Summary: The topics Wolf covers in this email addition to the collection include his experience with Dutch Elm Disease on summer crews in 1939 and 1940, Huntington Forest grouse and deer surveys from 1941-1942, Pearl Harbor, Lookout in the Siskiyou National Forest in Oregon in 1942, forest summer camp in 1946, graduating from Forestry College in 1947, his master's degree in 1947, working in a sawmill in the summer of 1947, Civil Service exam in 1948, working for C.B. Norton Lumber Co., Forest Service work in the Ochoco National Forest, a project fire in 1950, BLM in 1950, mill studies, the Smith River fire in 1951, the BLM in the South, another small fire, a fire sale in Arkansas, white oak theft, distillate stumps, and a few more brief recollections.

Part 1. ADDITIONS TO ORAL HISTORY, ROBERT E. WOLF

A. Some early experiences.

1. Dutch Elm Disease Crew; summer 1939, 1940.

The summers after my freshman and sophomore year at Columbia were spent on Dutch elm disease detection crews working in the Hudson River valley of New York. We were in a crew of four: one fellow was from Clemson, another was studying entomology at Iowa State, the third was a fellow from Colgate, their halfback Joe McCourt, with whom I had gone to high school. We had aerial photos of the land we were to cover. We examined every elm tree. When we say a sign of dying leaves, we tossed a rope up to a limb, then climbed the rope, hand over hand, made a bowline seat and a pruning saw was passed up. We'd then clip the branch, put a piece in a test tube, mark the tree location on the photo and put an large aluminum tag on the tree. The fun part of the job was coming down from the tree. We tied a "blood knot" on the rope,
which when squeezed let you drop like a rocket, and as you came near the ground, by releasing you grip your fall would be stopped. The goal as to make a "perfect landing." If the sample came back positive, another crew would come out to cut and burn the tree.

The highlight of the first summer, when we worked Dutchess County, was an encounter with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Actually the control project was his idea as he saw elms dying. The disease came from imported elm logs. Why we imported them, given our huge supply of elm, was never clear to me. At the end of one day we had just come out of the woods. We were walking along a dirt road near his Hyde Park estate, when a large open touring car came along. We stepped off the road, but the car with four occupants stopped. The driver of this specially equipped car was Roosevelt. He asked us how we were doing. Then, assuming we must be college students, he asked each of us where we were in school and what we were studying. After complimenting each of us, he quizzed Bob Strabeley, the entomology student, about the disease. He waved his famous thanks and went on. I'm sure none of his passengers were Secret Service. What a change from today!

2. Huntington Forest Grouse and Deer Surveys. 1941-42

Archer Huntington, once President of the Pennsylvania Railroad and other industrial enterprises, donated 15,000 acres of his Adirondack Estate to the College of Forestry for wildlife research. It was common for business moguls, whose operations ravaged other areas, to have great estates in the Adirondacks. Professor Ralph. "Terry" King, head of the College Wildlife program, where his staff conducted wildlife studies, ran this forest for wildlife research. Ruffed grouse and deer were two major projects. Five thousand acres was laid out in a criss-cross grid of orange painted lines, but no trails. One weekend a month King, Professor Bill Webb, Wilford
Dence, Frank Barick and some students King selected would drive up on a Friday, census on Saturday, and return on Sunday. Stan Ernst, Bill Buckley, Tony Taormina, Frank Schueler and me, were regulars.

We would each be assigned lines out and back, which would cover the entire grid. When we flushed a grouse, we would measure the distance to where the bird was when it flew. King's theory was that the average distances enabled him, due to repetitive measures, to compute the area "seen" for that day and from this compute the population. In addition, we counted deer sightings. Also Barick had deer traps, large boxes he would bait. He'd catch a deer, paint its tail with different color bright dyes, which enabled him to track their travels. He could also determine their weight by weighing the traps with a deer in it. We did the winter censuses on snowshoes. In the winter and early spring we would find dead deer. When I found one, I'd skin it out, selling the hides to Joe Buff in Syracuse who ran hidetanning business. I also kept several, which I gave to Ruth, who I later married, when I joined the Air Corps in WW II.

Prof. Justus Mueller, a noted parasitologist on the Medical College faculty, also taught comparative anatomy to wildlife students. He would sometimes join us. He was red-green colorblind but loved to paint, his condition made winter scenes his favorite. He'd also be the crew cook. He had trouble staying married because of his sardonic style. He divorced one wife because she gave him bean sandwiches three days in a row for lunch. He was also the inventor of the Ward-Mueller models that showed the life history stages of a frog. One Saturday evening Prof. King and I finished our lines at the same time and snowshoed back to the cabin together. As we rounded the corner there was Justus bent over the garbage pail fishing out a ham bone. King asked, "Justus, what are you going to do with that?" To which he answered, "Use it to make..."
a pot of pea soup." King thundered, "Not for me, you're not." Justus stood upright tartly responding, "And you call yourself a biologist?" In his world, boiling solved sanitation issues.

On the first census after Pearl Harbor, Terry told us of the reality of war based on his WW I experience. We had always noted the deliberate way he walked, and assumed he was just a deliberate person. He described how he had been shot in the legs and back while advancing on a German machine gun position. He crawled back to the trenches, dragging a fellow soldier with him. Both were fortunate enough to get to a hospital. The wounds severed some of the nerves in his leg. For the rest of Terry's life he had to tell himself to walk, which is why he had this plodding style. He was a remarkable man. Our oldest son was given his middle name for "Terence" King, and like him goes by the name of "Terry", never using his first name.

3. Pearl Harbor.

Like most Americans the Japanese attack came as a total shock to me. Boxcars on trains went by all fall with "OHIO" written on the "Over The Hill In October" as draftees declared their dislike for military service and said they would desert. For most Americans this was Europe's War. We paid little heed to what the Japanese were doing to China. The extension of the draft passed the House by one vote, with most Republicans and a few Democrats voting to end the draft. Dec. 8, 1941 found lines stretching around the block at the Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Corps enlistment offices in Syracuse. A few days earlier, very few went near them. I'd gone skiing the weekend before, even though the track team members weren't supposed to do so. I had hurt my knee. I had tape from my calf to my thigh. Trainer Julie Reichelt was giving me daily diathermy treatments. Nevertheless, I went with Jiggs Decker and Charlie Coulter, a couple of baseball players who lived where I roomed, to enlist in the Marines. The doctor balked at
examining me but Jiggs assured him my condition was only temporary. When I got to the eye
test, looking at the Ishihara color blindness test chart I could see two sets of numbers. Despite
guessing I flunked. Being unaware that color blindness was hereditary, I contended it was due to
too much studying. The next day, while getting, my leg treated I told Julie what had happened. In
a few moments he produced the Ishihara color blindness test book, saying, "You're not as dumb
as some of these fellows, see if you can memorize it." I did, and when the tape was off my leg
went back to the Marines. The doctor tested me 7 ways to Sunday, saying he never had someone
flunk the test and then pass it. He declared I had a marked overbite and rejected me. I walked
across the street and signed up for the Air Corps, passing the color blindness test 100%. The Air
Corps had so many enlistments, that it was several months before I was called to active duty.
Jiggs and Charlie didn't survive the War. Partial color blindness turned out to be lucky for me.
Basic training was at the Boca Raton Country Club, which the Air Corps had taken over,
cramming 8 to a room.

Then I was on to Yale, which the Air Corps had commandeered, with 4-6 to a suite, for
Communications training. This was an uncommon experience. All classes were taken standing
up. The C.O had the odd notion you learned better this way. A highlight was that Glenn Miller's
bands were stationed there. Members rotated on assignments. Every noon meal was eaten to jazz
music. We paraded on the New Haven Green every Sunday. One Sunday when our squadron led,
we marched toward the Green with just drums beating. As we entered the Green the band, just
ahead of us, broke out with the "Chattanooga Choo-Choo" in a marching beat, followed by
"St.Louis Blues". It was a great hit, but the C.O. almost had a fit. Cool heads prevailed and every
Sunday parade was to jazz. Our Squadron cadet CO, Tom Lutz, was from Louisiana, where his
Dad owned a sawmill where most of the mill workers were Negroes. One day Tom invited my
three roommates and me to his room. I was Cadet 1st Sergeant and Ozzie Willis from Georgia was a Flight Lt. Paul Uhlmann was from Kansas City and Bob Zetterquist from CA. Bob was half Swedish and half Mexican, with a complexion so dark he would be mistaken for a Negro, except for his "Nordic" profile and wavy black hair.

