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Interviewee: Duncan M. Hodgson
Interviewer: Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert
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Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert: This is an oral history interview conducted on behalf of the Boone and Crockett Club with Duncan M. Hodgson on December 6, 1978 at the Barbazon Plaza Hotel in New York City by Gyongyver "Kitty" Beuchert, office administrator of the Boone and Crockett Club.

Mr. Hodgson, could you give me your birth date and your place of birth?

Duncan Hodgson: May 23, 1901. Montreal, Canada.

GB: And the name of your parents?

DH: My father, Archibald Arthur. Mother, Mary Fisher. She was a McIntire. That hooks us up for the CPR.

GB: Could you give me some details about your family?

DH: Yeah. They're both the most wonderful parents a person could have because they're always years on you older, and I never heard one unpleasant word which is quite an unusual background. And there was no character entailed there because mother was a very forceful character. My father, fortunately, had a good sense of humor. He was able to swing with the punches. But I think it was a great privilege to be brought up as I was, I'm a very lucky fellow. I was an only child, and both of them had five children in each family, and it's a peculiar mixture of backgrounds.

GB: Could you tell me something about your wife and your children?

DH: Well, I've obviously got a very good natured wife because we've been married for 53 years, and I've got three children, three daughters, and I don't intend to turn any of them in at all, they're all very satisfactory.

GB: All right. Could you list the schools that you attended?

DH: Yes. A place called Selwon House in Montreal were good enough to put up with me for some years, and then I went to McGill University. I didn't learn much at either place, but that's the extent of my instruction.

GB: Can you tell us anything about your military career and experiences?

DH: Well, I had about five years in the Navy and one wave is just about like the other. I don't think there's much to describing it.

GB: I wish you'd give us a little more detail than that. I know you were an officer.

DH: Yeah, but any service will make mistakes from time to time, you know. I'd just as soon forget the whole thing, it was very unpleasant. Except for rum. The rum was excellent. (laughs)

GB: Okay, I know you had a career as a stockbroker. Could you tell me a little bit about how you selected that?

DH: Yeah. I think I was pitchforked into it in order to be a little bit more knowledgeable about the world's goods and I certainly got a free education because I went in just before the Crash of 1928. I went through the Crash and came out of it with a house of my father's in tax, and that's a good lesson.

GB: How did you develop an interest in hunting?

DH: I don't know, I learned to walk about the same time...about the same reason, I think, because it was a natural thing to do. I wore out three air rifles before I was ten, I think, and I never stopped.

GB: Okay. Did your interest in conservation activities come out of your interest in hunting? Did they just run together?

DH: Yes. Definitely. There's a great old member of the Boone and Crockett who's left us now, but it was C. Suydam Cutting who was our sponsor, and he taught me a great deal about hunting and I remember one thing he said, it was very apropos, he said, "Hunters fall into two classes -- those who kill things and have them mounted and put on the wall of their house to annoy their wife, and the other class is to do things for museums when they come back, and they're decent enough to take some pictures and get up and do what they don't like doing -- probably lecturing to people in armchairs who haven't got the opportunity to travel the way they have and share their experiences with others." He said, "Now just take your choice, you'll be one of two classes." And that hit me right between the eyes at that time, I sort of changed my outlook. I think that's about it.

GB: Could you describe any of your hunting trips, ones that may have been particularly memorable? I've got a list here of some of the hunting trips you took, in case that would refresh your memory.

DH: Yeah. Five to Alaska and five in Africa, yeah. Well, certainly Africa is the place, it's marvelous. You've got to get the daylight scared out of you, that's the way to go. Oh, it's such a big question. I don't know if it was a guest or a friend that I'd told in Canada, he went and

bought a plantation near us, Salsridge [?] in southern Rhodesia. We started off in there and we spent a month in the East Africa, that was Portuguese. He just took fifty natives off his plantation, piled them into a truck, and we drove them along and had a wonderful time for a month. But what I didn't know until we started was that none of them had ever eaten meat for about a year, they'd live on mealys cornmeal mush and it's very hard to shoot when you've got somebody slobbering in the background waiting for the meat to drop, you know. It made me miss for two weeks. It was most embarrassing I got to the state where I knew I was going to miss. One evening, Pat said, "We're having a dinner," he said, "You know you're a disgusting disappointment to me. I bring you out to this country and you don't shoot worth a damn." He said, "I don't think you want to." And he insulted me so badly that I didn't sleep that night, I got up before dawn the next morning, got the best tracker, went off and killed 10,000 pounds of eland before breakfast, and never looked back since then. I became a real butcher. But it's funny the way things click like that, and then suddenly you'll change over. The will to kill is the thing that's missing sometimes. But oh, the Belgian Congo is the thing of my whole life -- it was the most wonderful experience. We were there in '38 and '39. I was in there for almost a year. I took the only Canadian expedition that's ever been in there from McGill University of Montreal, Harvard and Belgian Museum [inaudible] outside of Brussels, and we stayed in that heavy forest for three months without coming out which is not very healthy. You starve for sunlight, funny enough. And the stuff there is so fascinating. We had a very good mammalogist, Bill Coltice [?] from the American Museum. I stole him and made him travel for Harvard. And had a good surgeon from the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal who did the mammalogical dissections. I was an amateur entomologist, so I did the butterflies and moths and I was an amateur movie operator, so I took some pretty poor movies. We had a professional still photographer, he took the first color pictures that were ever taken in Africa I think.

