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Paul H. Roberts
FOREST SERVICE ISSUES AND LEGISLATION TO 1951

Evan W. Kelley
THE MAKING OF A REGIONAL FORESTER

John W. Keller
RECOLLECTIONS OF GIFFORD PINCHOT

Interviews Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry

Sponsored by
Resources for the Future and the
United States Forest Service

Copy No. 1

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PREFACE

This interview was made possible by a grant from Resources for the Future, Inc., under which the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, embarked on a series of interviews to trace the history of policy in the U. S. Forest Service. Dr. Henry Vaux, Professor of Forestry, University of California, Berkeley, was the Principal Investigator of this project. Eighteen interviews were undertaken in the years between 1964, when the project received its first grant from Resources for the Future, and 1970 when the last funds were expended with five interviews still to be completed. In 1974 a grant from the History Section, U.S. Forest Service, enabled the Office to finish the remaining interviews.

Copies of the manuscripts are on deposit in The Bancroft Library; in the archives of the U.S. Forest Service; in the Department of Special Collections, UCLA Library; in the Forest History Society, Santa Cruz, California; and in the library of Resources for the Future, Washington, D. C.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in the recent history of the West and of the nation. The Office is under the administrative supervision of the Director of The
Bancroft Library.

Willa Klug Baum, Dept. Head
Regional Oral History Office

1 July 1974
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486  The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California
DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

Interviews: A Documentation of the Development of the U.S. Forest Service 1900-1950

This Resources for the Future interview series on the birth and development of the Forest Service began as a sudden disturbance in the ever-active brain of Ed I. Kotok in early 1964. One wintry day in early 1964, as we were putting away the tape recorder after one of our last sessions together, I mentioned casually that I would not be in the Bay Area for the summer: I had to go East.

Ed's eyebrows shot up. It was obvious that a final piece had fallen into place in a mental jigsaw that he had been carrying around for some time. He said that there were quite a few of his retired colleagues still in Washington, D.C., some of whom were the original "Pinchot boys." If only, he mused, the Oral History Office could find financing for an entire series on the Forest Service, maybe from a foundation like Resources for the Future.

Henry Vaux, then Dean of the School of Forestry at Berkeley, was the logical one to turn to. He gave advice and counsel on a priority system for selecting the men to interview. From deep in his perspective of specialized knowledge of forest policy, he saw the opportunity to preserve information that would otherwise be permanently lost.* At best, the tape-recorded memoirs could reveal, more frankly than annual reports and official letters, some of the political and economic facts of life that influenced the development of policy in the agency. The actual decision-making process, told first-hand and linked with the official rationales and actions on particular issues, could be useful in appraising contemporary policy questions and their multiple alternatives. Today, as in 1905, forest policy is a field where special interest pressures are in a state of varying equilibrium with the public interest. To see the policies and decisions of the past materialize, to witness through the administrators' eyes the expected or (more often) the surprising effect of those actions in the past - such a visible continuum could provide a depth of experience for those who are presently wrestling with the economic and political disequalibrium of resource management.

Horace Albright, a veteran interviewee of oral history operations, lent his encouragement to us and probably his enthusiasm to his friends on the board of Resources for the Future. We contacted three top-priority potential interviewees to see if they were willing to indulge us in our tape recording scheme, and we received a yes, a no, and a maybe. This changed to two yeses and, in place of the no, a substitute interviewee equally valuable. By late spring, a modest grant to the Oral History Office marked the beginning of the series, Henry Vaux agreed to be Principle Investigator, and we were off.

* See appendix, Letter from Vaux to Fry, March 20, 1964.
Structure of the Series

The series, with a working title of "The History of Forest Service Policy, 1900-1950", began and ended as a multiple use project. Its major aim was to provide tape-recorded interviews with men in the Forest Service who during most of the half-century had been in policy-making positions. The series also served as a pilot attempt to try the relatively new technique of oral history as a method of gathering primary information within a specific subject field (one which might be defined here as the origins, operations, and effects of policy in public administration). The method, in turn, was hung on the superstructure of a list of retirees who were considered to be able to contribute the most to that subject.

Each major interview contains the standard stock of questions on Service-wide controversies of the past: the attempts to reorganize the conservation agencies - specifically, to transfer the Forest Service out of the Department of Agriculture; the efforts to get passage of federal legislation that would have regulated timber management on private lands; the competition with other agencies and with private owners for land acquisition determinations; on-going issues, such as competing land uses like mining or grazing, which often reflected years of patient negotiation with and bearing up under the pressures of well-organized special interest groups.

Each interview covers as well topics that are unique to that particular person's experiences, so that tracing "policy in its origins, operations, and effects," necessitated a detective job to discover, before an interview took place, those policy questions with which the particular individual had had experience. It was here that an interviewee's own contemporaries frequently gave guidance and counsel; advice was also provided by academic specialists in forest economics, recreation, fire control, silviculture, and so on.

Given questions on the same subjects, the interviewees sometimes speak to them from contrasting points of view, and thereby provide a critique of inner validity for the series. For instance, while Lee Kneipp and Ed Crafts comment on the informal power in Congress of the Forest Service's widespread constituency, other men (such as Ed Kotok) who actually had been in the field and involved in local public relations verify how the system worked.

The structure of an oral history series depends on many factors beyond the control of the oral historian: the health of the interviewee, his willingness to interview, and how much he can or will say about his career. The fluid state of our interview list caused our cup to runneth over more than once with more interviewees than we could add to our original list of three. Twice the list was enlarged - and fortunately funded further by Resources for the Future. The phenomenon of expansion was due largely to the tendencies of a few memoirists (especially Christopher Granger, Lee Kneipp, and Raymond Marsh) to touch lightly on events in which he had only slight involvement, then refer the interviewer to the man who could tell the whole story from a leader's eye view. The result is that some of the interviews on the accompanying list are one-subject, supplemental manuscripts.
Results

One will find more comprehensive and general information in the longer interviews of Christopher Granger (who was the head of timber management), Ed I. Kotok (Research; state and private forestry), Leon F. Kneipp (land acquisition and management), Arthur Ringland (field activities in setting up the new forests under Gifford Pinchot), Tom Gill (international forestry), Ed Crafts (Congressional relations), and Samuel T. Dana (Research; forestry education), the latter interviewed in cooperation with Elwood Maunder of the Forest History Society. Earle Clapp (research, Acting Chief), shunned the tape-recorder and is currently proof-reading his own written account of his career, a manuscript that will be deposited in Bancroft Library along with the other interviews.

The single subject interviews consist of Paul Roberts on the shelter belt project of the New Deal; R. Clifford Hall's account of the Forest Taxation Inquiry, coupled with H.B. Shepard's story of the Insurance Study. A view from without is provided by Henry Clepper of the Society of American Foresters and Fred Hornaday and Kenneth Pomeroy of the American Forestry Association - a trio who provide a fitting introduction to the series for the reader. George B. Hartzog, Director of the National Parks, comments on the relationship of the two agencies; Earle Peirce gives a first-hand account of the first time the Forest Service stepped in as principal agent in salvage operations following a disastrous blow-down on both state and private timberlands. John Sieker and Lloyd Swift both contributed a telling picture of their respective divisions of recreation and wildlife management. Without these shorter, from-the-horses' mouth accounts, the series would have sacrificed some of its validity. There are of course still other leaders who can give valuable historic information on policy development, men who perhaps can be included in the Forest Service's current efforts to further document its own Service history.

With a backward glance at the project, one can say that the basic objective of tape-recording, transcribing, and editing interviews with top men in the Forest Service was realized. The question of quality and value of the interviews must be decided later, for the prime value will be measured by the amount of unique material scholars use: the candid evaluations of leaders by other leaders, the reasons behind decisions, and the human reflections of those in authority; how they talked in conversation, how they developed trends of thought and responded to questions that at times were neutral, at other times challenging. The value of the series also depends on how many leads lie in the pages of the transcripts - clues and references that a researcher might otherwise never connect in his mind or in the papers and reports he reads.

Since this series was built with tentative hopes that in the end it could justify itself both as a readable series of historical manuscripts and as a valuable source of easily retrievable, primary material, a master index of uniform entries from each volume was developed after the transcripts came out of the typewriter and landed on the editor's desk. Dr. Henry Vaux helped in setting up the broad areas of subjects to be included, and as entries were
added, the Forest History Society at Yale became interested. At present the development of the index is a cooperative enterprise between the Oral History Office, the Forest History Society, and the U.S. Forest Service. A master index of uniform headings from each volume is available at the Oral History Office and at the Forest History Society.

By-products

One frequently finds that the oral history process is a catalytic agent in the world of research. First, it stimulates the collection of personal papers and pictures which, while valuable during the interview in developing outlines and chronology, are later deposited either with the transcript in Bancroft Library or with related papers in another repository.

Another happy by-product comes from the more literate who are motivated by the interview to do further research and writing for publication. Thus, Paul Roberts is currently writing an entire book, complete with all the documentation he can locate, on the shelter belt, its whys and hows. Ray Marsh is meticulously combining both writing and recording in a painstaking, chapter-by-chapter memoir which will cover his earliest reconnaissance days, the administrative posts in New Mexico, the fledgling research branch, and his work with Congress; his stories of those earliest years have already appeared in American Forests. Tom Gill, fortunately frustrated by the brevity of the interviews, which were condensed into the short travel schedule of the interviewer, is writing a more comprehensive treatise that will no doubt be unique in this or any other forest history: Tom Gill on Gill and international forestry.

Also, there is the self-perpetuation phenomenon-- oral history begetting more oral history. The interview with National Park Director George Hartzog has led to serious efforts on the part of the Park Service to establish a regular annual interview with the Director-- not necessarily for publication. Also under consideration is a Service-wide plan for oral history interviews of all its major leaders, which could serve as a continuation of the series conducted by Herbert Evison in the early 1960's.

Ed Kotok did not live to see the finished series. Just as Lee Kneipp never saw his finished manuscript, and Chris Granger's final agreement, covering the use of his manuscript, was found still unmailed on his desk after his death. All other contributors, however, were able to devote hundreds of man hours to the reading, correcting, and approving process required in finishing a manuscript. Although Ed did not get to read and approve his own transcript, all who knew him will agree that the series stands as one more symbol of his propensity for plunging in where few have tread before.

(Mrs.) Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer - Editor
Mrs. Amelia R. Fry  
Regional Cultural History Project  
485 General Library  
Campus  

Dear Mrs. Fry:

The significance of the proposed project for securing information from certain selected people long associated with the development of the U. S. Forest Service rests on two facts. On the one hand, there are a small number of men still alive whose personal experience and memory covers virtually the entire history of the growth and development of the Forest Service since 1905. If we are to secure the best possible insights and understanding of the history of the Forest Service as a conservation agency the recollections and mature viewpoints of these men who were associated with the Service throughout their careers would provide unique and invaluable source material. The time remaining during which this information could be collected is obviously limited. A second justification is found in the fact that to date there has been no comprehensive historical evaluation of the role of the Forest Service as a conservation agency. Ise has published a critical history of National Park policy under the sponsorship of Resources for the Future which serves as an initial evalua-
tion of the National Park Service. About 1920 Ise published a study on forest policy but that is obviously now confined to only a very small part of the significant history. A series of views such as are suggested in the present proposal could provide both new source material and the inspiration for a critical historical evaluation of the Forest Service.

The results would be of the greatest importance to the field of forest policy. The Forest Service pioneered both the articulation and the implementation of the concepts of sustained yield and multiple use as policies for natural resource management in the U. S. It instituted numerous innovations in the organization and administration of programs of handling federally owned resources. It developed on a large scale new techniques for cooperation with state and local units of government in such matters as fire protection and landowner education. It pioneered in a number of respects in the development of research as a functioning guide to operational policy of the government. Each of the contributions just enumerated are of the greatest possible significance for forest policy and for important implications going far beyond the natural resources field. The project here proposed would throw much light on the way in which each of the innovations noted above developed and would contribute greatly to our understanding of them.

Very sincerely yours,

Henry J. Vaux  
Dean
THE RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE SERIES

Tape-recorded interviews on

THE HISTORY OF FOREST POLICY, 1900-1950

Clepper, Henry, Executive Secretary, Society of American Foresters.
The Society of American Foresters, 1968

Crafts, Edward C., Assistant Chief, U.S. Forest Service
Congress and the Forest Service, 1950-1962, 1975

Dana, Samuel T., Dean, School of Natural Resources, University of Michigan.
The Development of Forestry in Government and Education, 1967

Gill, Tom, Forester, author, head of Pack Foundation.
The Summary of the Career of Tom Gill, International Forester, 1969

Granger, Christopher, Assistant Chief, U.S. Forest Service.
Forest Management in the United States Forest Service, 1965

Hall, R. Clifford, Director, Forest Taxation Inquiry.
Forest Taxation Study 1926-1935, 1967

Hartzog, George B., Director, National Park Service.
The National Parks, 1965, 1973

Hornaday, Fred, Executive Vice-president of American Forestry Association.

Keller, John W., Forester, Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters.
Recollections of Gifford Pinchot, 1974

Kelley, Evan W., Director, Guayule Rubber Project, U.S. Forest Service.
The Making of a Regional Forester, 1974

Kotok, I. E., Assistant Chief, U.S. Forest Service, state and private forestry; research.
The U.S. Forest Service: Research, State Forestry, and FAO, 1975

Kniepp, Leon F., Assistant Chief, U.S. Forest Service.
Land Planning and Acquisition, U.S. Forest Service, 1975

Marsh, Raymond, Assistant Chief, U.S. Forest Service.
Collected papers and unedited transcript of interviews
Peirce, Earl, Chief, Division of State Cooperation, U.S. Forest Service.  
**Salvage Programs Following the 1938 Hurricane**, 1968

Pomeroy, Kenneth, Chief Forester for American Forestry Association.  

Ringland, Arthur, Regional Forester, Region 3, U.S. Forest Service; Secretary of National Conference on Outdoor Recreation; founder of CARE.  
**Conserving Human and Natural Resources**, 1970

Roberts, Paul, Director, Prairie States Forestry Projects, U.S. Forest Service.  
**Forest Service Issues and Legislation to 1951**, 1974

Shepard, Harold B., in charge of Insurance Study conducted by the Northeastern Experiment Station with Yale University.  
**The Forest Insurance Study**, 1967

Sieker, John H., Chief, Division of Recreation and Lands, U.S. Forest Service.  
**Recreation Policy and Administration in the United States Forest Service**, 1968

Swift, Lloyd, Chief, Division of Wildlife Management, U.S. Forest Service.  
**Wildlife Policy and Administration in the United States Forest Service**, 1968
Paul H. Roberts

FOREST SERVICE ISSUES AND LEGISLATION TO 1951

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry

Sponsored by
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United States Forest Service

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INTERVIEW HISTORY - Paul H. Roberts

Early in 1965, when the Regional Oral History Office was trying to complete a series of taped interviews documenting the lives of a few U.S. Forest Service leaders, we wrote to Paul H. Roberts and suggested that he write out the story of the Prairie States Forestry Project, better known as the Shelterbelt. He was happy to cooperate and noted, "Always when Director of an Emergency Project such as the Shelterbelt [I] had an historical chronology prepared as the job progressed and a complete account prepared at the termination thereof." He felt that putting the story together would be a natural for him.

In the spring an opportunity arose to meet Mr. Roberts in person when he wrote that he and Mrs. Roberts were planning to drive out and visit their son Rodney, who lived just across San Francisco Bay from Berkeley. Letters and telephone calls were exchanged, and arrangements were made to tape record briefly some biographical and Forest Service history that could be deposited with his Shelterbelt manuscript.

Accordingly, Paul Roberts spent the afternoon of May 27, 1965, taping in Berkeley. We used an empty research office on the fourth floor of the University of California Library, and even with such little ado in preparing for the interview, he entered into it with gusto and gave direct answers in an obvious effort to set down the high points and interpretations of the main events and issues of his career in the Forest Service.

During the following year the preparation of his book manuscript, Them Were The Days, competed heavily for his attention, as did the fact that he was not exactly retired in other areas of his life. In a letter of January 31, 1967, he states he is "president of Narce, Commander of the Prescott Barracks of Vets of World War I, Vice-president of the camera club and a few other things."

He also discovered, as he continued to work on the Shelterbelt story, that the quantity of research material was greater than he had suspected. This delighted him, and he prepared to proceed deliberately through it, if more slowly. Because he had grown up in the environs of the Shelterbelt, he also wanted to put together "the environmental, cultural, political, and social background" as well as the narrative of the project itself. We exchanged many letters discussing outlines and exchanging supportive comments. In the summer of 1967 he sent the
first chapter for a critique and estimated that the manuscript would run over 100,000 words. We both thought the finished story would be publishable.

Professor Wilmon H. Droze, then at Texas State University of Arlington, surfaced about this time, and for a while it looked as if the book world might be enriched with two histories of the Shelterbelt, Roberts's and Droze's. In the meantime, Roberts had dug up other sources, such as a Wessel article on the Shelterbelt.*

By March of the following year, 1968, Roberts returned from a camper trip to Mexico and surveyed the stacks of notes and drafts in his study, summing up: "I am astounded at the amount I have actually got written up . . ." He was getting help with source-searching in Washington from "a few of the old boys," and in August an exultant note announced he had located Carl Taylor, "our genius seeds-man on the Project who sent me his personal notebook . . ." He gained further stimulation from young plains foresters when he attended a forestry meeting on shelterbelts that was held in Oklahoma City that summer.

It was after his surgery the following winter that his writing slowed somewhat, although he wrote that he was still locating others who had been on the Shelterbelt with him and were rich in valuable information. He could see the end of the manuscript coinciding with the end of the year.

However, illness continued to interrupt. The rough-edited transcript of our interview, which had lain dormant during a period of low finances, was sent to him to check for further corrections and additions after he wrote on his Christmas card of 1970 that he had been ill for a year and had sent his Shelterbelt material to Professor Droze to finish.

He went over the tape transcript, cutting out those things he considered as irrelevant to forest historians and tightening the conversation to make it more readable. After his death, his wife helped us enormously by getting the manuscript to us and seeing that the legal agreement for use was returned. A rough copy of the interview also was given to Professor Droze for his files.

The first chapters of Droze's history of the Shelterbelt are now completed, and the Forest Service has announced that

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the finished manuscript will become the first book ready for general circulation to be contracted by their History Office. We wish Paul Roberts could know.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

10 June 1974
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley
CHOOSING FORESTRY
(May 27, 1965)

Fry: Would you like to start out by telling how you happened to choose forestry in the first place?

