

Harley Langdale Jr. Collection-Tape Two

VIDEOTAPE TRANSCRIPTION: Langdale Interview #2, May 16, 2003.
Interviewer: Laurie Sommers (LS); Interviewee: Harley Langdale Jr. (HL)

BEGINNING ITEMS 96-101 (TURPENTINE BOTTLES & CANS), COUNTER 8:39:45

LS: I'm Laurie Sommers and I'm here with Harley Langdale Jr. and we're discussing his gift of items from the Harley Langdale collection to Valdosta State University and it's Friday, May 16, 2003, in the studios at VSU Satellite Services, and we're following up, this is the second interview following the one we did on May 5, also talking about the collection, and I'd like to start with the items we have on the table, which are ID numbers 96 through 101. 96 is a small, green glass Lanco turpentine bottle, 97 is the medium bottle, 98 is the large bottle. 99 goes to the small metal container of Lanco gum turpentine, and the medium bottle of gum turpentine, and finally, the large metal can, which is item 101. So, you can read the labels, Mr. Harley, and tell what these are, but what I would be interested [in] from you is the story behind it. I know that they were, from reading your book, that they were designed by AFTA [sic], the American Turpentine Farmers Association, which was founded in 1936, and I know from reading the book also that you won, the association won, the national award for the design of these, but tell me about your connection to these, and why you've kept them all these years.

HL: Well after the American Turpentine Farmers Association was formed, one of the first problems that they had was people that wanted to buy gum spirits or turpentine had to bring their own container to the hardware store and they would fill it out of a barrel they had. It wasn't very handy, so they found out that if they had containers and sort of an advertising program that it would be helpful, and when that happened, we decided, not at first, but right after that, we started our own name, trade name, of gum turpentine as you see on these bottles and these tin containers, and we had that available in stores and sold it to houses at hardware supplies and building supplies, so that helped the sales of it a good bit. Before that time, we would ship our turpentine from the turpentine still in tank cars, and we would get as little as 20 cents a gallon for it, I remember that very vividly. And that just wasn't bringing us much money and this helped us out. And we've always been thinking of what can we do to put out a better product and get a little bit more money for it, and that was our...that's what we wanted to do.

LS: Now these, just looking at it, I don't see, I didn't see a date on any of these. Do you have any idea of the ones that you saved here, are these from a certain time period, are these the first, for example, containers that your company used?

HL: Well, now the American Turpentine Farmers allowed it, and they had turpentine and rosin factors to begin with, doing small container operations, and then we sort of came back at it and put the Lanco brand, which represents the Langdale Company, and that was soon after the American Turpentine Farmers Association was formed, I would say the latter part of the 30s, of the 1930s.

LS: So these are examples, then, of the first containers that your company manufactured itself or had manufactured for its own products of gum turpentine.

HL: Yes, that's correct.

LS: Is there a difference, in your eye, from looking at the metal containers to the glass, in any sort of way?

HL: No, we had the glass containers, not in the bigger units, but in the gallon here, we had the metal. That was a little bit more desired if somebody was painting a house and wanted more turpentine, but these were the housewives that wanted it for cleaning purposes and all of that, and so both of them had a place, and so that's the way, it never did change any, until we went out of business, with our turpentine business.

LS: So you had this same design for containers all along until...

HL: It was designed, see, by the American Turpentine Farmers Association, and we just went under their design, and put our name there, which you could do, other people did it, too.

LS: So there would be other companies instead of Lanco that would use the same design.

HL: Yes, yes.

LS: Were you involved at all in the...I know you were a member of AFTA [sic], were you involved in the movement to create a standardized container, you know, that the producers...

HL: I was very supportive because I thought that was progress, where you could go to a hardware store or other stores and buy a container like you wanted, and you had gum spirits or turpentine that was undiluted in any way, pure turpentine.

LS: Is this the only type, I guess, container, that, of this sort, you know, small, as opposed to big industrial use that you would have had as a company for turpentine products?

HL: I didn't know of any others. Now, other people would have a little bit of change on the design somewhere or another, but not too different.

LS: And so, since you said other companies could use, you know, certainly similar sizing and similar idea, and since it was designed by AFTA, I guess my question is if you know whether Langdale was the first, among the first, just one of a group, to go to this type of system, or was it everyone who was a member of AFTA, how did that work?

HL: Well, turpentine and rosin factors was the first, that I knew, and then we had other companies who also were factors, other factors were consolidated and they were such that I don't think they ever did that, but they had some others and then they had some other names that would have had a processing plant like we had, would do it. All of us were seeking better markets and more extensive markets.

LS: So basically what this did for the producers is eliminated the middleman, it eliminated the factor, right?

HL: Absolutely.

LS: Do you know anything about who did the design, or whether the company, your company, was involved? I know you said you were supportive, but did you have any personnel that were directly involved in the design itself?

HL: Well, when AFTA started designing something and all, they asked us our opinion, and we would add something and they would take it. We had an advertising person that knew something about it and they kind of led AFTA into what they ought to do and what they ought to say.

LS: And who would that have been? The name of that person, do you recall?

HL: Ed Oliver.

LS: Ed Oliver. And that was an advertising person for Langdale, or AFTA?