We did a lot of firsts, when you come to think of it. Firsts, "Royal firsts" as they say with their shoulders thrown back. Got the first mountain gorilla intact and brought every bit of him back. I think Harvard was studying him for about a year or two. There was a lot of material. And we got the first pygmy chimpanzees. We got five of them, and they were only known from one immature specimen—Chamberlain, one of his boys had brought in. There was great hoo-ha about that at the time because it was threatening to be the missing link and that sort of thing. Professor Houghton [?] was very interested from Harvard. There was a great to do about it and then the war took over. LIFE magazine was going to run part of an issue on the trip with all the color pictures and then the war [World War II] had just broke at that time and it was washed out, and greater things took over. But that Belgian Congo is, was someplace marvelous. Very exciting.

Alaska, of course, has a fascination all of its own. That's why people go back and back. I was up there twice without shooting anything. Not that I was trying, but there was nothing worth museum quality, and I didn't kill just to take a killing, and it's just as much fun as if you had. The sort of thing that you'll learn a lot from is sitting in a field at night, waiting for bear to come out and hearing a slight noise within 30 feet of you and realize that there's one sitting on the grass looking at you. He didn't seem to pay any attention much to us, the wind was the right way, I

suppose. He started to play with a field mouse and he was acting like a cat who was frightened of a mouse. He'd paw it like this and then jump back as if he was scared and go and paw it again, and this went on until we burst out laughing and he ran away. But lots of funny things happen up there. Things like Bob Reeve, he's about the funniest thing I ever met in Alaska, and his dear son, Dick. And he [Bob] certainly has to be the best pilot in the world. He landed on a sand spit one time and took Frankie Cook and me off with six feet to spare at the end of the so-called "runway" I think. We got flooded in, would have been there for weeks if he hadn't got us out. It was a heroic job.

Oh, Alaska's great, too. And the north of Canada, something could be said for it, of course. I was up there, went up to Ungava, great barren grounds of the Ungava north of Quebec, and the traffic won't keep you awake and you'll get very lonely, very tired, and very fed up with the country because it's all ups and downs. The biggest washboard in the world, I suppose -- swamp in the bottom and rocks on the top, and then up you go and down you go. I managed to get myself lost up there one time, and that's pretty poor country to get lost in because there's no use taking a compass. There's so much iron ore in the ground that the needle doesn't behave, and you got to get out by the seat of your pants.

GB: Can you describe what you did at that point?

DH: Yeah. I had the good luck to shoot three ptarmigan with my rifle and by that time, I was so hungry I ate them feathers and all, raw, and it was great. I think I had one in my hand when I made tent that night, about past 11 or so. But walking in the rain and the sleet along slippery river bed rocks is not prescribed treatment for your health. I was never so glad to get a belt of rum under my belt as I was that night. It's not nice but and those are the things that make you appreciate the good things.

GB: Did you walk out by yourself?

DH: Yeah, I was alone.

GB: Do you think you could recall some of the details of the hunt where you took the Bering Cross [?] and ground caribou that made the records book?

DH: Oh, boy, this is all really simple. We were just walking on the barrens, looking for caribou, and was glassing the hills around and suddenly, I spotted this white dot in the distance, and started to follow it up. We got close enough and my companion who knew the country, said, "That is a very large caribou, why don't you go get it?" I said, "How do you do it?" He said, "Go in on your stomach and don't get up."

It was quite a long way, and I was very tired of walking on my stomach, if you've ever tried it with a rifle. I had an Eskimo following me. We was really pushing me, and we finally got within a decent range and got up and I looked at him [the Eskimo], and he looked at me, we nodded, we

fired practically together, the two bullets were an inch apart. I was very pleased because he was a good shot.

That was a lovely sight, he [caribou] was on a mossy knoll which was by a little bed of a stream, just about a 300 foot drop over the side of him and he was standing looking over this sunset that was almost corny. The sun shone on his antlers and just about scared the daylights out of me, it was so beautiful. I hated to pull the trigger, but he looked good.

GB: I'd like to get back to Alaska for one moment. I was specifically instructed by Frank Cook to ask you about Pavlov –

DH: Oh, God.

GB: —and a particular bear hunt.

DH: [Chuckles] Yeah. Well, there again I was being choosy, you see, I wanted a good bear for the museum in Montreal. We were pretty desperate. We weren't getting any big bears in the sights. Finally we got placed opposite an opening in some bushes which were of an unknown distance. Frankie went up to the side and I went behind a sand pit sort of a thing and waited. This bear was feeding across the mountain and he came down and finally came into the opening and oh, Lord! He was going very slowly. It was beautiful. I put up right across the musket which was an African big game rifle, [inaudible] 416, it's what Frank finally called my "pumpkin thrower," and I know why he did it now, because it wouldn't carry that distance. I thought it was about a 200 yard shot, and I fired. My bullets hit the gravel about 6 feet short of the bear, just enough to sting him in the stomach, I guess, and he stood up and did that wonderful threat that you only believe that the taxidermists are faking when they have their mouth open, snarling, and their paws clawing the air, looking for trouble. Frank uncertainly said, "I think that's only about a 6 or 7 foot bear," he said, "But you have to take him, he's so beautiful." When he stood up, he suddenly turned into about a 10 foot bear. He was a very large bear, indeed, and he looked very ugly. Frank complemented me afterward, he said, "You did the right thing," he said, "You didn't move." Because I was too scared, but as soon as I got my nerve back, I saw him moving away, and I fired again, but oh God, it was miles from him. The gun was just too heavy for that distance. I should have had a high velocity thing. So that was beautiful. That was the end of the bear hunt. Never did get one.

GB: And how about Pavlov?

DH: Well that was hanging around there, that's the mountain there. Spitting flames and things.

GB: Was it actually erupting at that time? Was it really?

DH: The volcano, yeah. It was very picturesque.

GB: Going a little bit to a different subject now, how did you first become interested in the Boone and Crockett Club?

DH: Well, it was Suydam Cutting. Oh, I don't know, it's just the old monkey-see, monkey-do -- you get amongst a bunch of types who are thinking a certain way and you find yourself thinking the same way. And I liked them. As a matter of fact I suppose I copied them. Wonderful old chaps.

GB: Who proposed you for membership in the Boone and Crockett Club?

DH: I was proposed by Arthur Vernay who was the sidekick of old Suydam Cutting. Suydam Cutting was actually my host at the early dinners that I went to I know, and I'm surprised that he didn't propose me, but he's a very backward fellow and he probably had too good sense, anyway.

GB: What year did you join?

DH: 1948 I believe.

GB: Can you tell me anything about the other people who supported you for membership?

DH: Oh, there was a horrible character called Harold Coolidge who was known to many, he seconded me, and dear old Jamie Clark, the grandfather of all taxidermists, ("Gorilla" Clark from the American Museum) he was an endorser. Old Karl Frederick, bless his soul, he was another and Trubee Davison, and an H.B. Clark, who I can't remember for the life of me! His name doesn't mean a thing to me. That's easy.

GB: Now, I'd like to ask you what offices you held and what years, if you remember, and if you remember during that time anything that you were involved in very actively?

DH: Yeah, and I believe I was the Vice President in '60, '62, '66, '70, and '73. And Executive '63, '65, '67, '69, and on the NABG Committee for too darn long, and Conservation Committee ditto.

But I was in the historical meeting in Pittsburgh which was known as the Madison Gathering when we started one day and ended the next without drawing breath. I think we took turns sleeping on the sofa. I remember Bob Waters was the chairman and he had a hell of a dose of the flu I think at the time, and he keep passing out on the sofa, and then somebody would give him a drink and he'd wake up and take over again, and that's how we revamped all the measurements for the big game! And it came out extraordinarily well, considering. Our Conservation Committee is a mild thing compared to that. I think of old Dick Borden when I think of that.

GB: I think I've asked this a little differently, but I'd like to ask it again. How did you develop

such an active interest in both hunting and conservation? I mean, was there any specific reasons, or did it just develop, and how?

DH: Well, I was crazy about shooting, and I suppose I started collecting butterflies and stamps and things like that when I was very young and one thing grows out of another. Collecting is collecting. Still it's one thing if you're collecting for a museum, it puts more drive in it. The competition spurs the competition and the spirit of accomplishment. If you don't have it you're doing it for yourself. You feel that you're really maybe contributing something for the future. Some of the things you're privileged to get are dying out, being shot out or disappearing, and they should be preserved in one form or another. And photographs are very important, too, which are part of any good expedition, I think.

GB: What other conservation organizations have you belonged to, or been an officer of?

DH: Well, closer to home, I was, I think, four years president of, I think, the oldest conservation association in the New World—it was the one with the longest name too—the Province of Quebec Association for the Protection of Fish and Game. All with one breath, mind you. I'm afraid that I quit because I knew I was licked, I didn't have the right spelling to my name. It should have been a French name to get anywhere up in Quebec. I was a former Governor of the Arctic Institute. I've always been a member of the Explorer's Club since I got back from Africa around '40, something like that. There's no connection with any of these, no really working connection between the Arctic Institute for instance and the Boone and Crockett, that I know. And the Province of Quebec Association for the Protection of Fish and Game, that's been a disappointment to me because I tried to work up something there that never did click. One little pet phobia of mine is that we never looked into an animal right close to home who needs a little studying up—the eastern moose. Time was when I got one every year, and it's well known among the guides and the hunters around Quebec, around Montreal certainly and north, that we have two moose in this country, and damn few people know it. There's the mountain moose in the mountains and the moose of the savanna or the swamps, marshes, and they're two quite different animals, and nobody has ever studied these things. I don't think any scientist has done a job on them at all. It's always fascinated me because I've shot both of them and they share practically the same territory. It's a fascinating thing. There's one. There's another crazy thing the French-Canadians call a mountain moose or in French, they call it French. Why that? Where did they get that name from? It comes from Africa. But that's what they call it the eland. It has orange colored horns, spikes, no palmation, strong, short horns, not showy at all, and the animal is jet black with white stockings and very high in the shoulders, very low in the haunches, and he doesn't resemble the other moose at all, in my mind. And nobody's ever taken the trouble to do anything about it. I'd like to see, I'd like to go on record now as hoping to God somebody does something about it. I think it could be done, readily, because I think the Province of Quebec has got some pretty good mammologists working for them who would cooperate, I'm sure. We'd go forward for this side.

GB: Now in asking you if there was a relationship between your work with these other

organizations and Boone and Crockett Club, what I'd really like to ask is, did your knowledge that you acquired with working with those up there, particularly the Canadian background that you have, did you bring that knowledge into the Club in any way? Into the activities of the Club?

DH: Only in respect to caribou, I think. Probably, that's the only thing I can think of.

GB: Okay, well I've got some questions about that later. Could you tell me a little bit about the work of the Arctic Institute? And how it relates to conservation?

DH: That's a bit of a toughie because I wouldn't say that they have much to do with each other. I can't think of any connection, actually. Their scientific field is geology and the tides, the climate, ecology, and the people, and I never connected them with mammals or birds.

GB: And was the fact that it has to do with the ecology of people does not mean that it has to do with the ecology of any of the animals?

DH: Only in respect, possibly again, the caribou because the caribou has so intimate a connection with the Eskimo.

GB: Now, you are a very good friend of Archibald Roosevelt's. Do you remember some of the things that Archibald Roosevelt was active in and can you describe what he was like when he was a very active member of the Club?

DH: Yeah, he was the source of the greatest noise that you would ever hear in the Club, and I think because he had a voice like a bull moose! One of his duties, self appointed, was to call the Club to attention -- that the meal was being served or a meeting was going to take place -- and he used to bawl out, "Gentlemen, will you please -" and then he'd tell you what you had to do. His other job was to run a stop watch on any boring speaker that he didn't want to go on and on and on. He had a buzzer on this watch, it was quite loud, you could hear it, and he'd shout out, "Well, there goes the watch, gentlemen," and that was that. And as a host, I stayed with him out on Long Island one time, and he's an absolutely perfect host, marvelous, and he was showing me to, I remember he was showing me to the little bungalow on the side of his house where I was [to] spend the night in a lonely state, and it had a flight of flagstone steps going up it. Archie went first with a flashlight, and he missed a step and came down -- he was a very tall fellow and a very heavy one -- and he came down with a "crack" on the back of his head on one of the flagstones! He just bounced, he got right onto his feet, he didn't even pause, and he looked down in the dark, he said, "Gee, I didn't know those things were so well made." And that's Archie.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

GB: Could you mention some of the men in the Club that you were particularly close to or got to know very well and relate a little bit about them?

DH: Well, I'm looking at the list of members here and I think the one we [should] stumble over first is a Horace M. Albright who was a stalwart light in the government, and a very picturesque man and a very fine member of the Boone and Crockett Club. He's head of a couple of committees that I had the honor of serving on, and he was really a good, efficient gentleman. And old Harold Anthony, goodness, he was a stalwart. Milford Baker, oh golly, he was an authority.

GB: You worked quite closely with Milford Baker on the NABG Committee.

DH: NABG, sure, I witnessed a near knock-down, drag-out fight with him and the chairman of the Committee one time, I won't tell you who it was, but -

GB: I would like you to tell me a little bit about the knock-down, drag-out, though. [laughs]

DH: Well, it was verbal and counterless. Just stopped short of fistacuffs, I'd say.

GB: Well, no, but I mean what topic was it about?

DH: Oh, some foolish thing that had come up. We were very good at splitting hairs along the major axis. And I see here that character Bob Bartlett, my God, he [was] speaker at the first meeting that I ever went to, Suydam Cutting took me in the '30's sometime. Great old fella. Dick Borden, God he's been active, I always think of him in the Conservation Committee, he's always in there somewhere. Let's see who else we've got here.

GB: Did you know Bob Waters well?

DH: Oh, Lord yes. "Minnetonka", "Little Running Waters", yeah.

GB: Can you explain how they got into those names? [laughs]

DH: Oh, I don't know. If you can explain a character like Bob Ferguson, you can explain anything. He used to be the fellow that christened people, I think.

But Bob Waters was a charmer. He was a family pal of the "Boys of Pittsburgh," the Mellons and he's a friend of the whole world. He had one thing that was absolutely alarming. He had a hand clasp that was fatal! He'd just crush every bone in your paw, and I don't think he knew he was doing it. And he was tough on himself, too.

Old Jim Clark, here's a boy. Great gentleman, wonderful fellow, a taxidermist, the looks. Made a gorilla talk! He did a beautiful job up on the American Museum. That's the one, I think, that he got the little girls to sew the hairs on the chest of the gorilla because it had dropped the hairs, and they put them in, put a knot in the hair, pulled it in from the inside out, and gave him [gorilla] a new set of hair on his chest sort of thing. He's a perfectionist.

Francis Colby, oh by God, there's a fellow! Great pal of Suydam's and Bob Ferguson. I knew him from a distance most of the time, and I got too close to him once. I was staying at Bob's flat here in New York, and I had to share the room with Fran Colby. I certainly would never say that I slept with Fran Colby because you can't sleep with Fran Colby. He's just about like a fire engine the most noisy thing I ever heard in my life. Impossible. He had a big voice, too. He died, I think he died in Africa. He said he was going to, and on purpose. And I had the privilege of shooting with his rifle in 1959 just by sheer chance, it was in the hands of a big game hunter over there who lent it to me.

Hal Coolidge, there's a thing to conjure with. Probably the hardest working professional do-gooder I know. He's in everything.

Ian McTaggart, God I know him very well, in the West. A great gentleman and a naturalist.

Oh, Sal Coolidge, good Lord, I don't know why I feel like spitting every time I think of him. He sent me off to Africa to find the pygmy chimpanzee and he gave me a marked map. He was only 500 miles out on the map. Then I came back with two weeks of field notes on the pygmy chimpanzee, and he lost the damn things. So, I don't know how to speak of him. He's a nice chap, outside of that.

Suydam Cutting, oh old Suydam Cutting. Think of Suydam, you think of Tibet, the Potala. He'd get up at the drop of a hat or even if it didn't drop [and] lecture on Tibet, he loved it. He's the first scientist in Tibet, I believe.

GB: Suydam Cutting was? Cutting?

DH: Cutting, Suydam Cutting, his last name on the page here. Trubee Davison, he was one of the oldtimers. Duncan Ellsworth, yes, yes -- there's a fine body of men. Robert Monro Ferguson, the less said, the better. Frightful gorilla. Dear fellow.

GB: You must have known Harold Anthony quite well?

DH: Yeah, yeah. There was a man who really stood up for what he really thought, and no hesitation about saying it either. He's right spoke from the face out. I admired him. Karl Frederick, he was nice. Childs Frick, good man. Ira Gabrielson, my God. You forget how wonderful people you've met. Oh, DeForest Grant, what a man, [inaudible]

GB: You knew DeForest?

DH: Yeah.

GB: You knew Madison Grant?

DH: No I didn't, no. I met Forest, he was a privilege. Dear Sherman Gray. George Bird Grinnell, I didn't know him. And Pink Gutermuth, there's the grandfather of all the participants, look at the things he's done. Dear grandfather. John E. Hammett, the grandfather of the bison. He's the man that -

GB: Why would he be called that?

DH: Well, because he tried to sponsor the bison as the big game animal. He'd knocked one of these over in a cow pasture up north somewhere that come down through, it's just a prickle in the face when you wouldn't give him a medal. God he was a funny man. I think he was a good doctor, though. Who else have I got here? Duncan Hodgson, there's a thing. [laughter] Quite a list of characters. That's a good description of this Club, "Quite a list of characters". Dick Mellon, silver spoon apart, he was a great fellow. I liked him very much. Not for what he had but for what he was.

GB: How did Bob Reeve get the nickname "Silver Eagle"?

DH: Oh, I don't know, I think, well you knew he was the "Glacier Pilot", and he flew like an eagle, I suppose, except that I don't think eagles scare people the way Bob did. Terrifying fellow to fly with. Whoo! Most wonderful host, the most generous gentleman in the world, I think. God, he's a dear one. Been up there with him three times. I like to think he'd last forever. [inaudible], yeah.

John Olin, he's a good man on fish.

GB: Who was that?

DH: John Olin. He's done a lot of work for salmon conservation. Oh, and Jack Parker, there's another tower of strengths. Great fellow. Oh, lots of fun with old Arthur Popham [chuckle], makes me laugh. Fred Pullman, nice man, not stupid. I think we've hit most of the ones I'm familiar with. How'd you like to be called a Percy Madeira? isn't that wonderful? Spelled the same as the wine.

And then the Roosevelt family, of course, I knew Archie for a long time, but I knew Kermit a long time ago with Suydam Cutting because Kermit...Sudyam was a son of a gun to organize things and he was organizing a trip to Persia, as it was known in those days. He sent the Shah of Persia a machine gun for the back of his touring car and then he sent him a bunch of hounds, I

don't know what kind - fox hounds or something, to hunt with. He was just endearing himself with the Shah, setting up for a trip which he asked me to go on with him. Kermit Roosevelt and Suydam Cutting himself were going over to find the "The Longs of Herculadeum". Yes, indeed. Lions or tigers, I forgot which. Not much chance anyway, because I had a friend of mine going over there for the while later and the trip blew up -- I think it was on account of the war or something -- and we never did go. And I found out afterwards that the tigers were no more important than the pussy cat, they were just a myth, a few of them did appear out there, but it was in the north of Persia, but there's very little to it, Suydam was misinformed, wasted his hounds and his machine gun.

GB: Okay, now going into your area of expertise in the Club, how did you become specifically interested in the North American Big Game Committee?

DH: I'd like to be able to answer that politely, but I can't because I often regretted the day I ever heard of it. It's one big pain in the neck. [chuckles] Detail, detail, detail, it's a straight source of squabbling. Anything to do with competitions like that. You're setting up the rules: it's just horrible; feel people breathing down your neck and snarling at you all the time. It's not a pleasant job, and I certainly am sorry for any chairman.

GB: Where, do you remember when the competition was originated?

DH: Oh, gosh no.

GB: Do you remember the main reason why it was initiated?

DH: I think it went back probably to Teddy Roosevelt, really, because his "fair chase" was the background for the North American Big Game Committee rules. Animals had to be taken in fair chase and we felt that we were there to enforce that outlook, and to discourage anything, (and to keep on discouraging anything) because things kept getting more difficult. With the advent of the helicopter and the snowmobile and all these devices for poaching and cheating it became more difficult to police the game. It was all very unpleasant.

GB: Now it's a fact that the big game herds in North America are in better shape now and more numerous than 50 or even 80 years ago. Do you feel that hunting them now is endangering their existence at all?

DH: No. I would think the encroachment on their habitat is the main danger. For instance, if you run a bulldozer over the spagum (?) moss or the caribou moss up north, they tell me that it may take 100 years for it to recover. If you fly over the north today you'll see that the place is just crisscrossed with bulldozer tracks. That's all food gone and off the slopes and what is going to take its place? I don't think there's anything that's taking the place for a bedded down caribou -- he's relying on that. If you say that there's so many hundreds of thousands of miles of moss up there, but if you look at it from the air it looks pretty cut up today, and that's only one side

of it. The other side is the actual encroachment on the ground itself. Man taking up more place up north. Mining and God knows what, there's oil -- oil boys are the worst culprits, I suppose. We have no idea down here what's doing up north. It's a beehive! Ever since that billy goat found the oil off the top of Alaska things have never been the same. It's getting worse.

GB: Do you feel that hunting can be used as a conservation tool? As a management tool?

DH: Oh, yes, as a management tool, sure. And has to be in many, many cases because you can't stop people from breeding and you can't stop them from taking more place on the Earth's surface and pushing the animals out. If you push the animals out of their habitat, you can't allow the animals, in their own interests, to reproduce if the rate exceeds the supply of their own food. That's happening in Africa all the time, the elephants are eating themselves out of house and home and we're having the same thing, oh many animals are like that. And that's where they've got to be cropped. Intelligently cropped. I think the finest example that I can think of is right in the province of Ontario. I come from Quebec, and I can just sit there with envy at the way they've done it. They decided they'd find out how many moose there were in the province of Ontario before they'd set up the laws on how many you'd shoot. So there's a place called Melitulen (?) Island, Lake Ontario I think it is* where there is a good moose population and they did a clever thing, they waited until the snow was on the island and they overflew it with light planes and they overflew it with helicopters and then they covered it with game wardens walking within sight of each other, whole length of their arms so they had their fingers [touching], and they found that the light airplane was quite accurate enough so they overflew the whole of Ontario with light airplanes. Grid by grid, they gridded the whole country and they did a beautiful job on it. They flew every grid and they (?) this could be Monitoylin Island, Lake Huron; counted the animals in the snow, and they issued a proportion of what was there as licenses for that grid. Now that's intelligent thought! That's just the opposite of what we do in Quebec.

GB: Let me ask you, I think one of the purposes of initiating the competitions was to promote selective hunting. Do you feel that it does that and how do you feel about trophy hunting in today's world? In this time?

DH: I don't think that's situation's changed at all because the old boys are going to go anyway -- I think I'm getting to be an authority on that myself -- not many more miles on the old chassis I think might as well put it in the scrap heap and that's for the animals, exactly. And the Eskimos live that way -- when they're too old, they just leave the boys behind them and carry on, and I think that's nature. And if they're going to drop by the way anyway, you might as well take them. Those are the ones you're after -- the old ones, the big ones.

GB: So you feel that promoting selective hunting in that way is actually a good thing?

DH: Well, it's not a good thing. They'd do just as good to die naturally, if you want to look at it that way. But I don't think we're doing such a bad thing as most people let on.

GB: Okay. What was your viewpoint of the development of the scoring system which is presently used by the Boone and Crockett Club?

DH: Well, I think most people are satisfied with Mr. Goren when it comes to bridge, and I think we're the Goren of the game scoring. And that's just a similar thing, that's just like keeping score in a game.

GB: Well, what I meant was now, do you remember any of the details about how it was worked out? I know that it's a combination of Grantzel [?] Fitz's ideas on scoring and James Clark's, do you remember -

DH: Oh, I don't think the public will ever have any idea of the in fighting that went on behind the scenes and also the long, harrowing grief that went on sorting out, arguing -- is this the right way to do it, is that the right way to do it? They were all honest fellows, they were all trying to do their best. And it was really not a helter skelter job at all. I think it was an extremely clever business. I think it's well done. I think they were all very much to be praised, I think they are wonderful blokes and they're given a hell of a lot of time. Some would get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and do four hours work on the Big Game Committee stuff before they went to business. I'm thinking of one bloke in particular who would sit up half the night over it too. No pay, no praise, just a spirit of something, and I thought it was wonderful.

GB: And was that [inaudible]?

DH: Yeah, I would if I could remember his name.

GB: It wasn't Sam Webb, was it?

DH: He was chairman of the Committee, Big Game Committee, before Jack Parker.

GB: Elmer Rusten?

DH: Elmer Rusten's the boy! Oh, boy he was a selfless slave laborer. Wonderful.

GB: Do you know how the first measurers were appointed and how they were trained?

DH: Well, there again, fellows like Elmer Rusten set up the rules, and I think I have the privilege of designing a couple of the foul instruments they used. That was just straight mechanics, it was just a matter of putting bits of metal together. I don't know, it's just you needed to do it and you find a way to do it, and that's what we were there for.

GB: Were they more or less individually trained? Were some of them -

DH: Oh, yes. I mean they all went to a measurers class and were just like going to school, sure.

GB: You were instrumental in developing the various caribou classes for the NABG records keeping, could you explain your work in this area?

DH: It was a horrible and agonizing process. I had to practically get a divorce from my wife and fill the house with caribou books and do nothing else for a month or two and I'd just as soon forget it. But I tried to learn everything I could about caribou and I found there were one or two fellows in Canada who loved to write about them and it was pretty hard to sort out the nonsense. We had one dear old boy up in the National Museum of Ottawa who, I think he had about fifty classifications of caribou before he was through. It was just absolute rubbish! We had to try to sort that stuff out and make sense of it. To find out how many really different cars [caribou] there were. It's such a nomad, and such a wonderful animal. [Caribou] Hasn't changed for 400,000 years, and managed to dodge 3 glacial periods. He's quite an animal. He hasn't changed at all -- very nimble of foot, very ingenious and looks after himself beautifully. Of course he's very carefree about crossing breeding lines and racial lines and you get mixtures. When you get that it's very hard to set up the rules of differentiation for classification of the animals, and you've only got to do the best you can in a general way. That's all I tried to do because I think I was the first person in the Boone and Crockett to tackle the caribou, and I would hate to have to do it again because there are much more expert fellows now that have got into it. Two of them I got in the Club myself, and I was really glad to get them in to take my place.

GB: Well what first got you interested in having various classifications? Why did you feel that was necessary?

DH: Oh, because everybody knows that there are different kinds of caribou. Everybody up there, the Eskimo recognize them. There's the big white caribou which is one fellow, and another one, and they've got classifications that we haven't. They recognize different animals that we don't. And we wouldn't dare because they're interbred so that's its hard. You can't stop them. It's like putting your finger on a drop of quick silver. They're a tricky animal because they're on the move and they migrate like the blazes and thousands of them will go north out of the woods in the summer and then they'll come back and what happens in the meantime is their business not ours. They're hard to follow. In a general way, there is certainly the mountain caribou in the west and there's the ground caribou, a fellow that migrates in the thousands and the woodland caribou who likes to stick in the woods. They've got three classifications. I think you can carry it further if you dare, but I wouldn't.

GB: I must ask you a question about one specific animal, and I'm not sure whether he's a moose or a caribou. Can you tell me about George?

DH: Almost a mythical beast, except that I saw it once at a distance. I knew he was there because I saw his footprints. He was a moose, the grandfather of all moose. He had a footprint

which was, I spanned it exactly at 9 inches with my fingertips and that was the width of his foot. That is some foot for a moose, and he was an awful big one because in hard ground, his foot would sink in. He was a big brute and he was seen by three men that I know of, very close, and he was missed twice by a fellow member of the Boone and Crockett whose middle name is Winchester (he's a relation of the Winchester family). His guide told me (he's a dear fellow, Indian gentleman), described him, he said, "We got up over the river bank and there we were, face to face with George," he said, "not more than 50 feet away." And he said, "Mr.," so the rifle came up, and he said, "[inaudible]" He stood up [firing] like a garden hose that was going in circles, squirting lead. He didn't hurt the moose much, but he was so excited, so overcome by the size of the brute, he couldn't hit it. And then the next year he came on George across a valley in the woods and there he was standing grazing with his wife beside him. Once again he put up his trusty musket, a Winchester, and fired and killed his wife and left George alone [chuckles], and so George is really a spectacle. But we never did get him.

GB: Nobody ever got George?

DH: No.

GB: What are your thoughts about trophy hunting from a Canadian point of view?

DH: I don't think any different from any other part of the world, it's just the same thing.

GB: Well this really has not much to do with the question I asked you about being a Canadian, I'm going to ask you a couple of questions. Your gun control rules are a lot stricter than ours, can you explain possibly why?

DH: Oh, yes, that's a provincial matter, I think. The province of Quebec, we've really wakened up in that respect, and they put up the most magnificent system of hunter control. When you go to the woods, deer season and moose season, you pass through a barrier, a wayside station. Well, you're invited to go in, and you'd better go in and have your rifle checked and have your behavior checked. They make you shoot and they see how you behave, and they instruct you. Then if you go into a park, which is the only place you'll get anything now, you have a draw for the area, you know, and you go in and you have a guide allotted and an area allotted to you and it's pretty beautifully done, I think. You have to follow the rules. They're very strict indeed, and if you wound an animal, you go home, that's all there is to it. There's no second chances, it's like shooting a shell off.

GB: So in other words, if you wound one it's like having gotten one.

DH: You had your chance, yeah.

GB: But you are allowed to track it to the best of your ability.

DH: Oh, the guide does all that. You have a pro guiding, and he's watching everything you do. It's well done. I think the province of Quebec can be commended for their arrangements for their parks. They just run the hunting beautifully there.

GB: When you say "parks", that's not like our National Parks here, is it?

DH: Oh, we have two parks. We have National Parks, that's your Federal, they're run by Ottawa, and then we have Provincial Parks which are entirely run by the province. And the game is controlled in the Provincial Parks.

GB: Okay, but in your National Parks, do you hunt, we don't.

DH: I don't think so.

GB: Okay, because here in the National Parks, you can't -

DH: I've never hunted in the Federal Park. I think there's only one in the province of Quebec so there's not much knowledge about it, our area.

GB: Okay, now several years ago there was a very serious controversy in the Club about the Club continuing its affiliation with the records keeping program. How did you feel about this subject?

DH: Well, if we didn't do it right, somebody would do it wrong. That's the way I felt.

GB: Do you feel that the statistics compiled through the records keeping program can be used as a conservation tool? Do you feel that they are used that way?

DH: God knows, that's a cheerful thing, because most people

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

GB: The question was, "Could statistics that we've compiled be used usefully", is that it, in game management? I think an intelligent student of those statistics could probably draw some useful conclusions from them. I don't think it would do any harm, to put it that way.

The records keeping program is one of the important things that has made the Boone and Crockett Club famous. What could take its place as a unique function within the Club, or could anything take its place?

DH: Well, it's a horrible job, and I can't think of why anybody would want to do it except for their own self-aggrandizement, but I can't think of the Boone and Crockett Club without its record keeping quality, that's all. That's one of our main facets.

GB: Were you for or against the arrangements that were made with NRA to cosponsor the records keeping program?

DH: Oh, I shared with Bob Ferguson and Robert Baldwin's [?] approval because they felt that it was a forced measure, we couldn't do it ourselves, and if we couldn't do it properly ourselves, it was going to be done badly, as I said before. And with the facilities of the National Rifle Association added to our own, I think there was every chance of the thing being a great success which it has now. As long as we keep track of each other I think we'll be alright.

GB: Do you remember any of the discussion that took place about this and who was for it and who was against it?

DH: Personalities, no, but I think there were some gallant gentlemen who made chumps of themselves at the time and saw fit to withdraw from the Club in a huff on the head of it, and I hope they've been big enough to see the error of their ways by now. Because I think it shows a great deal of promise for the future.

GB: Okay, can you describe some of the meetings of the Boone and Crockett Club which you attended and some of the social get-togethers, do you remember any that particularly stand out in your mind?