Roberts: Oh, that's kind of funny. [Laughter] I wrote about that in this book of mine that's coming out.* My father was a graduate engineer; he was a graduate of Worcester Tech. But I thought I was not enough of a mathematician to be an engineer. I wanted an outdoor profession. I went to the University the first year with a friend from home who told me about forestry and about Professor Frank Phillips under whom we had taken an elective course in forestry. I had not heard of forestry as a profession before. I went to see Professor Phillips, who was very enthusiastic about the new profession. Actually, the School of Forestry was more or less in the Department of Botany then.

Fry: Oh, I see.

Roberts: They say Dean Bessey, head of the Botany Department, had been very instrumental in having a forest school established at the University of Nebraska. Phillips told me a good deal about forestry and he thought I'd like it—and so I decided that I would study forestry. Then I had to put in a year—that was 1909—at the Lincoln Academy to make up some credits because I came from Maxwell high school which was not fully accredited at that time.

Fry: This was in Nebraska, wasn't it?

*Them Were The Days
Of course, a forest school at Nebraska University was rather peculiar, so much of Nebraska is treeless, but Dr. Bessey and others were enthusiastic about tree planting in the Sand Hill region which no doubt had much to do with establishing a forest school. Well, I often said that I only knew three trees when I went down there: the box elder, the cottonwood, and the cedar. [Laughter] But at any rate, I decided to study forestry.

Roberts: Yes, Nebraska.

Fry: Now, what decided you? Just talking--

Roberts: Well, talking to Professor Phillips and some of the older students. It was the picture Phillips painted. Forestry was a new profession then, and the wide world was open except for the fact that you had to work for the government--there was no forestry work anywhere except for the government. I don't know whether any state had a Forestry Department at that time. Might have been. They say that one of the oldest forest schools in the country is at Bottineau, North Dakota.

Fry: This was about 1910. You say you didn't make up your mind until . . .

Roberts: Oh, I made up my mind all right, I intended to take forestry.

Fry: I was just wondering about Gifford Pinchot's run-in with President Taft in 1910. Were the reverberations felt enough in Nebraska for this to influence you?

Roberts: No. But we all knew about Pinchot because of course he was the Chief of the Forest Service. Everyone knew about Pinchot. But you see, that was about the time Pinchot was fired.

Fry: Yes, that's what I mean.

Roberts: So that was how I happened to take forestry.
REMEMBRANCES ABOUT UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA FORESTRY SCHOOL

Fry: Who do you remember from the Forestry School there?

Roberts: Oh, Dean Phillips very well. Then we had a Professor [Sponsler?] who followed Phillips, in charge of the school. And he was very good too.

And after that we had a Professor Morrell who was State Forester of Colorado, and head of the Forest School at Colorado State College.

I graduated in 1915. Due to various circumstances, I was a year late.* Nebraska had many men who specialized in grazing or range management. The School furnished many of the early range technicians.

Fry: What about other students there who later might have contributed something outstanding to forestry? Were there any with you as your classmates that you'd want to comment on?**

*Mr. Roberts adds: He stayed home a year when his father was ill and died.

**In the Nebraska Cornhusker of 1912, Mrs. Roberts found a picture of the "Forestry Club" and the following names:

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Roberts: Oh, well I think Palmer probably made quite a contribution on the reindeer study. John Boyee became a Yale Forestry School professor and nationally known forest pathologist. C. L. Korstian became head of the Duke University Forestry School, and W. R. Chapline became head of Range Research. He started very early with James T. Jardine. Arthur W. Sampson and Jardine were the two early range researchers.

Fry: Was Jardine a Nebraskan?

Roberts: No.

Fry: You mean after Chapline graduated, he went with Jardine?

Roberts: Yes, he worked under Jardine during his (Chapline's) student days. Jardine was involved in—well, they didn't call it research then. They were studies. (He was a brother of the Jardine who was Secretary of Agriculture for a while.) When Jardine quit, he went to Oregon to do agricultural work out there. Chapline took Jardine's place. In 1928, range research became a division of the Branch of Research. And he was in charge of this all through his career until he retired. Then, he went to Europe for the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Fry: And Clarence Forsling, another Nebraskan, became head of the branch of research?

Roberts: There were many other Nebraskans who attained positions of prominence in the Forest Service.

Fry: Do you remember if these men showed any great promise as students?

Roberts: Yes. They were good students. The year we took the grazing examination, Forsling got first place and I got second, and as I recall Nebraska men who took the examination that year got the first four places. The Civil Service Grazing Assistant Examination.

Fry: Bravo!

Roberts: Men like Dr. Ray Pool, Professor of Botany, and
Roberts: Dean Bessey were tremendously interested in forestry, in the whole conservation movement. And then of course Bessey was instrumental in getting the Nebraska National Forest established. It was all planted forest, you see; and then there was Dr. George Condra, who was a geologist, he was another one. Yes, and others: Dr. Bengston was one, a professor of Economic Geography.

Fry: Who were the people who really weren't concerned about the falling standards of the school?

Roberts: I don't recall that there were any of the faculty, Botany, Geography, Geology, but were concerned with maintaining a highly rated school. There were no forests, of course, in Nebraska, and Nebraska-trained foresters left the state, which was no doubt the major reason the school was discontinued. Nebraska forestry students went to the National Forests which were then almost entirely in the western states.

Fry: So that as a tax-supported institution, this had no place in their curriculum?

Roberts: Yes.

Fry: Was there any opposition to it inside the faculty?

Roberts: No, I don't think so. Gil McDonald, a Nebraska forester, who was head of the Iowa State College school, turned out a lot of fine foresters, but Iowa had much more woodland than Nebraska. Nebraska has always been known as the school that turned out the first group of technical grazing men, although it turned out a lot of foresters, also.

Fry: You were in grazing, weren't you? When you left, is that what you took up?
TO THE FOREST SERVICE: GRAZING

Roberts: I went into the Forest Service as a grazing assistant. After the examination I took, I first had the title of forest guard.

Fry: And then you went to Region 3 ("District" in those days)?

Roberts: Well, to the regional office in Albuquerque. I was on range reconnaissance, range surveys, they call it now, for about three years until the war. After the war started--do you remember back to World War I? Do you remember meatless days? Well, we who had been on grazing reconnaissance work, in the Region we were assigned to make examinations of all forests to see if more livestock could be grazed on the forests to help increase the meat production. They wouldn't let us join the army as long as we had that work to do--but as each one of us finished our range assignments, we quit and joined the army. And when I'd finished up, in the summer of 1918, I went to a cavalry officers' training camp in Texas; but I was only there, oh I think it was about two months or something like that before the armistice.

Fry: So you didn't go over?

Roberts: No. When I'd finished my range examinations, they made me Inspector of Grazing. But I was only in that job a month or two before I went into the army. And when I came back I continued as Inspector of Grazing for about four years.

Fry: So then you went to Washington?

Roberts: No. Then I went out as Supervisor of the
Sitgreaves Forest in Arizona for nine years, with headquarters in Holbrook, Arizona. Holbrook turned out to be a good headquarters town—the people there were just wonderful.

You were in Arizona just before World War I; I think you mentioned that for a while you did something on the Coconino Forest.

Well, that was while I was still in school. 1912. I went out there for a summer of range reconnaissance.

I see. Well, I was just wondering if you knew anything about Grand Canyon and some of the problems that it had as it was reclassified as a national park, and as some of the Cameron claims cleared out of there.

I knew something about that, but you see when I was out there, that was part of the Tusayan National Forest. When was it—1916 or something like that—before they made it a park? Well, Cameron, who was a highly respected Senator in Arizona had these mining claims on the Bright Angel Trail. And also at the top of the canyon. Well, anyway, he claimed they were mining claims.

T. T. Swift was a mineral examiner. He had started a career as a pharmacist's assistant in Iowa; as I recall, and was also supervisor of the Crook National Forest when he was a mineral examiner. And I think he had studied mining engineering, and went out to Arizona to try his luck at mining. I don't think he did too well at that, and decided to take the examination for the Forest Service work. He was the man that checked the claims. Incidentally, I've got a personal letter from him telling me about that.

Do you still have it?

You see, I gathered a lot of this information when I was working on my book.*

*See letter, Swift to Roberts, appendix.
Roberts: I didn't know exactly what I was going to write, so I started to gather up information here and there.

So then the interests were transferred to Coconino County. And then the Park Service took over.

I suppose you have known of the Kolb brothers who went down the Grand Canyon in boats—probably the first after Major Powell. They had a studio at the Canyon where they gave lectures and showed pictures. They built the boats. Kolbs thought very highly of Cameron because I believe Cameron had helped them out quite a bit.

At this time the range situation, as far as the relation between stockmen and foresters, was very good until after World War I. World War I was what really caused much of the grazing troubles on the national forests, and the depression in the livestock industry which followed the war. But before that good progress was being made in improving range conditions. Oh, we had our battles. But, there was a lot of mutual respect. There was no dirty in-fighting such as took place later; I missed that pretty largely because I was either in Washington or out on some emergency project such as the Shelterbelt. I was practically out of the Forest Service. I used to say, "I was not in the regular Forest Service," because I was out on these emergency projects. I went out in the fall of 1934 and I didn't get back until the fall of 1946. And a lot of the troubles over range abuse took place while I was on emergency work.
RESEARCH DIVISION ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Fry: Let's take you on to Washington, then, and let you talk about that. You were the first administrative officer in the branch of research.

Roberts: Yes. They created this position because the volume of research work was increasing. There were now at least ten field research stations and the Washington headquarters, and a position was needed to handle administrative matters.

Fry: This was about when?

Roberts: I went back there in 1931. I think I transferred back in 1932. But I went back in 1931, actually, occupying the job. And I stayed there until the fall of 1934.

Fry: What were your duties as administrative officer?

Roberts: I took care of the financial allotments and I prepared budget estimates in cooperation with chiefs of divisions, and handled the personnel—recruitment, assignments, and so forth. Research was a very tight organization. Except under unusual circumstances one couldn't get an appointment in the branch unless he had scholastically been in the top twenty-five per cent of his class in his university. We got reports from all the forest schools on the students. So Research was very selective.

Fry: Was any one school looked upon as better for research men than another?

Roberts: No, I don't think so. Graduates were judged on the basis of the work that they did.
Roberts: The appointees were selected by the entire staff usually with Earle H. Clapp, the Branch Chief, making the final decision. I handled appointment details, also kept informed about financial requirements, and kept the chief and division chiefs informed. I handled the mechanics of it. But the selections were made by Earle Clapp and the division chiefs.

Fry: Yes. What about selection of research? Would you have had anything to do with the selection of research projects and emphasis?

Roberts: Not a great deal. I sat in on all the conferences. If it came to grazing I might have been consulted. I always said that I never did anything in the Forest Service that I knew anything about because, you see, I had started on range which was new to me and then I became inspector of grazing which was strictly administrative. And I worked at that for four years. Then I was a forest supervisor, and had not had experience as a ranger. I had worked on the forest planning for range and for grazing, but I actually hadn't had much other experience in administrative work. Then I went to Washington in this administrative officer's job, which no one had been in before, which I organized with Clapp with regard to procedures and that sort of thing. I pretty much prepared the budget by consultation with different division chiefs and with Clapp. I got it in shape so he could take it up to Congressional hearings. Then, of course, when we went out on the Shelter Belt, it was a new undertaking on such a vast scale. And no one had had experience with tree planting on the plains on such a grandiose basis.

Fry: Right. [Laughter]

Roberts: I didn't get back to anything I was supposed to know about until I became Assistant Regional Forester in charge of Range Management at Missoula and by that time I had forgotten most of what I was supposed to know. [Laughter] That was in 1946.
EARLE H. CLAPP

Fry: What do you know that you'd like to say about Clapp?

Roberts: I think Clapp was one of the great foresters of this country and I don't believe his accomplishments have ever been fully recognized. In my opinion he did more for forestry, and more for the benefit of Forest Service personnel, during his tenure in Washington than anyone else in the Forest Service. He accomplished great improvement in salary grades. Forest surveys were a branch of research. When Granger came in to take over forest survey, Clapp obtained a salary for him greater than Clapp himself was getting as Assistant Chief. He had no compulsions at all about anything of that kind. And he was always struggling to better the position of his own men in research and also all of the Forest Service. His efforts were responsible in large part for reclassification of grades and better salaries.

I know that because I worked with him on some of this work and I had several conferences with the Department of Agriculture's personnel officer. He thought well of Clapp, too. But Hedley, who was at that time in charge of Range I Operations and Administration, was not aggressive in obtaining increased salaries and better classifications. So Clapp was always working against some resistance there.

Fry: Was the opposition inside the Department of Agriculture?

Roberts: No, I think Stockwell, who was in charge of personnel, was very liberal-minded on this.
Fry: Where was the opposition, then?

Roberts: It was more a lack of aggressiveness on the part of others in the Forest Service. As a matter of fact I think the improvement in classifications and salaries due to efforts of the Branch of Research had more to do with increasing the salaries in administration than anything else. But Clapp was that kind of person.

Fry: Were any of the men on the Washington office staff closer to Clapp than others?

Roberts: I'd say his own division chiefs.

Fry: You mean in Research. And then later on when he became Acting Chief, were there any that were closer than others?

Roberts: I don't think so. Not that I know of.

Fry: What did Clapp think of Ickes?

Roberts: I don't know what he thought about him personally. Everybody kind of admired him because he was an aggressive son-of-a-gun. He was out to get whatever he could get, that's all there was to it. He built up the Department of Interior. That's one reason why some in the Forest Service thought they'd do better in the Department of Interior. They thought that Ickes would do better for the Forest Service. Of course his story was that he was going to get the Forest Service and make a tremendous big thing out of it, and add other things to it:
ISSUES IN THE ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER THE FOREST SERVICE TO THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

Fry: What were the arguments for transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Roberts: The Forest Service was the only administrative organization in the Department of Agriculture. Everything else was research on crop agriculture. Now it was not a one way street, really, in the Forest Service, as to whether the Forest Service should remain in the Department of Agriculture. There were those who felt that the Department of Agriculture was composed of research organizations; it was crop agriculture, primarily. And they felt they'd never had proper recognition within the Department of Agriculture itself. For example, there was no forestry set up in the departmental organization and the Forest Service as I understand it felt that its problems and accomplishments were often neglected or overlooked.

They'd had secretaries who were interested in forestry. But they never had a secretary who knew forestry. But Carl Schurz, for example, when Secretary of Interior, was probably as interested in forestry and conservation of natural resources as any secretary of that Department. Anyway, there was some feeling that the Forest Service, which would be the largest operation in Interior, might fare better in that department.

But I think the dominating thing was that range and forests are biological and all the biological research or most of it was in the Department of Agriculture. Also I am sure that the leadership of the Forest Service felt that the Department of Agriculture was less politically inclined and less subject to political pressures
Roberts: than the Department of Interior. And they could maintain a continuity of programs in the Department of Agriculture much better than in the Department of Interior. I think those were basic considerations.

Fry: I have two questions on that. Did the political pressure on Interior come from Congress primarily or Interior's Bureau of Reclamation? Bureau of Reclamation usually got all the appropriations for favorite projects in various Congressional districts that it wanted. Was the Forest Service wary of competing with that, if it should become part of Interior?

Roberts: I know nothing about pressures from Congress if there were any, which I doubt.

Fry: Then I wondered who the men were in the Forest Service who would not be too worried if they happened to land in Interior?

Roberts: Well, I think some of the field men. And then I heard some underground talk. They didn't express it very forcefully or publicly because the policy was all the other way—to stay in Agriculture.

Fry: Then I gather that in the Washington office at the assistant chief level . . .

Roberts: That was pretty much united, as far as I know.

Fry: Against the transfer?

Roberts: Against the transfer, yes.

But Clapp was the ringleader of that fight. And he risked his neck time after time. And he was a bulldog to stay with things. He never gave up. He was one of the most courageous men that the Forest Service ever had because he could have been fired any minute when he was waging this fight against Interior taking over the Forest Service. And he probably would have been if the Forest Service hadn't had many friends both on the Hill and elsewhere.

Fry: I wondered.
Roberts: They wouldn't fire him. They might not have been what you'd call personal friends, but they were against the transfer.

Fry: In this fight, was Clapp more or less the center officer?

Roberts: Oh, he was the leader of it, yes. Oh yes. Absolutely. He was the strategist. And, as a matter of fact, the boys at Research probably carried that battle to a great extent. And others no doubt helped, if they happened to know some-who could do something about it.

Fry: Kotok and Show have mentioned something in their interviews about some of the grass roots efforts that were put forth in California. Were there other places?

Roberts: Yes, I think so. Anybody that had a connection. And nearly everybody did. I think very likely the southern states--I don't know much about that--but I have a hunch that the southern states did quite a little bit.

I knew Senator Norris very well. A lot of people thought that Senator Norris was in favor of the Forest Service being transferred, but I learned he was not.

Fry: He was not?

Roberts: No. He was very influential with Roosevelt. It looked like we were going to have the Second World War at that time--and I question whether he ever saw F.D.R. about the transfer. But he was in favor of the Forest Service staying in the Department of Agriculture.

Of course, he was one of the backers of the Shelterbelt Project. That was where I got to know him so well. He was from Nebraska and I was too. I had gone to school with his son-in-law, who was his secretary. And, of course, I knew Jack pretty well.

Fry: You could just call up and say, "Hello Jack, this is Paul."
Roberts: Well, not just that way.

Fry: Did he help during that time when it looked like all it needed was just a stroke of the pen from the President?

Roberts: He was not one of the senators, as I understand it. I believe one of them was McNary and the other one was Pittman from Nevada.

Fry: What did they do?

Roberts: As I heard the story they immediately protested to Roosevelt when he had the transfer order on his desk.

Fry: The order transferring the Forest Service to Interior.

Roberts: Yes. There was one more Senator, but I was not close to the maneuvering at the time, as I was on the Shelterbelt Project.

Fry: Well, we'll try to put that in the appendix.

Roberts: I don't think we'd better publish that now.

Fry: When these three senators went to talk to Roosevelt, what was it that they threatened him with if he should transfer?

Roberts: I can't tell you that except my understanding is--Roosevelt had a good deal of support for a lot of those things he started that were revolutionary things--and he was supported, of course, on both sides, to a great extent. And he didn't want to lose that support. In conservation he probably had the support of Senator McNary of Oregon, for one, one of the great supporters of forestry who had helped the Forest Service immeasurably. I think Pittman of Nevada had done the same thing. And there were others. Hayden of Arizona always had.