Tom said, matter of factly, "We're getting a "nigger" assigned to our Squadron." Then he said, "And that's the last time you're going to hear that word. If we're going to die together, we have to learn to live together." The actual Lt. in charge of our squadrons, Frank Fede, was from Alabama. He had apparently selected our Squadron under the impression that Tom would share his views on race. Fede had told Tom, "We'll wash him out in a few weeks." Tom told us he had told Fede it wouldn't work that way and if Fede tried to wash Richardson out, Tom would beat the shit out of him. He then said he wanted to put Richardson in our room and asked if we had any objections. Richardson became an officer. Fede tried a few capers to give "Rich" demerits. Each time we'd bring Fede to meet with Tom, say it was our fault and watch Fede and his corporal flunky quickly back down when faced with a phalanx of five stern-faced guys. He got the message quickly.

My service took me from Hendricks Field, Fla., a major B-17 training field, then overseas to North Africa and the Middle East for 2 years. One "civilian" I met was N.J. State Police Chief Schwartzkorf, the father of the current General of Gulf War fame. His job was training the Iranian police force, which he described as an insurmountable challenge. Corruption was well imbedded in Iran.

4. Lookout, Siskiyou N.F., SW Oregon, Summer, 1942
It was common for the F.S. to hire forest students. I got a job on the Siskiyou National Forest, drove West with some Syracuse graduate students from Seattle, hitchhiked to Gold Beach, Oregon, then took the mail boat up the Rogue River to the Agness District, where I had been assigned the lookout on Game Lake Peak. After a week of training in fire fighting, I went to Game Lake, a 15 mile trip, to work with two part Indian fellows who worked trails for the F.S., Frank Thornton and Marshall Frye. They were interesting because they had an old Eastern Tennessee twang and phrases. After the Civil War two fellows from that area had come out searching for gold on the Rogue. They married Indian women. There was a whole clan of Marshalls and Fryes who had the same Tennessee speech style, which had been retained due to 70 years of isolation in the remote Western Oregon area. They were the labor force for this Ranger Station and Powers to the north.

There was a barely passable road that went north from Agness to Powers, but very few travelled it. Agness business was carried on by the mail boat, which carried supplies to the Rilea store, the only business in town. To this day, despite a road from Gold beach to Agness, it remains an isolated community where the Illinois River joins the Rogue. In 1998 it still had the last one room schoolhouse in Oregon teaching grades K-8. Fritz Morrison was the Assistant Ranger. He went with me to Game Lake because he thought I'd get lost. He was sure I lacked any woods sense or common sense, since I was from the East. The first morning "Marsh" was making pancakes, which he "flipped" in a large frying pan over a wood fire. Fritz offered to make mine, telling me that if I missed the pan when I flipped mine I'd have no breakfast. I demurred, saying I'd like to try it. When the pancake was ready to flip, I turned to Fritz saying "Well here goes", flipping it without even looking at the pan. Fritz eyes widened. I never told him that one of the jobs I had in college was flipping pancakes in the window of a restaurant.
called "The Griddle".

From then on Fritz always acted as though I might know something. When you are in a new setting your ability can be doubted. Sometimes a non-germane event can help establish that you may have some abilities. When I went to get set up my tent and "lookout" Ranger Rolfe Anderson gave me a horse and a pack mule, instead of sending someone to help me. I was to bring the horse and mule down to Game Lake the next day and the packer would come through and get them. Half way up at a knife ridge my horse and mule balked. I finally got off the horse and led him and the mule, alternatively cajoling and cussing, but it was me against them. After 15 minutes we reached the top of the ridge, which was so sharp you would think it had been hewn with a knife. About 150' ahead and slightly below was a big brown bear. He looked at the three of us and ambled off. I then realized what my horse was trying to tell me.

I didn't have a typical lookout. The Game Lake Peak Lookout had blown down the winter before. I had a tent frame on the ground, a few feet below the peak, over which I rigged the 10 x 14 tent myself. I then built a 8'x 8' "structure" of scrap wood and canvas on the top of the mountain to house my Osborne Fire Finder. I had a roof and no sidewall or glass. When I headed up to the lookout, I remember Ranger Rolfe Anderson telling me. "Bob, if you get stuck remember, use your head." There were many times when I needed three hands and decided not to use my head as a tool.

A few lookouts had F.S. "groundline" phones to the Ranger Stations. Mine and most others were so remote that we relied on F.S. short wave radio to contact our "control" lookout that had a phone. Our radios wouldn't reach any Ranger Station. We had to be very careful with our use so as not to run our battery down. We had set times for "call in." It was also the way we
could request our food, which came by packer every 2 weeks, or report illness.

The Game Lake Peak Lookout viewing area was 30 miles west to the Pacific and about 15 miles east to a set of ridges, 15 miles north and south, some 900,000 acres, which shows how little roaded the Siskiyou was in 1942. At night when there were lightning strikes I recorded the location of each strike using a kerosene lantern to see my Osborne Fire Finder chart. My flashlight was for serious emergencies. I did fight a nightly battle with pack rats. I had to secure all my food so they wouldn't get it. I'd hear them in the tent. Sit up aim my flashlight and my 22 caliber Iver Johnson revolver at them and knock them off. One night I almost nailed the F.S. transmitter. That would have been a disaster.

Fog enveloped the mountaintop every night. It oozed up every valley like a river of snow until it finally enveloped even the top of this mountain. In the morning it receded as though it was flowing back to the sea. It was often after 10 AM before it receded enough that I could be sure that the rising wisps were fog, not smoke. Each morning, with binoculars, I scanned the entire area slowly 5 times looking for signs of smoke. There never was any.

1942 was a relatively quiet fire year. We had a code word we were to use if we spotted a Japanese "Balloon Bomb." Their existence was supposed to be kept secret for fear of alarming people. Japanese submarines would surface at night, releasing several balloons under the theory that when they came down they would start forest fires that would destroy the Northwest forests. I never spotted one. None of their balloon bombs ever started a major fire.

The packer brought supplies and mail every 2 weeks. My closest companions were a couple of bears who never actually dropped in. Game Lake, a mile hike below me, was my bathtub and fish supply. There was a spring half way there, which made me into a water
conservationist. A nearby landmark was known locally as "Horse Shit Butte." It was reputed to be nearly impossible to climb. Several years earlier a F.S. guy decided to do so. Another fellow climbed up before him and left a large clump of horse manure at the top. When the other climber came down he expressed amazement that a horse had climbed to the top of that butte - hence its local name. Early in his career the Forest Supervisor was Ed Cliff, who became Chief in 1962. That made him a member of the Board of Geographic Names, an Interior agency that assigns names to natural features. Since Horse Shit Butte wasn't an official name, Ed suggested the name "Horse Sign Peak" which was adopted, although, as Ed told me, the other Board members didn't have a clue as to why he offered this as the name. Knowing I'd been a Siskiyou Lookout, Ed knew I'd enjoy learning how the Peak got its official name.

In 1957 the Forest Service wanted to build a road along the Rogue to Agness from Gold Beach, where the Illinois River flows into the Rogue. Their goal was to log the timber in the Illinois River drainage, all the way to Game Lake Peak and beyond. Working in the Senate I helped fashion the bill that moved the Forest boundary downstream so that Federal funds could be used to build the Gold Beach-Agness road. Despite the fact that the real purpose of the road was to open the area to timber sales, the National Lumber Manufacturer's Association myopically sought to prevent the extension because with a "pavlovian reaction" they were opposed to any additions to the National Forest. They did not prevail.

I returned to the Game Lake Peak area in 1995. Steep mountains, most with over 30 percent slopes, mark the entire area. It has a huge network of badly deteriorating timber access roads built by reducing the price of timber so that the purchaser built the road. Some sections of roads were barely passable due to washouts. Substantial clearcuts have removed most of the
timber from the west side of the Illinois River drainage. At the higher elevations the original stands are gone. They were 4' to 5' dbh stately pines, typically 200' apart, with sparse manzanita undergrowth. Post-logging regeneration has been difficult, there were few signs of new trees. With 20/20 hindsight, looking at the results of logging that reached all the way to Game Lake, it would have been smarter never to log that high country.

5. Forestry Summer Camp, 1946.

After WW II I returned to the College of Forestry at Syracuse. I had not gone to summer camp at Cranberry Lake, which was a sophomore must. When we did our timber cruise and mapping of a square mile it was also part of a project by Bertram Husch, who later became noted for his pioneering work in forest photogrammetry. We had two-year-old aerial photos to use. When Chan St. John and I mapped that 1 mile x 1/4 mile portion that was our assignment we drew a pond in a half moon shape - which Bert pronounced "dead wrong". The 3 of us hiked to the area and what did we find? Since the photo's had been flown, the beaver had been at work. Our map was accurate. Bert not only apologized, but also realized we had all learned a valuable lesson. Natural events can change what seems certain in a photo.

