

# Evolution of the Society of American Foresters

1934-1937

## AS SEEN IN THE MEMOIRS OF H. H. CHAPMAN

Edited by David Montgomery

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The history of forestry would be a less colorful and exciting story than it is if there had never been an H. H. Chapman. And the library of forest history would be sadly the poorer if it were not for his prolific pen.*

*Chappie needs no introduction to the men of his profession. His reputation is well established as a teacher at Yale's School of Forestry, as the innovator of new forestry practice in the southern states, as a fair match for Harold Ickes in political in-fighting, and as the stormy petrel of the Society of American Foresters. If any forester has compiled a longer bibliography of books and articles, we have yet to see it.*

*The following article is based upon a study of the unpublished autobiography of Professor Chapman and is authored by Mr. David Montgomery of the Faculty of History at Hamline University. It explores a short but critical period in the history of forestry and particularly those years in which Chapman was president of the Society of American Foresters.*

*We safely predict that some readers will disagree vigorously with Chapman's accounting of events, others with Montgomery's efforts to see these events from the detached position of the historian. But we take satisfaction in noting that this article bears evidence that the history of forestry is being enriched and enlivened by autobiographical works and that forestry history is becoming a subject of growing interest to scholars and writers in other disciplines.*

The 1930's were as stormy and dramatic for the Society of American Foresters as they were for the nation as a whole. The events of this period, however, involved more for the Society than drama alone. The Society was redefining its place in the national scene in response to two influences which tended to pull it in opposite directions:

### Forestry's Growing Pains

On one hand, the Society was no longer composed, as it had been in its formative decade, almost exclusively of employees of the United States Forest Service. During the 1920's, in part under the impetus of the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 which had stressed the role of state governments and cooperation with private interests in the cause of conservation, a large corps of state foresters, foresters in the employ of private companies, and teachers of forestry had grown up. In the early thirties, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration opened many new federal jobs for foresters. But by this time the Society represented a profession well established outside the federal government. Many of the new foresters sought to reduce or even eliminate the emphasis the Society had formerly placed on questions of public policy and to shift its attention to the technical developments which were being brought to the forefront by the rapid growth of forestry education and research in the peculiar problems of the North American forests. Foresters of this outlook felt that their profession should be cast in the image of the mechanical engineer who seeks to maximize his professional competence but does not deem it the function of his professional organizations to debate the merits of industrial planning or launch broadsides against his employers. The thinking of this school was epitomized by the motion,

which was defeated at the 1935 convention, to remove editorials from the *Journal of Forestry*.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the protection of the "public interest" in matters of national forest policy had been a central concern of the Society since its establishment. To pioneer foresters who had mounted a crusade for federal action to halt individualistic waste and deprecation in the nation's wood resources and who had enjoyed enthusiastic public, journalistic, and official support in the first decade and a half of the century, the forest devastation of the war years and the marked absence of popular enthusiasm for federal regulations of any sort in the twenties made this period seem like the seven lean years. With the coming of the New Deal the seven fat years seemed to be at hand. Gifford Pinchot, hailing the appointment of F. A. Silcox as Chief Forester, told the Society that "aggressive forestry, eager and unafraid, is coming back," and bringing with it the need as never before for a "professional society . . . loyal to forestry as a public service." Pinchot concluded: "American foresters have once more folded their tents, shouldered their burdens, and are on the march under a leader who knows the right road."<sup>2</sup>

### New Deal Appeal

The goals offered foresters by New Dealers such as Silcox and Earle Clapp, however, went beyond "defending the public interests against predatory private interests" which had been raised in the Progressive Era. Silcox now called upon the Society to fit its work

<sup>1</sup>"Proceedings, Executive Session, 34th Annual Meeting," *Society Affairs*, I (March, 1935), 42-45

<sup>2</sup>"Proceedings of the 34th Annual Meeting of the Society of American Foresters," *Journal of Forestry*, XXXIII (March, 1935), 211. (Hereafter cited as *J. F.*)

into the overall objectives of national planning for full employment. It was not enough, he said, for foresters to be concerned with "forestry for timber production." On the contrary, Silcox contended:

The greatest single problem before the country is to find new opportunities for livelihood for large numbers of people, to take the place of the opportunities which were lost through destruction of the basic natural resources, or through technological changes. . . . The forests of the country must regain and hold permanently their place as sources of employment in every forest region. They must become centers around which communities may be assured a stable existence . . . . Our Society is more or less unique in that forestry is largely a public enterprise and is bound to become more so as time goes on . . . . The public point of view, it seems to me, is the one that must dominate the economic and silvicultural thinking of our Society.<sup>3</sup>

These divergent attitudes as to the basic character and objectives of the Society of American Foresters both crystallized in the mid-thirties. Both rode rising currents, one the increased diffusion of foresters in non-governmental posts (contrary to Silcox's contention that "forestry is largely a public enterprise and bound to become more so"), and the other popular appeal of the New Deal perspective of public planning for full employment.