Anyway, there had been a saying that forestry was supported by the East. If it hadn't been for the East, you wouldn't have had it. And I don't think that's entirely true because I think there were a lot of really firm believers in the West;
Roberts: I think that's been brought out in some of the later writings and research work.

Fry: Did Clapp and Roosevelt disagree on other major policies in the Forest Service?

Roberts: No, I don't think so. With all that fight, Clapp always thought Roosevelt did a good job for foresters. He was never opposed to Roosevelt, and thought he accomplished much for conservation generally.

I think Roosevelt was in favor of regulation. And of course Clapp was the power behind the fight for forest regulation. And while the Forest Service never got federal regulation, it did a lot for better forest management. It was that battle which forced the lumber companies into doing something about regulating their operations. I mean, the end results have probably been just about as good as if legislation had been obtained. But, as I say, Clapp was just a bulldog for tenacity on those things. And he just stayed with it and stayed with it.

Fry: How did Clapp feel about state regulation? State versus federal?

Roberts: He was for federal regulation. Most all Forest Service people were for national control.
POLICY ATTITUDES IN THE FOREST SERVICE

Fry: I wanted to know what policy questions might have been the most controversial in the Forest Service—within its ranks?

Roberts: I think regulation may have been one of them.

Fry: In the Washington office?

Roberts: I think, probably, throughout the Service. That is, whether they should, you know, go on a federal regulation basis or whether it would be better to seek voluntary cooperation from the timber owners.

Fry: Why were most people in the Forest Service for federal rather than state control?

Roberts: You know, from a national standpoint, you always feel that the states don't have the continuity of administration and programs, as does the federal government. The states were usually limited on money also, more limited than the federal government.

Fry: Who was more skeptical of federal regulation in the Forest Service?

Roberts: Of course, the lumber companies fought it tooth and nail.

But I think in the Forest Service it was more or less just a few individuals. I don't think there was any organized divisional opposition or anything of that thing.

Fry: Was Granger behind the move for federal regulation?

Roberts: I don't know whether Chris was actively a sup-
Roberts: porter of it or not. I think he would have been for it. But to what extent he fought for it, I don't know. I wasn't working with him as part of the organization.

Fry: I wanted to ask you if this preference for national control was across-the-board in the Service.

Roberts: Yes. People like Show, to whom I talked quite a lot. We all worked on the Copeland Report, the national plan.* You'll see my name in there.

As a matter of fact I made the first write-up that ever was written up on wildlife management. That was a kind of funny thing, too, because Clapp and I went out and tried to get [Aldo] Leopold to do it. But he wouldn't do it. Then Clapp came to me and said, "Paul, will you write a paragraph on wildlife management?" And I wrote the section on wildlife management for the Copeland Report.

Fry: Why wouldn't Leopold do it?

Roberts: Just about then he'd taken that job as dean at Wisconsin. They started the first wildlife management course.

So then I started. I made the outline, and after about fifteen or twenty of them I got one that suited Clapp. And I wrote the section. I was told there were more requests for this section than there were for any other. Because it was the coming thing, you see. Letters from lawyers and doctors about their sons starting to study wildlife. And requests for separates of the report. There were an awful lot of them. And probably, the wildlife portion was one of the poorest sections in the whole report. We had never done much about it before.

Fry: Yes, at that time Forest Service was pretty much

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ignoring wildlife management.

We'd never done much about it. We'd had it. Of course, that was after the battle over the Sun River elk herd and the Kaibab when Governor Hunt declared war against the United States. [Laughter] My boss used to say, "He was going to call out the Arizona militia to keep the Forest Service from shooting the deer."

Oh, he wanted the hunters to do that, I guess.

Governor Hunt was opposed to the Forest Service going in there and killing the deer. I think it was worked out so the hunters could go there. The Supreme Court at that time had avoided deciding whether the state or the federal government owns the game on the National Forests. Of course, it's always assumed that the state owns it. And it's well accepted that they do, now.

I wanted to ask you about these reports like the Copeland Report. They're all requested by congressional resolutions.

Those resolutions--I think that a Senator that was interested in some activity would confer with the Forest Service and then introduce a resolution. Royal S. Copeland was a senator from New York. That's how we started the range report.*

Who did you go to for the resolution calling for the range report?

Norris, George Norris introduced that resolution.

Oh.

I went up with Clapp and Silcox. Because I probably knew him better than anybody.

Why did you think it was necessary to have a range

*The Western Range, Senate Document 199, 74th Cong., 2nd Session, 1936.
Fry: report right at that time?

Roberts: I didn't. Well, Clapp, I think, thought that it was about time that they rounded up the history of the range and what was happening on the range. We wanted to get the story before the public.
TAYLOR GRAZING ACT, 1934

Fry: This was around the time of the Taylor Grazing Act, also.

Roberts: Yes, 1935.

Fry: Yes. Did that have anything to do with it? Because the Forest Service had just lost a great deal of potential control over grazing when the Taylor Act put unreserved public domain lands under the Department of Interior for grazing administration.

Roberts: The Forest Service had been fighting to get the unreserved public domain range put under administration for years. I don't think the Forest Service was too much concerned for a long time whether they got it or somebody else got it, but some members of the Forest Service believed that the Act as passed contained language that would prevent good range conservation. E. A. Sherman, Assistant Chief of Forest Service, who was more or less the author of the original bill, felt badly about it.

Fry: I guess Senator McCarran had something to do with that. Did Forest Service people have any pipeline into McCarran's office?

Roberts: No. I don't know McCarran's attitude. The reason that the range was not put under administration was because of a battle within the livestock industry itself many years earlier. Stockmen had petitioned time after time for legislation to have the remaining public domain placed under administration. Sheepmen were opposed to it. Cattlemen were usually for it and they could not come to agreement. And that was what kept the range from being put under administration for...
Roberts: thirty years after the national forests were created, just about the turn of the century. The Forest Service came into being in 1905. The Range Act was about 1934.

Fry: It was passed by Congress and went to Roosevelt's desk. And I think at that point the lawyers in the Department of Agriculture felt that it should not be signed, and the lawyers in the Department of Interior felt that it should be signed. At any rate, Roosevelt signed it.

Roberts: The Forest Service was the primary agency opposing the bill as amended.

Fry: I see.
NORRIS-DOXEY ACT, 1937

Fry: I'd like to move on to anything else that you might have had first hand information about, such as the Norris-Doxey Act.

Roberts: The Norris-Doxey Act was a very confusing thing. The Shelterbelt Project was operating with W. P.A. and various other related funds. We never had enough money for our overhead administrative operation. That is, you were allowed as I recall 5%—I don't know whether there was a legal limit on it, but I assume that that was about what you could have—and we never had enough. So all the time the Forest Service was trying to get an appropriation for the shelter belt that would give us an overall fund for our state offices and our regional office, and cover some of our personnel and our overhead activities like physical set-up and operational set-up, but the estimates put in the budget were always disallowed. Senator Norris and others who were supporting the project were trying to get legislation but it was not to be had. Finally, Senator Norris, who had tried on several different occasions to get a bill passed and hasn't been able to do it, said, "I can't get an appropriation that benefits only the strip of country through the Plains where the shelter belts go. It's got to be something that benefits the farmers all over the country." And he said, "Can the Forest Service write a bill that will be of benefit to all the farmers?" And I said, we could.

I told Clapp of the Senator's request and he said, "Get Harry Irion and write a bill for the Senator covering all the farmers." So Harry and I in about two hours, wrote the first
Roberts: draft of the Norris-Doxey Act. Clapp made a few little changes and that was all there was to it. I believe he consulted with Ed Munns. I don't know whether he did or not. And the bill was given to Senator Norris. Then the Senator wanted an identical bill introduced in the House.

Marvin Jones who was the chairman of the agricultural committee in the House, as I recall, introduced it in the House. The situation is hazy now but the bill did not pass. Jones was very busy the next year. So it was introduced in the House by Mr. Doxey. The bill was passed, apparently, without very much opposition. I don't remember too much about that. But that was the Norris-Doxey Act.

Fry: It did not contain a provision for a matching state and federal fund. It was just an outright federal grant.

Roberts: Yes, as I recall, it's been so long since I've seen the bill. I don't think federal-state cooperation would have been prohibited.

Fry: Yes, it did have some cooperation provisions.

Roberts: It was an aid.

Fry: Primarily functioning through the Agricultural agents.

Roberts: Yes. It was an aid to farmers, and as I recall, could be administered by any Forest Service agency, and was administered by the Shelterbelt. I think it was the first farm-forestry act that was passed, aside from the Clarke-McNary Act.

Fry: Then later on there was another agricultural cooperation act.

Roberts: The Norris-Doxey Act was finally superseded by another law.

Fry: Well, the Norris-Doxey was quite a contribution.

Roberts: It was peculiar. I don't know how it happened because it happened awfully fast. And the Forest
Roberts: Service had been trying to get some kind of a farm-forestry act. But Norris, at that time, had tremendous prestige in the Senate. And if he proposed something non-controversial, he was pretty apt to get it passed.

Fry: Do you think that this helped the Forest Service policy swing toward an interest in the little tree farmers, or farmer-timber-growers?

Roberts: The interest was always there. They never could get a legislative basis for it—a good legislative basis. Because so much of the tree growth was in the farm woodlands, you see. It was always recognized as an important phase of forestry, but for some reason or other it was never possible to get necessary legislation and appropriations.

Fry: And this interest was there, then, even before the Norris-Doxey Act.

Roberts: Oh yes. We always had the State and Private division of the Service. I don't know when the division was created, but it was one of the old divisions. But it was always a very limited advisory service.

Fry: Was State and Private primarily set up for the little farm forester?

Roberts: No, not entirely. It applied to all privately owned forest land. State and Private came in under the fire control phase when they were trying to get fire control over all forest lands. We were losing an awful lot in state forest timber from fire because of lack of state and federal organization. The states themselves were not organized. And part of this was, I think, to get the states organized and to speed fire control. It was a terrific job to get it done, but I think that was the dominating thing at first, rather than this little plot that the farmer himself worked with, although that was part of the picture. How to handle his wood lot, that came under the Norris-Doxey Act. The handling of the wood lot was a recognized activity that should be expanded.
A PERSPECTIVE ON AUTONOMY IN THE FOREST SERVICE

Fry: Would you like to go on into your comments on whether autonomy has increased or decreased in the Forest Service?

Roberts: Maybe I can more or less outline the thoughts that I had in mind. In the first place you have to go back to the origins. There were only about 150 technically trained foresters and most of these were in the Forest Service. The bulk of the Forest Service was made up of people who had an interest in conservation--ex-cowboys or cowmen or miners--they came from practically every walk of life. But all of that group was brought together by Pinchot into a cohesive organization, as far as ideals and purpose was concerned. And they all had a part in the development of the regulations, methods, and the procedures.

Most of those fellows were under thirty years old and recognizing that the Forest Service was a far-flung organization, and that inordinate time would be wasted if decisions were made in Washington, D.C., also that most of the day-to-day business was with the public, the organization of authority and responsibility was established on a decentralized basis, and everybody had first-hand experience and information as to what went into a program, regulations, etc.

So fellows like Evan Kelley came in 1905 and some of the other early foresters like Lee Kniepp and other people, Frank Pooler, all helped develop the functions of the Forest Service.

The District headquarters were in large cities, and the Districts were divided into Forests and the Forests into ranger Districts. Regional Districts were created in 1908. So District Foresters (now Regional Supervisors and
and Rangers) were given a lot of leeway for action and decision.

And also then, the policy in the Forest Service was a policy of decentralization of authority and responsibility within proscribed limits, all of which were set up in the regulations. The supervisor, for example, might make a timber sale for ten million feet of timber. The regional forester, I don't know, maybe he could make a sale for fifty million feet. But above that the Washington office had to approve it.

Supervisors issued their grazing permits and so forth and handled them under the regulations. So that they operated very independently. The inspection system was tight on both administrative and technical methods. At first, all the regulations were in what they called the Use Book. You could put it in your pocket and carry it around in your saddle bags.

Fry: Yes, I've seen one of those. I think they're about the size of a pocket address book.

Roberts: Of course, when I came into the Forest Service we had a book about the size of a loose leaf notebook.

Fry: It was still just one book.

Roberts: It was still just one book. You couldn't put it in your pocket any more, but you could put it in your briefcase or saddle bag. But it was all there. And you operated under that. And maybe you were inspected once a year and maybe you were inspected once in two years. I was supervisor of the Sitgreaves National Forest for nine years and had only three or four administrative inspections during that time, but many timber sale inspections.

Fry: Just four?

Roberts: By a grazing man.

Also, in the Organic Act the Secretary of Agriculture was authorized to promulgate regu-
lations for the administration of the national forests. That was the law. The regulations had the force and effect of the law. And they were tested in the courts time after time. When I left in 1931 I still had the one book of regulations. It was still just that big, and everything in it—administration, timber sales, grazing, lands, what not.

These men who came in around 1905 were all young men, and they lasted a long time. So when I left the regular Forest Service in 1934 they were still the regional foresters, assistant chiefs, some supervisors. Some of those fellows who had come in at first and been regional foresters for years, they had a background, knowledge, experience, and so forth. And things were pretty much theirs to operate. They would have a regional foresters' meeting once a year in Washington, D.C. headquarters. Maybe they had a meeting on timber sale management or grazing management every so often. And they did a little work on amendment of the regulations and the handling of various phases of the work. That kept up, you see, for about twenty-five years.

Yes, they were a highly experienced corps of men.

The people that started with the outfit had helped build it up. And they had a lot of prestige, publicly. Because even though they had to battle at times with the stockmen, the stockmen knew they were fighting them honestly and there was much mutual respect.

Then the New Deal came along and we had a revolution in new agencies, new laws, and a lot of social laws and new departures. So things got more complicated. Then we had overlapping activities with other agencies. Things had to be coordinated with other agencies. Particularly, I think, we had a lot of new laws. During the Roosevelt dynasty, instead of having one book of regulations, the book grew into a library. You had a reference book to find what you wanted and two or three of them were more voluminous than all the regulations that we had had before. Things just got more complicated.
Within the Forest Service there were also administrative studies in which the inspection system had a pretty big part. You had administrative management to improve the efficiency of the operations and you also had the special system which tightened up controls. Now, I don't think that the authorizations within the regulations were centralized or that authority was withdrawn, but the supervision of that authority became more intensive.

I see. You don't think this inhibited the authority of the rangers, then?

No, not too much. But I think the ranger was inspected more. It might have had the effect of causing him to refer to or consult with his superiors more often. But I think he kept the same authority. As a matter of fact his authority may have increased because where you had one ranger on a district, with maybe an assistant, the ranger became a little super manager and he had assistants in all these different lines of work. So he might supervise as many people as a supervisor did formerly.

He had more specialists to help him.

Yes, more specialists. And his work, instead of being direct tended to become supervisory. Where he formerly got out and marked the trees for a timber sale he now had a timber sale man or men to do it. So I think that if a critical examination was made of the grants of authority as they're written, the regional foresters, supervisors and rangers may have just as great authority now as they ever had, but are subjected to closer supervision.

So his job has grown more complex, in effect, and he may have just as many decisions to make.

Much more complex. And his decisions may be tougher. In the old days we didn't have any recreation responsibilities. But now recreation in the eleven western range states, as we call them, may be, economically, second or third. I don't think it's less than a third in any of them. But recreation, when I was supervisor,
Roberts: It consisted of local people going out camping and building a campfire and cooking hot dogs and so forth, and that was about all there was to it. They never let their fires get away.

Fry: Well, not usually. [Laughter] Yes, I think Show mentioned some of this too. You were really on your own to take care of whoever wandered off.

Roberts: Yes, that's part of it. But I think that the authority of the Secretary--he still has that authority to promulgate regulations—but I think that there are more laws that conflict; what I mean is, he has to take more laws into account in drawing regulations.

Fry: So that there may be more congressional control?

Roberts: Yes. "Limitations." I think you'd call them limitations rather than controls.

I did want to say the projects that I was in charge of would never have been involved if there had been any changes that affected the autonomy of the Forest Service set-up. Because I was always out by myself running the projects. And nobody else knew much about it.

Fry: You were just really autonomous?

Roberts: Yes. I ran it. That was all there was to it. There was always such communication I would have with the Chief or Clapp, who was then Associate Chief.

Fry: When did you retire from the Forest Service?

Roberts: I retired two years early because I was doing all this emergency work,* and I decided I was going to have a heart attack if I didn't quit pretty soon. I retired in 1951. I was Chief of Grazing in Region I when I retired. The Chief told me, "Paul, you'll never have to go on another emer-

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But every time they had one they'd call up and they'd say, "Will you go? Now remember you don't have to go." And it was just like a fire horse going to a fire. I couldn't resist. And, of course, the older I got the tougher they got for me, too.

But I started with the Shelterbelt Project. Then I went with the Guayule Rubber Project. Kelley was there about a year or two and I took that over as director. I left that in '46 and I went to Region I ostensibly as Chief of Grazing. Then they had the first Tussock Moth Project--airplane spraying project. They asked me if I'd run that; it was pretty well lined up. Then I think the next year, 1950, I went down to Colorado and took over the Spruce Beetle Project. The year that I retired, I think that was the year I went back to Washington and worked with P.M.A. (Production and Marketing Administration) for three months. I got out of there as quick as I could. [Laughter]

You worked for what?

P.M.A., that was the big agricultural organization into which they threw many other agencies, which had been separate agencies. There were all kind of jealousies, you know.

Was this under the Secretary of Agriculture?

Yes, the old A.A.A., and Marketing, Agriculture Credits etc.

Well the reason I asked your retirement date was to see under whose administration you retired, because I wanted to ask you if you thought that the authority of the Chief of the Forest Service had waned any. Had Chief Lyle Watts, in turn, lost some of his authority to the Secretary of Agriculture?

I don't think so, not up until the time that I retired, because the Forest Service has always been pretty much operated on its own. They weren't interfered with too much.

There were no under-secretaries then that had
Fry: the Forest Service under their wing particularly?