6. Graduating From Forestry College. B.S. 1947

I first attended Columbia University with the goal of becoming a metallurgical engineer. As a freshman living in an upper class dorm there were 3 of the 4 metallurgical majors living across the hall. It was a tough six-year course. At the end of my freshman year in 1939 I noticed the jobs they got did not seem to reward six years of hard work. The best starting salary of one with Raytheon was $35 a week. I began to have second thoughts. Early in my junior year I decided I would change career direction. Frank Bowles was the Director of Admissions (he later
headed the College Entrance Exam Board), and his brother Bob was a classmate of mine and a SAE fraternity brother. I went to Frank for advice. He urged me to do two things. Take a semester off and get a job in the metallurgy field and apply for entrance at the College of Forestry if that was my final decision. Frank got me a job with the Sperry Gyroscope Co., which was located in Brooklyn. I lived at the college and went by subway to Sperry. They had a major contract with Canada and the U.S. making aircraft and ship gyroscopes. I worked on the assembly line, where each person did one task over and over. I also had a chance to explore what their engineers did. My conclusion was that metallurgy wasn't what I wanted and forestry was. I also played on the company baseball team.

In the fall of 1940 I transferred to the College of Forestry. The change was a great educational shock. SUNY gave no credit for my calculus courses but required me to take college algebra, which was no more than I had in high school. It gave no credit for any of the liberal arts or pre-engineering courses, since their curriculum was 135 hours of all forestry. After WW II in 1947 I was still only in my "junior" year. Prof. E.F. McCarthy, head of the Silviculture Dept., called me to come to his office just before our class was to go the spring camp at Warrensburg NY. He offered me a drink of whiskey. Considering that all of the class was WW II vets, he seemed to think that was O.K. Then he asked me if I was some sort of a "College Bum," which took me aback. I said "No, why do you think that?" His answer was that he had looked at my combined Columbia-Syracuse record and I had more than enough total credits to graduate from any college. He then handed me a filled out petition to graduate as he told me. "As you know I'm retiring. I've always believed that we should totally change the curriculum and get away from many of the required courses. I've selected you as the person I want to use to prove my point. Will you sign up?" We discussed it some. He pointed out I could stay another year and get a
Master's degree, and take any forestry courses I might want, while also taking some at the Maxwell School of Government. I agreed and signed. He told me not to say a word to anyone and he’d call and let me know the outcome. A week later he called to tell me I would graduate. When I got back we visited over a drink in his office. He regaled me, with great joviality, about what transpired at the Faculty Meeting. He said he had described my great war record, my scholarship (which wasn't all that great), and my lovely wife who was such an outstanding nurse (Prof. Sammi had been rushed to the hospital with a burst appendix and my wife, as operating room supervisor had held his hand and assured him as they put him under for the emergency operation - so she was well known to the faculty). He explained how much I wanted to graduate that year. He secured their agreement. After all had signed Mac gleefully told me, "When I got the petition back in my hand, I stood and waved it in the air asking, "Gentlemen do you know what you have just done??? You've graduated a man from this institution who doesn't have all the required courses. May the Lord have mercy on your souls!!"

7. Master's Degree, 1947

In addition to taking several forestry courses, I also took a couple at the Maxwell School of Government, while working on my Master's thesis. I selected a "A Partial Survey of Forest Legislation in the State of New York", without realizing that I had set a goal that many later said should have been a doctoral dissertation. In a 352 page thesis I traced every bill considered and law enacted by New York since 1777 through 1947, as well as the Constitutional amendments, proposed and enacted, dealing with forest matters. Looking back, there is no doubt in my mind that I had no idea of how ambitious a project this was. New York was a major lumber producing state until 1850, and a leading paper making state until the early 20th Century. It was an early
conservation leader. Due to corruption in its forestry program in 1890, and the objections to logging by the wealthy corporate landowners with Adirondack estates, they concluded a State Constitutional amendment was needed to put an end to logging. They "packed" the committee working on amendments with their chosen agent, Elihu Root, later in McKinley,"TR" and Taft's cabinets and a Nobel Prize winner. He drafted the language that forbid cutting any tree living or dead on State land. The voters, agreed, creating the first absolute state land wilderness in the nation. The term "partial history" for my thesis was Dean Hardy Shirley's idea. Originally, he had intended to have the college publish the thesis. When he read my observation that the 1894 Constitutional ban on cutting any tree, living or dead, in the Adirondacks, was a bad draconian action, and my quotation by Yale Prof. H.H. Chapman in support of my view, he decided against doing so. He feared that even with a disclaimer, the college's funding from the state legislature might be endangered. He wanted the term "partial" because he said I hadn't covered all the game laws. He also urged that I remove my observations, which I refused to do. But at the same time, he wanted me to go on and do a doctoral which would cover the game laws.

I had inadvertently gotten embroiled in a controversy between Shirley and Yale Forest Prof. H.H. Chapman by quoting "HH" from the Journal of Forestry (JOF). He had said "arguments against the Forest Preserve fall like spent arrows on an iron clad." Shirley, also the JOF Editor, had tried to stop Chapman's comment from running in his JOF article. Their dispute became so bitter that Chapman had threatened to bring an action against Shirley with the Soc. of American Foresters board. I was totally unaware of this at the time.

My thesis examined 14 categories of laws; planning, management, fire, disease, insects, forest practices, reforestation, taxation, labor and workmen's compensation, inspection,
standards of measurement for seed, logs and maple products, commerce, logging and river drives, and timber theft. The State Constitution section covers regulation and use of the Forest Preserve, management of state forests outside the Preserve and private forest, state land acquisition, reforestation and fire, and the very controversial water storage issue. These were covered in discussion plus an extensive appendix that detailed each bill, law and Constitutional action. I divided the discussion into 5 periods, 1777-1843, 1844-1872, 1873-1894, 1895-1915, 1926-1940, 1941-1947. It never would have been possible for me to do the work if it hadn't been for State Sen. Tom Fearon, Assemblyman Harold Ostertag, and Judge Francis McCurn, the staff in the Dept. of Conservation and numerous others who opened the files of New York's comprehensive legislative library. It matches the facilities of the Library of Congress, and the state has excellent conservation files. In retrospect, my interest and curiosity in and about forest policy was either lurking in the back of my mind, or was energized by my thesis choice. I was, and still am fascinated by the role New York played in concepts of forest use.

8. Working in a Sawmill. Summer, 1947

In Nedrow, NY the Booher Lumber Company had a first rate mill with an 8 foot Clark band type headsaw. The plant had dry kilns, excellent airdrying procedures and resaw facilities. It produced high quality lumber products. I got a job there for the summer starting as the "pond man" snaring logs, putting them on the log chain which took them to the head saw deck. The machine that holds the log for sawing is called the "carriage". Two men ride back and forth on it past the head saw on rails that propel it by a steam fed piston. After each cut, the sawyer "shot" the carriage back to the starting position. The fellow on the front position operates the set works, which move the log forward to make the cut of the desired thickness, 1", 1.25", 1.75", 2.25", etc.
He also "dogs" the log, which fastens it to blocks on the front of the carriage. The man on the
rear, operates the two rear dogs which are operated by levers that throw a fastener into the log.

On my third day at lunch the sawyer took me aside. He said you're a college kid, how are
you at doing fractions in your head? I said I could do that. He told me that the carriage man
couldn't handle the math. He was going to break me in as rear "dogger," then try me as setter
carriage man. The mill noise level is so high that the sawyer and carriage man, who operates the
setworks that decide how thick each cut will be, communicate by hand signals. He said, "Watch
my hand signals. At the 3 o'clock break, let me know if you understand them." I did. The next
morning I became the carriage man, and the other fellow became the rear dogger.

The whole summer was a great learning experience. The sawyer used hand signs to quiz
me on the species of every log. In a few days I could tell every species by bark, texture, and
smell. I learned all of the combinations of thicknesses we made for the furniture trade. I learned
how a log was turned to saw for grade. As the rear dogger and I "dogged" the log to the carriage
I'd signal the log diameter to the sawyer. This was vital because he would calculate in his head
how he'd saw and turn the log. I noticed he wrote numbers on a clipboard for each log and
concluded it was his estimate of the board feet the log would yield. In a few days he began
signaling me to estimate the volume. Expecting he would do this I had memorized a 12", 16",
20", 24" & 28" Doyle scale and applied an overrun factor. He'd write down his board foot
estimate and mine. At the end of each day we compared our tally with the board feet output that
of the green chain tally man. The sawyer was pleasantly surprised at how close my estimates ran
to his. Our object was to estimate the actual output. We were both pretty good at this. For me
that was a real education into "overrun," which on the Doyle Rule ran around 25% above gross.
log scale. When later in my career I was told that overrun was a small matter, I knew from
experience that it's a big matter. The output tally by species and dimension was used by the mill
owner to track what he would have for furniture plant orders. It was also our guide to the species
and dimensions we would saw next day because much of what was sawn was to fill specific
orders. At the end of the summer when it came time to head back to school, the sawyer told me
he thought I could learn to be a first class head sawyer. He was going to retire soon. He urged me
to think about it. That was a welcome compliment from a guy who had worked his way to the
top mill job.