#### Chapman's Position

Between the two contending forces stood Herman H. Chapman, the President of the Society from 1934 through 1938. Chapman believed that the Society should become a professional organization with high standards and at the same time held that forestry was a profession clothed with a public interest and should not restrict its role to that of the consulting engineer. He advised his colleagues:

The Society of American Foresters cannot survive and function if its role is distorted into that of a political organization for the advancement of economic doctrines by means of controlling its governing machinery on the one hand, nor, on the other, if it degenerates into a cultural body for the polite discussion of technical problems in the pure and rarified fields of science.<sup>4</sup>

Chapman was not a man to stand idly by while disputes raged. As he explains in his unpublished memoirs: "On one occasion, while I was still in grade school in St. Paul, there was a football game in progress on a vacant lot, whose participants were boys considerably older than myself. But I joined in the fray and got in one good kick. I have pursued this policy ever since."

#### A Born Scrapper

During these four crucial years, however, Chapman did more than simply get in his good kick, as the scope of Society activities shows. In his autobiography, he

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 199, 203-204.

<sup>4</sup> "Proceedings, Executive Session, 36th Annual Meeting," *S.A.F. Affairs*, III (January, 1937), 8. (Hereafter cited as *Affairs*).

summarized the achievements of the Society during his presidency under five headings:

1. The divorcing of the Society from Forest Service control by the defeat of Earle Clapp for President.
2. Successful resistance to the scheme of Secretary Ickes and his predecessor, Secretary Fall, for the establishment of a Department of Conservation and Works, and the recapture of the Forest Service (by the Interior Department).
3. The adoption of a code of ethics for foresters.
4. The confirmation of the authority of the Council to govern its own affairs.
5. And perhaps most important, the successful accrediting of the schools of forestry by correspondence, in the absence of funds for the purpose.

Chapman's estimate of the achievements of the Society during these years reveals that out of the storm and fury a matured, independent, and stable organization had emerged—a Society attuned to both the social ideals with which forestry had grown up and the needs of a professional group whose membership embraced governmental, academic, and industrial foresters. It is interesting to note, however, that the social ideals to which Chapman clung were not oriented toward New Deal social planning, but adhered to the older Progressive aim of defending the public interest in the forests against predatory private interests, and now, it would seem, against encroaching bureaucracy as well. He castigated Society members who "take the position that those who are in agreement should loyally support any measure which is set forth with the stamp of approval of the New Deal and raise no questions as to economic, political, financial or professional soundness of such measures."<sup>5</sup>

#### Two Conflicts

Chapman's memoirs unveil some of the inner history of both the S.A.F. and the New Deal Era. He declares that "for a period of 34 years, the Society was practically an appendage of the Washington Office of the Forest Service." Chapman sought to sever this relationship during the very first years of the New Deal. As a result he involved himself in two conflicts, one over the election of a Society president and the other over the editorial policy of the *Journal of Forestry*. When the time arrived for election of officers in December, 1933, Chapman relates:

Earle Clapp of the Forest Service was nominated for President. Clapp's activities for furthering his plan for federal regulation of private forests made it appear that his election was undesirable. I discussed the matter with Colonel Henry S. Graves and suggested that I run as a candidate against Clapp. Colonel Graves said, "You would not be an acceptable candidate. You have made too many enemies," and he proposed Robert Ross, then State Forester of Vermont, as a candidate. As Ross was not widely known, I felt that this would not do. At this critical jun-

<sup>5</sup> "Proceedings of the 34th Annual Meeting," 205.

ture W. J. Damtoft and other members of the Appalachian section, nominated me by petition for the office without my previous knowledge. I decided to put the matter to the test. Perhaps my reputed activities had made as many friends as enemies — or more. So I gave my required consent as candidate and was elected for the 1934 term.

Chapman's election as President, however, by no means settled the question of S.A.F. policy. In the years 1920 and 1921, the debate over federal versus state regulation of forest practices had divided the ranks not only of the Society but of the Forest Service itself. At that time Gifford Pinchot and Major George P. Ahern headed a committee of the S.A.F. which recommended federal legislation to prevent devastation of forest lands and to promote the production of forest crops on public lands. The proposals of their report were embodied in a bill introduced in Congress by Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas. Both Chapman and William B. Greeley, then Chief of the Forest Service, opposed this bill; they favored state regulation and the enactment of conservation measures based on the cooperation of industry and government, rather than strict regulation. Their ideas were embodied in the bill of Representative Bertrand H. Snell of New York. "I had to oppose Mr. Pinchot on this issue since I felt that he was on the wrong track," comments Chapman. "Perhaps it was a case of David and Goliath, but it worked."