Roberts: No. And I think the only ones that ever did have anything to do with it were very favorable. There was one fellow that I remember, it may have been in the first Eisenhower administration, a fellow by the name of Ervin L. Peterson--I think he was from California--I think he was very favorably inclined toward the Forest Service. He helped them a lot. But the Forest Service had been the only administrative organization, you might say, in the Department of Agriculture. Others were research organizations. The Soil Conservation Service had no authority, for example, to administer land, so the Forest Service was given management of the Soil Conservation Service grasslands.
I'd like to ask you something about the switching back and forth of the Soil Conservation Service, too. Do you know anything about that?

Not much. You ought to ask Ed Munns sometime. When the New Deal came into being they appropriated large amounts of money for emergency work, and people were out of work. Anyway, when they got through stretching this money around, Ed, who always had his nose to the ground, found out that there was $5,000,000--and at that moment I think it was resting in the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering. And he came to me--check this story with him when you get a chance--and he said, "Paul, there's $5,000,000 in the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering that hasn't been specifically set up for some purpose and that's been batted around over there. They haven't done anything with it. And we ought to get that money."

Did he have anything specifically in mind?

Yes, we could have used it in the regions. Whoever handled the emergency work for the regions had cut them back from the original regional estimates. I got those. And I remember . . .

This was when you were in charge of research administration.

Yes, that's when I was in research administration. I got the Forest Service estimates. And I found that they had been cut back. And I told Clapp. Clapp wasn't disposed to try to get any part of the $5 million. But he said, "If you want to, go see Bob Stuart and talk to him." Bob Stuart was Chief. I told Stuart that this money was
Roberts: possibly available, which was none of my business actually. "The administrative estimates for the Regions had been cut back. So maybe we ought to try to get part of it." But the Forest Service estimates were already in and he had some com-
punctions about reopening the matter. So we didn't do anything about it.

Then Hugh Bennett, who was in the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, as I understand had the idea of creating a Soil Erosion Service, learned of this money, and went to Ickes. (Ickes, in Inter-
terior, administered emergency money.) Anyway, he talked to Ickes and the Soil Erosion Service was set up in the Department of Interior.

Fry: This wasn't quite what you had in mind, was it? [Laughter]

Roberts: No it wasn't. We wanted that money.

Fry: Bennett was in the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, in what agency?

Roberts: In the Department of Agriculture.

Then, Ickes was going on a field trip one time. He always claimed that Wallace stole Soil Erosion Service because when he got back it was in the Department of Agriculture. And then the name was changed to the Soil Conservation Ser-
vice, but this was later.

Fry: Yes. How did the Department of Agriculture get it back? Do you know?

Roberts: I don't know the inside history of this. But I just imagine that Wallace probably talked to Roosevelt and told him he ought to have it in the Department of Agriculture. And while Ickes was gone he took it. Ickes wasn't there to stop the move.

Fry: Did you ever have any dealings with Ickes?

Roberts: No.
INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Fry: Now in the Guayule Project, did you have access to the services provided by other agencies?

Roberts: Yes.

Fry: Such as the Bureau of Plant Industry?

Roberts: Yes, the Bureau of Plant Industry set up one of the best research outfits ever west of the Mississippi River. We had the B.A.I.C. We had men from the Bureau of Soils, Soil Conservation Service, and Bureau of Entomology. We did a lot of soil survey work. We did the same thing on the Shelterbelt. The Soil Conservation Service and Weather Bureau, at that time, were in the Department of Agriculture. We borrowed men from the B.P.I. Soil work, actually, at that time, was in the Bureau of Plant Industry, I think. And they did soil survey work for us.

Fry: So in your emergency projects, you had quite a bit of inter-agency cooperation.

Roberts: Yes--a great deal.

Fry: What about your research when you were back in Washington as administrative officer in research. Was this inter-agency cooperation easy to maintain there? Research frequently had to work with some of the other divisions in the Forest Service.

Roberts: Oh yes, they always worked together.

Fry: That's all I can think of now. You'll write up your history of the Shelterbelt and we'll put that in with this.
Biographical Material and Story of Mining Claim Sampling at Grand Canyon: The Cameron Claims

T. T. Swift, Old Time Forest Supervisor*

I was born and grew up on 480 acre farm in Iowa, graduated from State Center high school at the age of eighteen. A farmer's life did not appeal to me so secured a job in a drug store at a salary of $20.00 per month and room. Secured good board at $3.50 per week. After about a year in the drug store went to the University of Iowa for a course in pharmacy and became a registered pharmacist. I drifted back into the drug store but the long hours did not appeal to me. Somehow there developed in me a desire to go west. I married and took a course in mining engineering, after which I secured a position in the laboratory of a wholesale drug house in Muskegon, Michigan. There I became acquainted with men who were forming a company to develop a copper prospect in Arizona. They made me an offer as engineer which I accepted and was soon off for Arizona, landing at Safford in January 1900.

In Safford I became acquainted with John Farmer Forest Supervisor of what was then known as Mt. Graham forest embracing Mt. Graham and Santa Teresa mountains. In 1904 or 1905 a ranger examination was held at Ft. Huachuca. Upon the urge of Farmer I took the examination. At the time I had no idea I would ever enter the Forest Service. I took the examination to see what it was like. Soon after this Farmer was assigned to June 11 Examinations and H. A. E. Marshall, who was then Supervisor of Pinal Forest, near Globe, Ariz., was transferred to Safford from

*Copy of account written by T. T. Swift, for Paul Roberts. Original in The Bancroft Library.
which office he administered both forests.

Late in the fall of 1905 the mining company folded up account of the copper prospect did not turn out as anticipated and I was without a job. In January of 1906 Supervisor Marshall offered me a job as Forest Ranger on Mt. Graham which I accepted and in doing so considered the appointment as only temporary on my part. In April of that year Marshall was called into Washington for three months detail and I was put in charge of the Supervisor's office as ranger in charge. While Marshall lived near Globe he became acquainted with a school teacher from the East. The teacher secured the appointment as teacher in southern California. Marshall, in order to be near his lady friend, secured a transfer to a forest in southern California which left me in charge of the Safford office. In December of that year I was promoted to Supervisor.

At the head of Russell Gulch on Pinal Mountain was a beautiful level flat upon which some one, in the early days, had built a small one room log cabin. Marshall had the area withdrawn as a possible administrative site. Also Marshall had a ranger by the name of Rogers, a hard working man with limited education and possibly sixty years or more. A prospector came along, occupied the cabin and covered the administrative site with mining claims. All was reported to me by Rogers. I advised Ranger Rogers to explain to the prospector the status of the area which was not subject to mining claims location. I never knew just what took place but always thought the prospector ran Rogers off his claims at gun point. Anyway Rogers reported the prospector refused to vacate and was a dangerous man to meet. I advised Rogers I would be up to Globe in a few days and we would make the prospector a visit. All the way as we rode the trail to the head of Russell Gulch Rogers continued to beg me not to see the
prospector for if I did was sure I would get hurt. About a quarter of a mile from the administrative site Rogers stopped and said it was as far as he was going. I left him and rode on.

When I reached the flat the prospector was standing in the door of the log cabin. He was the dirtiest human being I had ever seen, am sure he had had no bath since Christ was born. His long whiskers held fragments of past meals and am sure his dirty greasy trousers would have stood alone. I introduced myself to which he said had heard of me. I told him I understood he had located mining claims on an administrative site and was occupying the cabin without permit all of which was not legal. Then he blew his top - said he knew the mineral laws - was an American citizen - knew his rights etc. - etc. After he cooled down I advised him he was in trespass and would have to vacate - that I did not want to arrest him and turn him over to U.S. authorities in Globe. Again he burst out knowing his rights and turned and entered the cabin. I sat on a tree stump some 25 or 30 feet in front of the cabin and waited next move. Presently he came out of the cabin with a six-shooter in each hand, walked up within a few feet of me, pointed both guns at me and ordered me off his property. I again explained the situation to him and advised him I would stay until he vacated. He looked at me for a few moments and then said he believed I meant what I said - to which I replied I did. He lowered the six-shooters, gathered up his pack animals loaded them and left. Where he went I do not know. I never saw or heard of him afterward.

In 1908 I was called into Washington for a three months detail. I met Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot a grand man whose heart and soul was in the work of the U.S. Forest Service. Upon completion of my detail I re-
turned to the Safford office. During my administration I reported on the Galluro range of mountains and recommended being added to the forest which was approved. Also the name of the forest was changed from Mt. Graham to the Croon National Forest. On account of my mining experience I was assigned, in addition to Supervisor duties, mineral examiner of all mineral claims for patent on the forests of Arizona, New Mexico and buffalo range in Oklahoma. In addition was assigned to examine the Cameron claims in the Grand Canyon.

Mr. Cameron was quite a politician during the territory days of Arizona. In fact was elected Delegate in Congress to represent the territory of Arizona.

The start, of what is now known as the Bright Angel trail, was made by the Havasupai Indians from the south rim to Indian Garden. The Havasupai Indians lived, and still do, down in the canyon. Cameron took over this trail and improved it, extending the trail on down to the Colorado River by way of Pike Creek. He plastered mining claims the full length of the trail as well as along the south rim both east and west of the Harvey occupied area. Thru his political influence, I was told, he got the territorial legislature to pass a law declaring the Bright Angel Trail a toll trail. Whether this is true or not I never checked because I felt it had nothing to do with validity of his claims. I also was told Cameron called at the Harvey office every night and collected $1.00 per head for every tourist who rode over the trail. I did not confirm this either. Cameron refused to allow any improvements on his claims such as hard surface roads along the rim drives or convenience of tourists, or any other improvements of any kind.

To assist me in examination of the Cameron claims was a mineral examiner from the Interior Dept. by the name of Gilliland, also a mining man of wide experience from
Seattle by the name of Kennedy, the latter of which also had experience in Alaska. We three met at the Grand Canyon and made plans for work. Before examination started I had a conference with Mr. Cameron explaining why and reason for the examination. I asked him if he had a map of his claims and if so could I have a copy. His answer was all the claims were recorded in Coconino County and I could help myself. Thus we had to hunt for each claim. Each location work, we found no other workings, was carefully sampled and plainly marked. During the day I kept all samples under lock and key and at night under my pillow. This was done so I could swear, if necessary, all samples were always in my possession, and also allowing no one to tamper with the samples or salt them as is a mining expression.

When the work was finished we were packed out from our camp at Indian Garden to the Harvey Hotel on the south rim. I secured a Pullman reservation for Los Angeles taking all samples for assay by a reliable assayer I knew. When I was ready to board the sleeper with the sack of samples the porter refused to allow me to take the sack into the car, said I could check it or send by Express. I explained the situation but of no avail. I told my story to the Pullman Conductor who let me on the car with samples. Upon arrival in Los Angeles I got a cab and drove to the assayer's office, turned the samples over to him taking his receipt and waited results. With the exception of possibly 4 or 5 samples all showed not even a trace of value. The 4 or 5 samples showed a trace of either gold or silver but not enough to figure a value. On the finding of the assay returns and my personal investigation of the Cameron claims I prepared an adverse report which was sent to the District Forester, Albuquerque, New Mexico. In the fall of the same year the Secy. of
Agriculture Huston and U.S. Forest Service chief of grazing Poter came to the canyon for a first hand look of the Cameron situation. I met them at the canyon and gave them all the information I had. A team and carriage was rented for a drive west along the canyon rim. There was two or three inches of wet snow on the ground but was not cold enough to freeze the ground. The ground around the Harvey quarters was hard surfaced. As we left this hard surface the carriage dropped into a deep hole that shook all. The Secretary wanted to know what we had struck. All I could say was Cameron's claims.

The way was finally cleared so the needed improvements could be made. Just how far these have been carried out I do not know for I have never been back to the Grand Canyon, I have seen all the canyon I care to.

In 1921 or '22 the watershed area from the Mogollan River to the Indian Reservation was included in the National Forest for protection of erosion to the Salt River irrigation project and was given the name of Tonto National Forest. I was given supervision of the new area. With added administrative work I was relieved of mineral claims examination.

In 1923 I was transferred from the Crook to the Tonto with headquarters in Phoenix. I remained Supervisor of the Tonto until I retired in 1935.

*Tonto National Forest, established 1905 [Paul Roberts' note]
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Evan W. Kelley

THE MAKING OF A REGIONAL FORESTER

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry

Sponsored by
Resources for the Future and the
United States Forest Service

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Evan W. Kelley at the time of interview, October 10, 1964.
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INTERVIEW HISTORY - Evan W. Kelley

Evan Kelley was interviewed primarily to round out the story of the Guayule Rubber Project during World War II, part of which was being written by Paul Roberts. Numerous persons with whom we had spoken during the Resources for the Future Project on Forest Service policy history had recommended getting Kelley's story, and if possible, a complete memoir.

So it was that when this interviewer was visiting in Santa Barbara, I called Mr. Kelley for an interview, even though the Resources for the Future Project had long since closed out. He was in a retirement home nestled at the bottom of a mountain on the edge of that beautiful seaside city, and although he was still gathering strength from a recent illness, he agreed to at least begin the taping. The day was October 10, 1964, and very Santa Barbara--room temperature with sunlight bouncing blue off the sea and mountains, compelling us to move outdoors for the recording.

As we set up our chairs and equipment, he pointed to a dramatic line on the mountainside only a few hundred yards above his residence. That was where they finally stopped the fire of only a few weeks before, he said, as it first crested the peak then roared downward toward the city. He shook his head, grinned, and said it was scary all right, and pretty hard for an old fire horse like himself to stay out of the fight. Then he proceeded to describe the unusual problems of that devastating '64 fire, how the air currents went the wrong way, and where I could go to see evidence of the tremendous winds produced in the fire. His concern now was that the burned area be planted immediately to hold the soil during the coming rainy season. It was a ground lesson in brush fires, made so interesting and lucid that the next day my camera and I photographed some of the fire scars, as if to illustrate the main points of his lecture.

With the tape on, he launched into a modest description of the rugged jobs as a mule skinner and mine worker he had had, beginning at age sixteen. (Some people say it was earlier.) He told of his assignments in the Forest Service, then of beginning the CCC, and of that almost legendary firefighting innovation, the fire jumpers. After about two hours it was clear my visit should end. So we stopped, promising each other we would meet again on my next trip to Santa Barbara and talk about the Guayule Project.
But Evan Kelley's life did not last until my next trip down the coast.

Earlier, Christopher Granger had explained how the Guayule Project had involved assembling equipment, establishing nurseries to grow seedlings, renting land for field plantings, overhauling the pebble mill (the rubber plant which was an old, out-of-use mill at Salinas), and recruiting labor during a time of great shortages in manpower and equipment. There were other difficulties with which Kelley coped, Granger explained: A government priority had to be obtained for almost anything he needed. Also, a member of Congress from California's Hemet Valley resented deeply the Forest Service's "invasion" of his district. The Associated Farmers in California became a harressing group: the Mexican workers' housing was unnecessarily high quality, a waste of taxpayers' money, and the House Committee on Agriculture sent a subcommittee to investigate. It rebuked the critics in the end.

Nor were California farmers and Congressmen the only source of unrest about the project. From Nevada, a Congressman pressured the Forest Service to use Nevada's rabbit brush as a source for a rubber substitute, but it was too costly to cut, assemble, and process.

When forestry Professor Emanuel Fritz told the interviewer that Kelley was "a hard-boiled boss," the appraisal fitted with the conditions of pressure under which he must have accomplished his job. It is interesting that Fritz's view of the Guayule project was that promoters connected with land interests pushed for decisions on the Guayule effort, men who had tried it before privately but could not afford land and labor costs required for production. Another source—Jim James—corroborates that bulldozing expense was so great that farmers had not been able to do it; the land had to be leveled first so it could be irrigated. However, much of it was land that was not producing anything at the time—such as old fruit tree groves.

As we were putting away our equipment after recording that afternoon, Mr. Kelley said he would be gathering his thoughts about Guayule. He spoke of others who had made it possible. Paul Roberts organized and started Guayule, with his help, he said. Christopher Granger was the one who had told him to take on Guayule, and then put through the budget, making several trips to California in the process. He added that the School of Agriculture of the University of California helped in soil analyses and water analyses, and that for that matter, "soils men came from all over."
Professor Fritz's brother-in-law, Roy Phillips, worked on the Guayule project under Kelley, and Fritz passed on the comment that Kelley was able to click "with the old timers" but gave the University-trained foresters a hard time.

It was Granger who gave the final appraisal to Kelley's talents: "Despite obstacles Evan Kelley and his outfit did a superb job [on Guayule]. I doubt if any other man in the Forest Service could have given the effective leadership and direction to the job that Kelley did. By the time the project was terminated we had produced 2,947,273 pounds of Guayule rubber, including a small quantity from the wild plant harvested in Texas . . . " [from the Christopher Granger interview, conducted by Amelia R. Fry, the Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1965].

Because we were expecting to tape another session, and because there was no funding at the time to support work on the interview, Kelley did not receive the rough-edited copy of this session to check over before his death. A grant from the Forest Service in 1974 has made it possible to finish the processing, which has consisted only of checking the transcript for clarity, names, and spellings, and breaking it up into topical sections. The order of the conversations has not been rearranged, nor have any words been changed except where an occasional bracketed word is inserted for clarity. Here and there a question mark flags a name or word that is muffled on the tape.

As an intriguing clincher for all who are interested in the history of the Guayule project, Kelley said he had given a copy of just such a history to "the organization in Mission Canyon" in Santa Barbara. He couldn't recall its exact name at the moment, but further sleuthing suggests that it is the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, which is located in Mission Canyon and which has a library.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer - Editor

15 May 1974
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley
Fry: One of the first things that I'd like to ask you about is where you were born, what part of the country you grew up in, and how you got interested in forestry?

Kelley: I was born in Sierra City, in Sierra County [California], on October 19, 1882. So right now I'm almost eighty-two years old.

Fry: I have it in my notes that you went into forestry in about 1906, is that right?

Kelley: That's right. I had quite a life before I went into forestry. I'll tell you how I happened to go into forestry, if you're interested. [Laughter]

Fry: Yes I am, because I know this includes some mining stories.

Kelley: I worked as a miner when I was a boy. I left school when I was about sixteen years old and went to work in the mines. And I worked in the gravel mines and the hydraulic mines, and then underground mines. I was a hard working boy.

Fry: I'm interested--how many hours a day did you have to work?

Kelley: In the mines? We worked about ten hours in the hydraulic mines. And in the underground mines, it all depended. We worked anywhere from six hours to ten hours. But most of the time it was six hours; and in those underground mines we worked six hours and there were three shifts of six hours. We went to work in that kind of mine at 7:00 in the morning. And we worked to 3:00 in the afternoon. Then another shift went to
Kelley: work at 3:00 in the afternoon and worked until 11:00 that night. And one went to work at 11:00 that night and they worked until 3:00 in the morning. And that was typical of the underground metal mines in that part of the country.