In addition, when the log chain, that brought logs from the pond to the deck, broke, I had
a chance to work on other jobs. I learned the right way to load a kiln and stack lumber for
air drying. I also learned that on a real hot afternoon the guys on the mill green chain had a signal
they passed to the pond man. He'd use his pike to pull some huge heavy "sinkers" from the
bottom of the pond, and put them on the chain, which would cause it to break. The one place
where the owner was "cheap" was that he wouldn't buy a new log chain. Sawing had to cease
while the chain was retrieved from the pond and the millwright welded the break, while the rest
of us piled lumber.

The timber we got came from farms. One day as we sawed a big oak log the band saw
hit an imbedded railroad spike. It broke the huge band saw and part came by me like a rocket as
it shot into the saw filing room, also narrowly missing the millwright. The sawyer had ducked,
but it wouldn't have mattered what he did if a piece had his name on it. Later hearing people
complain about "Tree Spikers," I've noticed I've never seen any proof it has actually happened. If
spikes were driven in logs, mill workers surely would have been killed. My conclusions are:
Some allege this to discredit conservation groups. And some fringe members of conservation groups oblige them for effect by claiming spiking has been done. Their hope is they can stop firms from buying timber stands that they don't want cut. I've kept an old railroad spike as a reminder of that experience.

9. Civil Service Exam. 1948

For years Civil Service gave detailed subject matter tests for every professional federal job. Forestry students had copies of exams, used in the past few years, which they would study in preparation for the exam. I hadn't planned to go to work for the Forest Service so I didn't study the old tests. A few days before the exam Chan St. John, a close friend, suggested we take the exam even though we hadn't studied for it. We went to the exam room, and several of our classmates expressed amazement we were there. However, this exam turned out to be a surprise for them because the Civil Service Commission had replaced the technical exam with a general type exam. Chan, who was a 10 point veteran, and I did a lot better than many of our classmates who were thrown for a loss because the exam didn't meet their subject content expectations.

Part 2. ADDITIONS TO ORAL HISTORY, ROBERT E. WOLF


Upon graduation I accepted a job as forester with the C.B. Norton Lumber Co., Great Valley, N.Y., in Southwest N.Y., just above the Allegheny N.F. This region has many short deep-forested valleys. The soil and climate created excellent forest land. Norton astutely figured that if he bought longterm cutting rights on tracts at the mouth of drainages under contract that gave him road access control, he'd control all the timber in back of it. Norton owned about 5,000
acres. He wanted to purchase key tracts that gave him control of the timber behind the ones he bought. My job was to select such tracts, estimate the timber value and start negotiations for fifteen year exclusive access along with our cutting rights. Even if the frontend tract's timber wasn't very good, what was behind it counted. In a few months I had bought 6 tracts that gave Norton control of over 20,000 acres.

Then there was one big acquisition of 10,000 acres owned by some Buffalo bankers. On this one Norton took the bankers to the cleaners. During the Depression a Buffalo bank wouldn't make a loan to him that he badly needed. As we drove to Buffalo to meet them, he made it very clear to me that for him this was "pay back" time - and it was. Norton bought fifteen year cutting rights to 3,000 acres and over five million board feet of excellent timber for 50% of its value.

This was a defining educational experience. I remain amazed at the financial naivete of F.S. and BLM foresters in dealing with the timber industry. The well-ingrained approach to appraising Federal timber has long been, and remains, assigning a conservative value to it that is typically 30% less than the agency thinks it's worth to even to a mythical "buyer of average efficiency." The cost to be a forest manager and timber grower never enters into the process.

Norton was a major supplier of cherry and maple to Kittinger's in Buffalo, an outstanding furniture factory, which made what was known in the trade as the official Colonial Williamsburg furniture. We were also a major supplier of White ash to the Adirondack Baseball Bat Co., Dolgesville, N.Y. Ryan Norton, one of his sons, and I invented a rig that sawed the 44" long ash bolt "rounds" into pie shaped pieces. Before that we shipped hand hewn "splits" to the firm, a process that generated a lot of waste. This machine enabled us to get 1 more "bat blank" out of a round and cut labor costs. The bat company didn't want to take our "sawn" splits. We got them to...
agree that we would bring them 100 rough turned rounds from hand split bolts and 100 from "sawn" bolts. We sawed all 200. Their "expert" examined them and told us with certainty which batch came from "splits". When we told him they had all been sawn he agreed that our idea had merit. We put in a rough turning lathe, that produced a tapered round for bats, which we began shipping, increasing our yield, and efficiency plus cutting shipping costs. I learned a lot about what sort of ash made a good bat. Each major league player who signed up with the firm got 36 hand turned bats each year. This was before the day of million dollar players.

The other thing I noticed about Norton was that he saved all the small pieces of black cherry from our furniture dimension cuttings. He told me he made more per MBF on these, which he sold to Plumb Tool Co., than he made on his furniture lumber.

"C.B." served on the Salamanca Bank board. The bank had made GI loans on previously repossed farms, several of which quickly went into foreclosure. The original appraisal had claimed the farm was good agricultural land and valuable timber, but there was neither. Any one familiar with what had happened to many N.Y. farms in the '30s should have realized that those not suited to farming had already gone through the wringer. Norton had me look at a couple of foreclosures. Using the ACP-SCS soil maps, which I used for timber scouting, I concluded that not only had the appraisers ignored the soil conditions, but also my visits showed that these "farms" had little real timber. I wrote a scathing report on how Realtors were taking GI's to the cleaners, selling them land that wouldn't farm, that didn't have timber either. Norton used this to reform his banks lending practices.

He also had me examine the Salamanca "watershed" where the reservoir was experiencing silting. Its hillsides had been planted to Norway spruce, years earlier. The stands
had closed, but had never been thinned. The soil was like pavement, so runoff became a torrent.
I recommended a substantial thinning, soil scarification, contour plowing, ditching and seeding
to impede water run off and aid water retention. This was my first lesson in dealing with the
press. The paper headline was "Forester recommends skinning city watershed."

10. Ochoco National Forest, 1949

I enjoyed working for Norton. However, a letter came from the Forest Service offering
me a job on the Ochoco. My wife, Ruth, said that she thought it would be great to go to Oregon.
On that basis we decided to go. I owned a Jeep on which I had built a wood-glass cab with doors
and windows, and a 4x8 trailer. We got all of out worldly possessions in a trailer load 4x8x8 and
headed for Oregon.

By the time we got to the Ochoco there was 2' of snow on the ground at the Big Summit
Ranger station, which was 50 miles east of Prineville on what was then U.S. 26, a two lane
highway, and 1,500' higher than Prineville, at 4,000'. Our house at the Ranger station had 2
rooms, no insulation, a wood stove for heating and another for cooking, and a small bath. We
had to keep the water running at all times from the irrigation ditch above the house so that the
line wouldn't freeze.

This forest was just being opened to largescale logging. Canyon Creek Road wound east
up steep switchbacks, past the sometimes working "Independent" and "Amity" mines, over a
4,800' pass down to a grassy, seep filled prairie of private land that is over a township in size
which is the headwaters of the Crooked River. The area was surrounded by majestic giant
Ponderosa pine parklike open stands through which one could ride on a horse, or even a pickup,
without a care. The area was opened to access by the mines, which led to settlement in the 1910
era under the homestead laws. The prairie had been excluded from the forest, like a hole in a
donut.

In fact there were still some 2,400 acres of public domain land that hadn't ben claimed by
homesteaders. The foundations of a school and a few other buildings were all that remained
scattered across the landscape as a short-lived effort to farm quickly folded when it became
apparent the short growing season would defeat it. A few people from Portland, one Leo Hahn,
whose family was in the spice business, had summer cabins in the woods on the North side.
There also was a small sawmill that ran intermittently on the west end. It existed on timber from
a few of the failed homesteads and patented bogus mining claims, and a little timber the forest
would occasionally sell to it.

The big timber operation on the south side of the Prairie was a major sale to the Ochoco
Lumber Co., which accessed the timber via a specially built better road that came in from the
West up Wolf Creek to Lytle Prairie, across the Crooked River and on toward Little Summit
Prairie, a 2 section area of patented land - another failed farming effort. Some timber came out
via Canyon Creek, which was one of their sales. Hudspeth operated to the west of U.S. 26 in
Marks Creek and Pine Products Sales was in the Maury Mountain unit. In those days all sales
were by application and sealed bid. Gentlemen's agreements still prevailed. There was no
competition.