HL: For ATFA.

LS: Okay.

HL: I knew him very well, he was, he came to, he had been working for the ATFA.

LS: And so you have kept these where, in your office, since 19...the late 1930s early 1940s?

HL: In my office...well...

LS: Or since you said it was...

HL: These are a little bit later, because we didn't jump into it just as quick as turpentine and rosin factors, but we saw that we ought to do that, and be better known as a producer, and because we had quality in every way. So we did that a little later, but it was not much, it was about the time that all of us were seeing that we had to have a way to get to the market, so that's the reason we did this, but I would say that earlier in the 30s turpentine and rosin factors started it, and we were a little bit later than after, I would say the latter part of the 1930s, before World War II.

LS: So since you used this same basic design until you finished and got out of the turpentine producing business, as you said, we really don't know the exact dates of these particular bottles, but the design remained relatively constant from when you started it until you ended, is that what I understood?

HL: I would say that in the latter part of the 1930s, we got this design, which was being used and ATFA approved it and we bought our containers in large quantities.

LS: So this was really the final, what shall I say, improvement or innovation of your marketing of gum turpentine to the small sort of household or hardware store consumer. And it really didn't change from this format throughout the duration of your business in turpentine, is that right?

HL: That's right.

LS: Anything else you want to add about these?

HL: I don't think so, because, you know, as turpentine got down, the price went up some and it was just, people weren't producing much and it wasn't that profitable and people just sort of let it stay like that, and when we saw that we were going to slow down on the production of gum turpentine, we sort of let it go, but we bought our containers in big quantities.

LS: Who manufactured them for you?

HL: Well, I think we...I better not say that because I don't remember that exact company on the glass or the metal, but that was handled by somebody that was on that basis. Does it say on there? It wouldn't be Owens?

LS: There is a note on there, it looks like something,

HL: It's a little hard to read.

LS: D-U-R-A, Duraglass, is what it says.

HL: This must be Owens Illinois, because I see their symbol down here, with the ring, and "I" and it looks like an "O" on the outer line and an "I" in the...so Owens Illinois, I would assume made the bottles. The metal, I don't know whose (examines can)...had to be another company, because I don't think that Owens Illinois was in the metal container business at that time; however, later they did get into the metal containers because they knew that was going to be a competitor.

LS: If you bought the containers in large quantities, they were, all of this was bottled locally in your plant?

HL: We had a small bottling machine and it would do it, it wouldn't do it that rapid, but it would do a good job, and we didn't start out like we were going to be continuous like they do with the soft drinks that you've seen bottled. But we had a machine that would take several bottles at a time, and then we filled a lot of the bigger containers that we had by just manpower.

LS: But some of these would've been all done by machine?

HL: Some. The smaller ones.

LS: What about the largest one?

HL: Not that, I think that was handled by hand.

LS: And it would've been done by hand throughout the use of these containers?

HL: I think, mostly, mostly. Now turpentine and rosin factors was a larger distributor and they might've had a little bit more automated equipment.

LS: And so, was that bottling plant here in Valdosta, then? You said you had a bottling plant, where was that located?

HL: It was just small, and it was down there where the turpentine still was.

LS: Okay.

HL: But we tried to be innovators, and we tried to take advantage of what we could pick up, and that's the reason we had the modern turpentine still out at that location, and then we had, we tried to make other products out of rosin, and so we had a building there, and it caught afire. The only fire we've ever had at any of our plants to amount to anything, it caught afire when it was raining, and it damaged it so badly that we decided, and we knew that the turpentine business was on the wane, so we didn't go that route any further.

LS: When was that, the fire?

HL: Well, let's see, we built the still in '44, so I would say that we had our trying to make other products out of rosin, I would say the latter part of the '40s, and that's when we were bottling more turpentine, so we did that, until the '60s.

LS: And, could you guesstimate for me sort of what percentage of your total operation, I guess that would've changed throughout the course from the '40s through the '60s, but say, during the peak period for the use and market for gum turpentine, it sounds like it would've been a pretty small percentage of your overall operation, since you could do hand bottling of some of this and just have a small bottling plant. My question is, can you kind of guess what percentage of Langdale's business...

HL: I would say of the turpentine, probably, probably, I think when we started, we probably had 25 percent of it that was being bottled and all, and I think that grew to more than 50 percent, but never 100 percent, or close to 100 percent.

BEGINNING OF USES OF TURPENTINE, COUNTER 8:56:32

LS: Did you yourself use these products personally, in your family? Did you use spirit of turpentine?

HL: Yes, yes, my wife and all the family, they liked it, because it's very good, and they used it particularly when they were cleaning the bathrooms and all, that was a very, very good material to do things like that with.

LS: So a cleaner, not just paint thinner, but it had lots of uses.

HL: Lots of uses, cleaning, and then we used it if we had any painters doing some work, but it was used very good.

LS: I'm sure you only used Lanco brand, is that right?

HL: That's right, most of the time.

END OF USES OF TURPENTINE, COUNTER 8:57:20.

LS: Okay. I think we can move on to the next group of items.

END ITEMS 96-101, COUNTER 8:57:30.