I was working in the Mohawk Valley, in Plumas County, in trying to develop a copper mine.

Fry: By develop you mean you owned part of this?

Kelley: No, I didn't own it. I was just working for wages. That was in 1900. A woman who was the wife of the man who owned that mine, came into the mine. We were working down in the hole. And we were digging a tunnel from that hole into where the copper metal should be. But we got in there as far as we thought was necessary to find the development of the mine, and we couldn't find any copper in there. But this woman came down there and she was brought down in that mine where another man and I were working. And she wanted to know whether there was any metal in that mine, and whether the mine was any good. I was just a boy and I didn't have any answer to give them. But I knew it wasn't worth a hoot. But the man I was working with, a fellow of about forty-five or fifty years old, who had worked in the mines all of his life felt free to tell her that he didn't think there was any value in that mine.

This woman was about sixty-five or sixty-six, and she looked at the hole we were digging, and she said, "Gentlemen, I presume it doesn't make any difference. My husband has been mining all of his life somewhere. (His chief work all his life had been to make some sort of medicine for kids.) And he's worked hard all his life. But he's spent all of his money working in the mines. And I don't suppose it makes any difference where he works. He's bound to work in the mines." [Laughter] "And if he doesn't make any money here, he'll go someplace else." Then she went back upstairs.

About three days later that mine closed down. And none of us working in that mine got paid for what we had been doing. The only position I could get--I was a long way from home; my home in those days was Downieville, over in Sierra
Kelley: But I knew a man in that part of Plumas County who was getting out logs for a sawmill. I knew him, I'd worked for him one summer before doing log cutting. So I hunted him up and asked him if he'd give me a job. He said, "Oh yes, I'll give you a job." He said, "Come on up to our camp." I walked up to their camp, about fifteen miles. And I got a job from him, cutting logs. In those days, for that kind of work, we went to work at 6:00 in the morning and we carried a lantern and worked until 6:00 in the evening. [Laughter] And we carried a lantern again. It was dark when we went to work in the morning and dark when we came back to camp in the night.

He had a daughter, about seventeen, who was the cook. And she wanted to go back to school. This was wintertime. And he didn't want her to go back to school because he didn't have a cook. She said that there must be someone in that group of twenty-eight men working there who could cook.

So he went around the camp that night. We were just in a log house with the beds along the wall. And we had little seats in front of our beds. And he came down to the bunkhouse and started to ask the men, "Can you cook?" He went all around until he came to me. I was the last man on the list. And he says, "Yes, you can cook." [Laughter] So that's how I got a job cooking. That started my interest in forestry.

All these men who were logging were all older men. I was just a boy. And during that period the word came out that the Plumas National Forest was being set aside. That was 1901. It hadn't been set aside, but they had made examinations and there was talk about making that a forest--a reserve. And all these loggers fought that idea. That meant that the government was coming into the country and would be ordering the loggers to do certain things in the woods, and they didn't like that at all.

They talked about that all winter. And after I cooked supper and washed all the dishes all I did was sit around there and listen. And the longer I listened--
Kelley: the more I became interested in the merits of setting aside those forest reserves.

In the course of time, during that winter, we finished cutting the logs and I went over to Virginia City. I worked in the mines there. But that was an impossible job for me. That mine was a wet mine—hot water. It was a miserable place to work. And you had the itches all over your body, working in a hot, hot mine.

Fry: You mean it was very steamy?

Kelley: It was steamy, yes, hot water and a lot of that. So I had to quit that. I couldn't work. So I went back home to Downieville and worked in another mine, and I worked in those mines there until the spring of 1904. Then my brother-in-law offered me a job—

Fry: Excuse me, what kind of mines were those?

Kelley: Those were placer mines—underground mines.

Fry: For gold?

Kelley: Yes, for gold. And they were rich mines, too.

So I'd worked in the mines so long that I decided that if I could get any other work that gave me any satisfaction, I'd quit the mines. So I quit that White Bear Mine. It was a rich mine; there was lots of gold in that mine.

I became a packer. He's the man who skins mules and loads them down with items from mines and what not. And I'd go early and come home late and load up anywhere up to two hundred pounds on a mule. If he couldn't lift two hundred pounds it was just too bad. Then this brings me up to how I happened to go into the Forest Service again.

In Downieville, that spring, came a man, I didn't know who in the world he was. And he never told me who he was. But he asked me a number of times where I was going that day and if he could go with me. So I told him where I was going, and I would be glad for him to go with me. And that
fellow would follow me quite a number of times back in the mountains—not the same way, the same road all the time, or the same trail, but where he would pick up information, I think. And he was asking me all the time, "What mountain is this? What are you packing all that stuff for? What are they doing with all that stuff?" I'd tell him the best I could. And that summer went on.

He finally left Downieville and went somewhere else. I never knew where he went. And I never did learn who he was. So the next winter where he went—he left Downieville country and went up to Sierra City and he covered that country. And he went with a young fellow by the name of Pride up there, who I knew as a boy, and asked him a lot of questions about the country. And Pride learned what his business was. He was a representative of the federal government, Forest Service. He was examining land for the Agriculture Department.

Doing reconnaissance work.

And what he was doing all the time he was following me and my mules around, was getting the information about the nature of the country and whether in his judgment it would be suitable for National Forest purposes. But I didn't know that at the time.

Later the next winter, there came a man into Downieville from Baker, Oregon. And he came there to tell the people in Downieville about the forest reserves and what their purpose was and what the government planned to do in those counties there—Sierra County, Yuba County, Placer County, and some others of them. And I was working and I listened to all of this. And finally I asked him what the chances were of getting a position in the Forest Service. This was in the spring of 1905. And he told me he thought it was all right. He told me what to do—to write to the Agriculture Department in Washington and tell them what my experience had been in the woods and ask for a position. I did that. But it went a long, long, long time.

In the beginning of 1906 I had a letter
Kelley: from the Agriculture Department offering me a position in the Forest Service—then it was the Forest Reserve. So I took the position. And I got the appointment in the spring of 1906. My headquarters was Nevada City and my supervisor was a fellow by the name of Eliot. And Eliot wrote to me and told me where I could meet him in Nevada City on a given date and I'd have to have with me my saddle mule. And he said, "You'll need a pack mule because when you leave Nevada City you have to go to Camptonville and there I'll tell you what your job is." [Laughter] So I didn't get a pack mule. I borrowed a horse from this fellow that I used to drive a pack train for. And my brother-in-law loaned me his saddle horse. That's how I got all fixed up. I had a fine saddle horse, and a mule or a horse to pack. That's how I started in with the Forest Service.

I went to Nevada City and reported to the supervisor, Eliot. He was a very fine fellow. He was from Lake County. And my first job was to run the boundary of the Yuba National Forest, which became later part of the Tahoe National Forest.

Fry: This took some added skills, didn't it?

Kelley: Let me tell you. I had learned a lot about mines, inside of mines, and how to hit a drill, and all that, and how to load a hole and so forth. But I never learned anything about surveying. I had never learned anything about the government surveys of land. I should have known more, but I didn't. But I learned that pretty quick.

Anyway, I started to run the boundary line of that little Yuba National Forest, from the Yuba River, clear across, working north into the north fork of the Yuba River. And I got that information by asking some of those old fellows who had lived in that country. They knew something about section quarters and section lines. And in the aggregate there were quite a number of them. And they could tell me where to go and what to do when I found one of those corner posts. That went on all that spring.

And then after that I counted my first sheep.
Kelley: I never counted a sheep before in my life, but I was instructed by this man Eliot to go down there to the Yuba River. He said, "The sheep will be coming along by the road over there. And be sure you count the sheep so somebody doesn't bring more sheep than he paid for."

Fry: For the grazing permits?

Kelley: Yes. So I counted sheep and I counted cows, after a fashion, in that territory, all that spring.

And then came the 22nd of May, 1906. And I was told by the supervisor that there would be a ranger examination in Quincy. So I took my old saddle horse and I rode all the way from way down the Yuba River, above Marysville, all the way to Plumas County, to Quincy, to take that ranger examination.

Fry: Did they ask you to pack a mule in the exam?

Kelley: Oh yes, I had to pack a mule. And I had to get on a horse. And I had to tell them how to make hot cakes. [Laughter] I had to chop wood and pile up a cord of wood. Of course, in the course of time, I had to put all this on paper. And the supervisor at that time in Quincy reported that into Washington. And I never heard from that. That was in May. I never heard from that examination. Along came the latter part of September.

And this man—his name was Bill Belcher—I worked for in the last mine I worked in, had gone to Nevada and had leased some mining property over in Nevada. And he came to Downieville looking for a foreman to go over to Nevada to open up some of those mines that he'd leased. So he knew that I could do that kind of work. So he offered me a job back in the mines again, over in Nevada.

I had spent all the money I'd saved before that year had ended. This was in September. And I'd never heard from that examination that I had anticipated.

Fry: But you were still working for the Forest Service?
Kelley: Yes. But I was only getting $60 a month, and I was broke. And this man from Nevada offered me $90 a month, which was pretty good pay in those days. So I told him all right, I'd take that job.

So then I sat down that night and wrote to the supervisor's office in Nevada City that I was resigning from the Forest Service and told him why. I took that examination way back in May, and I never heard from it. And I spent all the money I had. I was working for very small wages and I just had to go back and get a job which would mean more square meals.

Well, Eliot had just come home that day. Here's how your life changes—hangs on pedestals [pendulums?]. He'd come into Nevada City the day that I had written to the office there resigning. And he got my letter after he'd come in on the old train that night. So he called me up that night and told me that he had helped examine all those examinations sent in from Quincy and I had passed that examination with big credit. And if I wanted to stay in the Forest Service, he said, "There's no question at all but you can get an appointment as a ranger."
FROM RANGER TO SUPERVISOR, 1910

Kelley: So, I didn't want to go to work in the mines at all. I didn't have any interest in mining. I knew what it would be. It would be just nothing, just more hard work and bad air and all that kind of thing. So that's how I happened to become a ranger.

I hunted up my friend Bill Belcher and said, "Bill, I learned that I passed that ranger examination, and I don't want to go to work in the mines. You know what I did over there for you—wetness, bad air, and so forth. So I decided to take this ranger job." And I did. That was in late September, 1906. I'd been working ever since early April, 1906.

And I stayed in that country, in Downieville and that area, for two years as a ranger. In 1906, all of 1907, until October, 1907. And my friend there in Nevada City, Eliot, offered me a position in Nevada City, to work in Placer County, and El Dorado County and some more of those counties down there. So I went to Nevada City. And I never did go back to Downieville again to work. I worked in that country as a ranger--Placer County, Nevada County, El Dorado County, and Amador County.

On July 1, 1910, I was appointed a forest supervisor on the El Dorado National Forest. El Dorado had just been a unit before that. But they added to the El Dorado and part of Placer County and Amador County and Douglas County, Nevada.

Fry: This was the time when they enlarged--

Kelley: They made a national forest there, out of all these units. And I was appointed supervisor of
Kelley: those units. It was a miserable amount of money to set up housekeeping in Placerville. But any-
way I did the best I could, and I established the supervisor's office in Placerville on July 1, 1910. And with the little money I had I did the best I could to finance the thing. I had as much money as anybody had in those days. We didn't have any amount of money to speak of.

Fry: What were your chief concerns as supervisor in those days?

Kelley: In those days we had very little fires in any of the forests. Up there in Downieville, in Plumas County where I worked, I never had any fires there. I had just one or two fires there in Placerville. I was there in Placerville on the El Dorado Na-
tional Forest from July 1, 1910 until September 1915. And I never had a bad fire in all those years there. But we were building telephone lines and building look-outs and all that sort of thing. But fortunately we never had a bad fire in all the years I was there.

Fry: Did you have any get started?

Kelley: Oh, little fires got started. But we always put them out. Nowadays the Forest Service has so much more to do than put out fires that they let the fires get big, then everybody gets busy putting out big fires. [Laughter] But, in those days, people didn't set fires. We didn't have any campers over there. Very few campers ever went in the woods. People just didn't set fires. That's all there was to it. But it began to change after that very, very rapidly. More people came into the country. And there were more items to work with after that period.

In September, 1915 I was appointed an inspec-
tor. I had an office in San Francisco. And my job then was to go out and see what the heck the fellows were doing anyway in the woods.

Fry: You mean the Forest Service rangers--what they were doing?

Kelley: Yes--what they were doing--what the supervisors were doing.
Fry: When you were supervisor, what dealings did you have with the lumber industry in the Placerville area?

Kelley: Not very much because there just wasn't big company work in that territory. Two big companies. They had their own timber. That was the big El Dorado Company. They have a big mill now up in Placerville. It's about six miles above Placerville. They're still operating. Then there was one at Diamond Springs, a big mill way back there in the mountains. But they had their own timber. And we just sold their little timber to anybody in those days.

Fry: You were in this area then during its conversion from land which was really unassigned to land of the forest reserve. What was the local public reaction?

Kelley: Up in Downieville there was opposition because that was mining country. And they [the Forest Service] had ditches for water. And they were rowing with the stockmen up there all the time because their old cows would get in the ditches and break the ditches down, and then they'd have to repair the ditches. And they would object to the cowmen all the time. But he [a cowman] said, "The hell with you. I'm not going to worry about your ditches. We're worrying about our cows." And they were after me, in the early days, to do something about those cowmen, to keep their cows out of my ditches. So there was some opposition there, but they didn't go out and set fires at all. But that was the great opposition there.

Fry: In other words, they were opposed because of the grazing then.

Kelley: Yes, that was their trouble.

Fry: You didn't get much opposition from the lumber industry?

Kelley: They didn't have any lumber industry in that area.

Fry: They really had all their own timber lands then in those days?
Kelley: Over there, around Loyalton, there were some sawmills around that territory. But they bought lumber from people who owned the land, not from public land. The only opposition to that was out south of Loyalton, but it was small.

Fry: Did you have any outspoken support for this from anywhere?

Kelley: The only place we had open support was around Lake Tahoe, where people wanted to rent areas around Lake Tahoe that were owned by the Forest Service or the government, for the building of homes and places to rent to people. One outfit, I guess it still operates on one of those lakes adjoining Lake Tahoe, Fallen Leaf Lake, that place right on the west side of Lake Tahoe. I wrote that permit a long, long time ago. And it's still there I think.

Fry: You didn't have any dealings with farmers, did you?

Kelley: Not up in that area, no. Of course we had lots of dealings with the sheepmen and the cattlemen. From Nevada they'd come back into California. They had to get a permit from the Forest Service to bring their cattle from the East into California. And a lot of those fellows lost out. They wouldn't handle the sheep the way they should handle them, and their permits were cancelled in the course of time.
THE REGIONAL OFFICE IN SAN FRANCISCO, 1915-1917

Fry: From Placerville you went to the Regional Office in San Francisco. And you told me before that Ed Kotok had followed you there to Placerville.

Kelley: When I left Placerville, Ed followed me as supervisor in Placerville. And he was there for quite a while. I forget how many years. I think a fellow named Smith followed him. Smith's still there in Placerville.

Fry: I see. How long were you in San Francisco, then?

Kelley: I was in San Francisco until July, 1917.

Fry: During that time what was your position besides inspector?

Kelley: That's about all I did. Oh I did some other work. I did a lot of mineral examination. You see, in those days there were no mineral engineers available to the Forest Service at all. And I was the only man then working for the Forest Service who had ever had any experience in mining or had any idea or philosophy of mining. So I did a lot of mineral examination for the service. Somebody would go in there and locate a piece of ground or had a piece of ground, and make application for patent, and somebody had to go in there and pass judgment on the nature of the property. And I did a lot of that sort of thing all over that section of California.

Fry: How did this work out? Did you find quite a number of bona fide mining claims or was this a problem?

Kelley: That all depends on how big the mines were and how
Kelley: rich the fellows were that had those claims. And we had some bitter rows with some of those fellows. They'd go in and make an application. First they'd locate the mine. Then they'd prospect it and claim they'd prospected it. Then they'd apply for patents on the basis of their claims for what they'd found. And my job was to go in there and see how many lies they'd told. They were after the mines. And some of them were after timber on those claims.

Fry: Do you mean you had more trouble with the big ones or with the little miners?

Kelley: I never had any trouble with the little miners because the little miners just located. I never had anything to do with a small locator who ever applied for a patent. Just the largest people did that.

Fry: Are they the ones who were apt to use it for the timber?

Kelley: That was one reason. But it varied greatly. Somebody would go in there and make out an application for a patent and they'd see that they were up against it. It wasn't so easy. They had to prove the validity of their claim and the validity of their purposes. And they'd just tear it up and say, "We're just going to quit. We're not going to try to get it."

Fry: Oh, so they'd just give up.

Kelley: And some of them were valid claims, of course. There was no question about that. I did a lot of that sort of work for the Forest Service.

Fry: Who was the Regional Supervisor?

Kelley: When I first went into the San Francisco office it was Coert Du Bois. He was a fine fellow, a brilliant man.

Fry: He was here at a difficult time, wasn't he? When the forests were just being set up.

Kelley: Oh yes. He came here before the Region was established, you see. They had the Forest estab-
Kelley: lished but they didn't have the Region. And Du Bois came here and he was one of the inspectors of all this territory. Du Bois went to France with me during the First World War.
Fry: Oh, were you in the Tenth Engineers Corps?

Kelley: Yes. I was a Captain in the Tenth Engineers.

Then I became a Major in the Tenth Engineers, later on. I was in France by that time.

Fry: According to some of the notes I've taken, in France it was the duty of the Tenth Engineers to try to locate the timber needed for war-time purposes. Is that right?

Kelley: There were several men who did that, but they were in France before we got there, negotiating with the French for timber and getting agreements from the French that they'd give this timber here or that timber there to the Tenth Engineers. And when we got over there, some of that timber had been—I don't think any of it had been paid for—but it had been agreed that we could cut this timber or cut that timber. And later on, as time went on, we had the responsibility for finding more timber. And then these men who were over there first would come along and negotiate with the French for that timber.

Fry: I see. And what parts of this operation were under you?

Kelley: I had to build the sawmills and see that the lumber was cut. And I also had to get the stuff hauled to some point wherever the operators would say they needed it.

Fry: What did Du Bois do?