My job was timber sale marking and log scaling, and later road layout on the Ochoco Co.
sale. We worked on snowshoes, which was easy for me since I'd had plenty of this experience in
New York. As young Federal foresters we weren't introduced to the laws or even the regulations
that filled a 6' bookshelf. The days were long gone when "GP's" 142 page 4" x 6" book, "Use of

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the National Forest Reserves" guided every decision. We were blissfully unaware that the 1897 Act, (page 101, Use Book) said that only "dead, matured or large growth of trees" could be cut and that trees all had to be marked before being sold. Tree marking on the sale had just been changed from "cut 80%-leave 20%" to "cut 35%-leave 65%" in mid-contract. The Supervisor had decided we needed to cut more acres to remove trees he believed would die before the next round of cutting. To understand how this could be done, one has to realize that the F.S. made sales without cruising the timber or pre-marking all trees before selling the timber. Sales had "rubber boundaries" and volumes. A company wouldn't object the way they now do because the F.S. was always going to "find" enough timber to fulfill the guess as to the volume that was in the sale notice. Some days we would mark just ahead of the fallers, then turn around and scale the cut logs in the snow. This was sensible because a new snow would cover the logs making harder scaling and marking logs as scaled. But all of this was a total violation of the 2 strictures in the 1897 Act as well as financially naive. The price the firm was paying for the timber was so low that from their standpoint this was fine. As markers we were told to leave minor species and smaller Ponderosas, which should have been cut for silvicultural reasons. One spring day the Supervisor Hulett came out to our marking and discovered we had left a few acres unmarked, which were clearly signed as a PNW Experiment Station test plot. He told us to mark the trees, saying, the researchers never examined their plots. Phil Breiglab was the leading PNW Pine researcher. He had graduated from Syracuse in 1928, but I didn't know him of course. I sent him a note that we had marked his Canyon Creek research plot. Very soon he visited the forest, discovered the marking and went to the Supervisor. Hulett kindly blamed it on us timber markers and made us "X" out the paint and clearly mark the research plot boundaries.

The Hudspeth Lbr. Co. operated a Marks Creek sale. The F. S. Ochoco District forester
Orville Withee, who had been a Navy pilot, was the sale TMA. We marker-scalers also worked that sale. The firm was leaving large logs it considered low grade, as well as top logs, which were low grade. Orville started enforcing the contract rules on log waste. Hudspeth's wood boss, Roy Scharf began giving him a hard time. When change didn't occur he upped the ante by following each scaler as we woods-scaled each log. When my turn came, I gave him 10 minutes. Then I told him if he had a complaint about me to "spit it out". If his beef was with Withee, go see him. He was so taken aback by the choice language I used to express my opinion that he apologized and quickly left. A few days later the word came from Supervisor Hulett that we were not to penalty scale Hudspeth. Jim Lynne and I saw no reason to comply. We decided to raise the diameter on every log 2", then use the actual diameter to gross scale each log. We knew that by the time logs reach the mill no one had an idea of the board foot content of any log. Hulett wasn't my idea of a sound public official. Scharf never knew that his caper cost him about 500,000 BF in added scale. Interestingly, a few weeks later Scharf offered me a job, for which I thanked him, as I declined.

The ranger, Tommy Sears, ass't ranger, Ray Boyd, and TMA Barney Duberow, were very nice guys. Not having served in WW II they had a few problems relating to the batch of new JF's all of whom had not only served but also had extensive overseas experience. We were a far different group than the typical fresh out of college forester of the past. The Ranger's wife had a weekly "tea" for the wives, which was a nice idea. However, my wife Ruth, who had been a nurse at a major Army Hospital operating room, and then the Operating Room Supervisor at the Syracuse, N.Y., Gen. Hospital, wasn't strong on afternoon teas. Among other things, she didn't drink tea or coffee. What she did do was drive our Jeep to Prineville, 50 miles away, take the chains off the tires at the snow line, and work in the Prineville Hospital operating room. The
hospital, at that time, was in an old house, with the OR on the first floor. After an operation the patient was carried to the second floor by the Volunteer Fire Dept. guys. With logging, milling and ranching the major jobs, accidents were common. At the end of the day, when she got to the snow line, she'd lay a small rug on the road, put the chains on, and head home. Her independence amazed the Ranger's wife. She had a picture in her mid of what Eastern women were supposed to be. Ruth didn't fit it. She once asked Ruth if she wasn't worried about Indians. When Ruth told her there were more Indians in New York than in Oregon, and she had lived next to 3 major reservations, that ended that line of observation. When I got my first performance rating the Ranger made the mistake of noting that while my work was excellent, my wife was anti-social, because she didn't attend his wife's teas. Without consulting me, Ruth went to the Ranger and demanded that she be paid. When he asked her basis, she said, "You have my name on my husband's performance report, either pay me my salary or remove my name." In those days ranger station life could be intrusive into the affairs of employee families.

The forest built a new house for Barney Duberow, the Big Summit TMA. The toilet vent was forgotten. Very soon the house smelled like a dead animal was under it. Having had a building experience, particularly with outhouses, I pointed out the vital need to put in a vent. This solved the problem.

Oregon had decided to close its one-room schools, which meant "busing" K-8 kids over 60 miles each way to Prineville. Several ranger station families had K-4 children. They decided to use home schooling, getting courses from the Calvert School in Maryland, which specialized in curricula for military families overseas. By Nov. 1 these mothers had given up. They put their kids on the bus to Prineville. In those days 9-12 students of F.S., ranch and outlying community
families could get to the Prineville high school only if an arrangement could be made to rent a house in town, house the kids there Mon-Fri, with mothers taking turns as cooks and chaperons.

Times have changed. People who got in trouble on the U.S. highway over the mountains would regularly call on Ranger Station folks to help them, and we always did to the extent possible. On several occasions my wife had to help with sick kids and adults. In those days liability wasn't a consideration.

A. Project Fire.

The Ochoco had 980,000 gross acres. 132,000 acres, mainly range, was private, leaving the Forest Service with 848,000 acres. Only 530,000 acres, 62%, was then rated "commercial forest." Today less than 500,000 acres carries that designation. Substantial parts of the forest were range and brush. In the summer of 1950 a lightning strike fire in the rangeland around Little Summit Prairie erupted into a project size fire in one day. A new policy had been adopted, which troubled the Forest Fire Officer, Eldon Ball. Timber sale foresters kept working on their sale. They didn't drop everything and join the fire fighters. However in a couple of days the fire had passed 20,000 acres and we were sent to help fight it. In those days the Service would round up fire fighters from wherever that could get them. I was given a crew of Mexican beet field workers. The first thing I saw was that they were virtually shoeless. Taking them out on a fire was worse than foolhardy. I demanded that shoes be secured for them. When Ball said he didn't have time to determine their shoe size, I told him to get 20 pairs, half 11's, 1/4 10's and 1/4 9's. He agreed. I spoke little Spanish. Using a technique I had learned in the Air Corps, I asked who was their boss. The person that the crew turned and looked at gave me the answer. I started them out "cold trailing" an area that had already burned. When their new shoes arrived later in the day,
I had the hardest working crew on the fire because they appreciated the concern for their safety, something never before done for them. It took about 10 days for a large crew before the fire was controlled - and then a sudden rain - was the decisive factor. Very little timber was killed in the fire. The large Ponderosas in the path of the fire, which stayed on the ground, proved highly fire resistant. As the fire licked at the base of a tree, plates of bark would ignite and drop off it. A decade later one of the people working on the Space program used this phenomenon to design the re-entry shield for space vehicles. I've often wondered if he was once a forest fire fighter.


In the fall of '49 several of us on the Ochoco went to the SAF meeting in Seattle. Prof. Paul Graves had recommended me to BLM's O&C forester Travis Tyrrell as someone who could do timber appraisals. He had sent me a letter about interviewing me. I replied that I'd be in Seattle. I decided to take the job, which was in Portland.

This was an exciting time on the O&C lands. A new Regional Administrator, Dan Goldy, who was an economist, thought it was vital to modernize the O&C timber operation. There had been 1948 Senate Hearings that leveled a number of inaccurate, and accurate charges, at their timber sale operations. The O&C lands had been administratively divided into proposed allocations of its timber to selected companies that owned intermingled lands, which it could do under its 1937 Act and a 1944 Act. BLM and the F.S. were enamored with the idea of allocating their timberlands to major land owning firms. This idea created a firestorm of controversy that lined up the non-land owning mills and labor against the land owning firms. The idea died a quiet death around 1950.