DH: Oh, Lord yes! Wonderful ones. The funny thing is that there's nothing much to do with conservation except indirectly but there's a valuable custom of visiting the grave of Teddy Roosevelt. And the atmosphere around that meeting up in Long Island, and at the Frick house for lunch, and that sort of thing. Out there, Long Island is very particular with Boone and Crockett to me. And that's pleasant, and then when you get into things like Pittsburgh, it becomes unpleasant. There you have to get there and be you, the strangest place when you do, and it's just life in a hotel room or something like that or a strange museum and it's not so pleasant. [There are] a great many pleasant things about the Boone and Crockett, including the

members, and a damn few unpleasant things that's why I'm pleased to be here now.

GB: You know I'm glad you brought this up because I'd like to ask you something. You say it has very little to do with conservation, and yet it does. I want to pursue that a little bit, do you feel that the social get-togethers maybe bring the membership closer together in mind and from that point they go out and they do their various things -

DH: Of course, you've got to have that side of everything. Yeah, the get together thing is...we're not all lone hunters. I like fishermen, getting together, talking things over...or golfers or anything else. It binds and it develops you and it broadens you and teaches you many lessons. I've learned an awful lot from the Boone and Crockett. Not much of it bad, I don't think.

GB: Is there or has there ever been a similar organization to the Boone and Crockett Club in Canada?

DH: No. No. No. It was a funny thing, and I've often chatted my fellow Canadians about [how] you come down here and I attended a meeting I remember in Wall Street, top of the Bankers Trust Building with Nelson Rockefeller, Milford Baker, Dick Mellon...well you might say the cream of the crop there, and they started working at half past eleven, they ate lunch while they were working and they finished at three o'clock. If you can get a dozen people together in Montreal for half an hour at five o'clock, you're doing a miracle. There's a good spirit about this land that we can't duplicate up in Canada at all. We're not conscientious, I suppose, the way you are here. I envy it very much. And that's the sort of thing, well you can't have if you don't have get-togethers of some sort. Club spirit, I suppose, or whatever it is. But it's selfless and that's not bad.

GB: James Clark became a member of the Club and also Sam Webb. Both of them worked on the developing the measuring system that we're presently using now, but Grantzell Fitz [?] was also a very important member of that group that developed the measuring system and yet he never became a member. Do you know why?

DH: Oh, I didn't know Grantzell well enough to know whether he ever wished to be a member of the Club or not. That might be part of your answer. But another possibility, and this is only a raw guess on my part, he was a very near professional when it came to measuring himself, and I think that maybe the amateur boys on the Committee felt that they'd be over awed by having Grantzell on the Committee with them. That might be part of it because he was such a great expert on everything. The picked his brains mercilessly and used his knowledge to the best of their ability but the rest of it I can't hazard a guess on that.

GB: Okay, now going onto the Conservation Committee, are there any particular activities that you remember that you'd like to speak about?

DH: Conservation Committee, hmm. Hold it, hold it, hold it, I don't know, it's going to take me

time. Jesus, I can't think of a thing. Oh, way back, yeah. The first that comes to mind was the old key deer job which we are so proud about, and the pronghorn antelope. Those are certainly big conservation efforts that we pulled off, and I think we made [inaudible] name for ourselves out of those two issues alone, because it's incredible if you see the pronghorn antelope population today to think they were down to nothing and that we were largely responsible for bringing them back. And the key deer [was] certainly headed for extinction. Little thing the size of an airedale and people wonder why you bother but he's just got the same right to live as you have and he was being exterminated. Curious things. I don't know what else we've done that was outstanding.

GB: Well, let me ask you, do you feel that the Conservation Committee today is as active and effective as it was in years past?

DH: Yeah, relatively so because conditions are different. There were more things screaming out to be conserved at that time in years past than there are now because we aren't exterminating things senselessly the way we did at a certain time. I'm afraid to say it, but I think we're growing up. I don't think there's that screaming need for help, but there was.

GB: So in other words, you feel maybe the scope of the issues aren't as large, but they're still as active where they're needed. Is that what you mean?

DH: Oh, sure. Things are bound to come up from time to time, and if we didn't pay attention to them, there'd be trouble.

GB: Are there any areas in conservation now that you feel that they should become more active in?

DH: Not off hand, I can't think of anything. Give me an hour or two, I would, maybe.

GB: Okay. Were there differing views that you're aware of about what the Boone and Crockett Club was accomplishing along the way from a Canadian point of view?

DH: I think that question can be answered north and south or south and north, too, because when I was in the Navy, I was taking a taxi in Washington and a fellow looked at my costume and he saw a patch on the shoulder that said, "Canada". He said, "Say, did you have a Navy up there?", and we were down to 6,000 at that time. But that's more or less the way it works from south to north. Now, with the Boone and Crockett Club, I don't think that very many Canadians know that there's a Boone and Crockett Club in existence unless they're a possessor of a very large specimen or something and then they realize that there's somebody that can record it for them and give them a feather in their cap, you see. I don't think there's much [but] there's a very lot of respect by those who have learned what we are doing, yes. The gallant sportsmen who have read what we're up to and know what our measurements are based on, I think they have nothing but respect for the Boone and Crockett.

GB: Okay. Is there anything that I have not covered that you may like to discuss in the interview?

DH: No, except it's getting to that time of day that I'm accustomed to have a whiskey and soda, what do you think of that?

GB: [Chuckles] Sounds like a good idea. Okay, I'll ask the very last question then. How do you think the Boone and Crockett Club can best continue to carry out its original purposes (this is your opinion now) and retain a position of influence?

DH: By maintaining the same high standards of membership qualifications. By screening them, hand picking them and being just as tough as we ever have been. That's the basics. From then on I don't think there's anything more to be said because if they've got the right men, they'll do the right thing. I think that's all I can say.

GB: Thank you very much.

[End of Interview]