#### State Control Favored

A complicated referendum of Society members produced results which were somewhat ambiguous, though they indicated a majority of the small group who mailed in votes favored federal control. At the Society's annual meeting on December 20, 1920, the advocates of state regulation won the adoption of a resolution putting the choice between the Capper and Snell bills simply and squarely before the membership. The returns from the balloting showed a marked growth of sentiment in favor of state control: the Snell bill won 195 votes to 109 for the Capper bill.<sup>6</sup>

The Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 embodied the principles of federal aid to states and no federal regulation of timber cutting; but the issue did not die. On February 7, 1930, an appeal was sent to foresters by George Ahern, Robert Marshall, E. N. Munns, Gifford Pinchot, Ward Shepard, W. N. Sparhawk and Raphael Zon. Chapman reproduces the letter which concludes with this summary:

Forests are now and always will be indispensable to civilization. Forest devastation goes on unchecked. Forest devastation cannot and will not be stopped by voluntary effort of forest owners and industries.

Both Federal and State government have ample power for such control. Forest devastation must be stopped. It is the duty of the foresters of America to stop it.

The spokesmen for direct federal policing of forestry

<sup>6</sup> Editorial Comment, "Has the Society Changed Its Mind?" *J.F.*, XIX (March, 1921), 318.

practices by 1930, however, were no longer dominant in the U.S. Forest Service itself. Chapman continues: With the accession of Bill Greeley as Chief Forester [in 1920], the entire complexion of the Washington office was changed, which caused Gifford Pinchot to make some scathing criticisms of Greeley. Greeley's policy was one of education, persuasion and economic assistance instead of coercion. Later Greeley was to resign and accept the office of Secretary of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association where he vigorously pursued his plans, especially during World War II, when codes of forestry practice were widely adopted by the industry. But the most successful movement in this line was the establishment of the Tree Farm plan in Oregon and Washington, which has expanded to cover practically every forested state and now includes over 41 million acres of certified tree farms. Certificates are given to owners who have demonstrated that they are practicing adequate forestry measures, including control of (and use of prescribed) fire, and control of grazing. The tree farmer receives a large billboard sign indicating the status of his property. Compared with the proposed attempt at forcible regulation by federal agents in attempting to coerce millions of small owners, Greeley's policies of education and persuasion have been more than vindicated.

The triumph of these policies, however, did not come easily. In fact, the outbreak of the depression and the emergence of the New Deal breathed new life into the advocates of federal control. As early as May, 1931, an extensive and carefully prepared policy referendum, participated in by more than twice the number of foresters that had cast their ballots for the Capper or Snell bills in 1921, revealed an overwhelming majority in favor of public control of private forests and a greater role for the federal government.<sup>7</sup> This new mood gave birth to a vigorous debate over the role of the Society and especially over the editorial policy of the *Journal of Forestry*. Speaking for the pro-New Deal advocates of social planning in forest practices, L. F. Kneipp of the Forest Service challenged the 1935 convention of the Society:

Now, the question is, does this organized group accept responsibility for the administration of one-third of the whole land area, with a full appreciation of its social and economic obligations, other than the mere production of timber as a commodity? Or is it going to take a narrow professional view and insist that the technical phases dominate the political and social phases?<sup>8</sup>

Since its inception the *Journal of Forestry* had pursued an editorial policy geared to the social philosophy of the Pinchot school. Although Bernard E. Fernow had been the first Editor-in-Chief, Franklin Reed struck close to the truth when he asserted, "To all practical intents, [Raphael] Zon was Editor-in-Chief for the Society for 23 years."<sup>9</sup> Until the time of his

<sup>7</sup> Franklin Reed, "Principles of Forest Policy for the United States," *J.F.*, XXXII (October, 1934), 792-794.

<sup>8</sup> "Proceedings, Executive Session, 34th Annual Meeting," 41.

<sup>9</sup> Franklin Reed, "An Editorial Policy for the Journal of Forestry," *J.F.*, XXXII (October, 1934), 787.

retirement from the editorship in 1928, Zon had steered a course far removed from what Kneipp called the "narrow professional view."

In 1930, Emanuel Fritz, long a diligent Associate Editor, was elevated to the position of Editor-in-Chief, bringing with him a new emphasis of the technical side of the profession. Fritz sought to eliminate the antagonism between the lumbermen and foresters which he felt Zon's policies had created and to foster the philosophy that trees are grown to be harvested — that the welfare of the industry is the first concern of the forester.