Kelley: I don't know what Du Bois did. He went to France with the Tenth Engineers, but he was never a part
Kelley: of our organization. I never could understand that. [Henry] Graves was over there. And I think that Du Bois must have had some understanding, some connection with Graves, because Coert was never with our organization there. I never saw him over there.

Fry: What did you think he did?

Kelley: I don't know what he did. He didn't stay over there anything like the length of time we did. He came home to organize the Twentieth Engineers in the West.

Fry: I was going to ask you to give an evaluation of Du Bois and his work here in California.

Kelley: He was a fine, fine thinker, and a good presenter of problems. In some of these books I have around here, I had to do with writing a section on Du Bois for a book that Kotok wrote on forest fires. He was an able fellow and a very fine fellow to work with.

He and I made a trip one time from Lake Tahoe, from Truckee clear up to the top of the mountains there--the Truckee Range--and rode those tops all the way to the edge of the Walker River. We got along famously. Except that we came to such steep hills to go down on the Walker River that he couldn't go down those steep hills. It would make him dizzy. So he tried to go down backwards. [Laughter] I took the horses down, and he tried to go down those steep hills backwards. Then out on the Walker River we climbed up to the headwaters of the Cherry River, which heads way up in Yosemite Park. We ended the trip way up there at the headwaters of the Cherry River in the Park. Then we came out of there and rode west and got rid of our horses.

Fry: What did you do then when you came back from World War I?

Kelley: Our regiment came home in January, 1919. I didn't come with my regiment. I stayed over there with part of the Twentieth Engineers, repairing roads that the American army had worn out, for the French
Kelley: people. I did that at the request of the Chief Engineer of the United States Army in France. And I had the wherewithal to crush a rock and cut it up in pebbles and pack it around and put it in the roads and repair the roads.

Then the big job—it almost makes me sick to the stomach to think about it—we had a lot of lumber piled up in a place called Esertil. And the army wanted that lumber resawed to use for burying the boys who had been killed wherever their bodies could be found.

Fry: Oh, to make coffins.

Kelley: That's right. And I was told that I could put that job in the hands of young Germans who had been arrested and put in prison around Esertil.

Fry: You mean prisoners of war?

Kelley: Yes. So I went down there and signed up those boys. And they were just boys. And I put several of them to work remaking those sawmills. Making small sawmills out of big sawmills, and resawing some of those big boards and making small boards out of them. They landed on wagons and hauled them up into places where our boys were to be buried, which today are those big cemeteries that you've probably read about. And my job was to see that that lumber was delivered up there.

Then when I was doing that I could see those trucks come in there with all those bodies in boxes—big boxes. And those boys of that organization having to do with burial, would pull those bodies out of those boxes and try and identify them. Some of them had their dog tags on and some of them didn't. And they were down in the bottom of the box. That didn't worry those men very much. Their job was to get those fellows in the ground. And if they had to put somebody else's little old iron metal on their bodies, it wouldn't worry them at all. They just tied it on. And I'd see that going on. And I'd say, "My God, that's a heck of a way to do a job."

Fry: So there was a good deal of misidentification.
Kelley: Yes. Then a month went by and there would come the mothers and fathers of these young boys looking for their boy's grave. And they'd take the bodies out and take them back home. I never could see the justification of taking a dead man out of a hole in the ground and taking him back home to put him in another hole in the ground.

Well, I did a lot of that kind of work during the time I was a major. A major is supposed to be a big guy, you know, but that's what I did. [Laughter] But in the course of time I came home.

Fry: A question I'd like to ask you is if there was any intellectual cross-pollination between French lumbermen and foresters and American foresters on methods and techniques during this period?

Kelley: The only place we had any association with other organizations was with the Canadians. They operated in the same general territory as I did when I was running the sawmill. Within two or three miles from where I was operating my sawmill were some Canadians operating the same type of sawmill. I never was around any other organizations.

Fry: Then your job really didn't have a great deal to do with forest protection or silvicultural practices or anything like that. You were there to harvest lumber.

Kelley: Yes. And the French told us what they wanted done. Their foresters came out and marked our timber. And they told us--some of their big gun foresters for the French--would tell their men what they should do and what they shouldn't do. And my theory was that we were over there to do the best we could to satisfy the French because maybe we would want some more timber. I never had any trouble with the French.

Fry: Did they employ different cutting methods?

Kelley: Oh yes, different philosophies entirely.

Fry: Do you think it influenced us at all?

Kelley: No. They were very reasonable as far as my exper-
Fry: I meant for post-war development of forestry and cutting practices.
Kelley: No. The forester that I had most to do with when I left France--headed to leave France--I went up to a place called Pontarleille to say goodbye to him, and he was upstairs on the third story, in the town of Pontarleille. And I had a very nice visit with him. I got so I could talk enough French to keep myself out of trouble. And he followed me down these three steps of stairs and out on to the street. And he had a moustache and he had long whiskers. And he had both his moustache and these long whiskers and his nose all shined up with moustache wax. And when we got out on the street he grabbed me around and said, "Major, your men down there have been very, very cooperative and are very, very fine fellows to know. I've known lots of foresters in my experience with French foresters. But I've never had anybody any more agreeable to be with than you fellows. I'm greatly indebted to you." So with moustache and whiskers and all, he kissed me on both cheeks. [Laughter] That was just amusing.

Fry: Then when you came home I suppose you were mustered out, but did you stay in the reserves?
Kelley: No. When I came home I didn't know what I was going to do. But I'll tell you what I did do. I came home to see my mother. She lived in San Francisco at that time. I went to see her one morning. That same morning I went down to the Forest Service office in San Francisco and walked down the hall and the first man I saw was Coert Du Bois. And he said, "My God I'm glad to see you." He wanted to see me because before Mr. Graves went to France he had worked for a long time in Congress to get an appropriation for the construction of roads and trails in California. And Congress appropriated quite a lot of money to do that. Then Mr. Graves came back from France and he found out that none of that money had been spent, not a dollar of it, and he felt as if the Congress would think that he didn't play square with the Congress.
Kelley: So he called all the regional foresters together--the western regional foresters--to meet him in Spokane, Washington. And he gave all these regional foresters in Regions 5 and 6 the devil. He had said to Congress that it was absolutely necessary for the welfare and protection of those forests. So he laid down the law that these regional foresters, just as soon as they got home, would get a hold of somebody of their organization that would start road building and do it quick.

So the thing that Du Bois told me to do that morning when I got home to get busy and build these roads and do it damn quick. [Laughter] And spend that money.

Fry: This was like the experience you had in France.

Kelley: Yes. Do something and do it quick.

Fry: What about equipment for road building then?

Kelley: Oh we didn't have any. We had to buy it. I kept at that job--

Fry: Excuse me, what was your title in this job?

Kelley: I guess my title was the same one as when I left.

Anyway, I was supposed to go out and stir up a lot of enthusiasm on the part of the supervisors building roads, and see what they needed. I traveled through the country to see what roads we should actually build and what prospect we had of getting machinery.
Thanksgiving Day, 1919, I was up on the border between California and Oregon and I received a telegram from Roy Headley, who was then working out of Washington, D.C., to meet him in Sacramento. I left that country and went to Sacramento and met Headley there. And he gave me a job in Washington, D.C. as an inspector and various other things. So I went to Washington. I was an inspector in fire control, largely. There had been terrible fires in the fall of 1919 in Idaho and Montana and Oregon and Washington. So my first job after I got to Washington was to come back to San Francisco and find my suitcase and go up to Montana. And I was in Montana and Idaho all that year--1920.

So you were sort of a fire protection expert-at-large?

I wouldn't claim I was an expert. [Laugher] I was sent out on those jobs because I had the ability to do things and do them in a hurry. And I could see that men responded to that kind of urge to do things and get on the job, in other words. That's why I was sent on some of those jobs.

So that when something really needed getting done and expedited, you could do it.

Was this the time you were burned out in Missoula?

Oh, I was retired then. I retired in 1944. I came down here in 1942. But when the Second World War broke out this country was practically rubberless. And we needed rubber. And the only
Kelley: material that anyone knew about—I didn't know anything about that—some of the rubber men did know about it—that could be planted and grown in a rubber producing condition was Guayule, and do it fast.

Fry: I want to get your story of Guayule, but in order to keep this chronological, could we take your story of the CCC development first and then go from that to the Guayule?

Kelley: Yes. I didn't work for anybody but the President of the United States on that Guayule job. And I had all the authority that I needed to get that job done.

Fry: You had top priority—

Kelley: I had top priority on all that kind of thing. And it was a great satisfaction to have the opening to do things when the pressure was keenest.
THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS IS BORN

Kelley: Roosevelt was elected at just about that time, and he had all kinds of damn fool ideas. And when I got home to Missoula I found more people in that office than I had in the whole organization before I left—before I went to Guayule or any other time. In those days [before Roosevelt] a dollar was a dollar, and you had to ram the best we had in our brains to get the dollar to do things with. But here comes Roosevelt with all this money—

Fry: For the CCC.

Kelley: Yes. And he passed it out.

I came home and I saw all this organization there. And I knew very well that they were [weren't] using the dollars economically. But it hurt my sense of justice to go so far in the opposite direction from what we had to go way back during the years when we had to scrape to get the things that were absolutely necessary. That's why I retired. I couldn't stand that stuff any more.

Fry: You mean in the '40s?

Kelley: Yes, in the late '40s.

Fry: You mean you thought they were being wasted?

Kelley: Oh, they were wasted and they're still wasting it in my view. Now about the CCC.

Fry: Were you in Washington at about the time this thing broke?
Kelley: No, I was in Missoula on New Year's Day, 1932. I was working every day during those years. I came down to the office, and as I came into the office the telephone rang and it was a call for me from Washington from Greeley. He said, "Have you got a big suitcase? You get a big suitcase, and take the first flight out of Montana and come to Washington." So I did. He said, "You tell your wife you don't know when you're coming home." [Laughter] And all the other regional foresters were in Washington, or they came there within a short time thereafter.

Our Chief Forester was a good fellow. But he was a Republican. And we were going into a Democratic administration. And when we got there we saw, or I did and Show saw, a copy of a little order from President Roosevelt which roughly outlined what he had in mind for the CCC. And roughly how it was to be organized and how he wanted it done quickly.

After about a day and a half Bevier Show and I could see very clearly that we weren't going to do things quickly as the President asked. And no one seemed to know what should be done. We went through that for a couple of days, always winding up at the same place—not a damn thing being done. So Bevier and I walked home one night and we decided that somebody had to do something or the President would fire the whole Forest Service and get somebody that was going to go ahead and do it. And the next day we went down there and Bevier and I got all the other regional foresters together and told them how we'd been horsing around down there, just talking, talking, talking, and no one arriving at any decision for anything. And we thought that that would have to be called to a halt.

Bevier and I both felt that Stuart, the man in charge, was just not on the ball. Something was going wrong. And I figured that it was his fear that the Democrats would be firing the whole outfit of us and put the Democrats in power. I don't know whether it was true or not. So we proposed that all the regional foresters go in to the chief forester and tell him what we thought we ought to be doing. Then they said, "Who's going
Kelley: to tell the Chief Forester?" [Laughter] They went out, and when they came back they said, "We've decided that you ought to go and tell the Chief Forester what this is all about." So I did. He was so unable to get his thoughts together that he didn't answer us at all. Until the next day, he got thinking.

Fry: Could you give me a kind of outline of what you told him?

Kelley: I told him that the President's outline, which he sent, we ought to get busy and do something about it. And we told him roughly what we thought ought to be done. I don't mean to convey the idea that we knew exactly what ought to be done. But we knew that something had to be done to get things started. It's lost in my mind just exactly how it came about, but anyway, Bevier and I in the next couple of days sat down at a table there up on the fifth floor in Washington, D.C. and started to work out an outline. And we worked like the dickens, night and day. And we laid out jobs for all these regional foresters to do.

Fry: When I talked to Mr. Show he mentioned something about making up maps.

Kelley: Yes, the President wanted maps made where all these [CCC] companies would go. He didn't know exactly how many companies there would be. Then Bevier and I told these other regional foresters, "You'd better get those maps made." And we outlined the maps that we thought needed to be made. And as the days went by the President told how many companies he'd want, and where these companies would be placed, where'd they go on the maps. And he'd want to see the maps. When we took them over there he never looked at them. [Laughter]

Fry: He saw that you had them.

Kelley: Yes. The President had a little secretary, a little bit of a fellow. But he was a smart little fellow, Robert Fechner.

Then Bevier undertook to determine the personnel that would be needed. And I undertook to write up the materials we'd need--the machines
Kelley: that we'd need and what kind of machinery we'd need, and the trucks that we'd need, and all about that. Bevier estimated the number of people. I estimated the number of machines and the cost.

Fry: Was this just for Region One and--

Kelley: No, all the regions. And the only people that they had to tell them anything about what we were going to do were Bevier and I. Because we were the only fellows who thought we could work the thing out. We weren't too sure of that, but we knew somebody had to do it. Don't get the idea that we thought we were God Almighty himself. Somebody had to do it and we were willing to risk ourselves to get the thing done.

And we worked all that out. There were many, many steps to this. One of them was that somebody determined that the states had to have a look in on this. So the President told us to get the states in on the job. Somebody wrote to the governors and asked them to get their men into Washington and do it quick.

Fry: The state departments of forestry?

Kelley: Yes.

Fry: So they were there too.

Kelley: They were there. Now it came down to, who's going to run this thing? So all the regional foresters decided that all the Eastern regional foresters would be led by an Eastern National Forest representative, Bob Evans. And Bevier and I took all the rest of the regional foresters, state foresters. And we got them all together and outlined to them what the job was: to make the maps of their respective states and why they had so many camps established and all about it. That took several days. Then the politicians came in on the picture also. They wanted some local men employed, independent of the CCC, because those fellows were out of jobs. They had to give them jobs.

In the interim the man that the President had appointed to run the CCC had come from Boston. He was sick when he got there. He was sick for a
Kelley: week or more in a hotel in Washington. He got on the job. He was just as green as the grass, you know. He didn't know the first thing in the world about what to do or how to do it or what to do. So Bevier and I and some of the other fellows went up to his room and told him what the politicians wanted to do. They wanted to hire local men, forget all about the CCC, hire local men. He said, "We can never do that. I have my instructions from the President." He was a good politician. "I'll put a limit on the number of local men employable by each company." And things were worked out that way. And we established the amount of wages to be paid to the local men. And that made other problems. Politicians wanted to hire the local men, you see. They didn't want any foresters to hire the local men. They wanted to say what local men would go where. We couldn't handle that thing that way. And they didn't do it. Then later on, after the whole thing got started, then the politicians got bigger and bigger and bigger.

Fry: I see. You found this was true in Montana also?

Kelley: In some places yes. Butte was one of the places that we had trouble. But around Missoula we didn't have any trouble like that at all. The Democrats there—he was an optometrist. "I don't know anything about what you fellows have got to do. I don't know the first thing about it."

Fry: This was your representative in the House?

Kelley: That was our representative of the Democratic Party. He was a big gun in that country. And he told us, "You select the men that you want. I don't know what kind of men you need. It's foolish for me to pick out men that are going to go out to the forests and do things that I never heard of. You let me know who you want and I'll see that you get those men." And it worked very well. We had some Idaho counties, too, that were very satisfactory in that respect.

Fry: Did you have political flunkies in higher positions later on in the CCC—supervisory or technical?

Kelley: We had, yes. But the man in Washington who repre-
Kelley: presented the President, he had his men who were some big guns. We didn't see very much of them; we had to see some of them.

After we got all of our estimates made and all the maps made and all things ready to go for the President, Bob Stuart then told the secretary of the President that we were ready to present a plan. And Bob Stewart went over there and Chris Granger went over there and Show and I went over there, and that represented the Forest Service. But he also had the army men. They were supposed to have a function in this thing, and we had put down in our plan what that function would be. The chief of finances was there--Director of the Bureau of Budget. And by that time the representative of the Park Service was there.

Fry: What is his name?

Kelley: He's still there in the Park Service. Conrad Wirth is his name. The Park Service wasn't in this at all. When the President wrote to the Forest Service, he didn't have the Park Service listed at all. Bevier Show and I were in that office there on the sixth floor of the building and in comes John Coffman with tears in his eyes.

He said, "How is it that you fellows haven't even asked the Park Service to sit in here with you on the discussion of this problem?"

I said, "John, just bear in mind that all the Forest Service has been asked to do is to do what the President asked them to do. He didn't mention your organization. If you want to come in on this, the best thing you can do is go back to your boss and tell him that you're not in on this thing and it's important that if he wants to be in on it to go to the President and tell him what he wants."

Fry: His boss [Ickes] was capable of doing that, too, wasn't he? [Laughter]

Kelley: So he went out. The next thing we knew was that the Chief of the Park Service had gone over to the President and the President said, "Go ahead, of course you ought to be in on this."
Kelley: Bevier and I were asked to present our case because we had the only case to present. Then this army man said, "Hold on here, the army has a look-in on this. I'd like to present the army's plan," and he presented the army plan all nicely written: the Forest Service and the Park Service weren't in on it at all; the army was going to do the whole job.

The President's secretary, after the army man had presented his case, said, "I can't understand that. That wasn't according to the President's plan." And this bombastic colonel said, "That's what the Chief of the Army wants to do." And he said, "I have it right here in his own writing. If the army can't do all these things the way he outlined it, we don't want anything to do with it at all." Well, the little secretary over there at the desk said, "Well, Colonel, I want you to understand and I want your superior to understand that the Chief of the United States Army is the President of the United States." And this fellow said, "Yes, sir." He just quit right then.

Then we came in. Bevier had put down his personnel organization--for the number of personnel and what kind of jobs they would do. And I came down with all my technical organization. We added that up and it ran to $400 million or something like that. And this big guy who was going to be the President's money man said, "Take that all apart. We don't have any money like that. We can't buy all this equipment that you listed here. We can't employ all the men and technicians." And he went on and on and on.

And the little old fellow across the table said, "That's all in keeping with what the President would like to have. He knows that they have to have equipment to build roads and what not. He knows that they have to have technicians to mark timber and supervise the cutting."

And [the money man] said, "We don't have that kind of money."

The next morning the Washington Post came out saying that that man had resigned--just that quick.
Kelley: What happened that day was that that man went over, after we sat there outlining our estimates, and told the President what we did in a general way and that we didn't have that kind of money and we couldn't provide that kind of money, I think the President then told him, "I'll get somebody that can provide that kind of money for me." And this fellow quit. [Laughter] He must have because it just followed just like that, you know.

