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This is September 15, 1995. This is Dan Hall and we're doing an oral history interview with Ted Holsten, Jr. for the Boone and Crockett Club's oral history project.

DH: Ted, I'd like to start by asking you when and where were you born.

TH: I was born in New York City, [full date of birth restricted] 1928.

DH: Where did you get your background in hunting?

TH: I had one grandfather who was a hunter. My parents were never particularly interested in hunting, but from an early age I took an interest in it. Did quite a bit of it while I was in college and thereafter. Was fortunate enough to do some extensive hunting while I was still young enough to enjoy it.

DH: Where did you attend college?

TH: I went to Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

DH: When did you first become aware of the organization?

TH: I guess I became most aware of it after a trip to the Yukon in 1955, when the taxidermist who mounted my trophies suggested I should be adding them in the Boone
and Crockett Club records. My Dall's sheep from that trip in 1955 was in the '58 record book.

DH: How did you feel when your mount made it into the record book?

TH: Well, I was very pleased. I had never really thought in terms of trophy hunting before that and even since then I enjoy a hunt but the trophy is secondary. I think we like to have an outstanding record of our hunt but by the same token that's not the reason I go hunting.

DH: What would you say the reason is that you go hunting?

TH: Because I enjoy the outdoors and I like wildlife, and I like the friends and people that I associate with in the field.

DH: When did you join the Boone and Crockett?

TH: I became a member in 1986.

DH: Who was your sponsor?

TH: My sponsor was Norden Van Horne, who is a current member of the Club.
DH: How did the sponsorship work when you joined the organization?

TH: Well, when I joined, my friend Norden had been a member before, for awhile, and felt that it would be something that I should be interested in. He and I had been friends since college. We were fraternity brothers. We hunted together in British Columbia, Yukon, and other places and so we had a real interest and he's probably my closest friend. But as far as the process, I went to a dinner the year before and met some of the people and, as I said, Norden put in my recommendation and I was seconded by Howard Pollock and by Paul Webster and by Walter White.

DH: Have you sponsored anyone since you've been in the Boone and Crockett?

TH: No, I have not.

DH: What committees have you served on since you've been in the Boone and Crockett?

TH: Initially I was not too involved. As seemed to be the practice in those days, I came to the annual meeting and that was about the extent of it. But as the direction of the Club changed and it became a much more active group of people who seemed to want to accomplish things, I got involved with the Editorial and Publications Committee, and was asked eventually to take over the committee as chairman. Of course, one of
the things that had happened there was that there were a lot of things to be published and a lot of things to accomplish, and so I found lots of work to do.

DH: What kinds of things did they publish?

TH: Well, for many years, the Boone and Crockett Club published the records books, which started with Prentiss Gray in 1932. There were a couple of conservation books. Crusade for Wildlife and American Crusade for Wildlife were published under the sponsorship of the Boone and Crockett Club. But as far as an ongoing book program it had lagged over the years, and other than the records books, which had received great popularity, the publication of general material by the Club members or about the Club members had lagged since the days of George Bird Grinnell. It's very interesting, but Grinnell, from 1893 through 1933, was the editor of every one of the books in what they call the Acorn Series, which were a series of seven books, starting with American Big Game Hunting, American Big Game and Its Haunts, Trail and Campfire, etc., and the last of the books was Hunting Trails on Three Continents, of which Prentiss Gray was one of the co-editors. But Grinnell was really the driving force behind putting that program together, and I guess with that force, he being in the publishing business himself with Forest and Stream Publishing, and one of the early strong voices of the Club, managed to put those things together. There really was a gap from 1933 until we published the Prentiss Gray journals for the first time this past year and are doing another set of his journals currently.
DH: How do these publications help the organization?

TH: Well one of the things that I think has been a strong point in the publication program has been the fact that the income derived from the books does provide funds for the various conservation and wildlife programs that the Club supports. So we're considered to be one of the cash cows so to speak in terms of sponsoring some of the activities that the Club wants to stand for. So the books serve a purpose, not to make money for their own sake, but to help with the support of the programs that the limited membership dues could not possibly accomplish.

DH: I want to take a step back here. You were talking about the organization change from people just showing up for the annual meetings into a much more active and aware organization. Can you talk to me a little bit more about that?

TH: Yes. I have some strong feelings on it and it's probably what helps to motivate me to want to support the Club. When the Boone and Crockett Club was originally founded by Teddy Roosevelt, there was a very strong group of very politically affluent East Coast people who were the original members and who had the ability to force legislation and other activities which were very strong and instrumental to the conservation program. Of course, we all know the background with the involvement with the National Park system and a lot of the programs that the Boone and Crockett Club sponsored during those years. When that original group eventually aged and
died off and more members came in, during the period of 20 - 30 years ago, some of that effort seemed to have diminished. The Club became to a much greater extent a good old boys group, meeting and not really accomplishing the kinds of things that it originally stood for. One of the things that we find to be most critical right now is that we're not just a records keeping group, and we're not just a publications group. Those things are part of a program, and the main part of the program is to support the wildlife and conservation policies and to provide a background of the outdoors for future generations. That was the original intent of Teddy Roosevelt and the founding of the Boone and Crockett Club.

DH: In your words, who were the key movers who changed the organization?

TH: I think there have been a lot of them. It's pretty hard to say that any one person did, but I think of Steve Adams, Paul Webster, Phil Wright, Bill Spencr, Walter White. These are all people that have contributed very strongly, and of course Hal Salwasser and the program at the University of Montana is an example of some of the things that the Club has tried to accomplish. I think that the research efforts at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch, which has been devoted not so much to providing a place for Boone and Crockett members to benefit from their membership, since they're not even allowed to hunt there, but to provide a relationship with the community that makes wildlife management something that's not just for the hunters,
but something that can be shared by the ranchers and other people who are essential to the success of the program.

DH: The conservation programs that the publications help fund, are there any that stick out in your mind as being particularly memorable?

TH: As I say, the work at the Roosevelt ranch, the work at the University of Montana I think are particularly memorable. As far as the others, they're really divided into many areas. We're doing work with publications for school children. We're doing as many things as can be accomplished. I think right now there has been an effort to spearhead support and association with other wildlife conservation organizations, recognizing that we're not the only ones in the field and that working together we can accomplish a great deal more.

DH: Can you tell me a little more about the publications for school kids?

TH: I have not personally been heavily involved in this, but I know that there was approved a flyer to be distributed to school children in a particular area and I can't really give you the details on that. I know Joe Bishop was behind it and he was the prime mover on it. Exactly where it fit into our organizational structure I'm not aware, other than that I know it was done.
DH: Who else served with you on the Editorial and Publications Committee?

TH: My biggest support has really been from the staff at the office, from Jack Reneau, from his wife Susan, from Julie Tripp. I've worked with George Bettas and tried to coordinate through "Fair Chase," but as far as active people on the committee, it's been pretty much a one-man show because things have been moving so fast that we haven't had a chance to have committee meetings to divide up the work. So I've kind of taken a lot of burden.

I know at one point somebody said we ought to do an anthology and we have lots of material that has been submitted over the years. It got sent from one person to another and the last version was, "Let Ted do it." That's when I was very fortunate in a conversation a year ago December at the annual meeting that I talked to Sherman Gray, who is the son of Prentiss Gray. He was the original editor of the first records book and a very prominent Boone and Crockett member as well as a very prominent conservationist and president of the Schroder Bank and a very prominent citizen. During that conversation Sherman said, "Well I have a bunch of material of my Dad's that maybe you could use in putting this anthology together." And I said, "Well, gee Sherm. I come to New York once in awhile. Maybe we could meet and have lunch at the Williams Club and you could bring it and we could look it all over and see what we can do." I expected I'd be getting a bunch of notebooks and loose photographs and material like that. Sherm said, "I can't do that because it weighs several hundred pounds." It turned out that he eventually shipped it to me and I got more than 20
bound leather volumes, completely typed manuscripts with 8x10 photographs. Prentiss Gray was a very avid photographer and a very accomplished photographer. He was ahead of his time. So we had a built in opportunity to publish something by a prominent Boone and Crockett member that really superseded the idea of just doing an anthology. As I said earlier, we published his North American journals. Ten of them were consolidated into a book we called From the Peace to the Fraser, which was published last year, and which details a lot of his North American adventures. We are in the process right now of finalizing the African trip which he made on behalf of the Philadelphia Museum of Natural Sciences in 1929 and it's being published under the name African Game-Lands. That book will be off the press probably next month. It was a very memorable trip because it was one in which Prentiss Gray had a prominent ornithologist from the museum with him and they discovered many species of new birds and fish. He secured some dioramas for the museum, including one of giant sable, which existed in a very small corridor in Angola and which, to my knowledge with the Angolan civil war going on for some time, are probably extinct. So very fortunately we have his journals and his photographs and we're able to put that book together too. We were very fortunate in being able to do this. We still would like to do an anthology. It's just that that is a very difficult project to do because it takes a lot of editing and a lot of good writing to get from various people in order to put a meaningful volume together. Happily, Prentiss Gray was not only able to put this in such a form that we could use, but he was a good writer to boot so the amount of editing was very limited. We were
able to make this a flagship program of the Club's efforts and I was looking forward to
continuing this sort of thing.

Another program that has been very successful in helping to raise money
recently has been the publication of limited editions of most of the books we've been
publishing. When we did the 10th edition of the Boone and Crockett records, we
published a limited edition and also a special members limited edition. We did the
same thing on the records of elk and mule deer. Currently we're publishing three books
at the same time and all of them include limited editions. We keep the numbers down
to keep the interest high and it provides quite a good source of revenue for the Club.

DH: How do you decide which books will be limited editions?

TH: Well the last several books we've done, we've done limited editions on all of them.
I have a sideline business of used and rare books, primarily in the hunting field, which
is how I probably got linked to the Editorial Committee. From my own experience I
know that you always keep books of that nature in a very short supply so that the
collectors bid the prices up and people want to get them when they come out because
they know they won't last very long. That philosophy seems to work very well because
the books have been very heavily subscribed.

DH: How would you characterize the reaction of the Gray family when Prentiss Gray's
books were published?
TH: I think they've been pleased. We were hoping that Sherman would be at the last couple of meetings because we did present copy number one of the Presidential Edition to him and I ended up mailing it to him finally, but he seemed to be delighted with it. He also arranged to get 25 copies of *From the Peace to the Fraser*, which Susan Reneau and I were the two editors. He asked us to sign them and he wanted to distribute them to all of his relatives. So I guess he's enthused. We pulled a little fast one here that I know he'll be pleased with. We dedicated the *African Game-Lands* to his mother, who went on a portion of the trip and was involved with Prentiss on many of the trips on which he went. It's inscribed: To Laura Sherman Gray, wife of Prentiss N. Gray, who shared in his great adventure. Sherman is supposed to be here for this meeting so we're going to present him with a photograph of the bird in color that was named after his father, and that is going to be the frontispiece of the deluxe limited edition. It's a long Latin name and I won't attempt to state it, but it was named by W. W. Bowen, the ornithologist for the Philadelphia Museum for a new species of bird that he discovered and named in the Latin version of Prentiss Gray.

DH: How has this publishing activity changed the financial status of the organization?

TH: I guess we'll have to see how this year ends up because, as I said, we've had a crash program to get all three books out at the same time. Part of the reasoning behind that was not only that some them overlap. For example, the whitetail records and the 22nd awards book contain a lot of material that is interchangeable. But the other side
of it is that we are able to do the marketing effort in a coordinated way of all three books at one time, which saves an awful lot of marketing expense, so we don't have to send mailers out on each of three books. We can combine them into one. We can solicit and get quite a bit of editorial space in the wildlife publications for our books. We've been working feverishly to get those reviews out so that the material will be in the publication for Christmas and more will be sold. It should translate into a pretty nice amount of money for our programs, hopefully before the year's out.

DH: In a recent issue of "Fair Chase," you penned an article talking about the North American Big Game Competition. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

TH: Well, the North American Big Game Competition started in 1947 I believe, and it was done on a varying number of years basis initially. More recently it's been worked on a three year basis, and it's been tied into the records book, which has been done on a six year basis. The material that's put into the computer for the awards program is in a sense put together or ready for the next issue of the all time record book, which will probably be published in 1999.

DH: You say "probably"?
TH: Well, I say probably because there has been an opinion expressed that we should not be locked into a six year schedule. It happens to be convenient. But it could be done in four years or three years - whatever. There's an adage though, sometimes you can overdue, and I think we have to be careful that we don't try to overpublish either because we might kill the goose that laid the golden egg if we're not careful.

DH: Have you ever been to Sagamore Hill?

TH: Yes, I have. In fact I've been there a couple of times. The last time was with Sherman Gray last fall. He took us on a very interesting tour because of his close association with the place. He has been a regular cleaner-upper of the guns and memorabilia of Teddy Roosevelt's, which belong to the Club and which are at Sagamore Hill. At the present time there is a little difference of opinion over who owns them and I think that's an issue that the Club has been forcefully trying to resolve. It's our understanding that Archie Roosevelt, who was one of Teddy's sons, indicated that this material and the guns belong to the Club, and the National Park Service, having taken over the facility, have never quite fully acknowledged that. And I know that's a current issue and it's being addressed.

DH: So has the issue strained the relationship between the Boone and Crockett and the National Park Service?
TH: I don't know that it's strained it. I think we have not probably spent as much time at Sagamore Hill pursuing the issue as we might have and a lot of that is probably due to the fact that the Club's location has shifted so much more from the New York to the Midwest and more to the far West now. There's less activity at Sagamore Hill. They used to have Club meetings there. Incidentally, I understand that our annual meeting next June is scheduled at Sagamore Hill. Now to what extent we will use or be able to use the facilities, I don't know at this point. It's being handled by other people. I don't know the details.

DH: Who was the chairman of the Editorial Committee when you took over?

TH: The Editorial Committee has had a number of people over the years as chairman. Jack McAndrews was the chairman ahead of me and there have been a number of people before him. George Bird Grinnell, as I said, was the initial chairman, and he had it for many, many years. But Jack McAndrews was the chairman when I took it over.

DH: Did you know "Pink" Gutermuth?

TH: No. I know the name, of course, but I did not know him.
DH: It's been said by some with the involvement with Steve Mealey and of course Hal Salwasser and Jack Ward Thomas that the Forest Service has an undue influence in the Boone and Crockett. Do you think that may be true?

TH: I don't know that that's true. Again that may be in an area of the Club's activity that I haven't been involved. I think there's always been a close tie with the Forest Service. I mean it goes back to the early days of the Club. The Forest Service was one of the strong allies of the Club and one of its primary interests was in the land that the Forest Service was involved with so far as it related to the Club's interests and activities.

DH: Over the last 10 years the organization has undergone a cultural diversification, if you will. How do you feel about that?

TH: I think that it's essential to have people who can contribute. That means they can be of any sex or race. I don't know that that's a limitation or that that has ever been indicated as a limitation. I think there have been efforts to increase the diversity of the Club.

DH: What do associate members bring to the Club? Do they contribute?
TH: I think the associates have found that the program, particularly with the improvement of the "Fair Chase" magazine, has given new life to it. I think the program was languishing for awhile, and George Bettas and his group have done an outstanding job of making it a worthwhile venture and of conveying the kinds of information to the associates that they want to hear. So, I'd say that the associates program has had quite an uplift.

DH: I've run through the list of questions that I wanted to ask you. Is there anything that I've missed that you'd like to include at this point in time?

TH: Well, I think I've covered most everything. But I guess I'd say that I like working for the Club. I think that I've probably put in more time than I really have, and I think that the dynamic atmosphere of the current group of officers and people involved has helped foster that. I look forward to continuing to do all I can to support the Club's efforts.

[End of interview. Tape recorder is turned off and then on again, with Ted Holsten talking.]

TH: There is one other matter regarding an exodus of a group of members you might want to investigate. I don't know that much about the background of it, but I know that Douglas Burden was the leader. Douglas Burden was an author and he wrote several
books, including Dragon Lizards of Komodo which is a book approved by the Boone
and Crockett Club. He and several other members took exception to the record
keeping concept and since he was overruled he and a group, I don't know how many,
left the Club, back 20 or 25 years ago.

DH: What was their exception to the Club's records?

TH: I think that it was a question of role the Club was to play. Was record keeping a
role they wanted the Club to take? I think it all relates again to the whole concept of
trophy hunting. For a long time the Safari Club was so heavily emphasizing trophy
hunting, that to a certain extent it caused a backlash among a lot of the people in the
United States who see big game hunters as wealthy pigs that are going out and want a
trophy at any price. So that's one of the things that I think we want to be very careful
about. I think that the present attitude of the Club is very much in the direction that we
want to keep records, but trophy hunting as such is not our thing. We don't advocate
that as the reason you go hunting. The programs of the Club are directed, primarily in
the areas of conservation and education, and the trophy hunting is merely part of the
total program. It is not the be all and end all of our existence.

DH: Is it possible that the publication of these record books is contributing to illegal
hunting activities by unethical hunters?
TH: It's possible, but I guess that's the risk you have to take. I think we're very fussy about the background of the trophies. There have been trophies thrown out because any indication that it was taken by other than fair chase has resulted in a blackball to listing that trophy.

DH: What does fair chase mean to you?

TH: Fair chase means hunting by ethical standards. I guess that's a broad term, but it means hunting within the rules. And it means hunting because of love of doing it by the manner of hunting that is traditional and not using undue means to help in the gleaning of these animals. It's something that I think is a very hard thing to put a complete definition on. It's something you have in your own heart and soul. If you like to go out and hunt because you love the wilderness, you love the outdoors, you love the hunt, and the trophy you get is important whether it's in the Boone and Crockett book or not.

DH: I see. Well, that wraps it up for me. I'll ask you one more time, is there anything that I've forgotten?

TH: No, no. I just wanted to bring the Burden thing up because it really ties into this whole concept of the record keeping, which has been an issue at some times. I think that our present approach to it is far more realistic. Thank you very much.