### Fritz Carries On

To complicate the picture, the pressure of academic duties forced Fritz to submit his resignation in December, 1932. In the absence of a new Editor, the duty of getting out the *Journal* fell on the shoulders of the Executive Secretary, Franklin W. Reed. Clearly the Executive Secretary was overburdened by this increase in his duties; but the editorial policy did not change. In fact, Fritz later said, "I sat right down and edited four more issues, to make it easier for my successor."<sup>10</sup> This was the setting for the dramatic dispute Chapman now describes:

On June 13, 1934, twelve members of the Society petitioned the Council to give consideration to needed changes in the editorial policy of the *Journal of Forestry*. The twelve members who signed this petition were:

George P. Ahern	E. N. Munns
Carlos G. Bates	Gifford Pinchot
Earle H. Clapp	Edward C. M. Richards
L. F. Kneipp	F. A. Silcox
W. C. Lowdermilk	William N. Sparhawk
Robert Marshall	Raphael Zon

With the exception of Ahern, Marshall and Richards, all were members of the Forest Service or affiliated with it. Gifford Pinchot and Major Ahern had for some time been conducting a vigorous campaign to secure national legislation which would give the Forest Service authority to "put an end to forest devastation" by regulating the methods of cutting by all private owners, including owners of farm wood lots. The editor of the *Journal*, Emanuel Fritz, did not sympathize with this policy, and the men who signed the petition were determined to force the issue.

The petition raised three points: (1) the separation of the offices of Editor-in-Chief and Executive Secretary, (2) the selection for Editor-in-Chief of a man of high literary and technical attainments (and "with strong social convictions," ed.) and (3) a certain degree of independence for the Editor-in-Chief within the limitations of policies formulated by the Council.<sup>11</sup> The direct intent of this movement was the displacement of Emanuel Fritz as editor and the riveting upon the Society of the Pinchot-Ahern policy of federal control of cutting. After voluminous discussion in society

<sup>10</sup> "Proceedings, Executive Session, 34th Annual Meeting," 36.

<sup>11</sup> The petition was actually stronger on point three than Chapman indicates. It said the Editor "should not be subject to the dictation of the Executive Council with respect to editorial policy." The petition was published in *J.F.*, XXXII (October, 1934), 781-783.

publications and much correspondence, the matter came to a head at the annual meeting at Washington, D.C., in January, 1935. The meeting was well attended. Bill Sparhawk had prepared for the petitioners a long statement covering the charges against the editor.<sup>12</sup> Fritz was present, prepared to defend himself. I told him that I would ask one favor of him, namely, that he say nothing whatever. I was convinced that the members present would take care of the matter.

On the evening before Sparhawk's statement was to be presented, he came to a realization from contacts with members at the meeting that, to say the least, the petition was unpopular and suggested that he drop it. I told him, "Not on your life. You will present that petition tomorrow morning and abide by the results." On the following morning, Earle Clapp, Frank Reed and I went down to present the Schlich medal to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, leaving an embarrassed Sparhawk to drone through the petition. We came back just as he was finishing. Then Emanuel Fritz spilled the beans. In launching his defense, he deliberately attacked one of the signers in a personal manner, accusing him of communist sympathies; thus violating the admonition I had given him.<sup>13</sup> At about this time, someone made a motion to the effect that the entire matter be tabled, in other words "ditched." The vote was unanimous except for one joker in the rear who yelled "no" at the top of his voice. But my hearing was defective in this instance, and unanimous it was. Fritz remained Editor, and the last serious effort made by Forest Service men to dictate policies to the Society was terminated.

Chapman's analysis of this debate as hinging solely on an attempt at dictation of Society policies by the Forest Service is inadequate. We have already seen that Forest Service members were not themselves unanimous with regard to federal forest policies and that the issues at stake in this conflict involved not just the attitude of the Society toward federal or state regulation of forest lands, but also the broader question of the role of the Society as a professional organization. In fact, during the debate over the petition a second assault was mounted against the editorial policies of the *Journal* from foresters who wanted *all* editorials eliminated and the magazine devoted exclusively to scientific articles. Chapman did not subscribe to this view any more than he did to the outlook of the twelve petitioners. The motion was soundly defeated, and Chapman thanked the meeting for its "vote of confidence." It was after this

<sup>12</sup> Franklin Reed, of course, held the office of Editor at this time, but Chapman is correct in indicating that the charges were directed primarily against Fritz, whose policies Reed continued and who was assisting Reed unofficially. Sparhawk's charges were essentially that the Editor had censored New Deal views and devoted the pages of the *Journal* excessively to technical papers. See *Society Affairs*, I (March, 1935), 24-30. Cf. Robert Marshall's earlier indictment of the editorial policy, "Should the *Journal of Forestry* Stand for Forestry?" *J.F.*, XXXII (November, 1934), 904-908. For the replies of Chapman and Fritz see *Society Affairs*, I (March, 1935), 30-34, 36-39.