Then, that put us on a straight course. And with the help of Mr. Fechner, we went to bat. And Fechner said, "The next step is to put all this plan up to the President as you presented it to me. I'll talk to the President. I know what you have in mind. And I know he will be very enthusiastic about what you want to do." So he called us a day or two later and said the President would see us at 10 o'clock some morning.

We were loaded down with maps and everything else; he thought the President should have this. We went into the President's office and he greeted us very nicely. And he sat right down in his chair there in his office and began to talk. And he didn't ask us to show him anything, absolutely nothing. He started in by telling us how his interest in forestry was stimulated by his cousin. And he went on and on and on.

Fry: Which cousin?

Kelley: T. R. [Theodore Roosevelt] And he told us all about it, what T. R. did for him to start him on the ranch up there in New York. He didn't ask us to show him anything. He just went on and on and on. And finally he looked at that ship clock that he had in his office, and he said, "Gentlemen, I've been here forty-five minutes. I've got other things to do." He said, "Goodbye." [Laughter] And he went out. And we loaded up our maps and things and left, too.

Fry: Bevier Show told me how the girls worked overtime on the weekend to get all these things out--

Kelley: That meant then that the next step was to get the state foresters, tell them what had happened, and tell them to go home and start their ball rolling.
Kelley: And the regional foresters went the same way. Bevier Show and I worked like dogs on that thing--I don't know how many days--night and day.

Fry: Could you evaluate this as a government program--Do you think that it accomplished what it was supposed to?

Kelley: No, it didn't accomplish what some of us thought it might accomplish. But I think in general it worked as well as could be expected in view of all the politics and everything else that was involved. And it worked out, too, very greatly from point to point. Now the states never got anything like the work done that the Forest Service did. They just don't work that way you know.

Fry: What was their problem?

Kelley: Well, they're politicians.

Fry: It was easier to control it on the local level by politicians?

Kelley: Yes, absolutely. But some of the states did very well. New York, for instance, did very well. Minnesota did very well. But [in the] other states, [it] depend[ed] upon the kind of organization they had.

Fry: From your vantage point in Missoula did you think that the camps were able to accomplish a great deal of things which otherwise would have been postponed indefinitely?

Kelley: I think the Forest Service in Montana and parts of Idaho with very few exceptions did far better than the states did because the states were all mixed up with political pressures that interrupted what they had in mind--what the state foresters had in mind--and what they'd like to do very independently to reach their own decisions. And they had a lot of men employed in superior positions that would hamper the work of the Forest Service.

Fry: Mr. Show mentioned that one advantage the Forest Service had was that there already were plans drawn up for construction projects and improvements
Fry: and developments that were ready to go at the time CCC broke. Did you have any such plans up in Montana and Idaho?

Kelley: No, and neither did California. They had ideas of what they were going to do. But they didn't have finished plans.

Fry: But they did have it at least in the beginning stages of making a structured outline of what they wanted to accomplish?

Kelley: Oh yes, they did that.
Also at about this time there was some new development in fire control and fire suppression, I think. Your friends in the Forest Service tell me that you had something to do with it, such as the fire jumpers. Did this occur first in the Montana region?

It's not clear in my mind anymore just how and why we got such an organization started. When we started there we had men who could make jumping outfits and make them themselves.

You mean parachutes?

Yes, parachutes. Some of them were just show-jumpers in California and they came up there. And they could make parachutes and everything else that they needed. Of course they didn't make them all as time went on. But we had them. And we made those kind of things down in Idaho and made some of them for places in Washington and Oregon. They had some fellows there who did part ahead of the thing and were pretty well gone when we finally got to where we started. But those fellows that came up to our country from California who had been jumpers—entertainers—they were well-equipped to start this. Those fellows knew how to jump, and they'd train men to do jumps. We had more trained men than I think any of the other organizations did. Because it's not that we had been doing the same but because somebody else had, somewhere along the line.

Did you send for these men from California?

No, I didn't do it myself. But somebody in our organization did. I don't know who it was. Whoever did it, did it with my okay. At that time
Kelley: somebody had to be the fall guy.

Fry: Yes. You were willing to try this new thing.

Kelley: I was willing to be the fall guy. [Laughter] Somebody had to do those kind of things, you know.

Fry: Do you know where it was first tried?

Kelley: I know where it was first thought of and that was in Ogden, Utah. But it didn't have much support in Ogden, Utah. The fellow who first preached the philosophy of jumping down, knowing that it would save a lot of time and get more men thoroughly informed, started in Ogden. And it just died there.

Fry: And then somehow it picked up again in Montana?

Kelley: Yes, we picked it up. And Washington picked it up, too, about that same time. But we had more to work with and more determination to go ahead with [it] I think than any others I heard of.

Fry: Ed Kotok told me that the areas that you supervised consistently had very bad fire conditions.

Kelley: I'm not bragging but when I went up there in 1920, that summer Montana and Idaho had very, very bad fire conditions. ______ went up there and spent a lot of time up there. And he saw that they lacked, in that section of the country, a lot of leadership that didn't produce what ought to have been produced in the control of fires. So one thing--he told me what he saw and what he felt was necessary to be seen in that country, if we were ever to control fires in that section of the country. There were no roads and very few trails. So one of the first things that I had to do when I went up there was to try to bestir the men on those important jobs to get busy and lay out objectives in fire control.

That didn't come about just exactly as promptly as I hoped it would for two reasons: One, they changed supervisors, that is, regional foresters. The man that they put in charge was a fine fellow from Denver, where they never had any big fires. And he had bad luck and had a nervous breakdown.
Kelley: So he was taken out of there. Then it came to filling that position. Well, in the interim I'd been made Regional Forester of all that country from Maine clear to Arkansas, the East. And when that position was filled they were trying to find someone who had been in that North country, someone who knew his way around in that country and had some idea of what was needed in the way of action to control those fires. Well, I was sent to take on that job.

Fry: So that was when you became Regional Forester there.

Kelley: Yes. And then I had control to do the things that seemed to me to be necessary to have been done several years before but they weren't done. When Kotok gave you that statement, he was talking about the time after I went over there as Regional Forester and I had the control of things and all the help of previous look-outs and previously seeing things underway there.

Fry: This began when?

Kelley: That was 1929 when I went up there. That was nine years after I first went to that country. I'm not bragging.

Fry: Oh no, this is information that is necessary for us to have.

I think I'd better not question you any more tonight. You've been giving me answers for quite a while now. But I do want to get to the Guayule Project; maybe we could talk about that later.

Kelley: Anytime you say.
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John Keller was a trained forester in the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters from about 1906 on, including the period when Gifford Pinchot was Commissioner of Forestry of that state from 1920 to 1922. Pinchot became governor, and Keller continued as, among possibly other functions, Chief of the Bureau of Extension in the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters. Both men left the state "about 1935", according to Keller.

This interview came about almost by chance in 1964. It was recorded in the knowledge that it might never be transcribed, since the interviewer was on a different project at that time, one designed to document the development of policy in the U.S. Forest Service, and funded for that purpose by Resources for the Future. While on a visit to North Carolina in the summer, the interviewer took the opportunity to confer with forestry authorities at North Carolina State University at Raleigh in order to build up a bank of information and questions for subsequent interviews to be held in Washington, D.C. In the process, she received repeated recommendations to tape record Mr. Keller because he had been so close to Pinchot, and also because his advanced age (seventy-seven) made postponement of any interviewing a doubtful course of action.

On two hours' notice, he agreed to tape record. The interview was held on a stifling July day in his neat frame house, mercifully cooled by trees all around. The front room where we sat was cool, pleasantly dark, and he sat sideways by his old, probably oak secretary. He was most cordial, and he tried to ration his remarks on each topic in view of the limited time. Many specific battles which long since had been dimmed by subsequent, fresher ones, blurred into general statements; but he did manage to give glimpses here and there of Pinchot the talented administrator, the public relations man, the politician, and of course the forester.

Three-quarters of the way through the session, the reels of the battery-powered tape recorder began noticeably to turn more slowly and finally to stop. This part of the interview has been reconstituted from the notes taken at the time.

Afterwards the tape had to go into the limbo file until funds could materialize for transcribing and editing it. In 1974, under a grant from the United States Forest Service, it
was possible to produce a finished manuscript; but, since in this case the edited transcript could not be checked and confirmed by the interviewee, the only editing done consisted of checking out names, terms, and dates, and adding topical headings. Where words are not clear or inaudible, this is appropriately indicated.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer

22 May 1974
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FORESTRY SCHOOLS AND FORESTS IN PENNSYLVANIA
AND NORTH CAROLINA
(July 3, 1964)

Fry:
I understand that you worked for Gifford Pinchot
as a forester. Where was this? Pennsylvania?

Keller:
I can tell you exactly what he did after he came
to Pennsylvania. That was about 1922; he was ap-
pointed Commissioner of Forestry at that time.
From then on I worked with him quite in detail
right on up until we both left the state.

Fry:
Which was when?

Keller:
He left about 1935. He was first appointed by the
Governor as Forest Commissioner, and he reorganized
the whole department.

The reason I can't tell you much about federal
forestry is that we were having our own troubles
in Pennsylvania. You know, we were the first state
to start it, way back before there were any forestry
schools. In fact, we couldn't even get Pennsylvania
State College interested in a forestry course, and
the Legislature told us to start our own forestry
school. That's the way Mont Alto began. Then they
just went along in a sort of unorganized way as
far as the forestry part was concerned. They were
buying land. They bought the first million acres
of land up there, forests, at an average of one
dollar an acre, so you can tell how cheap it was
at that time.

Fry:
This was when?

Keller:
They started buying in 1898, and they bought a
little bit to start with. Then I went down to
Mont Alto in 1906, as a student, and at that
time they were sort of increasing the purchases
Keller: of land, and by the time I got out in the field they were buying land in very large quantities. Our land purchase program was the biggest thing that ever happened because it gave the foresters something to attach themselves to.

People weren't interested in forestry at that time. They were thinking only of protecting the headwaters of the streams; that's the only reason they were buying the land. And then when we started the forestry school, the first class graduated way back there in 1906, the year that I went out. And then from there on we graduated students regularly up until 1928, when the state forestry school at Mont Alto and the state college forest school were united. So then Mont Alto ceased to exist and everything went over to the state [college].

Fry: And I understand, the junior and senior classes and the dean picked up their baggage and came down here about 1929?

Keller: That's right, that's the way the North Carolina school started. I understand you were going to talk to Dr. Hoffman.

Fry: I hope to today.

Keller: Dr. Hoffman was the fellow who left up there and brought the senior class down here, and that's how he started the forest school here in North Carolina. Some of them were disgruntled, you know; they didn't want to give up and they didn't like the way it was transferred. And they just picked up stakes and came down here, but it was a good thing because they've got a good forestry school here now, mighty fine.

Fry: Yes, he must have been a leader in forestry as a field of study.

Keller: When he came to Mont Alto, he was supposed to be a protection man, versed in forest protection. And he was working on this business of foreseeing dangerous fire seasons by humidity and temperature, and combining the two of them. But then when he came down here, he spread out in all fields. He got to be quite an intellectual fellow.
Keller: He did something down here that no one has ever done, and I don't know whether Walter [Hoffman] is too modest to tell you about it or not. He started to buy forest land for the school of forestry, state of North Carolina. And the way he did it was to go to the insurance companies, and he told those people, "Now, here is a good investment for money, buying forest land. Buy it in the name of the school here, and we'll take the forester graduates out there and give them practice working on that, and we'll cut enough timber every year to pay the interest on the investment and a little bit on the principle." And his story was good enough that he convinced the insurance companies that it was a good investment. He bought, oh, I don't know how many [acres]; they have the Hoffman Forest down there that's about 80,000 acres, and they've got the Hill Forest down here and quite a bit of land like that. They gave the students land to work on, and then about that time everything spiraled, you know, and went up in price; and the land that they had bought for very little, now is worth twice as much. I understand that they have already paid it off from the sales of timber.

And Hoffman himself, after he finished out there, he said, "Well, what's the use of doing all this for the school? I'm going to buy a couple of tracts for myself." And the insurance companies he had been so successful with lent their money to him; he's got quite a nice little nest egg now, in his own right. But it was Hoffman who made the purchases and made it possible for the school of forestry to get that land. That will run the school of forestry without any doubt before very long, just from the receipts for the forest land.

Fry: The forestry school gets the receipts?

Keller: The forestry school gets it all. It was purchased in the name of the forestry school, North Carolina State College School of Forestry. It is run now by what you call a forest foundation, and while Hoffman is out of the school and is retired from that angle, Hoffman is still president of this forest foundation. So he's still guiding the operation.

Fry: That's interesting.
Keller: Yes, it is interesting, and the majority of people don't know how it happened. So that Hoffman [should] get the credit for that whole business.

Fry: This could be a good way to finance a lot of forestry schools; but you have to buy the land when it's cheap, I guess.

Keller: That's right, but now the same principle applies up there in Pennsylvania now. The forest land in Pennsylvania is bringing in enough money to more than operate the Department of Forestry.

Fry: And it goes into a foundation, or directly--

Keller: Well, no, it doesn't go into a foundation: it goes back to the state treasury, and then they have the use of it for operating the forest. But they got a little too much politics in it; they injected the recreational idea into it. And the Department of Forest and Water up there is operating these big recreational activities in parks. Independence Square, down in Philadelphia, was a memorial to the Revolutionary War, way back there, and yet the Department of Forest and Water operates it. Out in Pittsburgh, they spent $1.5 million down on the Golden Triangle developing a city park, which is operated by Forestry, so that is the sort of gadget that was put in politically; it wasn't good management to do that. But the Department of Forestry so far has been operating it without too much politics, except these legislators, they want a park in their home county, you know, their home district; and they're compelling them to spend a lot of money for local parks all over the state, and they are doing it.

Fry: Do you mean without a master plan, without comparative quality of scenery and land in mind?

Keller: They are doing a good job. They are hiring expert recreational people to carry it on.

Fry: Are the historical parks also under the Department of Forest and Water?

Keller: Oh, yes, all of the parks are.
Fry: Do they operate these as a historian would? Do they give them adequate protection?

Keller: Oh, yes, they take good care of them, but gee, they've got money galore. They get all of the oil and gas receipts, which amount to between $6 and $7 million. And that is committed to be spent for these parks around, and that makes a nest egg for the politicians to fight over. But they are doing a good job so far, and they are doing it because they have got a good non-political man as secretary of the Department of Forest and Water. If they put a politician in there, then it would be the other way around.

Well now, are you acquainted with Project 70 in Pennsylvania?

Fry: No.

Keller: Well now, that is a project that they have up there; the people voted on it and agreed to approve a bond issue for $70 million, and the money is to be spent for buying lands for recreation around the cities, and the urban centers, not out in the woods some place; they have authority for that. But this is for land within reach of the city people. It's the only place that I know of that a project of that sort has gone into constitutional amendment, because, you see, the people voted on it; now if both houses of the Legislature approve it and the governor signs it, they'll buy $70 million worth of land, purely for recreation, and that's looking into the future for the people in the cities. I think that it is a good idea, a far reaching plan. But that goes way ahead of what we ever thought in the early days. We were thinking of forest as forest to grow trees for the lumber business, and a little hunting and fishing, and that kind of thing.

Fry: But not mass recreation.

Keller: No.

But that sort of talk comes back to Pinchot now. Pinchot was the man who came to Pennsylvania and organized the forestry department. He came to Washington under Roosevelt, Teddy Roosevelt, and
Keller: organized the Forest Service. You knew that?

Fry: Yes.

Keller: Well, then he came up to Pennsylvania, and the first thing he did was to organize the Department of Forest and Water in Pennsylvania; and he set it up on a good firm foundation, which is still operating the same way he set it up.

Fry: Oh, it is?

Keller: Yes sir, it was a very excellent job of organizing. But before that time we just had a couple of political fellows down in Harrisburg who dished out the money that the legislature had. And we as foresters, we would—each fellow would get a certain amount of it for building roads, and fighting fires, and planting trees. But when Pinchot came up there, he organized the thing into the Bureau of Management, Bureau of Protection, Bureau of Silviculture, Bureau of Research—Office of Research, rather (we had a Bureau of Information, and Research was under Information). He set it up that way, and then he picked out men who were inclined along that line to head up those departments. Everything went along very well, and that's that.
GIFFORD PINCHOT AND FEDERAL ISSUES IN FORESTRY: 1930's and 1940's

Fry: Did he ever talk over with you the part that he played in the controversy over the transfer of the U.S. Forestry Service from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Interior under Secretary Ickes?

Keller: We used to talk about that, but we all knew about it before, because the forests were an extensive thing; you were very much interested in Pinchot's [inaudible] and the fight that they had.

Fry: Oh, yes; you mean earlier under the Clarke-McNary Act.

Keller: And we were always interested in those things. But Pinchot was never a fellow to brag about anything he ever did; he never did. He was very modest when it came to those things. Somebody else had to talk it over.

But when I got down to Washington [1940], down there they used to have the regular meeting, you know, of foresters. Pinchot still had his home up on Rhode Island Avenue, and that was the regular rendezvous for all the foresters who came in from all over the United States. And he had certain--for instance, in October he would always give an apple and gingerbread party. All the foresters would be invited, and that way we would get together, with state men and federal men. But as a rule, there wasn't so much of that until after Pinchot got out, and away from Washington. Then they started to mix up people. He was explaining to us what the value was of mixing up with these federal foresters.
Fry: What was his view on the value of this?

Keller: Oh, he wanted foresters to get together. He wanted them to discuss their matters together. You know, when we were up there in Pennsylvania, a bunch of kids, we were together in a new profession. We were just a little nest together there, and we never went out. It wasn't until Pinchot came up there that we ever got into the Society of American Forestry. And up until that time, until Pinchot got his shoulder to the wheel there, very few of the states had foresters that belonged to the Society of American Foresters. But that was a big help because it let us brush shoulders with fellows who were doing the same kind of work under different conditions.

Fry: So you were able to share information—

Keller: That's right.

Fry: But as far as lending influence to legislation for forestry, or anything like that, you don't think this had much to do with it? Or did it?

Keller: Well, up until Pinchot got up there, we were only interested in Pennsylvania.

Fry: I mean after Pinchot.

Keller: After Pinchot, then of course we were interested in all of the stuff, because we had joined the American Forestry Association and the Society of American Forestry. We started to make our trips down to Washington to get acquainted with the fellows down there, and that way it broadened everybody.