For years O & C sales were created by a firm requesting the district advertise a sale on a
specific group of '40s. The system was so informal that all that was needed was a note put on a spindle in the local office. However, it hadn't always been "clean." If a firm was favored, their application took precedence; others were ignored. The district timber cruiser would do a 20% strip cruise of the timber. BLM had its own constructed volume table based on studies and 16' logs, but even these produced significant overrun because the defect in logs estimated by the cruisers was too generous. Also even the best log rule based on 1" boards, would produce overrun. Cruise results were sent to Portland where the timber was priced, then advertised.

The O&C system differed from that of the F.S., which used long log measurements and scaled all sales. Scaling encouraged buyers to use various strategies to leave low-grade material in the woods - scaling converts waste into a virtue. The buyer pays for only for the logs he removes. BLM relied on lump sum bids; the highest total dollar bid won the sale. This was the price paid. Both agencies used versions of a residual value appraisal. The advertised price was the residual after logging and milling costs and a generous profit allowance was deducted from the selling price of logs or lumber. The result was a very low estimate of the value of the timber to a buyer. BLM's formula was more bizarre than that of the F.S. It underpriced high value timber more than low value timber and failed to come close to reflecting the value of timber to a buyer. O & C sales specified that 120 live culls had to be left to regenerate a new stand, a practice that seemed to me like having the village idiot do the breeding. All sales were "lump sum," sealed bid. It didn't matter what price was offered for individual species, the highest total dollar bid won the sale. Firms made their own estimate of sale yield so their overbid was partially due to believing that they would get more timber than the cruise estimate and the value was greater than the appraisal, or both.
A logger of Yugoslavian origin, whose name escapes me, also helped broaden my horizon. His accent was strong but he had mastered a 1st Sergeant's vocabulary. He had just completed a Willamette N.F. sale. He told his logger, "This isn't Forest Service timber. I own every tree from the roots to the very top. I want every log. The first faller who breaks up a tree is fired. Fell every tree so that it hits the ground like it your own little baby." If the Forest Service ever needed a lesson in why it should adopt lump sum sales instead of scale sales, he could have given them a post graduate course. In 2000, it still insists that scale sales are appropriate in Regions 1-6 and 10. Both agencies had a peculiar approach to road access. Each granted exclusive road building rights-of-way to timber owning firms that enabled them, via road control, to freeze out bids by potential competitors for government timber. The BLM has came about because almost every management unit in the 2 million acres checkerboarded ownership had been proposed for granting to the dominant firm in it exclusive rights to purchase the timber at the advertised price under the "Cooperative Agreements" authorized in the 1937 O&C Act and the 1944 so-called "Sustained Yield Act." The potential for OTC competition was further dampened by a system of 16 artificial "Marketing Areas," which required that the timber within them be completely manufactured by firms located within the area.

Goldy instituted several changes. Timber sales would be planned based on agency objectives. The appraisal system would be changed, although the change he accepted was badly flawed, but he viewed it as an interim solution. He broadened the representation on District and the State Advisory Boards. He added labor, and conservation groups as well as several outstanding Oregon "statesmen." A broad gauge board of advisors can be a great help in fleshing out possible policy initiatives. His most startling and challenged change was the decision to use the authority of an 1895 Act to break the strangle hold that timber owning firms had been given.

Robert Wolf Interview, OH 227-52, Archives & Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana - Missoula
on competition through control of roads on O & C land. I was unaware of all of these things when I joined BLM. There was a seemingly endless chain of Advisory Board agreements as Goldy and "bad cop" Attorney Leonard Netzorg, and "good cop" Attorney Harry Hogan deftly fought off every industry (and some internal) efforts to water down the policy and regulations. While I was just an onlooker on this issue, I look back on it as a classic example of how public support was generated for a greatly needed policy change.

Interestingly, shortly after the Secretary adopted the road regulation, Goldy and Netzorg became casualties to the Secretary's desire to pour oil on troubled waters. That in my view was the opposite of sound public administration. However, their immediate successor was a capable person. Tom Conklin, Alvin Schmitt and I ran the appraisal system. We worked diligently to close the gap between advertised and bid price. The starting place was lumber prices which were converted to dollars by the grade percentages in a log. A circular device called "the squirrel cage" had been invented by Ervin Rengsdorf. For each species, the log value of every possible combination of value could be ascertained by tree diameter and number of logs. Appraisals started here, with the deductions for logging costs subtracted, and the "profit" allowance to produce and advertised stumpage price. Interestingly Rengsdorf, by then long gone, had also designed a slide rule for appraising timber. The problem was that while it was a complete tool for such appraisals, whenever any price or cost element changed, it had to be redone. This was too costly, as well as really unworkable, so it quickly became a conversation piece. I had a one for years as a curiosity, but lost it. Our appraisal group faced strong internal resistance to realistic pricing from Lu Alexander, who later became a partner in Mason, Bruce, and Girard, and Jesse Honeywell, Ass't Chief of Forestry. Both thought low advertised prices were a virtue. They had the peculiar notion that BLM had an obligation to the firms that had weathered the
Depression. Many of the then prominent firms are long deceased. Among the dead are Booth Kelly, Hines, Long-Bell, Crown Zellerbach, Dwyer, Fischer, Woodard, Daugherty, Bohemia, Hills Creek, Mt. June, Hult and Auzten's Portland Manufacturing Company. They either folded or were bought out. Hult and Autzen have their name prominently affixed to Eugene landmarks, a Performing Arts Center and a football stadium. Cheap timber produced some benefits.

12. Mill studies.

Tom Conklin had a good working relationship with Elmer Matson in the PNW Experiment Station. Mill studies, to determine the grade structure of logs and their content, were high on the list of F.S. interests. Tom and I participated in a Douglas fir coastal long log mill study at the Cape Arago mill in Coos Bay, and a Pine-Douglas fir short log study at the Kogap in Medford. My job was gross scaling the before they were sawn, while a man named Smith from the Columbia River Scaling Bureau had the task of setting his estimate of the lumber tally the sawn log would yield. Smith had the view that when a log was less than a 100% sound peeler the proper thing to do was first make a volume deduction for grade, which he called a "rough cut" and then make another deduction for presumed internal rot. Midway through the study I forecast that the lumber output would be almost 40% over the gross scale. It was!!! I don't know how many million board feet the Forest Service has lost due to its decisions to [A] Use Scale, and [B] compound the loss by using Private Scaling Bureaus.

Jim Watts who ran timber sales in the Eugene District was promoted to be the Roseburg District Manager. After a year in the Regional Office, I replaced Jim, taking over 100 existing timber contracts. The first thing I learned was Dist. Manager Otto Krueger, wasn't at all concerned that some firms, Mt. June in particular, clear cut their sales taking the 120 trees per 40
that were to be left for seed trees. In fact, Otto, a hale fellow well met, put being loved above being right. Travis Tyrrell in the Portland office supported my request that we change the situation. First he made a quiet visit to see me to evaluate my observations. Then he sent a select team down to examine all of Mt. June contracts. Hal White, their V.P., learning that every old sale was being visited, became concerned about what might happen. Our first son Terry was a few months old. Hal gave us a very nice baby present. To show our appreciation, I asked Ruth to invite Hal and his wife to dinner and feed them royally, for she's a great cook. The day after our dinner, I gave Mr. White the bill for several thousand dollars worth of stolen trees.

Mt. June and Hills Creek Lumber Co. woods bosses were brothers who were too old to serve in WW II. I got along well with both of them. Hills Creek followed contract precisely. Fred Hills was a straight shooter. Tension developed with Mt. June's woods boss shortly after they were billed for their contract violations. Not only had they been billed, but also on all of their remaining sales, I had bunched the 120 "seed trees" per 40, marked them and told him they were not to be cut. He could clearcut the rest entirely as had been the past practice. We were talking by a stump in the woods when I told him the new rule. He then observed that working in the woods could be dangerous. He said that,"Tree limbs could fall and kill people". He called then "widow makers". I decided this warranted a measured quick response. Relying on my stint as a 1st Sergeant I decided it was the time to see if that had been a useful part of my education. I had a cruising axe with me that I set on the stump. Very deliberately I said, "Pick it up, you "xxx" son-of a bitch!" He looked at me very carefully as I added, further well-chosen 1st Sergeant adjectives, that I had come through the War successfully, and no one was going to get away with threatening me. He said, that, of course he wasn't threatening me. After that we got along very well. The only comment was one his brother a few weeks later when he casually observed, "I
guess the War was tough. "The most lasting result of the Mt. June event was that Terry Tyrell decided to abolish all seed tree sales. In the Douglas fir region BLM shifted to clearcuts. It was already using selection sales in the Pine areas. Tyrrell was an extremely competent, forward-looking forester. Ruth and I remained friends of the Tyrrell's all of his life, and we still keep in touch with his wife.

One "gyppo" logger was a real character, Peter Di Paulo. He had a serious stutter, and the more excited he got the more pronounced it became. The owner of Mt. June was Frank Tripp. Peter wanted to buy a tract Tripp owned West of Eugene, which Frank wouldn't sell to him. Stuttering madly, Peter told me how he changed Frank's mind. In those days road control still remained a factor, as getting O & C road agreements in place took time. Mt June controlled access to the Lost Creek area where they logged. Peter said he promised Tripp he'd bid against him. Tripp didn't believe him. Peter bid on a sale. Peter said that Tripp saw the light and sold him the tract in what was known as the "Low Pass" area. Di Paulo was a good logger but not above chicanery. He told me that he had a deal with the Columbia River scaler at the M&M Plywood mill. He paid him to upgrade and overscale his peeler logs. He offered to work out a deal with me if I could fix a BLM sale for him. I told him, it would cost too much. I'd have to get enough to move my family to Sweden, and I was sure my wife, who was of Irish descent, would never agree. He never broached the idea again.

13. The Smith River Fire.

With a very dry summer in coastal Oregon, in 1951 a huge fire erupted on a logging job in this watershed. The ownership was O&C and a timber company. Oregon had State organized, county forest fire "associations", supported by tax dollars and levies on timberland. Looking
back, this was not the most efficient system, but it was well accepted. I went to help on this fire. The crews were mainly loggers plus the typical pick-up" crews commonly used. This fire eventually reached over 20,000 acres. This is an area of steep canyons, with much still in heavy stands of Douglas fir and associated conifers.

The battle was one of constant retreat. We'd hand build a fire line at a ridge. The fire moved from canyon to canyon. In late afternoon as the humidity was minimal and the hot winds picked up, there would be a sound like an express train down in the canyon. The fire, which had slowly burned down hill from a ridge, would pick up speed and charge up the hill, seemingly rocket propelled. Our crews would literally run for their lives to get out of its path. We'd return to camp, the fire bosses would hold strategy sessions, we'd eat, sleep on the ground, then head for the next ridge before sunrise. Again it was rain that came to the rescue. It took several weeks by mop up crews to kill the last embers. The follow-up was the typical fire salvage sale. The price of the timber was a few dollars per MBF, although in reality, the value of the timber hadn't depreciated.

Part 3. ADDITIONS TO ORAL HISTORY, ROBERT E. WOLF

14. BLM in the South.

Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oklahoma are Public Land States. Title to all land passed via a General Land Office patent to applicants under the public land laws. Some lands were obtained legally, others were not. After the Civil War carpetbaggers sought to wrest lands from some local owners. Courthouse fires were a regular occurrence so that records could not be secured and altered. However, some land occupants had never secured the patent to their land and they never bothered to do so. As WW II vets began to apply for GI
loans, which required a chain of title back to a patent, "color of title" cases turned up in large numbers. People who could show a chain of title back 30 years and the payment of taxes could get a clear title by paying the GLO $1.25/acre.

After the Ozark and Ouachita Forests were created from public domain at the turn of the century, there were demands that several hundred thousand acres be eliminated because they were suited to agriculture. Because much of the land wasn't suited to farming it wasn't patented. Also, much land that had been secured under the Homestead Act, that wasn't patented, was actually bought out by the Land Resettlement Administration and reverted to PD status. When the Weeks Act was passed in 1911 the AL, FL, MS, and LA Forests were proclaimed. Public domain within them became their core. However, the poor condition of the GLO records resulted in some land being overlooked.

There were some 300,000 PD acres in the South. The situation was complicated by a conflict in the BLM's Washington office. Wild fires, intentionally set, were an annual Southern practice designed to increase the forage for free-roaming hogs, and kill ticks and chiggers. The Forestry staff had the peculiar notion that because the lands were scattered that the fire risk was lowered. They also erroneously held that much of the land had valuable timber, susceptible to sustained yield management. I was presented with a glowing picture that a viable forest program was feasible after clearing up a few public land cases. On that basis I accepted the job of Southern States District Manager, with an authorized staff of 3 field people and a secretary, Mary Scott, all of which I was to hire for an office in Russellville Ark., also home of the Ozark N.F.

15. Another Small Fire.
Driving through the Western Colorado rangeland on our way to Arkansas, we saw a cowboy ride toward and then past us on his horse at breakneck speed. About 3 miles down the road we came on a fire about 150' in diameter. Ruth and I stopped, left our one-year-old son Terry in the car, and got out a shovel and Pulaski I had in the trunk. Ruth understood the "one-lick" system of fire line building. We got 30' or so in front of the head end of the fire and started scrapping a mineral earth fire line. We were lucky. The fuel content of the area was low. When the fire reached our line it died. We worked our way around the edge. In perhaps 30 minutes we had the fire contained and essentially out. No one had yet arrived from the ranch. We got back in our car and drove on. I still wonder what the ranch hands thought when they got to the site, saw signs of a fire line, and no sign of who put the fire out.

On arriving in Russellville, and getting settled, the first thing I did was take a trip to look at some of the BLM land. It was immediately apparent to me that no permanent forest management scheme was remotely possible. On top of this there were some 60 public sale applications that were supposedly completed but were totally misvalued. Added to this were about 100 "color-of-title" cases that deserved speedy action. I had to get a staff hired. Here I had luck. The Dean at the U. of MO recommended Rolla Chandler, who turned out to be very capable. John Carpenter, on the Ozark NF staff told me that the F.S. was in the process of getting rid of nonforesters who had 15-20 years of service. It had decided to staff up exclusively with forest school graduates. It was taking people who had always worked year round, although "temporary" and furloughing them for 2 months, a calculated policy to push them to leave. John told me to visit the Ozark Ranger, Troy Curtis, who had 2 men I could hire. Troy said he hated to lose his 2 best men, Bruce Griffin and Fred Buffalo, but I ought to hire them, which I did. They had excellent basic educations, common sense, and woods sense. Bruce had been a
schoolteacher. Both men knew the local scene. The F.S. loss, was real but it was BLM's gain.
Both men later went on to better BLM jobs. Then, running short on money, I hired Bill Grant as a GS-1, a pay scale never used. Bill stayed with BLM, got a degree and worked later in their mineral leasing program. I also hired a secretary, who was a solid worker.

We formed two 2-man crews, organizing a system to cover all outstanding applications on the 5 States. Using my N.Y., experience we went to the SCS and ACP offices for aerial photo's and information about land and people in each county in each State we had to visit. We set up a plan that speedily re-examined all pending cases. We didn't pay much attention to the 40-hour week rule.

One problem in the Ozarks in particular, was the likelihood of running across a still, and the suspicion that you were a "revenue agent". To allay this I always made it clear that I was a timber cruiser. To buttress this, I always said I was from Oregon. Then upon learning the name of the person, I'd inquire if they had any "kin" in Oregon. Without fail they did. By a series of questions I'd find out the town and the mill they worked in. Then I'd adopt this as a place where I'd been and "think" I'd met their relative at the "Pastime Bar". This disingenuous approach was a great help in establishing cordial relationships with people and assuring them you didn't have a mission they might find harmful. On several occasions, I'd be told to beware of a certain area that was a "full of rattlesnakes," which I took was a code word for "still".

One stroke of good fortune was meeting Clem Mesavage, Director of the F.S. Ozark Research Station at Harrisonville, Ark. I knew of him because I was impressed with the Mesavage-Girard Form Class timber volume tables when I worked in Western Oregon. Jim Girard was a legend among foresters for his skill as a timber cruiser. After he left F.S., he was a
key member of the Northwest consulting firm of [Dave] Mason, [Don] Bruce & [Jim] Girard. Clem became our hidden asset. He explained to me his work on timber cruising. He had found that the keys were accurate plot diameters, accurate tree diameters, accurate determination of the merchantable height of a tree, and avoidance of the most common mistakes - underestimating plot boundaries, tree heights and diameters. He used the system I had found useful in N.Y., making sure via aerial photos that your plots were representative samples. On this basis, based on work that he and Lew Grosenbaugh in the F. S. New Orleans Office had done, they had demonstrated that 4 lines and 4 plots per 40, a 10% cruise, were as accurate as a 100% examination 95 times out of 100. Clem was one of those prodigious workers - he go 18 hours a day for a week then play golf. He knew how to test ideas, discard those that didn't work and go ahead with those with promise. He was a leader in forest mensuration - regrettably too often ignored. He also urged that the International 1/8" Log Rule be used as more likely to hit the mark, and urged avoidance of making needless deductions for defect.

We had an early test of his system. We had appraised several tracts with good timber stands in the part of Arkansas where International Paper operated. They were applicants under the Public Sale act, which gave them the chance to buy any sale at not 3 times the advertised price by simply matching the high bid. Under the GLO "low price" system, there had been bargains. Our cruise was "high", as was our price, according to IP's forester Campbell. He appealed to me as a fellow Syracusan, to exercise "common sense", as he demanded that the sales be pulled, recruised and repriced. We gave him our cruise sheets, and said if the tracts didn't sell, we'd consider his position.

There were 2 bidders, one about 3% over our price and on 5% over it, plus IP at the
advertised price. They didn't use their option as an applicant, under the public sale law, to match the high bid. The State Forester later told me why. IP thought that if they did this it would give other landowners the idea that their timber was worth more than IP was offering them. That was the only "cruise" complaint we ever had. One unique person I met was a rural postman in Southern Alabama. He had acquired about 2,000 acres by watching situations where an owner was likely to want to sell his timbered 40 or 80. He'd investigated timber volume and price estimating to devise his own system. He had selected lump sum pricing for all the trees he had marked. He had written into his contracts what he called an "incentive system": he charged a rate that rose in a logarithmic progression by tree diameter for any unmarked tree cut. He said that when he started advertising sales some firms had said they'd never buy timber that way. This was a bluff. Every sale he offered sold. He was constantly being asked when his next sale would be held.


Spud Chandler and I were working on applications in Stone Co. Ark., when the SCS man told us he thought there had been an arson fire on a BLM 40. We went to look at it. We found a fine stand of old growth Shortleaf pine. A ground fire had swept through the stand but hadn't killed any trees. When we returned to our office we had a call from Washington that an Ozark lumberman had complained to Senator Fulbright that some BLM timber had burned and nothing was being done to salvage it. We thought this was an interesting coincidence. I asked for and got permission to sell the timber after advertisement for 10 days, as I disarmingly explained we needed to act fast before the timber lost value. We cruised the timber, setting the highest price ever put on Pine on the Ozark NF. It was a sealed bid lump sum price of $40.05/MBF for an
estimated 200 MBF on about 18 of the 40 acres. The Ozark National Forests TMA forecast it
wouldn't sell, especially as a fire sale. I called several mills in the area to arrange a "show me"
trip, which I started at 7 AM some responded, including the guy who was the suspected arsonist.
He was most critical of the price. Using a cruisers axe I chopped several trees, pointing out that
they were fine, as the green needles also attested. There were 3 bids, with the high bid the
equivalent of $40.25/MBF. The sale went to a mill owned by a fellow who had not set the fire.
The arsonist got his just reward.

17. White Oak Theft.

Most Ozark counties voted "dry" but drank "wet". Stills existed in various places.
Legitimate white oak barrel stave buyers working for major distilleries, were either in or out of
the market. They didn't buy on a regular schedule. We got an unsigned letter defining who had
stolen some white oak from a specific tract. When we called on the suspect, he turned out to be a
very tall man who was also a local preacher. After I introduced myself he proclaimed "The Lord
Giveth and the Lord Taketh. Today I believe He will Taketh." He admitted the theft but said he
had been tempted to do evil by his neighbor. Then he explained that they had a falling out when
his neighbor refused to keep his hogs out of the preacher's tomatoes. When I implied that an
allegation wasn't proof of guilt, he decided he had to impress me with the evil nature of his
neighbor. He sold me the man had a daughter, she was pregnant and he was the child's father. I
thought this was a very interesting way of assuring I'd be sure of the man's guilt. While I never
saw the daughter, I did secure his confession of the timber theft. Both men sent us money orders
made out to the Treasurer of the U.S. In those days the FBI wouldn't investigate any timber
theft, even white oak. We developed a technique for overcoming this. When we found a recent
theft, we'd make some inquiries. When we got a lead we'd visit the person and ask if the FBI report was right that they had been stealing timber. The letters "FBI" were sufficient in those days to strike fear even in backwoods areas. This often produced an immediate confession. After setting the charge, I'd tell the person to send us a money order made out to the Treasurer of the U.S. The last question always was, "Who turned me in." My answer always was, "The FBI never tells me that, but you can write them and ask if you want." I doubt anyone did so.

18. Distillate Stumps.

The Washington Office Forestry and Land Office staffs didn't really understand Southern timber. Some of the tracts in Mississippi that had been cut over years earlier still had well preserved pine stumps loaded with distillate material for which there was a good market. When we sent our first public sale appraisal of distillate stumps they thought I had taken leave of my senses. We made good money selling stumps, and then selling the 40.

19. My Big Mistake.

The friction between the Interior and the Forest Service that came about when Ickes sought to secure the Forest Service was still in its full mindless bloom. Local BLM and FS people often acted as though maintenance of bad relations was a duty. This had never appealed to me as sound, sensible or even desirable. As we examined land we found varying amounts of Public Domain within the National Forests of the five Southern States. I prepared a list by forests. I sent it to each forest supervisor as well as to our Washington Office. It was as though I had proposed sanctioning original sin. My relationship with the Washington Office Forestry staff deteriorated.

20. Bureau of the Budget, 1953
Dean Shirley had been approached by Sam Broadbent at the Bureau of the Budget, who needed help locating a potential budget examiner with experience in both the Forest Service and BLM. Fortunately, Shirley got in touch with me and suggested my name to Broadbent. I was offered a job with B.O.B. This was an interesting experience. B.O.B., had a great cadre of career people dedicated to serving the President. They viewed themselves as the "thin line" defending the parapets against the "wild spenders". The first thing you were told was that even cabinet officers were suspect as being captives of the agencies.

20. Ike Would Do Better Than Truman in Balancing Budgets.

There were only 2 Presidential employees in the whole Bureau; Director Dodge and his Deputy Roland Hughes. The staff loyally supported their direction. Balancing the budget was their dream of fiscal heaven. I've related a couple of events I considered significant in my year at B.O.B., in other parts of the oral history.

One aspect though was my introduction to an aspect of Washington life - the car pool. The members of my car pool were:

1. A close neighbor, Carl Tiller, a most distinguished public employee who was the Chief of Budget Methods. He gave us regular "lectures" on what it takes to produce a budget with integrity.

2. Charlie Parker, who worked on Government Organization issues. He was a fountain of knowledge on why the government is structured the way it is.

3. Charles Schultze, who at various times was a member of and the head of the Council of Economic Advisors as well as Johnson's B.O.B., Director. At first he was on the CEA staff. Ike
was persuaded by Congressman Taber of NY to fire the Council. The White House forgot for
three months to fire the staff. Charlie told us how he became the Economist for the Steel
Industry lobbying group. By then he already had a great reputation as an up and coming
economist. He was offered a job. Then interviewer said that there could be times when they
might want to "adjust" his work to better reflect their views. He asked what Charlie thought of
that. In classic Schultze style he said, "You tell me how you want it. That's how you'll get it. I
don't want any amateurs f—ing around with my work." A few months later, when Ike realized
the value of CEA, Charlie was rehired. He went on with his distinguished public career. Charlie
was a great source of common sense economic advice.

4. Erna Whaler, who was Sam Broadbent's secretary, a lovely woman with a great sense of
humor.

My boss, Carl Schwartz, Lee Dashner, on his staff, Sam Hughes, Harry McKittrick and Russ
Andrews in the Legislative staff, Howard Ball, ('39 Forestry) and Wes Sasaki ('47 Forestry), were
wonderful people with whom to work.


Eisenhower had directed that B.O.B. use the audit reports of the Comptroller General to
help define budget savings that could be made. a regular series of monthly meetings was set up
to do this.GAO had produced its highly critical (I-17,338) report of Forest Service and BLM
timber sales practices. The author was Cliff Groth, a first class investigator, who later became a
key person in the Bureau of Public Roads. Bill Ellis, heading GAO's new Office of
Investigations, gave me a copy, asking me to analyze it. I wrote him that it was an excellent
report, on the mark overall and accurate in every specific, which it was.
A few weeks later he invited me over for lunch, which I presumed was to talk about the report. The lunch was in the Comptroller's private dining room with him, Ass't Comp. Frank Weitzel, Gen Counsel Bob Kellar (both of whom were later Comptrollers General), Owen Kane who headed their Legislative shop and Bill Ellis.

What I soon learned was that I was being interviewed to replace Cliff Groth who was heading to the Bureau of Public Roads. While a number of people have credited me with authoring the report, I did not. It was what resulted in my being offered a job with GAO.

A GAO function was to provide staff support to Committees when requested. From 1954 until early 1959, I shuttled between special field Forest Service investigations for GAO, a series of House and Senate Committee assignments on a wide range of resource issues and advice to the auditors.