<sup>13</sup> No such charge appears in the published transcript of Fritz's remarks. See "Proceedings, Executive Session, 34th Annual Meeting," 36-39.

point that the entire question of editorial policy was tabled.<sup>14</sup>

The demands of the petition, furthermore, were not entirely ignored by the Society. Many members, including Chapman, agreed that the coupling of the duties of Executive Secretary and Editor-in-Chief was undesirable. The Council worked out a compromise in 1935 by which a new Editor was appointed to deal with major editorial policies and planning, while the Executive Secretary continued to carry the greater part of the burden of publishing the *Journal*. The Editor appointed was Herbert A. Smith of the Forest Service, but an agreement was reached between Smith and the Council that his "conduct of the *Journal* must be independent of Forest Service control and directed individually to serving the best interests of the Society."<sup>15</sup>

### A New Alignment

As if to demonstrate that the defeat of the twelve petitioners did not mean that the Society should devote itself exclusively to technical questions and ignore public policy, Chapman concludes his description of the dispute over the petition in this way:

This conflict marked a final achievement by the Society of complete independence of Forest Service dominations. At the same time, the Society (aided by the American Forestry Association) became the strongest supporter of the Forest Service itself, as was shown by its conflict with Harold L. Ickes and Albert B. Fall over the Department of Conservation, the adjustment of the Oregon and California land dispute, the solution of the vexing problem of mining claims on National Forests, and the support of the Forest Service against the nefarious schemes of the grazing industry, including proposals to transfer the public domain to the States.

The dispute over the proposal to form a Department of Conservation and Works, the defeat of which Chapman called the second great achievement of the Society during his administration, brought to the forefront the contrast between the attitudes of the earlier Progressive Era, represented now by Chapman, and those of the New Deal. On the other hand, although no referendum was taken on the subject, President Chapman appears to have enjoyed almost the unanimous support of the Society on this subject.

### Ickes' Argument

The problem involved is intriguing. Arrayed on one side was the logic that a vastly expanded program of public works and planned use of resources to overcome the national economic crisis required systematic and centralized administration of domestic resources, including all public lands. The activities of the P.W.A. and the C.C.C. were especially closely related to the administration of national forests. As Secre-

## THE KIDNAPING—OR MORE AND MORE DEMOCRACY



Courtesy of New York Herald Tribune

tary Ickes wrote: "While the primary activity of the Department of the Interior continues to be conservation, and its corollary public works, nevertheless, the distribution among other agencies of functions relating to our domestic economy threatens the effectiveness of a centralized conservation administration as a national policy through duplication and neglect. . . . The combination of a conservation and public works department is a natural union."<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, there was no agency of government the mere mention of which roused more ingrained hostility among foresters of all political outlooks than the Department of the Interior. "The Department of the Interior," as Chapman once wrote, "traditionally, has been dominated by the spirit of the General Land Office, which has carried out the laws under which the 2,000,000,000 acres of public domain were granted as rapidly and easily as possible to individuals, corporations and states. . . . [When] it comes to land administration as a national resource, whether for forests, grazing, water, or the prevention of erosion, the history of this Department does not quite justify its desire for exclusive jurisdiction and control."<sup>17</sup>

As a central step in Theodore Roosevelt's policy of forest conservation the national forests had been transferred from the jurisdiction of the Interior Department to that of the Department of Agriculture

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Franklin Reed, "Shall There Be a Federal Conservation Department?" *J.F.*, XXXIII (July, 1935), 652, 654.

<sup>17</sup> H. H. Chapman, "Conservation, and the Department of the Interior," *J.F.*, XXX (May, 1932), 544, 522.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-45.

<sup>15</sup> Herbert A. Smith, "Report of the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Forestry*," *Affairs*, II (March, 1936), 11.

in 1905 and the Forest Service was brought into existence as a division of Agriculture. The Ballinger-Pinchot controversy of 1910, the efforts of Secretary Albert Fall to move the Forest Service to the Interior Department and the Teapot Dome scandal had all served to fix in foresters' minds the image of Interior as a den of iniquity. And now in 1935 the proposal they had fought so long, to put the national forests and the Forest Service under the Interior Department, appeared again—this time under the banner of social reform!<sup>18</sup>

Many New Dealers were hostile toward the plan, among them Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and Chief Forester Silcox. Gifford Pinchot blasted the bill in an open letter to the press.<sup>19</sup> Chapman even used the vigorous reaction of foresters to the Ickes plan to attempt to dissuade Pinchot of the latter's views of land policy. He relates:

The Pinchot-Ahern drive for securing federal legislation empowering the government to regulate private owners was being conducted at the very time when Secretary Ickes was attempting to secure the transfer of the National Forests to the Department of the Interior. I remonstrated with Pinchot, emphasizing the fact that it was a bad policy to alienate the lumber interests and others at the very time when united support was required to prevent the loss of the Forest Service altogether.

Although Chapman did not change Pinchot's views on forest policy, the two men did combine forces to defeat the Ickes bill. The venomous correspondence between Chapman and Ickes reveals two well-matched antagonists.<sup>20</sup> The outcome of the debate is told briefly by Chapman:

My only personal contact with Mr. Ickes occurred in Washington, D.C. There were two committees holding hearings on Ickes' Conservation Department bill. I testified in Ickes' presence at the House committee hearing and he did not like it. He then went over to the Senate committee hearing and denounced me personally as a lobbyist. Next day I got my hearing before that committee. I told them that I represented the Society of American Foresters and the American Forestry Association, both of which were unalterably opposed to the passage of the bill. Mr. Ickes' bill did not pass, and the Forest Service remained in the Department of Agriculture. This brought to an end the efforts of several successive Secretaries of the Interior to rehabilitate that Department for its loss of public land business at the expense of the Department of Agriculture. My efforts may have contributed some small part to this result.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 544-553; Reed, "Shall There Be a Conservation Department?" 648-657; H. H. Chapman, "Foresters Challenge Conservation Claims of Department of the Interior," *J.F.*, XXXIII (August, 1935), 713-715; H. H. Chapman, "The Case Against the Ickes Bill Restated," *J.F.*, XXXIII (October, 1935), 834-842.

<sup>19</sup> Reed, "Shall There Be a Conservation Department?" 648, 654-657; "Gifford Pinchot's Open Letter to the Press," *J.F.*, XXXIII (August, 1935), 718.

<sup>20</sup> "Ickes-Chapman Letters," *J.F.*, XXXIII (August, 1935), 715-718.

Thus by 1935 the Society of American Foresters had severed its traditional ties with the Forest Service, steered a middle course between the proponents of broad social planning and those who sought to devote the organization and the *Journal* exclusively to technical aspects of forestry, and participated vigorously in the battle to keep the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture. All these steps tended to divorce the Society from the federal government and to reflect the fact that a constantly increasing proportion of the membership was employed not from Washington, but by state governments and private corporations and agencies.

### Establishing Standards

The emergence of a large corps of trained foresters in America presented the Society with a new challenge. If most foresters are employed by the federal government, the civil service examinations and rules can effectively establish both qualifications and professional standards. But when many foresters, or men claiming to be foresters, are outside the scope of the civil service, some new group must establish the standards. Thus Chapman wrote in 1934: "Forestry on this continent is almost ready to burst its chrysalis and emerge as one of the accepted modern professions." But the task of making forestry such a profession fell upon the Society itself.<sup>21</sup>

Two basic steps were taken by the Society toward this goal: the formulation of a code of ethics for foresters and the accrediting of schools of forestry. The formulation of a code appropriate to the profession was a process begun before Chapman became President and not completed until after his retirement. It was between 1934 and 1937 that the new standards took shape. Chapman says:

The principles which should govern the vocational relations of a member of a profession are of a threefold character. They deal with his relations with his employers and employees, with his fellow technicians, and with the public at large. Ethical behavior does not come naturally; it must be learned by experience and example and formulated as guiding rules for professional practice. Small children are, to all intents and purposes, savages. They normally practice cruelty; they lie and steal, and they only learn civilized conduct through punishment, example and teaching. To do what is right in one's own eyes does not satisfy civilized conditions.<sup>22</sup> In the Society of American Foresters, there had occurred from time to time cases which seemed to require the expulsion of the offending member.<sup>23</sup> The lack of any specific code of conduct was a serious drawback in handling such cases. This difficulty led T. S. Wool-

<sup>21</sup> H. H. Chapman, "The Emergence of the Profession of Forestry in America," *J.F.*, XXXII (April, 1934), 395-396.

<sup>22</sup> This thesis is further elaborated in H. H. Chapman, "The Need for a Foresters' Code of Ethics," *Affairs*, I (September, 1935), 3-9.

<sup>23</sup> In 1923 the Society had adopted a procedure for dealing with charges of conduct unbecoming a member. H. H. Chapman, "Procedure in Cases of Disciplinary Action," *Affairs*, II (December, 1936), 5.

sey, Jr., to make the first effort to formulate some kind of a code. In 1931 the Society's President, P. G. Redington, appointed John D. Guthrie to study the subject of a code of ethics. Guthrie worked assiduously on this job, studying the codes of other organizations and corresponding extensively with foresters. He drew up a code containing 12 to 14 sections.<sup>24</sup> The proposal was debated back and forth vigorously at the 1935 conventions by Emanuel Fritz, Sam Spring, Christopher M. Granger of the Forest Service and others, who cited many objections and difficulties. This discussion and Guthrie's efforts paved the way for the present code. In this work we had notable assistance from Julius Kahn, who had a forestry degree from Syracuse but was actively practicing law in New York City.

The main reason for the delay in completing the code was that the Society became deeply entangled in immediate disciplinary cases and in a fight to preserve existing civil service standards among foresters in government employment. The most serious disciplinary case of the period involved a member who allegedly sought to use his position on the California State Board of Forestry to bring charges of political activity and incompetence against the State Forester, Merritt B. Pratt. The charges against Pratt were considered unjustified by the Society, and the forester raising them was charged with unethical conduct.<sup>25</sup> Chapman recalls:

The Council expelled the offending member, but his friends petitioned for a review of the case. I appointed three members of the Society, one of whom was Bill Greeley, to report upon the case. The report they presented was rather startling. It confirmed the guilt of the offender but advocated his restoration to membership. I could not fathom the reasons for this remarkable recommendation, unless it was Greeley's desire to pour oil on the troubled waters. But it was not desirable to repudiate the recommendations of the committee; so the member was reinstated.

Although the Society needed a code of ethics because many foresters were not government employees, the peculiar situation of the 1930's forced it to take a step backward in terms of logical development and to defend the older civil service standards themselves. Constantly during this decade charges were brought before the Society that the federal and state governments were removing competent foresters for political reasons or selecting new forestry officials on purely partisan grounds.<sup>26</sup> On this question, the deep gulf between Chapman's outlook and that of the partisans of the New Deal was revealed again. For Chapman an impartial civil service throughout all ranks of the administration was an ideal and an accom-

plishment of the Progressive Era which should be jealously guarded. The perspective of the New Deal was expressed by the Forester, William Mollenhauer:

Possibly due to the fact that most of my working life has been spent in connection with organized labor, I see things a little differently than perhaps other do. . . . I personally feel that not only department heads, but also any policy-making jobs, such as bureau heads or state foresters or any other similar positions, should be under the appointment of the men responsible for that work. When you are going to start new plans, as we have under the New Deal, it simply isn't going to work to have those plans carried out by men unsympathetic to them.<sup>27</sup>

It was impossible for Chapman and the Council to see matters in this light. Although they had not been able to complete a general code of ethics, they did formulate in 1935 a special code to deal with civil service and political appointments. This enactment made it the business of the Society to investigate "all cases or practices involving the substitution of political qualifications for professional efficiency," and to treat any violation of this standard by a member as a breach of professional ethics.<sup>28</sup> Chapman concludes:

The entire matter of the code finally came to a head when I ascertained that the Society of Mechanical Engineers had a committee entitled Engineers' Council for Professional Development and was actively working on a code of ethics. I was convinced that the requirements for an engineers' code would have greater similarity to the needs of foresters than would those of such professions as medicine or law. The chairman of this committee was Professor Dugald C. Jackson of Cambridge, Massachusetts. I visited him there, and, with his assistance, drew up what proved to be an acceptable code of ethics for foresters.

It was not until 1948, however, that the "Canons of Ethics for the Profession of Forestry" were finally adopted by the Society. Julius Kahn was chairman of the committee which prepared the final draft, and Chapman was a member. Significantly there was no direct mention of government service in the final document; the main themes were the relations of the forester with the private employer, the general public and fellow foresters. Nothing of the crusading spirit of the Pinchot days found expression in the code beyond the brief statement: "The professional forester will utilize his knowledge and skill for the benefit of society."<sup>29</sup>

The divorce of the Society from the Forest Service and the transformation of forestry into a self-govern-

<sup>24</sup> "Proceedings, Executive Session, 37th Annual Meeting," *Affairs*, IV (February, 1938), 48.

<sup>25</sup> See Chapman, "The Need for a Foresters' Code of Ethics," 3-9. *Affairs*, I (December, 1935), 6-7; II (February, 1936), 3-12; II (March, 1936), 19-20.

<sup>26</sup> H. H. Chapman, "The Pennsylvania Forest Service, Past, Present, and Future," *J.F.*, XXXIV (April, 1936), 409-413; "Report on the Civilian Conservation Corps," *J.F.*, XXXIV (March, 1936), 307-319.

<sup>28</sup> "Committee on Maintenance of Professional Standards and Qualifications in the Employment of Foresters," *Affairs*, I (October, 1935), 8-10; H. H. Chapman, "The Attitude of the Society of American Foresters toward Political Employment," *Affairs*, II (May, 1936), 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> "Canons of Ethics for the Profession of Forestry," *J.F.*, XLVI (August, 1948), 626-627.

ing profession required adoption of a code of ethics. It also made it incumbent upon the Society to define or declare its own standards of admission to the profession. This goal was attained through the project of accrediting schools of forestry. Chapman gives this account of the work:

In 1932 the Society of American Foresters received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation for the purpose of making a study of forestry education. This study was conducted by Henry S. Graves and Cedric H. Guise, who published a volume of 419 pages. In this publication they made a thorough analysis of the requirements in curriculum, teaching staff and physical plant for schools giving adequate instruction in forestry, both undergraduate and graduate. This was a most valuable contribution and contained a wealth of information. It was intended that this study should be used as a basis for accrediting the schools of forestry, but it did not work out this way. The authors took the position that the schools should be given a period in which to adjust themselves to the standards they had indicated.

When I became President of the Society in 1934, the status of the schools remained as before. At the first Council meeting I announced that the Society was under obligation to proceed with the task of accrediting the schools. One of the Council exclaimed, "It will raise hell." I replied, "What of it?" But how was this work to be accomplished? The money from the Carnegie Corporation had been completely used up, and there was none in the Society budget to take its place. So I decided to see what could be done by correspondence.

Chapman relates that he formulated a basis for grading the schools, involving such factors as faculty, enrollment, degrees granted, budget and field instruction. He then submitted the list to schools of forestry, requesting them to weigh each item. For him the most significant criterion was the size of the forestry faculty. On the basis of the standards adopted, 14 schools were originally accredited, Yale and the University of California topping the list.<sup>30</sup> The problem remaining was to raise the other institutions to acceptable grades. Chapman continues:

In several instances, these [non-accredited] schools had lumped the students of forestry with those in agriculture and had used the indicated enrollment as a means of securing additional appropriations, not for forestry, but for pet agricultural projects. I published a pamphlet entitled "Forestry, the Cinderella of the Agricultural Colleges," exposing this situation. Instead of raising hell, every one of these non-accredited schools of forestry received the report on professional schools with great enthusiasm. It gave them a tangible basis for insisting on improvement of their status. After a lapse of seven years from 1935 the Society undertook to regrade the non-

<sup>30</sup> H. H. Chapman, "Report on Schools of Forestry," *Affairs*, I (December, 1935), 4-5.

accredited schools. The standards previously applied were used, and I was appointed chairman of the committee.

In addition to requiring statistical reports, I made personal visits to each of the institutions involved, the Society having provided a budget for this purpose. The results of the efforts were nothing short of phenomenal. From an initial average grade of 65.04 out of a possible 100, the average had been raised to 84.04, or an even 19 per cent.

Twelve schools of forestry were regarded at this time, among them six which had formerly been unacceptable but were now accredited. Despite criticisms of his method by a later committee, Chapman remained convinced, "my plan placed the whole matter of comparisons on a tangible basis and produced the results that have been indicated. The grading and accrediting of schools of forestry was as important to the profession as the similar and previous work done by Flexner for the medical profession."

In 1937 Chapman declined to stand for re-election, and C. F. Korstian was elected in his place. The most turbulent days of the Society's history came to a close. But though the passions engendered by the great disputes of the thirties have faded, the changes then brought about in the nature of the profession of forestry, its relation to the federal government, and the role played by the Society have endured.

#### State Laws Take Over

A referendum initiated by Chapman in 1949 upheld his preference for state over federal regulation of private forest practices by a vote of 2,545 to 1,107.<sup>31</sup> Chapman was confident his stand would be vindicated despite the fact that the U.S. Forest Service at that time endorsed the Anderson Bill for federal regulation because he believed "there existed a widespread sentiment among Federal Foresters, especially in the South, opposed to federal regulation." He concludes: This vote was the final death blow to the Pinchot-Ahern plan, and the results have justified the decision. In Washington, Oregon, California, Minnesota, Maryland, Louisiana and other states, laws for the regulation of private cutting have been enacted with the full support of public sentiment.

It is impressive that in the very period when the dominant tendency in American life seemed to be growth in the scope of governmental activities, the foresters of the nation cut themselves adrift from the government and established through their Society a self-governing profession. The initial election of Chapman, the conflict over editorial policy, the drafting of a code of ethics and the accrediting of forestry schools all contributed to this end. By revealing the elements of this process through his memoirs, Herman H. Chapman has made a significant contribution to the history of America during the New Deal years.

<sup>31</sup> "Referendum on Federal Forest Regulation Requested by Petition," *J.F.*, XLVIII (February, 1950), 142-143; "Members Oppose Regulation Principle," *J.F.*, XLVIII (June, 1950), 404.