Fry: Did you ever take part in helping to ward off the transfer of the Forest Service to the Department of Interior?

Keller: Oh, yes, we were all interested in that, very much so, in that controversy. And we had a few people along in Pennsylvania there that were very influential in Washington. For instance, I might name J. Horace McFarland; you've probably heard of him. Well, he always went over there to J. Horace and told him, "Now, you do so-and-so with
Keller: this man down in Washington, or this man." And J. Horace McFarland did a lot towards those national questions, much more than would have been done if we hadn't of had him carrying messages back and forth.

Fry: I see.

Keller: But we always took quite an active interest in that.

Fry: McFarland served as kind of an informal lobbyist with his entree to the congressmen?

Keller: He had an entree into the President, the senators, everybody down there. He was at one time president of the American Rose Society; it was an organization that was composed of very influential people. And it was mainly through that organization that he had so many contacts down there. But J. Horace never wanted anything political; he always wanted to do the things that were the right things; he just knew who to go to.

Just to give you an example, when the administration changed from Republican to Democratic in 1932, it had been Republican for forty years and the Democrats just turned things upside down. They didn't have anything like the Civil Service or anything like that. But we had one very good forester up there in Pennsylvania that we were all interested in, a fellow by the name of Swingler. At that time, I was talking with J. Horace about this man Swingler [and told him] when he gets down there in Washington to tell those fellows if they need a good forester, he's the man they ought to look at. And it was only a short time after that until Swingler was invited down there, and he became one of their real voices in the Forest Service. He either has retired or is going to retire, but he headed up private forestry for a long time.

Fry: Was this when Franklin Roosevelt first came in?

Keller: Yes, Roosevelt was first elected president at the time that Pinchot was governor the second time up there. And I was in his office a number of times, when Franklin Roosevelt would call up from the White House. Franklin Roosevelt would say,
Keller: "Hello, Giff!" And he would say, "Hello, Frank!" and that kind of stuff, you know. So they were quite active at that time. Then everything went along fairly well. You see, then after Roosevelt got in they got the CCC, and that took up the slack for foresters everywhere.

This is sort of incoherent, I know, but I don't know just exactly what you would like to have.

Fry: I talked with Ed Kotok and Bevier Show, and they have been able to comment on CCC. They also recorded some on the grass roots effect of foresters in this controversy over the transfer of Forestry to Interior; and so I would like to get a little more on that, if you know anything about it.

Keller: Well, now what about CCC, do you want more on that?

Fry: Yes, if you know anything on the federal level.

Keller: Well, we got the first batch of CCC camps in Pennsylvania that they had sent out. I was in Pinchot's office when Franklin Roosevelt called up and said, "Can you use thirty-two camps?" Well, we had a good organization of foresters at that time, and he looked over at me and said, "Sure we can use them." And we got the first bunch of them up there; there were one or two other CCC camps, single ones, but this was the first batch of them. We had 115, I believe it was, CCC camps. Most of them were forest camps, but we had as I remember about nine park camps.

Fry: Did you have any difficulty with politics and the appointments to the administration of CCC?

Keller: Yes, we had a man down there in Washington that everything had to clear. You knew about that?

Fry: No, I didn't.

Keller: Well, Franklin Roosevelt had a fellow--I can't recall his name anymore--but everything had to clear him. The state senator would okay it, and then this fellow would okay it. At first, when they opened this thing up, they just let us go ahead and use our own judgment. We had good camps. But after it was in operation a couple of
Keller: years, and this fellow got working, gee, they started putting in druggists that didn't have jobs for CCC camp superintendents, and fellows that had never been out in the woods before. Then it didn't work so good.

Washington tried to overcome that by regulations. Well, they got so many regulations that nobody could follow the regulations anymore. As a whole, I'd say the first three years of the CCC they did just as much work up there as they did all the rest of the time they were in existence. Because after politics got in there, why they couldn't do anything unless it was okayed politically.

Fry: Did Pinchot think this was a good thing, to have a federal program going in the state?

Keller: Oh, yes, yes sir. He wanted it there. There was never any question about that as long as Pinchot was there. After Pinchot left, why the fellows sort of drifted back into their shells, thought they could get along without the federal government; and that was about the time that the federal government was trying to force a lot of this [inaudible] private forest regulation onto the people. The people in the field didn't like that, so it tended to break it up a little. Kotok could give you the whole story on that; he was one of the fellows who had to go along with the federal government in passing these regulations.

Fry: Yes. Well, I hope to talk to Earle Clapp in Washington, too. Would you say that he was about the central figure in that?

Keller: Well, he knew it sort of second-handed. Now wait 'till I think of the fellow who was the head of that. I can't recall his name anymore.

Fry: The chief?

Keller: No, Silcox was chief, you remember. No, we didn't do much work with Silcox. It was a fellow, he was a western man, that came in there and sort of headed the thing up.

Fry: It wasn't Marsh was it?
Keller: Who?

Fry: Marsh, Ray Marsh?

Keller: No, not Marsh.

Fry: Or Chris Granger?

Keller: Chris Granger always took a very active part in it. All of those fellows did. Any one of those fellows I think could give you a pretty good story on the federal side [of regulation?].

Fry: You know there isn't any comprehensive history written about that. How far did their attempts at federal regulation go?

Keller: Well, they fought it through for a good many years, but the people in the field just wouldn't go along with it. And they fought it out at the Society meetings. Apparently the only people who were for it were these people who were tied up with the federal Forest Service. They were sort of out on a limb because the local fellows wouldn't go along with it. And there were quite a lot of bitter fights about it, that side of it.

Fry: It was never passed as legislation, was it, in any form?

Keller: No, no they never could get the thing through.

Fry: Did they have any support from the federally employed foresters in the states, in the field?

Keller: Well, the federally employed foresters in the states were told to keep their mouths shut and not to get into politics.

That was the thing that we had learned way back in Pennsylvania with Senator Penrose in the early days. He said, "Now these foresters are technical men, leave them alone. Don't wrap them up into politics in any way." And we were never bothered with politics until after Pinchot came. When Pinchot was elected governor the first time, he kept a lot of the people, the old organization men, on. And then when Pinchot left--the governor dare not [succeed?] itself--when he left, the old
Keller: organization men came in and threw every Pinchot man out. Well, then the next term of four years, Pinchot was elected again. And he did the same thing to the organization men that the organization men had done to him; and that really started the political ball moving as far as the foresters were concerned. From then on Pennsylvania could hardly get a good man to work for the forestry department because it was political and they knew it was only going to be for four years or until the next change of administration.

Fry: That was state?

Keller: Yes.

Fry: Would you say that there was any political activity, such as making grass roots campaigns, on the part of the federal rangers and foresters in Pennsylvania, on regulation?

Keller: None that I ever knew. They all were told to stay away from that. We had one national forest in Pennsylvania—I knew all those boys well—and they never opened their mouths about anything politically, no they didn't.

Fry: Well, another area that I'm wondering about is the relationship of state foresters to Forest Service foresters. For instance, in the area of research I noticed that you said your state of Pennsylvania had a subdivision of research, in information. How did this function with the research done on the federal level?

Keller: When we started up the research in Pennsylvania—that was back in 1920—we were pretty much on our own. There wasn't too much forest research going on at that time, except for the federal government; and while they exchanged their papers and that kind of data, they never would go out and visit each other to see what they were doing in the early days.

Then after they got a little bit broader in the thing, why we went out to the experiment stations there and they would come around and visit us. But at first, there wasn't very much of that visiting done. In those early days, they never had any cooperative projects, whereby the Forest Service and
Keller: the state service worked together on any research. They didn't have that; now they've got lots of that. But then they didn't.

Fry: Was there much duplication, do you think?

Keller: Well, no, I guess there wasn't too much of that. They never discussed it too much. You wouldn't know. But in those early days, research was sort of a lone child. People didn't think that it was necessary to have research, the way they do now. And the fellow that was doing research work, people would laugh at him because there was nothing to that. But now, of course, when we all realize the value of research, why we realize how much good it does to get research men no matter whether they are private, or federal or state or what: they get them together.

Fry: What about fire protection? Was there much cooperation in the early days between federal and state on that?

Keller: When they got the Weeks Law in--I guess that was about 1912, along there--they had Section Four, which was fire protection. And by Section Four, the states would each get so much money for fire protection. From then on, the federal government would send an inspector out to see what we were doing in fire protection to see if we were spending the money right.

There was another section in that provided for so much money for growing trees, and we would always get a little bit--I don't remember how much it was--it wasn't so very much as far as Pennsylvania was concerned because we were so far advanced in the production of trees. But we would always take it. I remember a fellow by the name of Bacus [?] in the Forest Service in Washington, who used to always come out. I had charge of the state nurseries in the early days, and Bac would always come out. I'd take him around to the different nurseries and show him what we were doing, give him the figures of how many we grew and how many we expected to produce the next year; and on that was based the amount of money we would get from the federal government. So that was really the start of the good relations
Keller: between federal and state.

Fry: Was Pinchot in any position to help in the passage of the Weeks bill?

Keller: Oh, yes, Pinchot was well-thought-of all over the United States, and when that Weeks bill went up, why, Pinchot was mixed in with it all over the United States. At that time, he was still in Washington, I think. Smith Lieberite [?], I guess, was the next one that was appointed, next after Kent [?]. But at that time Pinchot was very much interested. I remember he sent me down to Washington a couple of times to talk to Dr. Smith about it, and about how it would affect Pennsylvania.

Oh, Pinchot was a cooperator; he would cooperate with anyone he thought could help him get his points across.
PINCHOT CHARACTERIZATION

Fry: My next question is whether you have any anecdotal material on the Pinchot-Ballinger controversy. Do you know any stories about Pinchot's part in that, that might not be in written records anywhere?

Keller: No. Pinchot never talked very much about that, except about the results of it; he would talk about that. But he never talked about those early fights. Although, when that thing went on, down there at Mont Alto, the students would get together, you know, get things printed about it. They were all very much interested in it.

Fry: Was there ever any doubt that these claims in Alaska might have been illegitimate?

Keller: Who might have been?

Fry: The claims that Pinchot was complaining about in Alaska. Was there ever any doubt that these were illegitimate claims?

Keller: Oh.

Fry: I mean, did anyone ever think--

Keller: Yes, I believe I did hear that discussed a little bit in Pinchot's presence. He didn't lead the discussion, but I remember that quite a lot of them were discussed at various times.

Fry: As this is put together now by historians, it is hard to determine really what went on after that; it seems there were so many other areas in the political life in Washington that were influential in this too. I wondered if you had heard anything about that?
Keller: No, I never heard too much about that. I'll tell you, in those early days our contacts with Washington were very few and far between.

Fry: What I meant was if you had heard Pinchot refer to this, or refer to the legal decisions that came out of the U.S. Attorney General's office.

Keller: No, I don't believe I have.

Fry: You said he only talked about what the effects of this were; do you mean the effect on his career or the effect on forestry in general?

Keller: The effect on forestry in general; Pinchot projected himself way ahead. He was always way ahead of the rest of us foresters in his thinking; and when he would see something going on now, the first thing that he would think about was not the effects of it now, but what's going to happen with that in the future.

Fry: What did he think about this? What did he think the effects would be, or were, of the Pinchot-Ballinger fight?

Keller: Oh, always he would, of course, give credit to the results of these fights. He would never back away from a fight, but he would lock in it and he would always keep the principles of it right before him. He'd never let it get away, [when] somebody would come in and talk about something irrelevant that didn't apply to it. I'd say that he always had those views of the future of forestry right before him, and if anything would cross over--you remember when they were talking about putting Forest Service in the--well the Soil Conservation Service was over in the Interior, and they talked about Forest Service going over [to the Department of Interior] in Roosevelt's administration. Right away he got up and told what that was going to mean.

Fry: Tell me more specifically what he felt this would mean.

Keller: To turn it over?
Fry: Yes.

Keller: Well, he was afraid of the influence more than anything else. The influence of foresters was going to be governed by people who were not foresters and not operating forestry and the outsider coming in and getting it. That's what he was afraid of. He always wanted to keep forestry by itself, not to mix it up with land and Interior and that kind of stuff.

Fry: There was too much land disposal involved?

Keller: He was afraid of that; he was always afraid of the Interior selling their land, and getting rid of it that way. That was contrary to his idea of what ought to happen.

Fry: It seems he took a pretty active part in opposing that.

Keller: Oh, he took a very active part in that, and he wasn't content to talk to just a few fellows around Washington. I remember him calling up people in different states; I didn't know who they were, but from the conversation you could see what he was talking about. He was trying to get these things pinned down to the influential people who were locally affected by it.

Fry: Oh, I see. Did you help him any in this, or were you still a forester?

Keller: No, I never helped him very much in that kind of thing, because I wasn't [in] on that. Pinchot was a national figure; he knew people everywhere.

Fry: On the whole, did he think that F.D.R. did a pretty good job in forestry, except for this threat to move it to Interior?

Keller: He didn't like the change of policy to come in, but he was 100% back of F.D.R.

Fry: Did Pinchot remain behind him until the end?

Keller: Well, I don't know whether he did in the political business, but I know that as far as forestry was concerned, he appreciated everything that Franklin
Keller: D. Roosevelt did for the advancement of forestry. He was a 100% backer of the CCC camps, and he was a 100% backer of the federal [inaudible] and fire protection; those things, he was back of them 100%.

Fry: When I read about what Pinchot has done, I think of him as perhaps a flamboyant sort of character. Was he that way at all, or what was he like?

Keller: He was a man that had a principle, a guiding principle, and that was what he would fight by. And if he would be sitting in a room with two people talking about it, and they would say something that was contrary to the principle that he held before him about forestry, he would preach them a sermon right there. He never let anything go. He wasn't flamboyant at all; he wasn't ugly about it, but he could certainly stir up anybody or any group of men more than any one person I ever knew.

When he came up there to Pennsylvania, we had just a little bunch of foresters, inexperienced, but who knew the local story, and that was all they did know. But he could go up there and he would point out what was going to happen; and then he'd say, "Now we need you fellows to help. I don't ever want anything else." And before those fellows left, there wasn't a man there that wouldn't have done anything in the world to carry out that principle. He could just get his points across too strongly. He wasn't an orator or anything like that, but he could put out the points so that everybody could understand.

Fry: He must have been a very interesting person to know.

Keller: He was; in fact, I never worked with a man that could draw out the best in his organization more than Pinchot could. If there was something that they were stumbling over, that they weren't quite sure of, he'd call us together and explain the thing, and by the time he was through we all knew about it. We never had very many meetings together before Pinchot came up there; but after he organized us, he'd have us together all the time. Whenever a big point came up that he wanted to get across,
Keller: he'd call all the foresters down to Harrisburg, down to Mont Alto, or up to another part of the state some place. And he would get his points across.

Fry: Did you think he did this with all his government departments, or was he a little partial to forestry and more cognizant of its needs?

Keller: Well, when he got to be governor, he was just as much interested in other departments, too. We, up there, were organized as the Department of Forest and Water. But we were all interested in forestry, and we had a few water engineers over there filling [inaudible]. But after he got over there, he put in two bureaus there, a Bureau of Forests and a Bureau of Water. And he built the water up along with the forestry. And he did the same thing in the other organizations that he knew. There wasn't any one of the departments up there that he didn't keep his fingers on. He had a Commissioner of Highways, a Commissioner of Health, a Commissioner of Insurance and the different departments. But he knew what was going on in every one of those departments and he could talk about it; but he would never talk to an outsider unless he brought in the man who was responsible for it; he was always like that. He never talked to some outsider about my work, without telling me about it. He would make it a point to have me around when he talked about it. And he did that with all the other departments up there, so that it wasn't just a single man running it; it was the organization. He was a good organization man.

Fry: How was he on communications from lower echelons up to his office; was it easy to get in touch with him?

Keller: Oh, anybody could talk to Pinchot, anybody could. And he didn't like it when the hired field men would come in there and not make it a point to see him. He wanted to see everybody and shake their hand. He was a politician when it came down to that, and he did make a good politician. He was elected twice in Pennsylvania as governor, against the machine; and Pennsylvania had a big political machine. He went in there lone-handed,
Keller: and he beat the machine two times. So he was an organization man, and he knew how to put an organization together that would work.

Fry: Did you campaign any with him?

Keller: No, never.

Fry: You couldn't do that could you?

Keller: No sir, not at all. When he was running for governor the second time, I attended a political rally one time; and he stood at the door shaking hands. When at last we shook hands, he said, "Now, I want to see you."

[Power fails; tape fades out. Mr. Keller continues, telling how Pinchot was a natural as a public relations man, and how, soon after he became head of the Pennsylvania State Department of Water and Forests, he brought in a Mr. Vorse, a veteran newspaperman, to teach his foresters how to write newspaper stories.

[He mentions that Governor William Sproul (governor of Pennsylvania 1916-1920) went against Senator Penrose's advice in appointing Pinchot as head of Water and Forests.

[He sketches his own entry into the field of forestry when he was going to Susquehanna College and, against his father's wishes, entered Mont Alto in 1906, having made the second-highest grade in the entrance examinations. He served in the Pennsylvania Department of Water and Forests, then in 1936 went into the Soil Conservation Service as a forester. He tells how the Resettlement Administration became the Farm Home Administration, and under the Soil Conservation Service in 1938. He was in Philadelphia in the Regional Office of that agency until 1940 when he went to the Washington office and remained an assistant chief forester in Soil Conservation Service until 1947, when the position was cut out.

[He points out that when SCS was transferred to Secretary Ickes' Interior Department, the same men were kept and returned to the Department of
Agriculture when the SCS did. "It was in Interior a very short time," he said. "All the foresters went after it." He also credits its transfer back to the Department of Agriculture to Pinchot's influence on both President Franklin Roosevelt and on Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes. The main constituents of its placement in the Department of Interior, he says, were the livestock interests and agronomists, who wanted to see the grasslands put into Interior.

--From notes taken at time of interview]
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Graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1947 with a B.A. in psychology, wrote for campus magazine; Master of Arts in educational psychology from the University of Illinois in 1952, with heavy minors in English for both degrees.

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Writes feature articles for various newspapers, was reporter for a suburban daily 1966-67. Writes professional articles for journals and historical magazines.

Joined the staff of Regional Oral History Office in February, 1959.

Conducted interview series on University history, woman suffrage, the history of conservation and forestry, and public administration and politics.

Director, Earl Warren Oral History Project

Secretary, Oral History Association; oral history editor, Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship.