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This is an oral history interview with William C. Chanler, member of the Boone and Crockett Club, conducted on May 25, 1977, at his office at 40 Wall Street, New York, New York. The interviewee is Gyongyver Kitty Beuchert, Office Administrator of the Boone and Crockett Club.

GB: I'd like first of all to get your birthdate and your place of birth.

WC: July 26, 1895, at a place called Gog Magog, Cambridge, England. My mother was sent to England for her health by the American doctors and we moved over there for the summers, the family did. My father started to study law in Cambridge, I think, and I was born in this place called Gog Magog, after Gog and Magog, who were two great English giants in historic literature days. This was a country place, I think, belonged to Duke somebody. You could rent an enormous English country place in those days with 15 servants and three grooms and horses, for less than a four-room cottage on Long Island Sound. The reason was that the dukes all owned six or seven big country places and they all wanted them occupied. So all they wanted were people to live in them.

Anyway that's where I was born and I spent the next . . . until I was probably 18 or 20, we spent many summers partly there and then we moved to a place called Woodbasquick in the Norfolk broads and I got interested there, a certain amount, in animals and birds, and then we also lived in Tuxedo Park, New York. We only went abroad for the summer months. In Tuxedo we built a house way up in the woods, the part that was then completely undeveloped, wild wilderness, and I started going out hunting as a little boy with a bow and arrow. I didn't expect to kill anything but I'd shoot it along, save the arrows. Then finally I did get really hunting with a bow and arrow, and got very keen about it, and became a keen hunter and sportsman.

As I grew up, I remember, while I was in Tuxedo, we lived there and I was still probably an undergraduate, I don’t remember how old, I got interested in some kind of game conservation
organization there, the preservation of hunting and shooting, which I was always very keen about. Like I said, I also got so I could hunt with a bow and arrow as I grew older and then when I got old enough to go off on my own I think I first... I think it was when I went with Stimson, which would've been after I graduated from law school, that Stimson took me out...

GB: This is Colonel Henry Stimson?

WC: Colonel Henry O. Stimson was the head of Winthrop Stimson, and he, although well maybe it was his partner Bronson Winthrop, who was a cousin of mine, and I went with him long before it was Winthrop Stimson. I guess it was before that when I was still in college he took me out West on a six week, two month camping trip, in the course of which I sneaked off and did some hunting with a bow and arrow. And I think I shot a deer there with a bow and arrow and impressed the guide very much. And we hunted in Montana in those days.

We had a very fine guide, the name I can't remember at the moment. He knew the country around there very well and I got tremendously interested both in hunting. There was a place where we went just south of Yellowstone Park, where this guide had his headquarters. So we hunted south and west of Yellowstone Park, and as I say I got very interested in both hunting the game with a bow and arrow, which was twice as sporting as a rifle, because I had to start hunting when the rifleman would've shot. He could shoot when he saw the game at 80 yards and I had to sneak up to 40 yards.

GB: At least.

WC: At least. I discovered... Somebody taught me a very interesting and important point about bow and arrow hunting. That after you've shot the deer he hasn't heard the shot. All he
knows is he's been hit by something that hurts him and he jumps up and if you keep absolutely quiet, still, he'll run 200 or 300 yards and lie down. Then you smoke a pipe and you sneak up and then he's so sick from it that you can kill him with another arrow right away. But if you start to yell and run up, which is what the guides like to do, he'll run two or three miles with the arrow in him. Then you lose him, and that's why wherever bow and arrows are allowed you always find deer lying around, dead, with an arrow sticking in them. And I had always to tell the guide to shut up, sit down, after I'd shot if I shot one so that the deer would lie down. And that's a very important part of it.

GB: That's a marvelous point of instruction for bow hunters.

WC: The trouble is, when I later suggested we should use the bow and arrow instead of the rifle for the Boone and Crockett Club, people said it was so dangerous, [that] there were deer lying around wherever we've used them with arrows stuck in them, but I explained that this was the reason for it. And they decided, this was way back in the '20's, and they decided that it was too complicated at that point and they wouldn't go in then for changing it to bow and arrow. Later, of course, that was forgotten. I think it should've been brought up again instead of getting joined up with the National Rifle Association. The trouble is they got tied up with the National Rifle Association and they said to hell with the bow and arrow.

GB: Well, I want to ask you a couple more things about you personally. A few details about your family and when you got married.

WC: Well, my family . . . My father was one of five brothers and three sisters. They were descendants of John Jacob Astor and until 1928 were very rich, then in '28 and '29, in the
Depression, people who were handling the family affairs let them all go for taxes or something.

GB: What were your parents' names?

WC: Louis Styvessant Chanler was my father. Came from Barrytown, New York, up in Duchess County. My mother was Alice Chamberlain, who lived in Red Hook, oh four or five miles from Barrytown, so they used to ride together, ride back and forth when they were growing up. So he'd known her as a girl, and all the Chanler brothers had. They played around together a lot.

My father was a lawyer and interested in politics. Became Supervisor of Duchess County and then Lieutenant Governor of the state of New York and then ran under Charles E. Hughes, who was a Republican, and he was a Democrat because they were separately elected in those days. They served together for four years, I think. And I used to see them. We used to dine together with the Hughes in Albany when I was a kid. I was quite young, 10 or 12, I don't know. And then he ran for governor against Hughes and was beaten because Tammany Hall turned him down for being against three strike gambling. Anyway. He was very keen on that, and very keen on fox hunting, riding horses.

GB: That's almost a lost art now.

WC: My mother was a born gardener. She loved gardening, and in England, of course, they went into it a great deal for landscape gardening and gardening generally, so that the many summers that we went over there she became a very keen gardener and I inherited a great interest in it. I've had it all my life and [am] still probably more interested now in my country place that I can slowly walk around about and see the planting I've done and anything else I can think of. Can't go hunting anymore. I'm not strong enough.
GB: Can you tell me when you got married?

WC: Yes. For a number of years I used to spend a lot of time in Siosit, Bronson Winthrop's. When I went in to Winthrop Stimson, he kept a bachelor's home in Siosit, Long Island, and there were three or four other bachelors who used to live there: Frank Appleton, I can't remember their names at the moment, I'll think of them later. About five or six bachelors, we all lived there. Next door on Bronson Winthrop's place, next it would be nearly half a mile away across a field, Paul Hammond, who was a great friend of Mr. Winthrop's . . . He had made great friends in the war; he was a great civilian naval officer who got into the Navy during the wartime. He was a very keen sailor. And he got to know Roger Williams—who was then, I think, a commander in the United States Navy—very well during World War. I think they were stationed together on an island somewhere. They went off on trips - Naval . . . Well, Roger Williams had a lovely daughter called Randall, and he somehow got Paul Hammond and made him her godfather. And when he'd go away, she would go stay with him in Siosit, and I got to know her then as a young girl. She was, I thought, too young for me to get too interested in. She was 15 years younger than I was. But as she grew older, I got more interested, then to my big annoyance went and married a friend of mine called . . . I know perfectly well his name but it just escapes me. My memory is so bad now. I'll get it in a minute. But that marriage didn't last long, and I was very glad that it didn't; she'd become a beautiful girl by then. She had one charming daughter—Evie Rogers—his name was John Rogers. I knew the Rogers family. But somehow that broke up, I can't remember why, and she was going back to Paul Hammond's house with her lovely daughter, and then I proposed and finally married her there.

I think, well I do know, in '34 or '35, I can't remember now which, at that time I was at the Corporation Counselor's office. I was First Assistant to the Corporation Counsel under Mayor Laguardia, and as she had been divorced, we couldn't have a formal church wedding or anything
like that. And we had a very amusing wedding. I went down and got the town clerk, who was in the Municipal Building, to come up with all the papers. And I said I had people coming to my office, to my room, where they wanted to have a technical legal wedding. I think the town clerk performed it, I'm not sure, or the chief of something or other, and there also was an Assistant Corporation Counsel, who was in charge of that part of our work. Well, I had them in there and also Roger Williams, his wife, his lovely daughter Randall and my mother and father, I think, I don't remember, and possibly Paul Hammond, I think probably. We began taking . . . I don't know, filling out papers, asking questions, "Where's the groom? Where's the groom?" the town clerk [said]. "Just do what I tell you," [I said.] "Fill these papers out. I'm running this show." "Well, I can't understand it," [the town clerk said.] "The groom has got to be here." Well then I said, "You just go ahead." So then I said, "Now, where does the groom sign?" He handed it to me and I signed it. So they all burst out laughing.

We went by boat to Bermuda. We had a nice cabin. And somehow the cabins were connected and there was a great friend of ours, I think it was Kathryn MacAgg, in the next cabin, little upset to find me at my age running along with a pretty little girl like Randall, going off on trips together. It was really rather shocking. So I didn't tell her we were married till we got to Bermuda. Then she was delighted. Before that she thought we were just having a frightfully wicked affair. Well, anyway, that was the beginning of my marriage. We'll lived very happily ever after and still are.

GB: Have you had any children?

WC: Yes, she had five daughters, four of them mine and one of them Jack Rogers'. And they're still all around and we think they are about the nicest daughters. Four married and one of them living out west in Montana, the youngest one of them, Sarah, is living out west in Montana and
believes in the modern method, that you live with a gentleman four or five years before you
decide whether you are going to marry them or not. I call the young man my sin-in-law.

GB: That's wonderful. Okay. Can you tell me something about your higher education, the
schools you attended?

WC: Well I first went when we were living in England. My brother had gone to Wicksonford
Wilkingham, which was an English prep school, and then to Eaton. His last term at Wicksonford
my family sent me there—he was four years older—and I was pretty young. I think I was eight
years old, pretty young to go to boarding school, but I did, just to get to know him and get to meet
some prominent English gentlemen.

At Wicksonford they didn't have dormitories. They had rooms with eight or nine boys per
room. Now there was [in my room] a prominent English gentlemen called John Jacob Astor,
Junior Vanderbilt, Bernard Carter... I forget five-six prominent Americans and one Englishmen.
However, I then got something that made me cough. They thought I had consumption, so I came
back and family came back to this country pretty much. And I want to play school, Southborough
Mass for a year and a half, I guess. Graduated from there and then went to St. Mark's,
Southborough Mass [for] six years, and then went to Harvard College 2-1/2 years, and then went
to World War I and got back in the spring of my senior year and was given full credit for the time I
was in the Army. So I graduated at the same time I would have (in 1919) if I'd stayed in college,
but I'd spent two years at that, I think.

I went to Leavenworth, Kansas, to the Army service schools, where they train you, and if
you stayed there, graduated after three months, and then stayed in the Army for two years, you
became a Provisional Second Lieutenant, equal to a West Pointer. And I did that cause I was
too young to be commissioned from Platt... I'd been to Plattsburgh for several years, where
young people went, but I was too young to be commissioned so they sent me to Leavenworth. And that was all very interesting. And then I went to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in artillery and then got back and graduated, as I say, and then went to Harvard Law School and practiced law.

GB: You've mentioned a little bit about your military experience. Were you actually in the war?

WC: Well, in World War I when I was in Leavenworth service schools, we had a bright young blond haired, blue-eyed captain just out of West Point in charge of our company, C Company, and he used to make us all get beautifully dressed at daylight every morning and stand at attention. We were there from January to February, and he'd march us around and march us in two different drilling jobs. And finally one day he marched us off to take situation maps. He showed us how. You'd take a thing on a tripod and draw a map of the country ahead. You'd show to the artillery actors for the enemy to shoot, for the gunmen to shoot at, to shoot where the enemy was. So we lined up taking situation maps, and the man next to me said, "Bill, your ears are red." I said, "Your lips and your eyes . . . your eyes are white. Captain, Captain, sir, your face is all white and your ears are red." "Oh my God," he said, "and I forgot to tell you to wear earmuffs, etc. Break ranks and run for cover." Well then we went around with our ears in bags for weeks. We were known as Ike's Frozen Ear Brigade because it was Dwight D. Eisenhower, the young captain.

GB: Oh, you're kidding.

WC: And he'd forgotten to tell us in the bags the ears swelled up. So then, jumping to World War II, I was Corporation Counsel under Laguardia. I'd been there nine years in his office then, and I told him I had to get back and practice law and make money to bring up my daughters.
And he said, "It's very unpatriotic to go to war . . . to go to bat . . . to leave government in wartime
unless, of course, you are ordered overseas." But he made a blunder then. He forgot. So I
called up Randall and told her to spend time with the Stimsons in West Hills where we lived next
door to them, a quarter mile away, but who would . . . And the Stimsons came with Jack
McClure, an old friend of mine who was Assistant Secretary of War under Stimson. And I told
them . . . when I got to the point (that Laguardia said it was unpatriotic) he said, "Oh yes, Willie,
you can't quit as corporation counsel. Go back to the office now. I'm sorry to say you can't. It's
unpatriotic." But I said, "He went on and said 'unless you were ordered overseas . . .'." "Oh," he
said, "Would you like to go overseas?" I said, "I'd much rather stay where I am. I'm fed up.
I've been there nine years. How about it Jack?" McClure said, "Sure. How soon can you go?"
"Three or four weeks," I said. "All right. Three weeks from today you'll report to Washington
and we'll tell you about it." So I went back and told Laguardia, and told him he'd made a mistake.
He'd forgotten about my relationship with Stimson. He laughed and said "Oh, what a damn fool I
was. Well, I congratulate you anyway. Go ahead."

So I went and flew abroad and then I was in Morocco in organized military government. AMGOT
we were called - allied military government of occupied territories. We had to change
the name because all the natives in Africa roared with laughter at the name AMGOT— it meant
"drippings of a horse" in their language. So we had to change our name. Anyway I'd been there
three or four months, got military government organized there, and Jack McClure came by and
said "Do you want to move on?" I said, "Absolutely." He said, "Go to Algiers and report.
General Eisenhower is in command there." And I said, "Certainly." So he told me how and when
"Had any military experience?" "Yes sir, I've had the best military experience of any officer in the
Army." "Oh come on," he said, "That's pretty conceited." "Well," I said, "I was a member of Ike's
Frozen Ear Brigade in World War I." We burst out laughing. He said "All right. All right." We
became great friends.

I became Chief Legal Officer of Military Government in, first, north Africa, and then in Sicily, and then in Italy up to Naples. And then after Mussolini—well, they threw him out—I drafted an unconditional surrender document and got them to sign that, and then Mussolini was rescued by a German plane. I was then ordered back to Washington where I was Deputy Director of Civil Affairs. Now, off the record . . . [tape stops]

It's exactly what I already have dictated for my autobiography. In Washington I had a funny experience. I was Deputy Director of Civil Affairs under General Hildring, and his chief of staff, an officer called Colonel Mickey Marcus, had been an assistant of mine, I believe, when I was corporation counsel. Anyway I'd known him, had some connection with him, perhaps he'd had another office with Laguardia. They had the same system there that they do in the presidency and governorship where the vice-president or lieutenant governor or the deputy director had absolutely nothing to do except when his boss goes away. So I'd sit there in the office with nothing to do and when I'd go and tell Hildering [he'd say] "Oh, Mickey will tell you." So then Hildering would announce that he was going away for six months, travel over Europe, and I was now going to act as head of the Civil Affairs Division and I'd say, "I don't know what you've been doing." And he said, "Mickey will tell you." And so we ran things that way. And it worked all very interestingly.

But as I had nothing else to do, I got tremendously interested in the question of war and peace, and I worked hard on that and wrote memoranda and did a lot of work on it in connection with, well, first unconditional surrender, how it should be worded. And I drafted the one in Italy, and then when the Germans came, I got my partner—Haydon Smith—to go and take my job as Chief Legal Officer of Military Government in the field. And he called me up from Berlin and said the Germans were ready to surrender and he wanted the wording of the surrender of Mussolini. So I gave it to him over the phone. [It was] simply, "I, so and so, in charge of all the German
Army, here surrender unconditionally to the Allied forces on behalf of all Germans and order every officer in the German Army to obey the orders given them by the Allies." No conditions.

I'd had a terrible row with the International Law Organization, which a great friend of mine—Philip Gessup—represented, and they said there was no precedent for such a surrender and they had written an unconditional surrender with 40 pages of conditions written in. And I was so pleased that I'd beat them because they'd been retained by the State Department to draw it, you see, and luckily the generals did it in Germany before they could hear it, and did it on my draft. So that became the system there. And then the international lawyers had to accept it.

I had found a precedent for unconditional surrender when I was still in Naples. I was suddenly ordered by the general in charge there, I guess it was Eisenhower, I don't remember, to prepare unconditional surrender terms for the Italians, who had thrown Mussolini out—anti-fascists. Threw Mussolini out, locked him up. And they signed . . . The king of Italy had been brought back and he was going to sign, etc. And I ran into the library in Naples [with] a couple of friends of mine. We worked like hell 24 hours and discovered two precedents for unconditional surrender. One, the army in north Africa that fought Rome—a perfectly well known name, Rome's great enemies in north Africa, I've forgotten it at the moment—the Phoenicians. And the king of Phoenicians, or whoever it was, said, "I hereby surrender unconditionally. What are your orders?" And then I discovered the same had been done when Ulysses S. Grant took the surrender from Robert E. Lee. Exactly the same language. So I put that in and that was it. And the international lawyers were furious because they hadn't known about that precedent. But anyway I got away with it and worked very hard at that. And also after the surrender I worked on what we would do when we captured the Germans. I wanted to try them for waging a criminal war because under the Kellogg/Bream Pact, which was agreed to after World War I was ended, all the nations, including the Germans, had agreed to renounce the right to go to war except in self-defense from actual physical attack. But the international lawyers said that didn't mean
anything because it didn't say what the punishment would be for violating it or some asinine argument of that kind. So I had to work hard at that, and I did, and I successfully beat them. I got Judge Jackson of the Supreme Court of the United States . . . [He] became chief prosecutor and I sent him the debates I'd had with international lawyers and others. And he sent back a longhand letter, which I was delighted to discover I still have, saying he'd read my memoranda and they were very helpful, and he entirely agreed with me, and he was glad that Professor Glick of the Harvard Law School, who was the man I had principally debated with, had finally come around to agree to my views. He said, "After reading your last letter to him, he had nothing to do but unconditionally surrender himself when it was proved it was wrong." And so he surrendered and agreed with me. And so when we went to Nuremburg they then tried the Germans for illegally fighting a war that they had renounced the right to fight, which created a real precedent for world peace in the future. Which was the point.

GB: You know, that was just what I was going to ask. Even if there's never been a precedent, that's how you set them isn't it? Is to do one courageous thing and set a precedent?

WC: Yes. Well, anyway. It ought to be obliquely accepted now that you cannot fight an aggressive war. International lawyers said there ought to be prerogatives of being head of a government—what did they call a king in those days?

GB: Monarch?

WC: No, they had a name - an absolute monarch. There was another word for it, I can't remember what it was. But anyway, part of the rights of an absolute monarch is to go to war anytime he thought it was in his or his country's interest. Trouble was the British were opposed
to me because they had done that in building up their British empire. When they wanted to capture Australia, and they were an enemy there, they declared war on them. So they were afraid that we'd get them into trouble. We finally brought them around and so we . . . The Nuremberg trials went largely on the basis that the Nazis waged illegal war and therefore did not have the protection of the laws of war that said if you fight like a gentleman, you're all right. Don't matter how you fight if you made an illegal war of aggression. So that we got eight or 10 top German men executed. Course Hitler was dead already, and so was Mussolini, but we got a lot of others executed, hanged, and then a lot of others went to jail for different terms. One or two are still in jail, for life, I forget who now, and that kept me very active and very busy.

GB: [other side of tape - lost first part of question] . . . and also how you developed your interest in conservation activities.

WC: I started hunting a little bit with bow and arrow in Tuxedo Park, as I've told you, when we built the house there when I was a kid. I went around with a bow and arrow and I think I shot . . . I had a stone arrowhead, Indian arrows. In those days I was a great Indianophile—I loved the Indians. And I had an Indian bow and arrow I bought at an Indian shop in New York—I forget its name, but only sold Indian things. And I had an Indian bow and a lot of Indian arrows, and I sneaked ff in the woods with moccasins on, and occasionally would get a shot at a deer, but I wasn't strong enough and the stone arrowhead usually bounced. I don't think I killed anything there, I'm not sure.

But later, as I grew up, I went out West with Stimson and Bronson Winthrop on a pack trip. I got fascinated with going on pack trips, and then I went on pack trips practically every summer for the next 20 years, if I was free and not too involved. First in Montana with Stimson's old guide, who'd come up . . . he was a Mormon by birth and worked his way up from Utah, and
settled in Montana and married an Indian, so that he had half-breed Indian children. And he took us on a trip, and then later I went off alone on hunting trips with him and, or it may have been another guide, I'm not sure, he had a camp on the western side of Glacier Park, I think. And I remember going with Stimson on a pack trip through Glacier Park. Course we couldn't shoot there at all. But then we went out . . . well I don't know . . . it may it have been before I went on the pack trip because I went and stayed with Jack Monroe. Jack Monroe was the name of this guide. J. B. Monroe. He was pretty old himself then. He'd been Stimson's guide. But I went and stayed with him in his camp, his home, in western Montana on the edge of Glacier Park and I told him that I wanted to go hunting, and I had my bow and arrows, and he said . . . well maybe it was before the bow and arrow, I think this was a rifle that day. He said, "Well, you can go right up those mountains there. You'll find bighorn sheep up there and maybe moose and deer." So I climbed up the mountain, saw a bighorn sheep. I rode up. He said, "Go out to the corral there and pick yourself a horse. There's a saddle." So I did it all myself. Saddled the horse and went off by myself up the mountain. Saw a bighorn sheep, dismounted. The horse was trained, and with those Western horses, the reins are in two pieces, not one going around, so you drop them and the horse won't move because he's taught that if he turns you step on the rein. So the horse is just like almost if you had him tied somewhere. And I climbed up the mountain, shot the sheep, brought it down, cleaned it, put it on the back of the saddle, and rode triumphantly down through the town where we were, the name I can't remember at the moment, on the eastern line of Glacier Park, just outside. I went and got to Jack Monroe's house, called loudly, and said, "Look what I've got." He said, "Oh, my God. You damn fool. You've been hunting [like] those white people." Oh yes—he called himself an Indian because he'd married an Indian. He said he was a Blackfoot Indian. Claimed to be a Blackfoot Indian. Jack Monroe. And his sons were half-breed. Anyway, he said, "Those white men will say you've been hunting in the park. I call it Blackfoot country and that's why I told you to go there but I didn't think you shoot anything, or at
least not ride through the town. We're all going to get arrested." Well, I didn't, for some reason. Nobody saw us and we kept it quiet. He told everybody to shut up. But that was one of my first hunting experiences. And the sheep, as I remember it, was a record head, and I think Jack Monroe took it to the Boone and Crockett Club show in New York and I think he got a prize for it. And it was shot in the park but I was told to shut up. I was pretty young in those days. Then later I joined the Boone and Crockett Club and I was pretty much amused. I don't know whether I claimed that as one of the animals that I had shot.

But about that time I started really hunting with the bow and arrow instead of the rifle. I found it much more fun. With steel heads it was certainly easier and I found I could kill. I killed moose with it. I don't think I ever tried to kill a bear with it. I did once when we made "Silent Enemy," a movie that we made. I shot bear, dressed in hero's costume, because the hero was a Blackfoot Indian who couldn't shoot a bow and arrow. It was an Indian movie. I was a lawyer but the lawyer had to act like a Blackfoot chief because the lawyer was the only one who could shoot with a bow and arrow. As soon as I hit the bear, Douglas Burden shot it through the head with a rifle so it would drop dead, cause that's the trouble with the bow and arrow—it doesn't knock them down. But it does kill them. Now, what more did you... Oh.

Well then I...

GB: I was going to ask a little about your early interest in conservation. You mentioned a little.

WC: Well I was tremendously interested, of course, in keeping the wilderness that I went to as a wilderness. Stimson was very interested in that and he was a very keen member of the Boone and Crockett Club, and I think probably Stimson and some other older men who had gone hunting with me got me interested.

I then went to British Columbia by accident, but it was a very useful thing. By that time I'd
joined the Boone and Crockett Club and was tremendously interested through that in conservation. I'd shot the animals that I had to shoot to become a member, with the bow and arrow mostly, and then one day I got in the elevator and went to Stimson's office. There was a man all dressed up to go out West. He had a cowboy hat on and clothes, and I said . . . I knew him. He was a lawyer on the floor above or somewhere in the same building. And I talked to him and he said he was going out to British Columbia where he had a marvelous guide who took him off on these wonderful hunting trips up there where there were moose and bighorn and deer and everything else. Oh yes, and Jack Monroe had pretty much collapsed by then. And so I said I wanted to got out. So he said, "You can come right after me, I think. I'll send you a cable." So I a telegram saying I could come immediately. I had three weeks. So I went out and went hunting in British Columbia, oh, eight or nine years running, I think, on pack trips, hunting trips. Then he had a lovely daughter who used to go with us as one of the guides. I think they hoped I would fall in love with the daughter. I nearly did. She was a charming young girl. We got along very well together, but by that time I was getting married to Randall. So I brought Randall out there and they were very upset about that. They didn't like my coming with a new wife. And so I didn't go anymore there. That was . . . I've forgotten the exact name of the place but the head man was a painter. And I've got a very good painting at home that he made of bighorn sheep in the Rocky Mountains. And he used to take me out on these trips and I'd hunt with a bow and arrow and he'd paint. His daughter would be the guide, and another male guide too. We went all over the British Columbia wilderness and mountains there, which is better than running into Glacier Park.

GB: Now I was going to ask you, what led you to become a member of the Boone and Crockett Club and who proposed you? Do you remember?
WC: Well I suppose Stimson proposed me, but I don't know. I do remember that as soon as I heard about it I was tremendously interested, and when I found through Stimson and Jack Monroe and the others that if I shot certain number of game, I could become a member, if I worked hard on that and did shoot the necessary game. I suppose I got Stimson to propose me, but I don't remember. It was in the 1920's, I believe, that I joined.

GB: 1926, I believe, but I'll look it up.

WC: 1926. Just after I graduated from law school. That's how I spent my summers when I was in law school, going out on these hunting trips mostly, although I also went cruising a great deal. I had a sailboat with no engine, which I loved. First "Java" and then "The Frenchman," and we used to cruise all over the New England coast, but then of course, law school summers were 2-1/2 months long so I could do both, go for a month cruise and a month pack trip. But I was always terribly interested in the Boone and Crockett and hunting business. But after I got married, I couldn't go with my Canadian guide anymore cause they didn't like us.

I don't think I went on Western pack trips, but I went up to Bear Lake Fish and Game Club, which some friends of mine had organized in western Quebec at a time when they had had a great hunting club in the Adirondacks—the name I've now forgotten, a very well known hunting club there. But suddenly automobiles began coming in to the Adirondacks, and they got mad and went up and founded this fish and game club—Bear Lake Fish and Game Club around Bear Lake in Canada. The Canadians in western Quebec left areas 15 x 15 miles square, absolute open wilderness. There was nobody living inside it except Indians. They'd turned that over to the game clubs because it kept the trappers out, although you were allowed to trap there. Professional trappers would trap. So I joined that with quite a lot of friends of mine. And I remember the first time I went. I landed in Ontario and a nice Indian paddled me four miles up
the Ottawa River to the mouth of Bear Creek, put me ashore and told me to walk up Bear Creek 20 miles. There I'd find a big sign on a tree and an arrow on the tree [pointing to] a trail coming down from the left, and that trail went to a cabin that belonged to Douglas Burden's family. And he was the one who got me going there. Douglas Burden's father belonged to the Bear Lake Club and had a camp there on Smith Lake, I think.

On the way in, there was a cabin called the Bronson's, which was amusing because Bronson Winthrop was my great uncle, my law partner and what not. And at the camp at Bronson's I had walked in and had lunch there. I was rowing at the time, so I was in pretty good shape and walking 20 miles didn't bother me. Carrying a pack on my back with a headstrap and went in Douglas' camp. Douglas had to back out at the last minute so I went in alone. He came a week later. He got sick or something. He and his family. And I used to go with them many years to the Bear Lake, to their camp on Smith Lake, and go off hunting with bow and arrow in the woods there, on foot of course, unlike Western hunting on horseback. I got tremendously interested there. There were moose and deer, I forget what else, but I did a lot of hunting. And Douglas and I both, I think, joined the Boone and Crockett Club at about the same time. Maybe. I think I read that he joined in '22.

GB: He did. I think he joined in '22, two years earlier than you.

WC: Yes, maybe he put me up. Maybe he's the one who got me into the Boone and Crockett Club.

GB: In 1928 Kermit Roosevelt took a trip to India. He was secretary of the Club at the time and you were appointed assistant secretary. Do you remember anything of particular interest that was going on at that time in the late '20's?
WC: I'm afraid not.

GB: Okay.

WC: I can say there was no problem about . . . Well, yes. The conservation problem had been brought up by Stimson and five other members—whose names I've got in a letter here that I wrote to Douglas Burden 40 years later—where they had said that maybe we had to cut out giving the prizes in the interest of conservation, although it wasn't necessary yet. And I got very interested in that, and then wrote that they ought to try the bow and arrow, which was turned down as being too complicated, and too difficult to be sure that people would know how to use it, and objections that there would be a lot of deer around with arrows, wounded deer with arrows sticking in them because people chased them and all that. That happened, I think, in the '20's and '30's, but then I don't remember much more that I did in connection with the Boone and Crockett. Until this row began happening in the late '60's or early '70's.

GB: Well, one thing I'd like to ask you that took place during the time that you were fairly active was the incorporation of the Club. Do you remember the reason? I think it was around 1931 or '32. Do you remember the reason why they decided to incorporate rather than just be a club? I have a general idea and it might serve as a reminder. I think they wanted to be able to accept gifts so that they could work . . . so that they would have more money to work, but I was wondering if you remembered any of the details.

WC: No. But I do vaguely remember that it had to do with our authority to enforce some of the things we wanted with hunting. Maybe we had to be incorporated to lay down hunting rules in different parts of the country. I have an idea that we tried to set up different parts of the country
where one could shoot or couldn't shoot elk or deer or something. Seems to me that we had to be incorporated to have that right.

GB: And then the other thing that was happening right while you were an early member is the development of and the setting aside of the Sheldon Antelope Refuge and I was wondering if you remember that?

WC: Where was it?

GB: Let me think. It was in northwest Nevada and they set it aside in memory of Charles Sheldon. And I know that the antelope were becoming very scarce at that time and I think that they wanted to set up a refuge where they could reproduce without being bothered.

WC: I remember the name and I remember something but I don't remember details at the moment.

GB: Now, I know that Theodore Roosevelt died before you became a member, but did you ever have the opportunity to meet him?

WC: Oh yes, I knew him. He lived out in Long Island 10 miles beyond, or right near where Stimson lived I think. I think Stimson got his land from Theodore Roosevelt. So when I used to go to Stimson's in the early days... When did Theodore Roosevelt die?

GB: He died in 1919.
WC: That was my senior year at Harvard. But I knew him before that. I know that I'd met him and talked with him and admired him enormously, and of course I knew Kermit and young Ted, etc., very well. They were close personal friends.

GB: Now you mentioned a little earlier that he would now probably disapprove of hunting, well probably at least with a rifle altogether.

WC: No, no. He would disapprove of this business of making the . . . giving of top prizes. Such an important matter, getting in the books, that people would go out just solely for the purpose of winning a prize. And I had an experience of how badly that worked. One day when we were up in Canada I came out of the bush, walking, with my bow and arrow, was in the railroad station waiting to take the train back to Montreal where I could go to New York, and I saw a deer, a sign on it and a rifle laying beside it, and some clothes. The deer was clean. And then a man came and I said, "Is this your game?" "Yes," he said, "I'm delighted. I think it's a record head and I was only away from home 48 hours. I flew up here and I flew in with a guide to where there were lots of deer. We saw this deer at the edge of a lake so we landed at the other end of the lake, sneaked around and shot him and then came down and picked him up and brought him. Now I'm taking him home. Isn't that wonderful?" I remember telling that story at a meeting of the Boone and Crockett Club, the meeting at which we all spoke against giving the prizes, and I said, "That's what they do. He shot it with a rifle in the park and not out of the plane, not bad as that, damn near."

Ferguson just hated all of us who were against giving the prizes. I don't know what was the matter with Bob Ferguson. I used to know him. I do know him. I think he went off his head. He was rude and insulting as he could be whenever we talked about putting an end to giving the prizes. I got the impression he was a member of the National Rifle Association and was doing it
for financial reasons. I don't know. He was a dreadful ass. But anyway he spoke up. He said, "Did you report that to the Boone and Crockett?" when I told him the story. I said, "How do I remember whether I did or not." But anyway I remember that as an example of what giving the prizes . . . He said he'd get in the book cause he had a record head.

GB: Now one of the questions I wanted to ask you about that is if the Boone and Crockett Club totally withdrew all affiliation from this records keeping program, isn't there a danger that some other organization would pick it up and run it totally commercially and then it wouldn't have any integrity as it has now?

WC: I guess.

GB: Because right now they try to maintain some integrity to the program.

WC: Well they talk about it. I don't know how much they really try. How much they really do. They actually sneered when I raised the bow and arrow business again. Ferguson said, "You got turned down on that 40 years ago. Just shut up."

The trouble with the Boone and Crockett Club is that it's in the hands of people like Ferguson who are hostile to those of us who say that conservation comes first. That's what we want to change. We want to see that conservation comes first. Hunting subject to all the conservation rules is all right but if you make that so important that people will hire airplanes to go where the game is and not walk, to hell with it. Now of course they don't admit that they give prizes to people who shoot game illegally, but how can they always tell? A man produces the animal.

Now I was just reading a letter here before you came, trying to refresh my recollection.
Somebody discovered somewhere near a big hunting area, I don't remember where it was, an enormous truck full of game heads with labels on them and they asked him. "Oh, those are the game heads that we shot," [the man replied.] "We've sold them to hunters who want to turn them in to get prizes." That happened somewhere up in Canada and I don't know what was done. But that's the kind of thing which the Boone and Crockett Club not only hasn't been able to stop but didn't give much of a damn when . . . I don't know when the National Rifle Association got control of the Boone and Crockett Club. They should have no control.

GB: The records committee was taken over by them in 1973 and the Boone and Crockett Club is still supposed to be governing all the rules.

WC: I know, but the trouble is the National Rifle Association really runs it. I think . . . All I want is to have the National Rifle Association thrown out of the Boone and Crockett Club and the Boone and Crockett Club run the rules for the prizes in the way that they think . . . According to conservation and regardless of what the National Rifle Association wants. That's what I've always thought. That's why I mentioned the bow and arrow. Course the National Rifle Association just sneers and has fits when you mention the bow and arrow cause it hurts their rifle business. But if we had never got in touch with the National Rifle Association I think the Boone and Crockett Club would still be the way all those who resigned and feel like me or my contemporaries (early members) used to feel about it. The primary thing was conservation and next was sportsmanship. It was not getting your name in the book; it was being able to go out hunting the way it should be done. If you got a record head, fine, but using airplanes in connection even just for looking for the game is an absolute outrage. And to do it just to get in the book under the auspices of the Rifle Association is to me an outrage.

The only reason I haven't resigned—I feel just as badly as the 15 members who did
resign; they were all contemporaries of mine—I haven't resigned solely because I'm hoping someday to feel well enough to go to a meeting and speak up again on it, because I think now that all the people who were speaking up on it before have gotten out. As far as I can make out that damn fool Ferguson runs the damn thing and sneers at anyone who says conservation comes first. If we get rid of that, get rid of the National Rifle Association and run it as a real conservationist hunter's club the way it used to be then I'd want to stay on. It doesn't look as though it's getting that way. I don't know.

GB: Well, let me ask you this too. Wasn't the Boone and Crockett Club in a sense as much social as it was a club for doing good things? I mean, wasn't that an important aspect, that it was a group of good friends who knew each other well?

WC: Oh yes. Yes. Definitely. It was a social club in a way.

GB: And that was actually a very good thing, that it was a group of people who knew each other well.

WC: Knew each other and trusted each other. Very much so.

GB: Now there's one thing I'd like to ask you. When this records keeping program started at all, in the beginning, wasn't it first started simply to promote selective hunting so that people wouldn't be running out and shooting the first thing that they saw?

WC: I don't know. I don't remember that. When did we start the records?
GB: Well, it seems, according to the written records that we have, that the actual competition part of it started in the early '40's.

WC: Oh, really?

GB: And prior to that there were books but there weren't the awards and everything involved.

WC: The great thing was to get in the book. That's what I always said. You had to get in the book.

GB: Now there was a book in '32 and in '39 put out by Prentiss Gray and those were the two books that... I don't believe there was a competition involved with them other than the fact that they were large beautiful trophy animals, but it was in the late '40's and early '50's that they developed the scoring system and then there was competition involved and awards given. I believe the reason why they first started—I'm not sure, I was hoping that you could confirm it—was so that they would promulgate very selective hunting so that people would not go running out and shoot the first thing they saw. It has kind of maybe turned around from that into something that it shouldn't be.

WC: I don't know, and I'm sorry to say that my memory's so bad that I can't remember whether I had anything to do with that. Turn it off for a minute.

I knew Madison Grant quite well. I was tremendously interested in getting his views on conservation and wilderness and everything else. After we'd finished "The Silent Enemy," that Indian movie that we made, we had a preview of it for the public and I sat beside Madison Grant and some other great man, I forget now who, on my other side, watching the preview. And Grant
said, when it was over, "Fine movie. There was one wonderful shot." Best shot he'd ever seen. It was the Indians finding the caribou migration up in the north woods and shooting the caribou with a bow and arrow. And then there was a fake [shot] and he was upset [about that]. It was an obvious fake. That was when the buffalo charged Long Lance, the chief, who was supposed to be a Blackfoot Indian, and we thought was. He'd pretended to be. And he had gone out to hunt a bear, I think it was a bear, and the point was the bear attacked him and he was quick enough to shoot the bear and kill it. It was quite an extraordinary performance. The point was that the bear... The way we made these game scenes for "The Silent Enemy," was that we'd capture the wild animals, put them in a big enclosure in the woods, perhaps four or five acres, feed them there, and then we'd go in and the Indians would chase them and shoot them and he went in and attacked this wild bear and killed it. And Madison Grant said that was a fake. And I said, "Well, Mr. Grant, Mr. President or whoever he was, president of the museum I think, you're wrong on both counts." I said, "Long Lance killing the bear is absolutely authentic. I can swear to it. I saw it. I was right there. I helped set it up." And I told him how we did it. The bear was let out of his cage and immediately attacked as he came out or something like that but still it was really done, not shot with a rifle until after he'd killed him, after he'd got him down. And I said the thing that's the fake is the caribou. I said we went up north to where the caribou usually migrate, which is 150 miles north of where we were making the movie on the Ottawa River, headwaters of the Ottawa River. We sent an outfit up there to take that part of the picture and when we discovered... When they got up there they found that the caribou that year had migrated 50 miles west and so we missed it. Then we discovered that there were what were known as reindeer, but were the same as the caribou, in Alaska where they were being run by private ranchers, who took care of them and had dogs surrounding them, and feeding them, and took care of them. There were thousands of them. So we sent an outfit up there, with cameras and with all the same costumes as our Indians, and there they attacked enormous herds of these
reindeer, who were not so afraid of people. The real wild ones would have been. But they went in and shot a lot of them with a bow and arrow. The dogs, of course, were huskies, so they looked like wolves and so you thought that was real. But that was the one fake in the movie.

GB: Oh, that was funny.

[end of tape; presumably end of interview]