wherever it was going. This, of course, would only increase any leaf burn or mold or whatever the lettuce might have on it. Many times they would haul this lettuce around trying to withhold it from the market, to get the best price. Often, after the rail car arrived at its destination, they would open the doors and have nothing but a bunch of slush in there - terrible stuff - they couldn't sell it - they'd throw it away. It was really a gambling business.

The other thing was that the packing sheds were constantly being struck during the height of the growing season. This caused a lot of violence and a great deal of trouble and many unpleasant situations. The vacuum cooling process eliminated the ice plants; the refrigerator cars were bunker iced at each end but all top icing was eliminated. The packing sheds were eliminated because the lettuce was

packed right in the field and ultimately they developed some rather Rube Goldberg-like looking contraptions for harvesting the lettuce.

They had workers out in the fields chopping the lettuce and dropping them on a traveling conveyor. The lettuce went on up the conveyor to a platform. At the back were boxes. They'd open up the boxes, stitch the bottom of the box and another man would put the lettuce in while somebody else would stitch it on top, and away it would go. Then they would drop them off in the field. A pickup would come along with an automatic device and pick these boxes up. Then they would go to the cooler and then they'd go to the rail car.

The paper box worked extremely well. They wouldn't break open like a crate would. Also the wood crates held 48 heads of lettuce and we decided that it was pretty hard to make a box that big to hold that amount of weight. So instead of having four dozen heads of lettuce, we cut it to two dozen heads of lettuce. We also had figured out that this would enable the chain stores to use women to unload the lettuce because they could handle the two dozen heads without any trouble at all but four dozen heads was just too darn big. Also, obviously there were no splinters to get into them. This was a good selling point.

The main selling point was the lettuce stayed in beautiful condition all the way through. They would ship it to Boston or wherever, or back to Philadelphia, playing their own game of trying to keep the price up. When they opened up the car a month later the lettuce would be just as good as the day it was picked. Housewives noticed the quality change immediately and it became a very fast selling item. We incurred the enmity of the people who owned the ice houses.

McCourt

Who controlled those?

Kieckhefer

They were controlled primarily by the lettuce growers, but here again some of the fellows who owned the ice houses figured out very quickly that they could save so much money they didn't give a darn about their investment in the ice houses anymore. They went to the vacuum cooling process and went fast. They were sure they would lose some money, but not much. So they went right ahead.

As a matter of fact, when they put the vacuum cooling plant in Phoenix, it was difficult to get adequate land along the railroad spur because the ice house interests alledgedly were leaning on everybody, the railroads and everybody else, not to sell to these vacuum cooling fellows. So a friend of mine (who was in the produce business) tipped me off where there was a parcel available and I went down and gave the owner my check for $25,000, then came up and borrowed the money to cover the check so we could make the deal right that minute and not wait for somebody to dissuade him from selling it to me. In fact, the cooling plant was built right on that location and that took care of Phoenix, Glendale and all the surrounding area very well.

Other large lettuce areas are Salinas, California, Wastonville, and nearby areas. That all went into the vacuum cooling of lettuce. Vacuum cooling lettuce was pushed along by a fellow called Bud Antle, who unfortunately, passed away a few years ago. He was a great guy and like most produce men, a little reckless sometimes by our standards. He'd plunge into the market to such a large degree that sometimes when his reasoning wasn't correct, he would be a little strapped, but then he'd work his way out of it. We always got all our money out of him, but he was a great driving force in this vacuum cooling because he saw the advantages instantly and he did not have an interest in ice houses. So he went into it full tilt. It made his brand of lettuce, "Bud Lettuce," highly desirable.

I sold a lot of lettuce boxes, not many to Antle because his interests in Arizona, when I was selling, were not that great, but became greater as time went on. I never did get all of these fellows in Phoenix simply because we put them out of the ice business. But I did sell most of them and made some very good, strong friends in the industry.

Unfortunately, as time has marched on, a lot of these men have gone to their reward, but my friendly relations with their sons still continue and they're still buying from us. I don't sell them or have anything to do with it but they're still buying from Weyerhaeuser. I still enjoy the friendship of these men and I think that's one of the great things I've enjoyed about my years of selling, the friends I made. I also enjoyed being able to look myself in the eye in the morning and figure I've done a pretty darn good job selling for the company. It also enabled me to accumulate some money and become financially independent by the time I was 34 years old.

McCourt

I was just thinking when you went up to sell the dynamite boxes, you were about 21, weren't you?

Kieckhefer

Yes. I was 21, I was going to be 22 that December. It was a little hairy and looking back now, I don't know why I was damn fool enough to even try it. But it worked and I don't know what would have happened to me if it hadn't worked. But it did work and it gave me the idea that I could sell paper to almost anybody under any circumstances.

I enjoyed that part of my business life more than anything else, the selling of paper and once I got a customer sold - it's kind of like my father had felt - that then the fun went out of it and I had to go out and find another new customer. It was very rewarding and I'm sure that my father and his brothers enjoyed my success in it too.

My father was very careful not to compliment me too highly or hint that I was doing very well. I always knew when I wasn't doing right just from the look on his face. Most of the time we never had any business difficulties and he, of course, taught me all the way along the line about the box and milk carton business. We kind of grew up in the milk carton and vegetable box business together. He took a great interest in conquering the wood box - that seemed to be his lifelong ambition.

Several ideas we had didn't work but ultimately one of them would work. We spent a lot of time on one, but we couldn't make it for sort of a flukey reason which, I guess, I should have noticed fairly early in the game. We wanted to use a corrugated sheet properly scored at the right places so it would bend without cracking for wrapping bales of cotton. The tonnage was terrific and it would be much more desirable for the cotton people who primarily use burlap, or something like, so the cotton wouldn't get dirty. Also our product, unlike polyethylene, would allow the cotton to breathe.

By this I mean they buy cotton, say, here in Arizona and ship it down to Houston baled, let it sit on the docks down there and soak up all that moisture and then the

cotton weighs more when they go to sell it. This is a great game. Obviously when you wrap the whole thing in plastic it can't breathe but it can breathe if wrapped in a corrugated sheet all the way around and also the top and bottom. I thought we really had a tremendous breakthrough there and these sheets could be made very simply right off the corrugator. You didn't have to take them in the box shop at all and the tonnage would have been vast. Unfortunately, I overlooked one thing, that is the press in which they bale the cotton. There were presses used here in Arizona that were made about the time of the Civil War and in every period since then and every one of them was a little different in size. They don't sell cotton in bales that are exact measurements, you sell it by the pound. If a bale weighs 500 pounds, fine, but if it weighs 450 pounds, you get paid for 450. With this tremendous number of presses, hardly any two alike, we couldn't afford to be changing the scoring devices on the corrugator for everybody's cotton press. It would take all the profit out of it, not only the manufacturing profit, but you would also lose your board profit which doesn't leave anything. Then you have too much downtime on your corrugator and too much chance for a slip up. These things weren't printed, they didn't have your customer's name on it. It would be a very simple thing to send the wrong sheets to the wrong man and then you'd really have trouble because when that cotton comes off, everything has to go precisely; they run these balers around the clock.

McCourt

Any chance of maybe trying to standardize the customers?

Kieckhefer

No, because they don't spend any money. They feel, if it was good enough for grandfather, it's good enough for me. Now ultimately these old babies are going to fall apart. They will get to the point where they can't patch them anymore and then they will become standardized. When they do, it'll be a real shot in the area to our industry. It would be a simple thing to do, but you don't win them all at least at first.

I don't want anybody to think that every idea I ever had or worked on succeeded because that one darn sure didn't and I was very disappointed. Being around a cotton gin is no fun. The air is full of dust and particles of cotton and everything else. If you stayed in there long enough, and I did, you would get, and I did get,

pneumonia one time. I never appreciated that too much but when I got well I went back. It is a field that ultimately will be converted. If you go into the South you'll find hardly anybody has the same size press. Here in Arizona you would find maybe two that were alike and another one that was almost like it, but almost isn't good enough.

McCourt
California might have more standardization?

Kieckhefer
Not anymore than Arizona. They have the same problem over there. They've been at it a long time and the new fellows who went into it got presses and they were different sizes. I hope that someday we'll be able to get that business. I don't know at this moment if there's any work being carried forward on it but there should be. Somewhere along the line it's going to have to go. It has all the advantages of keeping the cotton clean and still allows it to breathe. Other than that, I don't know of any other fields to be conquered right now since I haven't been active in selling for about 15 years. I must admit I miss it a little bit, but not all that much.

But really I think it's a remarkable thing when a fellow can enjoy selling and being in on the development of products and new markets. There's a lot of time lost and sometimes I wasn't even home on Easter Sunday. Thanks to God, I was always home for Christmas but I missed a lot of Easters and a lot of so-called good times and all that, but I never stopped trying to promote the product and promote the company.

McCourt
It's alway exciting.

Kieckhefer
It's really challenging. Of course, on the other hand, once I have the problem whipped and have things going well, then it really doesn't hold much interest for me, anybody could take it from then on. There were new ideas and I was fortunate to be in a position and an area of the United States where lettuce was and where citrus fruits were growing right there almost in my own backyard. A man would have been a fool not be able to develop some of that stuff.

McCourt

I wonder, the breweries, you've done alot of business with the breweries, especially in Milwaukee but they were late in changing from wooden boxes, weren't they?

Kieckhefer

Well, they were. I don't know why they were necessarily.

McCourt

The return bottle bit?

Kieckhefer

Yes, we made a solid fiber returnable case that worked out very well. Breweries would complain that the solid fiber case got scuffed and dirty. We could fix it so they could turn the hose on it and wash it off but then you weren't saving them enough money. And, you have to remember, I speak not in any critical way of the people who owned these breweries because you know I'm part German myself and it's very hard for a lot of Germans to change their way of doing things very rapidly, they're very thorough and very cautious and there's no jumping around fast with them; they do it very methodically. I can understand that habit because I'm that way myself about many, many things and I think these people saw the advantages but just didn't accept it until they were almost pushed into it.

My father, of course, was a lifelong friend of the men who ran the Schlitz Brewery in Milwaukee, Mr. Joseph E. Uhlein and his brother Robert and their brother Ike whose real name was Erwin; he was a contemporary of theirs. They all went around together socially back there and I am still a great friend of Bob Uhlein, Sr. who's currently head of the Schlitz Brewery and a very able guy. (Bob Uhlein, Jr. died late in 1976.)

We made boxes for Pabst, of course, we knew all of the Pabst family and the Blatz's. Some of these people lost control of their breweries, like Blatz and Pabst, during and after prohibition when they didn't have much to do and they didn't really go aggressively into other fields like the Uhlein family (Schlitz). The Uhlein's did an excellent job of diversifying, real estate, banking and did a tremendous job for the city and also for themselves.

We were very successful in selling beer boxes all over the United States. We had no problem at all doing it. I don't know why they bought more from us than anybody else; maybe because we started in it first, and being careful people, they figured since we were first in it we probably knew more about it than anybody else which may or may not have been the case. But it's always been a large volume item. It was for Kieckhefer and Eddy and now is for Weyerhaeuser. Many of the friendships we made in the brewery business still exist. I see some of the people at Anheuser-Busch, close personal friends of mind, and the Uhlein family, of course...

As a matter of fact, at one point in time I owned a quarter of an interest with one of the Von Gontards in a steeple-chase horse and you know the Busch family and the Von Gontards family are almost as one. In fact, one of my old girlfriends was one of the Uhlein girls so it's a small world, I guess.

We developed the brewery business all the way. We had a lot of success with the smaller breweries who now have gone out of business or, in effect, had their volume taken over. They were forced out of business, or went out of business, by the larger breweries and our position with larger breweries remains constant.

We were very big in the canned food business in the beginning. I remember at one time my father owned the Columbus Canning Company in Columbus, Wisconsin and I asked him how he acquired it. Well, he told me, they couldn't pay their bills so he took out all the creditors and got this string of canning companies - a half-a-dozon or something like that. They turned out to be very profitable. He got a friend of his who was having some difficulties financially but who was a good hard worker, and J.W. said to him, you don't know much about canning but you can learn. He put this fellow in charge of the canneries and everybody came out extremely well.

Also one time I remember, back a long time, Kieckhefer Container Company was the proud owner of approximately 15,000 head of horses which belonged to some dog food company which had gone under. We took over and Dad, in his ususual fashion, took the other creditors out and we owned it. He found another friend of his that wasn't doing so well in whatever he was doing and there he was, making dog food. It was turned into another profitable venture and then sold out. His friends always did extremely well and he got back his money and a little more besides. He was in several other lines. At one time he had a small shoe factory.

Somebody, through some stroke of misfortune, couldn't pay their bills and he put in a little cash and away he'd go. I don't know of any other box company that would do that in this day and age but in those days it was rather a common occurrence if you had the cash. Kieckhefer Container Company always had money in the bank.

They never lost any money. Even during the depths of the Depression, they always made money. Eddy Paper was bought just after the Depression hit and it lost money. They lost a little money there and little money here and I remember one year they had a cash loss of $6,000. Of course, the paper loss was considerably larger. There was really hell to pay that year. As a matter of fact my father got in an argument with Ed Lansburg, who I mentioned previously owned about 25 percent of Eddy Paper. He made some remark that was critical of my father at a director's meeting, so my father said okay, "I won't take a nickel for running this unprintable Eddy Paper Company until I put it in the black and then you'll pay me and pay me well." And that's just the way it was, but it wasn't long before it was in the black.

It was going that way but Lansburg didn't know it. Then my father had great trouble with Lansburg because Lansburg was always wanting to raise my father's salary and such as that and my father said no, he was being well paid and didn't want any more money and Lansburg was saying, now, I made a deal with you and my word's good. My father would say, I know it's good, Ed, but I don't need any more money and that's the way it went. I can remember those days very, very well.

My father was a very fair man, completely honest. He treated his employees very, very well and his profit sharing plan, that he set up, I think was a great one. He never had a nickel's worth of trouble with the government about it because when he set it up, while he was the president of both Eddy and Kieckhefer, he specifically excluded the president from ever being able to participate in this plan. When time went on and Herb moved on to be president of Kieckhefer, he stopped participating in the plan. What he had put in prior to assuming the presidency was fine, that was his, but no more. His participation was frozen the day he became president. The same was true with Walter Kieckhefer when he became head of Eddy Paper, his participation was frozen right then. And this incidentally was a great selling point in those days with the government.

McCourt

There was one challenge to the Kieckhefer plan. Did you hear about that, Bob?

Kieckhefer

What was that?

McCourt

That most of the assets of Kieckhefer profit sharing plan, I think something like 98 plus percent were in Eddy Paper stocks. The Internal Revenue Service said this was an unsound investment.

Kieckhefer

That's right. It worked out very well for the employees though.

McCourt

It sure did. You couldn't have picked a better investment.

Kieckhefer

No. That's what I did myself personally. Anytime I had any money laying around, I don't care how little of it, I had a buy order in on the Chicago Stock Exchange and I was paying an eighth of a point higher than anybody else was paying and I bought a lot of it. I wound up being a large stockholder of Eddy Paper, larger than my father, much to his great surprise. One day he called me up at work in San Francisco at the company office and wanted to know where I got all this stock. I said I have been buying it for years and years.

McCourt

You thought it had good management.

Kieckhefer

Yes, I thought the management was excellent and I can remember very well back in 1935, 1936-37 before I became active in selling, another fellow and I had a guest ranch outside of Tucson at Oracle, Arizona. Anyhow, the weather wasn't good everyday all winter so I became a fairly good country contract bridge player and also in those days, just like it is now, backgammon was the rage. I kept myself

going, I paid all my expenses, food, clothing, gas and everything else out of my winnings in bridge and backgammon. But I was frugal and everything else I put into Eddy Paper Company stock. I probably wound up doing better financially playing bridge and backgammon than anybody in the history of the games because I don't think anybody invested like that. Of course I could have lost it all too if things didn't work out. But it's been a good thing for everybody.

Speaking of the merger with Weyerhaeuser Company, it was a very good thing for the stockholders of Kieckhefer and Eddy.

It was a good thing for my family group, and I mean all of the family members, because it gave them liquidity which they did not have before. We 'd known Weyerhaeuser for a long time because we were their principal customer in the West for their linerboard and also for their bleachboard for the milk carton stock. We got to know them as a real first-rate outfit with a wonderful set of assets behind them. But more than anything, besides the way they operated and their assets, the land and the trees, were the people running the company. They were not only able and hard working people but were truly high-class people. These were the kinds of people that we wanted to be associated with. We had many a company run at us for mergers right up to the time we merged with Weyerhaeuser, but we never gave them much thought because we didn't particularly care for the people we would be dealing with. These companies have also proven to be successful over the years. They weren't bad companies and were obviously well-run, but we just didn' like the cut of the jibs of a lot of their principals, but we certainly had a very high regard for Weyerhaeuser. So we were very, very pleased that it worked out this way and as I always tell Weyerhaeuser, we hope you're as well pleased as we are. You know mergers are sort of like marriage and not all marriages work out, but this has been a happy one and it takes two to tango and nobody has ever stepped on our toes. We hope we've never stepped on anybody else's.

McCourt

I think it has been a very good spirit you brought to Weyerhaeuser. You were a very lean organization and I think it's had an impact on Weyerhaeuser.

Kieckhefer

We hope it has and they've gotton along alright. They maintained their position pretty much as they should. They got out of the folding cartons and frankly that business wasn't any great joy to us either. We were perfectly ready to step out of it, if the time ever came.

McCourt

It's really a local entrepreneur's operation.

Kieckhefer

That's right. When we were in it we were smaller, it wasn't too bad - we made some money; but the bigger it got, more spread out, by that I mean more geographical areas, the harder it became to make a profit. We always made a profit on it. We made two profits - we made a profit on the box boards and we made a little on the converting end. But it was difficult and it took lots of time. In my own opinion, it took more of top level management's time thinking about it and working on it than we got back.

But it's like everything else, things change, times change. I'm sure that if my father were alive today, he wouldn't have been in it. He'd be out of it. I think he would probably have fought harder for the milk carton position at one point in time than Weyerhaeuser did, but they've since reversed their course and their position is solid.

McCourt

You traveled with your father when you were younger...

Kieckhefer

Yes, I traveled with him a great deal. I used to go to the East Coast with him once a month for eight, nine or ten days, and then up the West Coast we'd go. He aways went West twice a year regularly, and sometimes more often, but for every time that he went I would go two or three. I always went with him. We traveled together in business a great deal. We were rather careful about not flying on the same airplane, that rarely happened. We rode the trains together a lot, but we never shared a room after we traveled together for a little while because my father was a terrible snorer and I couldn't sleep. That offended him for a while but my mother agreed with me.

We did have one fortunate thing happen, the time that we were negotiating with Phil Weyerhaeuser, during the merger talks in the fall of 1956 (I think that's when it was). Joe Auchter was to fly out from Philadelphia to meet my father and me in Denver. We were going to fly from Phoenix to Denver and then catch a United plane on to Seattle. I developed a terrible cold; when this happens with me, my ears suffer. I wasn't feeling at all well and I was running a fever. So very reluctantly my father said call Joe and tell him the trip's off. He said he'd call Phil and tell him we'll be up in three or four days. No big deal, that was fine with everybody concerned. That was the plane that was blown up in the air. The one from Denver to Seattle that we were, fortunately, not on.

McCourt
Oh boy!

Kieckhefer
That's the one. So that's how close we came to missing buying the farm, as we say. I had no premonition about it, just my earache, that's all. It would have gotten three of us in one blast. That would have been pretty hard on our company because we always had great faith in Joe Auchter, who I think is one of God's really great men. He performed a great service for the Kieckhefers. He did a great job.

McCourt
Did you ever meet Phil Weyerhaeuser?

Kieckhefer
Oh yes.

McCourt
Could you tell me about the time?

Kieckhefer
Well, I met with Phil Weyerhaeuser several different times but up until getting close on to the merger deal, it was always in the role of a customer, a valued customer. He was the seller and we were the buyers, but I always was very much impressed by him. He didn't fool around, by that I mean he came to the point; he didn't waste time in business, he got right to the heart of the matter, discussed it

and arrived at a conclusion that everybody agreed on. I do know this, that his word was just as good as my father's, just as good as gold. He was a high-class gentleman and a first-rate businessman. When you get a combination like that, well you just like to be with people like that, you enjoy it. It's a great feeling. That was the way I remember him. Mostly, that way, and also extremely favorably and warmly because he was a real human fellow too. He was considerate, kind, but yet he was a successful type business man. I can easily see where George gets the talent and his qualities from because George reminds me so much of his father. Gosh, you could close your eyes sometimes, you know, and think that Phil was there. Then, of course, when we were talking some of merging, I was up there a couple of times and talked with him then. That was shortly before he passed away. We didn't know he was having problems of any kind, and we hated to see him go. In fact, we moved back a little from the merger, not far, but we kind of took another look at it. But then, after another look, we ascertained that there was plenty of talent behind Phil, so everything moved ahead, but he was a fantastic individual, as is George.

McCourt

Yes, he had a great sense of humor, too.

Kieckhefer

Yes, he was a warm person, a real human being. You don't find all those fine characteristics wrapped up in one person very often.

McCourt

No you don't. Incidentally, there's going to be a birthday party for Norton Clapp on April 14, the night before the annual meeting, and we're collecting stories and anecdotes about him. We mentioned this in a letter I sent to you a few days ago. Have you had a chance to recall any, Bob?

Kieckhefer

I'd rather think about it and let you know. I'll tell you why, because I've been out of my office, the last two days of last week before my daughter got married and then didn't even get to work Sunday. I had to entertain some people last Sunday and then I went up to...

McCourt

It was a good cause...

Kieckhefer

Oh yes. I'm very apt to work a couple hours on Sunday because I come down here and I'm all alone and the phone rarely rings. I can get a lot of work done, lot of thinking done. Then on Monday I went on up the coast to Tacoma and came back Tuesday night. On Wednesday I had to go to Phoenix and your letter was laying there and I just haven't had a chance to really think about it, but I will. I can think of a lot of them, I'm just trying to figure out what might be the best one and put it all together. Although I don't think I could beat Herb's story. It's got to be the greatest of all of them. But Norton's a grand guy, too. He's a very kind man as well as an extremely able man. There, again, a unique blend of two very admirable characteristics. And I know I for one am going to miss him. I'm going to miss him a lot. He's given a lot of direction to the company, good direction, and he's been a darn good soldier. I mean he worked at it.

McCourt

He doesn't goof off.

Kieckhefer

He doesn't goof off. He's a darn good soldier, that's what I say. That the highest compliment I can pay a fellow. He sees something that has to be done, he'll go about and do it. You don't have to worry because he'll do it just perfectly, he has no problems at all. I know we're going to miss him. Probably I'll miss him as much, or more, than the other fellows on the Board.

McCourt

He's another warm, human being.

Kieckhefer

Well, you see getting down to the point of service, not too many fellows have been on that Board longer than me.

McCourt

Right. Carle Blunt is going to be leaving.

Kieckhefer

He's going to be leaving - Norton is leaving, that just leaves Johnny Musser and, who else?

McCourt

Dave Weyerhaeuser?

Kieckhefer

Dave Weyerhaeuser, that's it. But I've enjoyed my relationship with Norton very much and he's been very nice to me and darn good to me, I'll tell you, and good to the company and to its employees and good for them. On top of all that, he took on the leadership of the Boy Scouts and other worthwhile things. I don't know where the man finds time, but everything he does, he does perfectly. Obviously he knows how to get the job done.

McCourt

Going back to your father and the trips you were on together when you were younger, you mentioned to me one time, going, I think, to Europe or someplace and talking to the suppliers of pulp, your suppliers of pulp...

Kieckhefer

Oh, my father did, yes but I didn't. My father traveled abroad. He went to Finland and met up with Baron Mannerheim who was almost a saint over there. He was quite a man.

Dad was buying his pulp from the Scandinavians. He always felt he was at their mercy, which he and everybody else really were. That's one of the things that moved him into the South. But I remember very well his coming home one day and into the office. I was there and I said, "How did the trip go?" He'd been to New York to the head offices of the Scandinavians, one of the pulp suppliers, and he was furious. He went on to describe how he was going to get out from underneath their control. He said, "I want to tell you something. They had more beautiful women working, or whatever they were doing in that office, sitting behind desks, than any place I've ever been. I don't know what they're all there for or what they're all doing all the time, but they cost money. I don't like that kind of business. I'm not going to pay these prices for their pulp because part of it is going there and that's

not the way I live and not the way I operate." This was a kind of very simple direct outlook, possibly, but it was just the way my father was. He thought there were some shenanigans going on there. Either that or the girls were there for the benefit of the Scandinavians or for the benefit of the customers or whatever, but he didn't want any part of it. He was not a player in that kind of game. He was not going to buy pulp from these fellows any longer than he had to. He wanted to get out from underneath them and his march to the South had begun.

It's funny how things like that will get you moving. Just like back in Wisconsin when Bob LaFollette got pushing those taxes around. This was another motivating factor, when my father saw something he didn't like, it was enough to change his course right there. He never stood around and watched, he'd just lead the pack off in another direction and everybody would go; it all worked well.

McCourt
Well, Wisconsin is proud of having the first income tax in the country.

Kieckhefer
Oh. They've got to have either the second worst or the worst income tax situation of any state in the Union. New York has the worst, I think, and either Minnesota or Wisconsin, they're second and third; that's another story for another day.

Dad was very much interested, incidentally, in politics when he and mother came to Arizona...in about 1941. He, being a Republican, found the Republican Party in a complete state of disarray, if you could even say there was a Republican Party in Arizona then. Sometimes they didn't run a candidate for governor.

So he took it upon himself to become the state Republican finance chairman, although he'd never done any political work other than just give money to the Republican campaigns. He put as much energy into that as he did to anything else he ever did and made a great success out of it. He rounded up the money, enough money to run the proper type of campaign and therefore attracted the proper kind of people.

He was active some years before Barry Goldwater got started, even before Barry was a councilman down in Phoenix. Dad was a very close confidant of Barry

Goldwater's and helped finance his campaigns and get everything going and was very active in raising money for Barry. A lot of people had never heard of him, most people hadn't in the period from 1946 to 1952.

He was able to attract support for Barry from areas outside of Arizona and put it to good use. I think Barry is the only fellow I've ever known who spoke up to my father. At one time they were sitting there in my old office down the street. I was there along with Barry's campaign manager. They got to arguing about what kind of speech Barry was going to make in different towns around the state --- this was just before his campaign for reelection to the Senate in 1958.

He had his speeches all scheduled out, every day between then and election day. Down in Ajo, Arizona, which is strictly a mining town and highly unionized, Barry had chosen that place to deliver a speech on why he was for the "right to work" issue. Dad said, "You don't have to talk about the 'right to work' issue down there. You can talk about Europe or something like that. Give them the inside on what's going on somewhere else in the world." Barry said, "No John, I'm going to tell them about the 'right to work' bill." And they got into quite a heated discussion about it and they finally made a very modest wager, I don't know what is was a few bucks - I don't even know, it might have been a bottle of whiskey. But it didn't come to much over $10 as to whether Barry would win or lose that area Ajo was in.

If it came out that Barry lost by only 100 votes all bets were off. And my gosh, Barry lost there by only 50 votes. So my father didn't win the bet because Barry had to lose it by more than 100 votes. Consequently, Barry won the bet, but my father, I know, went to his grave convinced he was still right. He kept saying, "Damn it, Barry, what's the matter with you, if you would've talked about foreign policy or told them something else down there, you would have carried by 50 votes." Barry said, "John, what difference does it make, I carried every county in the state." And Dad said, "Yeh, Barry, but you're still a young man. You really don't know what's going on in this world." Barry looked at my father and said, "You're full of (bleep)." The old man said, "I may be, but I've been around a lot longer than you have."

Dad was very active in rebuilding the Arizona Republican Party which he soon realized was not really the Republican party. It gave the conservatives in Arizona

a place to come to - it gave them a home. That's the way he put it and he was absolutely correct. The Democratic Party in the state had been taken over by the union bosses, at that time, from Los Angeles. It wasn't necessarily a very nice climate to be in. A lot of the conservative Democrats are registered Democratic, but they vote Republican more regularly than some of the registered Republicans do.

He believed in sound government and a sound fiscal policy and obviously was never able to find that in LaFollette's Progressive Party or the Democratic Party.

When he wasn't building shipping container plants and milk carton plants in the late 40s and up to the middle 50s, that's what he was doing and he spent a lot of time on it. He would get in his car and poor mother would go along with him. I rarely went with him because he was the world's fastest driver. He never had a wreck in all the years he drove, but he was not the world's best driver. He just went down the road like he owned it.

He went to every hamlet in Arizona and everwhere else and he made a heck of a lot of good friends.

Dad was 83 when he died. We had a service down in Phoenix, we also had one in Milwaukee. There were fellows who were 70, 72 who came from every nook and cranny in the state; fellows that he'd worked with in the Republican party. They didn't have to come to his funeral at all, but I guess all of them came, they were all there. Even the ones he argued with were there. I guess they wanted to be sure that he was leaving and not coming back to raise more money. But he had a great influence on the party.

I know that some of these Democrats still hate the name Kieckhefer because of what he did to the Democratic Party. He just darn near ruined it by simply giving the conservative people or the moderates, if you wish to call them that, a place to come to.

McCourt

You're pursuing a little activity along those lines, aren't you, Bob?

Kieckhefer

Oh, yes. I did a lot of it up until the time I went on the Racing Comission which was six years ago. My term was up this past January so I'm right back in the political swing now. I enjoy it, of course I've never run for anything. I've been a precinct committeeman for 30 years or so out here and I've been the County Finance Chairman and raised money from most all of Arizona. I go out on the road - kind of like my father did, although things are much better organized now. Every county now has a County Republican Chairman which they didn't have in the old days. When dad was active and it's still true today, if you don't produce, you're out.

McCourt

What prompted you to come to Arizona, Bob?

Kieckhefer

I came out to Arizona in 1935 for my health. I was one of two children for 16 years. My sister was two years younger and she passed away as a result of a bout with scarlet fever. So I was the only child mother and dad had left and after it became apparent to one and all that in Arizona I could operate and get around in great shape, why, mother and father became interested in living in Arizona. Primarily, just to be near their son. Frankly in '35, '36, '37, I didn't have any idea that I'd wind up in the paper business. It just didn't look like it was going to work. At that time if I got out of Arizona for a day I'd choke up to where I'd almost be flat on my back. So I didn't come out of Arizona very often.

We looked around; there was no industry, there was nothing to do. By nature I'm not a shopkeeper and the banks out here, my father said, were nothing in those days. I think he went to his grave still believing that. He didn't have a very high opinion of the major banks in the state, so I went to the University of Arizona for awhile and studied ranching and aspects of ranching. We thought that would probably be the best outlet for me. We spent a lot of time looking around southern Arizona because that's where I was living, outside of Tucson, around Oracle. There's some tough looking country down there - hard looking country, and he just couldn't see that at all. One day in 1940 we went to Phoenix. It was, I believe, just a day or two before Thanksgiving. We had lunch with Wirt Morton of the Morton Salt Company. Morton Salt was a large customer of the company, and I went along

with Dad. After lunch Wirt said, "John, I've got just the ranch for you and Bob. Just great."

Well, you know, we had heard that song from many people for three or four years and Dad said, "Where is it?" He said, "It's just outside of Prescott." Well, that was just like saying it was on the other side of Siberia because neither one of us had been north of Phoenix even one mile. Well, Wirt was very insistent that we go look at it. Dad said, "Well, we'll drive back to Tucson and I'll call you tomorrow, Wirt, maybe we can work it in after Thanksgiving." Well, we got back to Tucson and here's Wirt on the telephone insisting that we go up the day after Thanksgiving.

I didn't go because I wanted to go to the football game on Saturday, but dad and mother went. It was quite a drive in those days from Phoenix. The roads were not very good. You had to go through Wickenburg and on up over the Yarnell hill which was a tortuous drive. The last 15 miles coming in to Prescott weren't much of a joy to drive either, no guardrails, all mountain driving, curvy, twisty and miserable. Well anyway, he got up there and drove out to this place which was 40 miles from Prescott, 37 miles of which was a dirt road and not very well improved in those days. He drove into this place and twelve Canadian geese got up off a reservoir, or lake as they like to call it, that wasn't too far from the house. My father was an avid bird shooter, ducks and geese, he didn't care about the upland birds. We were duck and goose shooters and he probably was the best shot I ever saw in my life even when he was in his seventies - he was an excellent bird shot. That sold him right there.

He came back to town and he called me up - this was the Saturday after Thanksgiving - and announced that he had just bought a ranch. I said, "Oh my goodness," you know, "what can this be?" It was a forest permit - it was about 330 head permit on it and a couple hundred acres of potential land and some water rights and a few irrigated fields, about 40 acres, so it sounded alright. When we came up, it looked alright. It didn't make any difference, he had already agreed to buy the place. Well, that was in the wintertime and we waited until the worst of the winter was over to go gather the cattle. The owner had guaranteed so many cows and so many bulls and so many two-year old heifers and they were all on the forest where cattle numbers are supposedly rigidly controlled. Well, we got to that 330 head of cows and the bulls and two-year old heifers - everything checked out -

gee, there were a lot more cattle running around up there. We gathered them up and instead of having 330 cows like this man guaranteed, we had almost 600 and proportionately that many more bulls and that many more two-year old heifers and that many more yearlings. He bought the place from a cartoonist, called J. R. Williams, who was quite famous for writing the cartoon "Out Our Way," and I forget what the other one was, about a machine shop, anyway, it was all cowboy stuff and very interesting and this fellow was very famous in his day.

We never met Mr. Williams. Mr. William's wife announced one day that they were leaving the ranch. So that was it. He had to go. That's how it happended, the ranch was for sale. He put a price on it which looked so ridiculously low to my father that he couldn't resist it plus having seen the geese. Well, when he got all the cattle gathered, and there was a rise in the cattle market at that time, he had to sell off the excess because the forest wouln't let him keep them. They couldn't fine him for having too many cattle and they couldn't do anything to J. R. Williams because he was gone.

Dad sold the cattle and that almost paid for the entire ranch. Then he got to thinking that the ranch should be expanded, this was too small really to qualify as a serious business. He almost literally looked over the fence and the Chino Valley Land and Cattle Company was in dire financial straits, not because it wasn't an excellent piece of country and the cattle weren't of the highest quality, but the owner had many other investments and had finally, ultimately, struggled through the Depression only to die before he got out of hock and all of his affairs back in order.

Dad went in and made him a cash offer. They didn't want to take it, but I had found out they were up against a payment deadline and they had to take it. It was a fair price, but certainly not an inflated one. So we got the ranch and before we could do much with it, dad's friend, Fred Becker, who ran the Fiber Box Association in Chicago for the industry, decided he wanted to have a ranch. He'd been out looking around down south of Prescott, on a semi-desert country and was going to buy one down there called Mule Shoe ranch which for that area was not a bad kind of a ranch. Dad said, "Fred, you won't like it. I'll sell you a third of this place I just bought." So Fred wound up with the east part which came out to one-third of the Chino Valley Land and Cattle Company.

McCourt

How much out of the acreage?

Kieckhefer

What Dad got to keep were about 600 acres of irrigated farm land and around 45,000 acres of range land most of which, about 83-84%, was patented land or deed land, which is really a rarity itself out here, the balance is state lease. It was never worse than checkerboarded, as we say out here, so control of state lease is like your own patented land. It was well watered, he could drill a hole for a windmill and put a windmill in it and get enough water for cattle. It was reasonably well developed. He put in a couple more wells, then he went to farming. He always wanted to be an engineer, so any time that I was free, I was the rod man and he was the engineer looking through the transit. I don't know how many hundred acres of land we figured out. Ultimately he wound up with 1,600 acres and, of course, drilled more irrigating wells, farmed it and pastured cattle. That was early 1941. Well that made a pretty good size operation.

That was to the north and west of us, to the north and east of us was a man, a very fine man, but he never could stay still in one place very long. He had a ranch in different areas around there and he had a big one up there next to us. We first bought a forest permit from him which included all the so-called winter country. Then when he wanted to move somewhere else and sell his ranch, he had no winter country to really go with it. We made him an offer and he finally took it. We wound up with ultimately 238 square miles, a very large percentage of it was patented land.

Dad kept up ranching until he died and now our son has the lower two-thirds of it and our Charitable Foundation, has the upper one-third. A good part of that's going to be sold off someday. Dad loved it up there. He wasn't much for riding a horse, I'll have to admit that, but he had a good eye for animals. He became a well known national authority on Hereford cattle and the dwarfism problem which cropped up in the late 40s was a truly devastating thing, and that's another story that goes on forever. He trotted around the country on his business trips, speaking to the Hereford breeders wherever a few had gathered together, and he'd tell his experiences, that he and I had documented and it was very, very interesting. I still run into fellows scattered out through Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma and that remember him and remember me. They remember our coming to them and talking.

He had a great deal of enjoyment out of the ranch and strangely enough, so did my mother. She didn't ride horses very much or anything like that, but she liked it because she said she saw more of my father out there than she ever had during her married life. When he was there, he was there 24 hours a day. Otherwise, why, she'd just see him at night and he'd be gone the next morning or he'd be going to New York or Three Rivers, Michigan or wherever. He really enjoyed it and it was good for him and I feel that it helped him live as long as he did. He set the operation up very methodically and very well.

He's got enough tanks of fuel oil out there to generate our own power for almost two years at any given point in time. He has complete facilities for everything and generators and back-up generators; he's got three of everything, but it's a very self-contained unit. It's a very pretty place. But mostly it is because the geese, I think, caught his eye to begin with and I think it was almost 25 years before any more geese ever came back.

He was able to pursue his hobby of hunting out there. Not where he lived, but down on the farm, there was excellent duck shooting and he did a lot of it there.

He particularly enjoyed the people here in this town of Prescott, which I think had 4,000 people when we came. It has 17,000 now. He got along well with them all and he made a lot of good friends out here, and obviously he was a leader wherever he went. Pretty soon he was leading about everything he got into out here. He didn't get into too many things, just the ones he was really interested in. The ranch was obviously appreciated greatly in value. He bought this land, three acres for $1 and the state leases were $10 a section, I think, or something like that and that land now is worth $35 an acre and state leases are $1,000 a section. So there's been considerable money made there that hasn't been realized yet, but it went just the way he figured.

He also figured it would be a great place to be when inflation hits the country. They may come out there and hang you, but it'll be a lot harder for them than if you were in Chicago or New York, I can tell you that, which is kind of a chilling thought because all the things he predicted back in the middle '30s, the way he thought the United States was going to go politically today, it's like seeing a bad dream the second time. Just exactly going that way. It took longer than he

thought it would, but it's headed that way. Wild inflation, the minority groups jumping up and down. He wasn't a foe of the so-called minority groups at all, he just didn't have much to do with them. He had his own friends as he said, his own family and that was enough.

He did a lot of philanthropic work, not only here in Prescott, but in Phoenix. Dick Cullen of the International Paper Company was a great friend of his, great competitor. Dad always went salmon fishing up there on the Gaspe Peninsula, up to International Paper Company's fishing lodge and had a great deal of fun and enjoyment doing that. Dick Cullen came out to Phoenix and had a herd of pure-bred Herefords, of which my father bought a dozen one time. Ultimately he sold Dick an old run-down paper mill, I don't know what it was, Kalamazoo or someplace like that; Dad didn't want it anymore. Cullen was so glad to sell him these 12 head of registered Hereford cows for $200 a piece, he couldn't wait to buy the mill if that was going to make my father happy.

It was kind of amusing, I sat in on all this. Cullen was a Catholic, we are Protestants, and Cullen was very much interested in contributing toward the rebuilding of St. Joseph's hospital in Phoenix. Upon Dick's death, St. Joseph's hospital received several million dollars of International Paper Company common stock out of Dick Cullen's estate. The Cullen's didn't have any children and Mrs. Cullen, I believe, either passed away or was about to pass away the same time that Dick died.

Unfortunately for the Board of Directors of St. Joseph's they did not listen to my father and hold on to the IP stock for six or eight months more. They were against no time problem at all. Somebody gave them different investment advice or they'd have had 2-1/2 times as much money to build it.

That always bothered my father, not because his advice was turned down, but because his friend, Dick Cullen, didn't really get a full run for his money. Dad contributed substantial sums of money, I'm not talking $50-100,000, I'm talking about substantial sums of money over a period of time to kind of help flesh the St. Joseph's Hospital out. Every year, he'd give them a very substantial amount of money and he only had one stipulation, that is, if word every leaked that he'd given them a nickel, much less how much he'd given them, they'd never get another dime.

He contributed, I guess more than Cullen did in the end, but nobody knew it, which was the way he wanted it. When he passed away they wanted to hang a painting of him at St. Joseph's and I said nothing doing. I said everybody would then ask, how did John Kieckhefer's painting get there? That's just the way he wanted it, he was that kind of a man.

He did a lot of philanthropic good and nobody ever knew how it came about. He set up a Charitable Foundation in 1953. It's grown to be a relatively decent size foundation, large for Arizona, not too large in other areas. I mean it's nothing like the Fords or the Rockefellers or anything like that, but it skips along in the low eight figures. I'm the head trustee of the Foundation and have been ever since it was formed. There again he told me, "Now, if you give this away during my lifetime, tell them all the same thing. If they ever say where they got it from, they never get another dime." And it's just exactly the way it was until after he died.

After he died we gave some money to MIT and they named a lectureship in Health Sciences and Technology after him back there. An endowed class in Molecular Biology was also established at the Salk Institute in his name. The same thing for mother at a day-care center down in South Phoenix, which I had his approval to do, but only after he was gone. He said then it would be great. We've got something done for all the trustees now, or will have by this fall, and all those who have been trustees. Everybody will have their name on a door somewhere, I guess, but that's the way he wanted it. He said, "You don't take any pay or anything else. I want you to do this."

He was a very modest soul. You could look at him and you couldn't tell whether he had $10 or $10,000. Money never bothered him. I know he always taught me, he said, "All you have to do is work and the money will take care of itself." If you were fooling around and not working, why then he said, "Money will go faster than anything you can imagine." And he was right. He pointed out examples of young friends of mine that had dissipated fortunes in relatively short order. I learned a lot of lessons from him which I've tried to pass on to my children and I think I've succeeded. In fact I'm sure I've succeeded, the're too old to change now, but as I say, he was a very kindly sort of a man and did so much good for so many people, but they never could tell anybody about it. They'd never get another bit of help.

My mother complemented him very well. Mother was very charming and never forgot a name. My father could barely remember his own lots of times - he was too busy thinking of other things. I remember my mother saying to me one time, I as a youngster then - seven or eight years old - she said, "If you're walking down the street or anyplace with your father where you can move and somebody walks up to him and says, 'Hello, John' or 'Hello, J.W.' or 'Hello Mr. Kieckhefer' and if he doesn't call them by name instantly, you keep right on moving. You get out of there, beause he doesn't know their name and he'd have to introduce you and then he'd have to ask their name and it would be embarrassing." And you know I followed that practice right up to the time he passed away. He wasn't anymore forgetful at 83 than he was at 43. He just didn't seem to remember names.

Mother could do that. Mother had a very keen, quick mind. I'd have to say this about my father, he was a very dominant figure but the only person I ever knew who could make him stop lighting his pipe or stop talking in mid-sentence was mother, by simply saying, "John," never raised her voice, just said, "John," and that was the magic word. Sometimes this leader of industry would get carried away, in his politics or something like that, at a party. So mother would say, "John," and he'd stop. If he wasn't lighting his pipe, he'd relight it and then he'd start off on another subject. She was great. She never let him bring any of his customers to the house. They were not allowed to come, she said, "You can take them to the clubs, you can take them anywhere you want and I'll go with you." "But," she said, "they are not guests in my home."

The only person who was ever allowed in our home, and he was really welcome, was Jim Dole, of the Dole Pineapple Company. He was a close, personal friend of mother and dad's. Back about 1928 or '29, dad and Jim Dole and John Hancock, who was one of the top players in Lehman Brothers at that time, investment bankers in New York, owned a fishing club up at Pennak Lake which is south of Kamloops, British Columbia. Some of the land we now cut on up where I used to ride through on horseback and also in a car all through the '30s. They built this and they'd go up there every summer. There was no telephone - it took you two hours to drive the last three miles of the road if it was dry, and if it was wet you couldn't go at all. Dad and Jim Dole, as I recall, each owned 45% of it and John Hancock owned the other 10%. The only reason they let Hancock in there was in case they should ever disagree there would be an arbiter.

Well, they never disagreed. They were great friends. Jim Dole was a grand character. He knew more stories, more funny stories, all of which were clean. They weren't off-color at all, not in the slightest, and he never repeated them from one year to the next. You always heard a new set of stories. They were never the same ones. Very entertaining guy and he and dad got along great. In fact, I said he was one of dad's favorite friends and obviously one of mother's because he was allowed in the house.

I should also mention that out of the Carnation Milk Company, in it's earlier days, came a fellow called Jack Norton and another fellow called Lewis Hardenberg. Lewis Hardenberg ultimately became head of Nestle's, and Jack Norton pretty much retired when he came out of Carnation, but they're all gone now. They were nice people and so were the Montagues who were with Borden. They came to the house too, but for some reason they weren't considered customers, I don't know why. Even though we sold them everything they bought, they weren't considered customers. Jim Dole, of course, was a joy to be around and his wife Belle, a lovely lady. I remember those things well.

I remember my father talking many an hour with Sidney Weinberg who was head of Goldman-Sachs when he died. Sidney was a great fellow, a great mind with great ability. I learned a lot listening to those two fellows talk. Entirely different backgrounds and everything else, but they looked at the world pretty much with the same set of eyes.

He was a very good family man, very close to his brothers, to me, to my children, but he was a man of strong likes and violent dislikes. If you ever lied to him, why you only got the one chance and then he just wouldn't have any more to do with you. His employees over the years who didn't quite tell it the way it was, they were gone. Consequently, anybody that wanted to hang around always told him the truth, no matter how bad it was. That enables him to make the right decisions. He'd know what the facts were. And he had great support from his brothers. They all loved him and just worked like dogs for him. Of course, he worked harder than any one of them or any of them together. Nobody rested on their oars, they stayed right in there and they made a great team, too, because one fellow could do one thing and another fellow did the other thing. J.W. could do it all, but he didn't have to do it all because he had fellows he could absolutely trust, right with him every stage of the game.

McCourt

I never met Walter, but I talked to him on the phone several times, about the plants building here and there.

Kieckhefer

Yes. He was a great guy. He was more like an older brother to me. I always got a great kick out of him. I called my other uncles "uncle" most of the time, but I always called Walt "Walt." He was a great guy. He died much too young, he was about 66 or 67 when he died, but really a grand guy. They were all good people. I really had no problems with any of them. It's been interesting to see how the family has gone out and spread all over the United States, I guess you might say, in all kinds of endeavors.

I think I'm the only one though, the only one in the family who stayed at all active or really even interested in the forest products business. A lot of them are still Weyerhaeuser stockholders, don't misunderstand me, and substantial ones, but they don't follow the business at all, which is probably a good thing; they're not cluttering up the scene. I'd rather have it that way sometimes.

McCourt

Thank you very much, Bob, for your time and, more importantly, your recollections.

A1/BK/1011

ROBERT H. KIECKHEFER

Born December 27, 1917, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Education:

Attended schools in Milwaukee area

1939

Married Virginia Ott, July 3, 1939
Four children

Investments - self employed

1940

Kieckhefer Container Company

- Salesman

1946

Advanced to Southwest Sales Manager

1954

Supervisor of West Coast Shipping Container Operations
Became director of company

1957

Became director Eddy Paper Corporation

1957

Director - Weyerhaeuser

Southwestern district sales manager and vice president West Coast shipping containers

Director and Executive Committee Member and V.P. of American Quarter Horse Association and Arizona Quarter Horse Breeders Association.

Member, Arizona Thoroughbred Breeders Association and American Horse Council.

Chairman, Arizona Racing Commission

Governing Committee of the Western ARt Associates of Phoenix Art Museum.

Operates the K4 Ranch, a large cattle ranch in Arizona (130,000 acres). Directs their quarter horse operation.

Hobbies

Hunting - fishing - quarter horses

Box 12

ORAL HISTORY AGREEMENT

Weyerhaeuser Company Archives

I hereby give to the Weyerhaeuser Company Archives for such scholarly, educational, and business purposes as the Director of the Weyerhaeuser Company Archives shall determine, the tapes and transcript of the interview recorded on the 20th day of February, 1976.

Robert H. Kieckhefer
Interviewee

3-21-78
Date

Arthur J. McCourt
Interviewer

3/29/78
Date

January 15, 1975

Mr. Robert H. Kieckhefer
Post Office Box 750
Prescott AZ 86301

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your letter expressing your views on the priority of candidates in the Weyerhaeuser Company oral history program. Your vote will be duly recorded.

Your understanding that the history of Kieckhefer Container is an integral part of Weyerhaeuser Company history is correct. It's my position and, more importantly, I heard George Weyerhaeuser make the same statement at one of our earlier committee meetings.

I am attaching some guidelines for your review as to material we would be looking for about Kieckhefer's history. You, Herb, and Joe surely have more ideas on what the history was. I wish you would supplement, modify, and change the guidelines as you see fit and return a copy to me.

My knowledge of Kieckhefer is definitely limited and really my exposure was primarily to the 1950's. I was impressed by the expansion that took place during that period especially in the number of box and milk carton plants added.

A history of a company, however, is really composed of people and sometimes families like the Kieckhefers. The history of your father is surely necessary. I know you, Herb, and Walter surely played very important roles, and of course, Joe Auchter and Bill Wurster should be included.

Other names I think of for consideration are Ray Meier (or Meyer?) in Chicago; Ken Trowbridge and Wes Marrow in Plymouth; John Savage, Win Wilson, and Hubert Ange in Tacoma; and Vince Donohue and Henry Sachleben in Pennsauken.

I am pleased with the interest that Herb, Joe and you have shown in this effort. I appreciate the support you have given me.

Sincerely,

Arthur J. McCourt

AJM:je

Enclosures

P.S. Our new archivist will start work about the middle of March, but will be working in New York till the end of May. I plan to have her visit our operations on the East Coast during that period. She has had excellent experience in oral interviewing. I would appreciate any names you could suggest for interviews.

Historical Archive Guidelines for Kieckhefer Container Company and Eddy Paper Company activities prior to merger with Weyerhaeuser Company.

While the following will surely not be all inclusive, it does cover elements that are essential to the history of these two companies.

Formation of companies

Were there other companies or entrepreneurs that became Kieckhefer or Eddy? Who were the principals, what was the general nature of their business? Where were they located? How and when did they start Kieckhefer and Eddy? What were their products? How did they get raw material and from where? How was the manufacturing done? Who were the customers and where were they located? What problems and opportunities were there. Discuss the management and the work force at that time.

Changes since formation

Growth - geographical, new plants, customers and suppliers. Change of products or material used (wood to solid, fiber board to corrugated). Machinery development and process changes. New products added milk cartons. Integration back to the timber. Management changes and new management to run mills, converting plants and timber lands and expanding sales.
Financing growth.
Agreement with Excello.
Management style, philosophy, and principles.
Histories of each plant.
Economic changes and environment encroaching government, taxes, depression, etc.
The NRA, war efforts and problems.
Sales efforts and marketing approaches.
Labor force, attitude, cooperations, spirit, old timers, unions.
Opportunities seized and mistakes made.

Merger with Weyerhaeuser Company

How did idea come about? What were reasons for and against? How were negotiations handled?

September 13, 1976

Mr. Robert Kieckhefer
Post Office Box 750
Prescott, Arizona 86301

Dear Bob:

I want to thank you very much for sending the material on Kieckhefer Container Company to the Archives. The following were received in fine condition:

1. Picture of the original Kieckhefer Container office building in Milwaukee

2. Picture of the Board of Directors of the Kieckhefer Container Corporation

3. Two pictures showing the plantation in North Carolina on the M. D. Wilson Tract #1 taken in 1948 and again in 1952, along with tree sections that demonstrated the size of the trees cut in those two years

4. A box containing correspondence of H. F. Kieckhefer

We appreciate your thoughtfulness and consideration in making this contribution to the Weyerhaeuser Company Archives. I hope if additional material turns up, you will continue to remember us. I think especially of that colorful minute book that you have on hand.

I didn't get a chance to talk to you about your oral interview last time. I hope that indicates you are devoting time to making supplementary additions that were missed in the interview.

Sincerely,

Arthur J. McCourt
Director
Historical Archives

AJM:mc

January 24, 1977

Mr. Robert H. Kieckhefer
P.O. Box 750
Prescott AZ 86301

Dear Bob:

Thank you for reading our report. In answer to your question, Board of Directors minutes were requested several times by Alan Vandevert and Howie Meadowcroft for reference and guidance for specific purposes. Generally we respond by making Xerox copies of the specific resolutions they are interested in. The minute books we have on hand cover 1900 through February 1962.

I guess your question is prompted by a concern about the general availability of the material in our archives. On that assumption I will describe our general policy.

We respond to inquiries from within Weyerhaeuser completely except for sensitive areas. Then we take into account management level and area of responsibility of the inquirer as related to the nature of the inquiry.

Requests from outside the company are generally of a character that are not sensitive in nature. We in the archives do the research and present the response in a positive manner.

In addition we have had a few researchers in the archives. To use our records they must have a specific subject in mind, be endorsed by a reputable organization, and secure my approval. The researcher is not allowed in the rooms where the material is stored. The records relevant to his subject are brought upstairs. We also discuss the subject with the researcher so that he may better understand the material he is working with. We strive to be objective and helpful during his visit. We assume the researcher will study other sources than our archives and we hope his dissertation is objective. In addition, a small percentage of our collection has restrictions placed on it by the donors and are presently closed to research. I also impose restrictions on a case-by-case basis regarding recent material if deemed necessary, however, very little of our collection covers the last 10 or 15 years.

This is a long answer to a brief question, but I want you to be assured that we are not operating like a used bookstore encouraging people to come in and browse around.

Sincerely,

Arthur J. McCourt
Director
Historical Archives

AJM:mk S/A2

cc: W. H. Meadowcroft
1/25/77 dc

Box #12

January 24, 1983

Mr. Robert H. Kieckhefer
P. O. Box 750
Prescott AZ 86301

Dear Mr. Kieckhefer:

In keeping with our 1983 objectives, the Weyerhaeuser Company Archives' staff has begun to create an index to the collection of oral histories. Your interview has been among those high on the list for early indexing. Enclosed is a copy of the name, subject and place entries from your interview transcript. We thought you might wish to have this for your files.

The middle column containing the accession number and your initials appears simply because this information is necessary to identify the source of the entry when this is combined with the other indices being prepared. For your purposes it can be ignored. Please let me know if you have any questions.

We look forward to holding the next Archives Steering Committee in our "new" quarters, i.e., what is now known as Project House. If I do not see you before April, perhaps our paths will cross at the Annual Meeting. Meanwhile, I send best regards.

Sincerely,

Linda Edgerly

LE:vh65/27/a4

Enclosure

July 6, 1976

Mr. Robert Kieckhefer
Post Office Box 750
Prescott, Arizona 86301

Dear Bob:

At long last we have your interview transcribed and ready for your review. Make whatever corrections or additions you desire and return it to me for final typing.

I think it is an excellent interview, however, you may feel that we did not cover all the ground we should have and a supplementary interview would be advisable. If so, do not hesitate to tell me.

I am also enclosing an Oral Interview Agreement form which I have signed as interviewer and which I wish you would also sign. If you have any questions regarding the form, I will be happy to answer them.

Herb and Joe's interviews will be ready shortly and I will be sending them on to them. Thank you again for contributing your time and giving us the history of Kieckhefer and Eddy.

Sincerely,

Arthur J. McCourt
Director
Historical Archives

AJM:mc
enclosures

P.S. I have talked to our pilots and they are supposed to let me know when they will be flying to Prescott so they can pick up the pictures you are giving to our Archives.