BREAK IN TAPE

BEGINNING ITEMS 105-108 (TREE CROSS-SECTIONS), COUNTER 9:00:30.

LS: All right, we're going to switch now to the, well, I'm sure there will be some overlap, to more of the forestry part of, I think, your materials here for a while. This is Items 105 through 108, and they're four cross-sections of pine tree; the largest is Item 105, which has a tag, "planted 1975, harvested 1991, 16 years." Item 106 has a tag that says "11 years" on it. Item 107 says "75 years," and I'm going to turn these over for you, and then Item 108 has a tag that says "11 years," and that's the smaller of the numbers, so, why don't you just tell a little bit about these four tree cross-sections and any stories or what the significance is to the company and the company's innovations and your work as a forester or whatever seems to apply to whichever one you want to start with.

HL: Well, this is very important to us. What we're trying to do is grow a quality tree as fast as possible, for it to be financially worthwhile, and that's what we show people, because many people would come into my office and didn't have any idea what we were trying to do in a forestry situation. And we found all of these trees came from some of our land, and we knew the history of them, as you probably know, a tree, a pine tree, is very vividly ??? and they have two rings a year. They have the dark ring, which is what we call the summer wood, and then the light wood there is what we call the spring wood. And you'll notice that the large tree right there was grown down in Echols County, which it doesn't show that on there, but, so that tree was doing just fine, and then when it got to be about 10 years old, you see it starting slowing down, so then we look at that, well that tree was too thick and we wanted to thin it out so we would have more sunlight to the top of the tree, and continue maybe not that fast of a growth, but something faster than this. And so, that's what we were doing, trying to thin it and trying to put it into some sort of use. All these trees qualify for the number one grade lumber, and we were

particularly happy when we got those two that were 11 years old, and we didn't have pulpwood markets at one time, if we hadn't had that, I don't know what we would've done. I have the greatest admiration for foresters, early foresters, that didn't have a pulpwood market, so they could thin the timber out and keep it growing. So that's what we tried to do, and we showed people that, that we needed to thin those trees and get them looking like this, and that's our ideal, over there. Now this is a larger tree...

LS: Let's just wait here and go back. This is your ideal, this one, which would be number 106, and just explain why that's the ideal, what's ideal about it?

HL: Because it was growing, and it wasn't suppressed, and we'd possibly thin some timber around it and see it's such an even stand and it passes all the rules and regulations required to be number one grade lumber.

LS: Can you just talk a little bit about what those rules and regulations would be?

HL: We've got to have a certain amount of summer wood and so it's not that complicated, but very simple. This part right here, this most lesser, that probably wouldn't pass right in there, that part, so you wanted it close enough so that it would be firm wood and still wood that was grown too fast and more pithy you might say.

LS: What are the, just before we move on to the last example, which is the oldest tree here, what kinds of pine are these, what types of trees do these come from?

HL: The slash pine, all of them.

BEGINNING OF TYPES OF AREA PINE TREES, COUNTER 9:05:31

LS: And I think, could you just speak a little bit, I think you and I had talked before, when I was at your office recording you, about sort of the beginnings of slash pine commercial cultivation as a crop in this region and I think you talked some about your family's involvement in that, could you just talk a little bit about that? Because the slash pine is something that's...doesn't it grow faster in this part of the country? I've heard that, is that true?

HL: Well, we have really three bane pine trees in our area, and that's long-leaf pine, and slash pine, and loblolly pine. Now we have a few of the other trees that have come down with bird droppings and other reasons, but we planted slash pine back in the early days because they were so much easier to get in the woods, where they'd come up too thick, we would go out and gather them in the woods because we didn't have the state or individual companies producing them. We found out that the slash, only two of those trees I named produce oleo resin, and slash is the better producer, the faster producer, at a younger age, you know. The long-leaf is a little slower, but the long-leaf has other qualities, they're more fire-resistant, probably more bug, insect resistant. So I guess that slash was the easiest to keep living, and get started better, and produce gum naval stores, which was their main crop. So, we planted more slash. Now, we're planting a good many long-leaf, because we like, we're in the pole business, in the piling business, and the long-leaf is more of a straighter-growing tree. It's a little slower, but we're usually able to get

more stumpage, or money for the tree, if we sell the trees in poles and pilings, than we do in lumber, which we can have trees that grow crooked; we can saw that where it'd be acceptable.

END OF TYPES OF AREA PINE TREES, COUNTER 9:08:06

LS: Early on, when your family started working, your grandfather, in the turpentine business, and began to acquire land, they were just cutting the old growth forests in this region. When did the Langdale Company, or when did your family start actually start planting crops? Who was...

HL: About early, I would say 1929.

BREAK IN TAPE

LS: We were in mid-stream talking about these, first these three things of slash pine and I think we were talking about...

HL: So, so slash pine was our desired tree, and it produced more crude gum. So we planted slash pine and most of the plantations that we had in South Georgia had been made with slash pine seedlings but now we have certain areas that we know we can grow long-leaf, we found out how to plant them, and some of our land east of town has what we call a hard pan, which is compressed soil, and it could be several inches thick or it could be smaller than that. And the long-leaf pine has a taproot, and a taproot has got to penetrate that hard pan for it to continue growing.

LS: Do you say hard pan, like P-A-N?

HL: Pan, P-A-N, is our common name for it, there must be a technical name, but I never did know it, but slash pine root systems spread out, long-leaf pines concentrate on getting the taproot in and then it spreads to some extent, but our better soil, what we called a better site, for long-leaf, especially west of Valdosta, where you have clay and some of our better soils, is suitable for long-leaf, and we were planting long-leaf because of the quality of the tree and the money that we received for it using it as a pole or a piling, compared with pulpwood or softstock. So that's what we're after, is to grow wood like the piece over here that you have 11 years, and that's what our goal is.

LS: I think when we took the break you had mentioned 1929, was that the date...we had just come to that date, is that when...

HL: That's about the time we started our first seeding, 1929 and 1930, we planted seedlings that we gathered from concentrated pieces of seedlings, and we'd take a pitchfork and we'd go in and prize them up, and then we would take ??? and plant them. We had very good luck.

LS: And that was seedlings of slash pine?

HL: Uh-huh. Slash pine. And we didn't like loblolly pine, but loblolly pine is probably the most important pine in Georgia now, because they will grow in most any locality, and it grows

fast, but it's more, usually more crooked, and more knotty, but it has seed crops practically every year, and slash has them most of the time, but long-leaf only has good seed years around four or five years, or maybe sometimes longer than that.

LS: We haven't really talked about the fourth sample, I had cut you off earlier about that. But these three are slash pine, and that is another type of pine, the one?

HL: Well this is slash pine, and all those are slash pine, I'm sure of, and this could be long-leaf, because it's 75 years old, and you see how close those rings are, and that's the way that tree was, either a suppressed, that could be a suppressed slash, and I'm not qualified to really look at this and tell, but I would say that it's either long-leaf or suppressed slash pine.

LS: And these, these four pieces they're shellacked, you've got them identified and labeled, how...I think you may have already discussed this, but how would you use, have used these in the context of your business or talking to customers or...

HL: Well, I'll tell you what they ought to do is they ought to do business with us because we are qualified to thin the trees out, and we are foresters, and we know, and we think we know what we're doing on every occasion, most occasions, but the secret of growing more wood is having each pine tree having enough sunlight and far enough to the next one that they have no hindrance of their growth. Now, where you've got them too thick, they're not going to grow fast, so we try to thin them and we usually planted pines, we thinned them when they were somewhere in the neighborhood of 10 years old after planting, and then we'll wait until they're 15 years old, we'll thin them again, and then we'll have a ??? because we're on a faster rotation. Some places where they want to grow quality timber and they've got more for other purposes, too, like game management and everything, they will leave them longer, but we try to operate our business on the basis that we can harvest these trees as quick as we can and not have to wait so many years.

LS: Where would these have been stored or kept over the years in your business, these particular pieces of pine samples? Where did you keep them? Have they been in your office?

HL: In my office, the whole time.

LS: So you would use these, then, when someone came in and...

HL: That's for ladies (wink, wink) that were wanting to know about how they could get the most money out of their trees.

LS: I see. And did you yourself have these prepared for explaining purposes?

HL: Yes, we talked about it, what we could do to explain to people and that was gathered by some of our foresters.

LS: And you said that this particular one was from a plantation in Echols County. Do you know where the other ones came from, are they...

HL: I think that, as best as I can remember, I know where this one came from, Echols County and that was a good site in Echols County because it was close to a creek, a running stream, and that's usually a big help, too, and that's usually some of the better land, not where it's flooded, but where it gets a little more water than the others, maybe, at times. So I would say that, if I'm not mistaken, all four of these samples we've got here are from Echols County.

LS: This largest one says, "harvested 1991," so that would suggest that this means of explaining things to people, you really, at least with that one, you've only been using it to explain for about a decade or so.

HL: Right.

LS: Is this something that you've...did you always have pieces of lumber like this to talk to customers?

HL: Of some type.

LS: Of some type. So this is just the latest version?

HL: Right. And you can go now and see our finished lumber and you can see 'cause the ends, anywhere where you're cutting off the ends of a piece of lumber, where it's smooth, you can count the rings very well.

LS: Anything else you wanted to add about these?

HL: I don't think so, they pretty well show themselves.

LS: Let me just ask one final thing, then, about the one that says "+75," because the rings are so close together, would that be the most...you said this one was the most desirable...

HL: Right.

LS: Would that one be equally desirable, the one (that says) "+75?"

HL: Some people would say, well, the more rings would be the stronger wood, but that's not necessarily so where you use wood, because that passes the specifications and this is overly past it.

LS: I see.

HL: You just couldn't wait for 75 years. That's what was really happening when I came back from as a forester, a lot of people were saying, planting trees, well you think you're going to get some money out of that, but you're never getting any money out of it because they were looking at a few trees somewhere around the fence row or something, you know, that just grew that slow, for some other reason, so that's true. You know, the sawmill people in the early days, they would cut the trees and move on because they felt like they couldn't wait, and now the sawmill

man is trying to thin it fast enough so it'd get it this size over here bigger and then we dropped our sizes some, too.

LS: Are you, you know, were the...as the first person in Lowndes County to get a degree in forestry and the third forester in the state if I remember right, and have been a practicing forester since 1937, I think I looked at your diploma, does that sound right?

HL: That's right, that's right.

LS: Just, maybe to conclude, when we look at these tree samples, is there something in terms of what you would say, in terms of your company and the way that you've managed trees or any particular development that Langdale has pioneered or been known for that's a result of your background or involvement in forestry? So I guess, is there a contribution that you feel that you have brought as a forester to directing the company that somehow...

HL: I think we've helped...a lot of the people just didn't have any idea that you could plant trees and you would get an income, but now, when we plant trees, we expect them to do some thinning there to bring in some money. When this was, certainly 10 years old and we started thinning some of it from 10 and go on up from the first thinning up to maybe 15, but we think we ought to thin it as quickly as we can and then we might get another thinning out of it before we get to what we call our plan of growing trees as fast as we can as long as it passed specifications like that, to make money.

LS: Let me try to ask you my question another way and see if...you were the first to practice forestry in Lowndes County and again, the third...

HL: Not necessarily, somebody might've thought they were practicing but they didn't have a degree.

LS: Right, okay, with a degree. We're at a university, degrees are important. We know that, but, I guess, at the time that you took over the company, then, you were one of very few people who had, you know, sort of "scientific" training in forestry in the business, working certainly in South Georgia and in the state. Is there anything at that time when you took over that you brought to the business that wasn't happening with some of your competitors at the time that was related to your knowledge as a forester?

BEGINNING OF FOREST FIRE PREVENTION, COUNTER 9:29:27.

HL: Well, the first thing that we knew about the pulpwood market was (it was) beginning to come, move South, and we realized we had a better market. But then we didn't have fire protection. We had...we called ourselves keeping it rough, so it wouldn't burn and we would watch it ourselves to some extent, but we didn't have any specialized equipment. And that was started because Superior Pine Products Company which was a company up north that made paper size, and as you probably know, paper size is something they put in the paper when they're making it so it won't be like blotters, it'll be paper that you can use and all. But they thought we had given out of trees, a lot of people thought we'd given out of trees, and they started practicing

fire protection when they bought the property in 1926, so they started immediately, having fire protection, and they had a lot of trouble to begin with that people couldn't understand that, they didn't like rough woods, because rough woods were harder to work in and so it wasn't as successful at first, but they had a technical forester, that was a top-notch forester, named Captain I.F. Eldridge, they called him "captain" because he'd been in World War I. And so he plowed...got equipment to plow little trails and take off all the vegetation and pull that to the side so it'd have a place where it could stop if they did have a fire along the roads it passed by, people would throw out cigarettes and didn't care and people would go ahead and set the woods afire because that helped the game and hunting and if you put your cups up, you know you had, you didn't want them to burn because you really had value in your cups and your gutters and your gum, so it was a matter of seeing that we could do it, and all of us had a lot of trouble. I remember some of the fires that we had, we had turpentine labor that worked, and we didn't have anything but a hoe and a rake and maybe a shovel, and then we'd take a pine top and beat it out and a lot of that wasn't successful and a lot of people lost a lot of money by catching afire and you couldn't put it out, so after we got that licked a little bit, we were so much better off, but you know we had a governor named Eugene Talmadge, and he had a forestry department in the state of Georgia, but he believed in not having anybody that had gone to school to study forestry but he believed in woodsmen that had been working in the woods, logging or running cows or hogs or something like that, but he didn't want anybody that had a degree in forestry. But when I came along, Herman Talmadge, his son, was in school, and he knew the forest school, and he seemed to be our friend, and so that's where about that time is when it changed, so I would say that I was a help, but I really didn't start it off because people said you're nothing but a fool if you're going to keep your land rough and they're going to catch afire and you're going to destroy what timber you're growing, so it was a long time, and that all happened a long time ago, now.

END FOREST FIRE PREVENTION, COUNTER 9:33:32.

LS: Let me just make sure I understand a connection. When you talked about Captain Eldridge, the forester who worked for Superior Pine, was that something then that you're saying that you knew of that because of your connections as a forester and you were trying to implement some of his approaches here, and it was a hard go, basically, because it was so counter to how people had...

HL: Absolutely. You have described that very accurate(ly). And Dr. Eldridge, well, he was Captain Eldridge, everybody called him. He was in great demand with the U.S. Forest Service back in that time, and everybody wanted to know how much timber did we have in the South, so he accepted a position with the U.S. Forest Service and every 10 miles, he would get young foresters and he would run a line all the way across and they would check on some sort of basis of how much timber was there, all over the South.

LS: Did you work with him personally?

HL: No, I worked with him down on the turpentine places when we'd go back and forth, and I'd talk to him and he wrote a book. He had been a manager of four forests, and he called it "The Four Forests," and it was a very good book, and he said something about us in the turpentine

business and trying to protect it, and it was a tough job. But we conquered that area, but we got better equipment all along, and when he left, he got a fellow by the name of Bill Oettmeier, and Bill Oettmeier was a Pennsylvania boy, and he studied forestry at Pennsylvania, I think. And so he went down and married a local girl and stayed with it, and then he turned it over to his son, who was a graduate forester, later, at the University of Georgia, so that's been, they've certainly been our friends, because they found out that they could not work the labor and make money by producing crude oleo resin which is the gum that we take and make the rosin and turpentine. They found out that they couldn't make any money at that, so, my father, wanting to do more business, made an agreement with them and we worked all their land that they worked for turpentine production, or rosin, or oleo resin, properly. So all that has been a learning (experience) for me, and it's been practical and tied in with what I learned in school, and my father was impressed with that, and he listened to it and it made sense to him, and a lot of people thought that he was making a bad mistake because he could have one fire and everything burn up, and I've seen a fire that burned 90,000 acres of the Superior Pine Product Company's land and destroyed the timber and they re-seeded it with pine seed from the air, and they got it started back fairly quick, but it was a big lick. So that's where we just moved along with these new things and as the pulp mills demanded more wood and (were) building more pulp and paper mills down there, the worth of it increased a little in value, and then people started to seeing that planting trees would pay.

END OF ITEMS 105-108, TAPE COUNTER 9:37:36

LS: Well this, actually this conversation leads into just the next group of objects that I wanted to bring over which...

HL: I went too long on some of this...

LS: No, you didn't, you didn't, but let me just break here then, and bring over...

BREAK IN TAPE

BEGINNING ITEMS 37 (DIPLOMA), 137 (TEXTBOOK) AND 132 (FIELD BOOK), COUNTER 9:40:14.

LS: This next group of objects includes Item Number 37, which is Mr. Langdale's diploma from the University of Georgia; Item 137, which is a textbook, we're guessing, and you can talk about that, "Elements of Forest Mensuration," by Herman H. Chapman and Dwight B. Demeritt from 1932; and then the third item is "An Engineer's Field Book," that's Item 132. So, I put these together because we were guessing that this green book you have here, Item 137, was something that dates to your years in forestry school at UGA. Is that right, do you know about where this book came from?

HL: Yeah, well this was the fundamentals of really practicing forestry to grow more wood per acre per year, and that's (the) things we really didn't know. That was where we learned to use the increment bore so we don't have to cut down the tree to find out how old it is, you know, we'd take a little bore over there and we'd count those rings and we'd know what was happening

to that tree, and this is very important. But maybe I ought to tell you this though: after I got to forestry school and all, I had an emergency appendectomy at the fraternity house, and so when I did that, they carried me to the hospital and operated on me and the doctor did that, but somewhere or another we had a little leakage in it, and that formed a problem with me and I didn't get into some of this stuff in here, but they were very nice to me about that and that's something, I didn't do as much surveying as some of the others did, but I did it later. But this formed a tumor, and I got down to 100 pounds, and I had a very hard time getting anybody to really look at it back in that day, that was before you had all these drugs and I came home and our family doctor had a son who was a friend of mine who had gone to Johns Hopkins. So he got excited immediately and thought it was cancer and it wasn't anything to do with...if he opened it up, he'd sew it back, you know, but his son made arrangements up there with a doctor at Johns Hopkins, and I went up there and he examined me and he operated and cut it out where the other doctor had cut off the appendix and that's what it was, just leaking in there and nature trying to take care of it. Had a tumor about this big on my intestines and he cut out enough of it to then tie up both ends and then put it together and then I started getting better. But I stayed in the same bed for eight weeks. They didn't have all this penicillin and things like that. But that kept me from doing some of these things at that time at school, but otherwise I did all of them and after that, I haven't had any trouble with it, except every so often, the what'd I say there, the...not the muscles, where you have an operation like that and they get crossways or something like that and it really affects me for a few days there, but I get along fine, and here I am right at 89 years old. But on some of that, I was there, and when the professor, see this was done when I was in school, the surveying part of it, and everything.

LS: So this book, to you, draws up images of surveying. Was this a primary text for using that?

HL: Well, not necessarily primary, but that was a good book. But we had other books and other courses that we took after we got the basic studies through school. So surveying is very important to us, and we keep somebody that's a good surveyor all the time, and now we're using the GIS system and all that, probably the first one, we were ahead of the U.S. Forest Service Florida group, and they came up here and looked at ours before they ordered (theirs)...we're proud of that. A lot of people didn't survey the land, and they just walked it off or guessed at it and the deeds weren't described where you could find them, and I know that's something else that you're probably going to talk about later, but we paint our lines and we survey all our property. Most people agree with us and they appreciate it, because they didn't know right where their line was and some of the lines were described in such a way that there's no way to get them priced straight; you had to have a greed line, because a lot of them said, well, it goes to the high bushes on the west side of Swaneeregee Creek, and things like that, but all these books and I've got those other books, I don't know why you picked out mensuration, but we've got that, and tree identification and all the other things, but I still...

LS: This seemed to be, of the books that you've donated so far, this was the...I think these two were the oldest books. This one looked like it was the only one from your college days in forestry at UGA, so maybe you have other ones that you haven't...

HL: That's right, I've got others that will be following in the next set.

LS: Okay, because we were wondering why this particular one had been saved, but in fact, it's just one of the group.

HL: All equally important and all of it came from, you know, I guess the original foresters were Germans and that's who they say that (were) the original foresters in the United States. I had the opportunity to meet not necessarily the first ones, but some of the first ones who had been in Georgia and had the opportunity at meetings and all that to know them. And most of them were up at Yale, Syracuse, and places like that, Michigan, and I guess that then it filtrated down here, and the University of Georgia is probably the oldest one, much older I think than Florida's, but that's been spreading all the time and getting better, and better equipment, and better firefighting equipment and all. We used to have these towers, you know, for fire. So I would say forestry has come a long way in my lifetime, the first part, but I was right after that part. It was a pleasure to see somebody like Captain Eldridge that knew the basics of what he knew, it was very good, but he was dealing with people who, some of them were squatters, some of them didn't care anything about the forest, they had woods cattle and woods hogs; he had a real tough job, but they have done a good job of it, and do you know the families of the same owners who were the forebears in the papermakers chemical corporation still own the property. Of course it's spreading out, there's so many people that don't really know anything about it, but Bill Oettmeier Jr. is still the general manager, so that's the third manager of that property. Now he was younger than me and I enjoyed being with his father. His father was a very good person and really knew forestry good, and he had been in World War I. Now I might be getting off the track here, and telling you so much about what you didn't ask about, but Bill Oettmeier Sr. was really interested in shortwave radios, and he was one of the first that started with the shortwave radios so he could get a hold of people when he did have a fire. Things like that, they just progressed and then as the paper mills came they were making money and spending it on the woods and all.

LS: Are they the other big sort of family operating in the general business of forest products in South Georgia? There's the Oettmeiers, there's the Langdales, I know they're based in Fargo, right?

HL: Yes, you've got some other families that are not as big, but they're big, there's the Sessoms over in Clinch County, Cogdell is their headquarters and they live there, and they're carrying on, but their family, I really don't know enough about them to say, but they have had to employ people from outside, where we've been very fortunate that I've lived longer, and we've got foresters, but we don't depend on them for their complete judgment.

LS: This book right here, the little brown one, if you want to pick that up...

HL: This is surveying.

LS: So, when you were talking to me earlier about the appendectomy and the fact that you didn't do a lot of surveying, would this have been from your college days, this particular book, can you tell me about it?

HL: We did surveying in college, of course then that was sort of a different course, where you get a bit more technical about it, but we used that in some of our surveying interests up there.

We surveyed some land, the school had some property, but that really became more important after I got back down here in school than surveying land. Surveying land wasn't really that important to us down here, but it's become more and more important, as land became more valuable, and it's absolutely necessary for us to keep somebody on our group staff.

LS: This one doesn't have much identifying it, so we were wondering if you could just tell us a little bit about it, as something that you're donating.

HL: This was just small courses in some of the beginning of surveying and things like that because this doesn't really have any surveying notes to amount to anything in it.

LS: But are we right that this is something that comes from your period at the University of Georgia?

HL: Right, we did more. And then you're going to have to go ahead to get a surveyor's license, you have to take a course, and we've got people in our organization that are taking those courses and leaving with that, and I didn't really do a lot of surveying after we got started sort of. I had a school person that was in school with me and I had several of them working with me that when we first started off when we got down here, they've all passed on now except one, that turned out to be the best surveyor, and he kind of helps teach some of our younger people some of it, and then they...

LS: What's his name?

HL: His name is T.E. Connell, call him Buck Connell, he's still the only one still living that started out that was in the school with me or worked for me.

LS: So, although this book is kind of an artifact, then, from your college days, surveying is not something that played a big part in your career.

HL: No, that's right. But it was really important. But I always was able to work something out on that, some way or another, but some of these lines were dead about impossible, it was sort of give and take when you got on them...although my grandfather helped survey the south boundary of the Okefenokee Swamp in the early 1890s, and we have that information somewhere in my papers. But he and another man, I don't know what kind of surveying they did because I know they didn't have any training in it, but a lot of them stepped it off in surveying, and that's all they had; they didn't have a chain like we have now.

LS: Tell me a little about the...in relationship to the diploma, is this something that hung in your office?

HL: Yes. That was just my degree.

LS: Right.

HL: Bachelor of science in forestry.

LS: And I know that you've told this elsewhere, but I think it would be appropriate now, if you'd just tell me the story about how you ended up in forestry as an occupation.

HL: I was going to the Citadel in South Carolina, and that was a friend of my father's was named Varn, the family. They grew up and out from Waycross, Wareboro. But they went and been in the turpentine business. But they had one brother that had made some money on the border of Mexico and those Southern states out that way and in fact, he furnished some of the meat from cattle he had to Pancho Villa when they were having all those uprisings down there. And he had a place called Palmetto Bluff he bought after he sold the property to Superior Pine Products Company, he sold that land for \$6.50 an acre to them. And he had been trying, he had come back with money he had and trying to grow trees and wanted to be in the turpentine business, but it was very difficult, because down there it was kind of rough woods and hard to keep labor and a multitude of other things; it'd take me a long time to tell you everything that happened, those roads were just like trails and everything, it was some of the last land that they really had roads down there to because there wasn't any need for roads because the timber wasn't worth that much, and the timber had all been originally cut and saw logs, mostly. So, but anyway, after he sold that land, he wanted a place, he never had been married, and he bought this place across the Savannah River they called, in South Carolina, called Palmetto Bluff. It was a peninsula coming down to the rivers and to the marshland. But it was owned by a financier and the railroad business in the early days out of New York. So they used it and they had a nice home there and the best one, it burned down. But they'd go down there and deer hunt. My, Mr. Varn, would take his friends here in Valdosta and my father did that, and when we were trying to get all these rules and regulations in the Senate and in the House, they knew a good many of those Senators and the Congressmen.

LS: What kind of rules and regulations, for what?

HL: What kind of...?

LS: You said rules and regulations in the Senate. For what?

HL: Well, about things that...well, to get the Commodity Credit Corporation to finance the rosin that they held back and the loan program which was one of the most successful programs that the Commodity Credit Corporation ever handled. And it's my understanding that it never lost any money and that's really what saved us as long as we did. So that gets into a long story there, too, but so, they thought the best thing to do was to entertain some people that had the authority to do it, and we had Senator George, Walter F. George, was the senator from Georgia. He was from Vienna, Georgia. And he was a great person and did fine, and then they had Dick Russell, and then they had what they called Cottonhead Smith from South Carolina, and after they formed the American Turpentine Farmers Association in '36, they got to knowing those people and you know, I guess that they knew better than I, but it took that to get some of these things through the red tape or the system in the United States. So, they'd go up there, and that would be a nice place to be, and they would enjoy it, and they would eat like they all ate right when they were boys, you know, they would have all kinds of vegetables and everything, and they'd go deer hunting. That was a nice place to deer hunt. Deer were scarce because of the screw worm and

everything else in the South. They had some congressman from Mississippi, all the way from Mississippi, I don't think they ever had one from Texas, Texas didn't produce much then, but anyway, they'd go up there and spend about two or three nights and all together and all of them talk, and it was very pleasurable for them. You don't have to put this in there, but they would drink a little something, too, to make them feel better. So, Senator George was well-respected. And he had two boys. And one boy he had sent to forestry school because that's when Roosevelt was president. And he was excited over what Roosevelt says he's going to do to forestry. And that's when he started the CCC camps. And that got carried away with us...that was going to be a great blessing for growing trees and everything else, because they made roads through your property, and that was going to help with fire protection and everybody was excited about it. Well, he talked to me one time about that...

LS: Did you say what the sons' names were?

HL: What, the sons?

LS: Yes.

HL: I didn't know and the one that went and studied forestry, he went to the war effort and died, I think, or died right after.

LS: Okay.

HL: I can't record it right now, but I never did know him personally. But when Senator George talked about all these vast improvements and that was my nature anyway, being working in the turpentine business and I loved that kind of work, so I transferred over there and started studying forestry. And that's about the way it is.

LS: So you would go up to Palmetto Bluff with your father, is that (it)?

HL: I'd go up there with him, my father would take me. My father and...in 1926 I killed my first deer up there with a gun that he had given me, because I was 12 years old. And I had my gun, and I killed that deer and Mr. Varn that owned the place thought that was out of this world and he was quite a sportsman. I got to know him better all the time, and he was a great help to me. He was a...

LS: What was his first name?

HL: George W. Varn. George Washington Varn. And he died and had land a little later than that, but that's a long story, too, but he was a great person, and I used to drive him, and he's really the biggest help that I had in going ahead and putting the processing plant together, because that was brand new, and everybody was scared, and the Glidden Company was already in it, so...

LS: That was the new plant right after you became chairman, right after you...

HL: Right after I became, right after we formed the Langdale Company out of the other groups we had. So although he was in his, he died when he was 75, but he was diabetic and all of that, but he took a chance and hired a chemical engineer by the name of Park Newton out of someplace in South Carolina. And he built a plant over in Hoboken, that's west of Waycross, and he took a big chance, and he got all the plans, now, from the experiment station at Olustee, there were two experiment stations, government experiment stations, at Olustee. One is on trees and forests and the other one is on how to improve your products from it and more mechanical. That's where we got our information on how to build it. But see, before that, Glidden Company had two plants, and nobody else had a plant like that. So that was the best thing that ever happened to us. So I got to knowing him and then he, being a diabetic, he had had to have one leg removed and one eye, but he really wanted to go, and I drove him around when I was 14 years old, and we didn't have licenses then in Georgia. But, that all ties in with those people that I respected and they were very good people and they had about five or six senators and they had about four or five congressmen, that old-line congressmen, and a lot of these things they got through that the Commodity Credit Corporation could do this, and the fact that tree farming was agriculture, and things they wanted to change, and so the board of directors, or some of the board of directors, went to Washington and with that sort of help, they got some of these things done.

LS: The board of directors of AFTA you're talking about?

HL: The what?

LS: What board of directors? For what?

HL: The A-T, ATFA.

LS: Right. So, let me just clarify, then, that it was really through Mr. Varn's place and your meeting Senator George that you ended up...

HL: Practicing.

LS: ...Practicing forestry.

HL: That's right.

LS: ...Rather than, not that your family background growing up had no influence, but you really hadn't planned...

HL: No.

LS: ...To go into trees and turpentine all along.

HL: No, no.

LS: Your dad didn't influence you in that direction. But you were the oldest, right? And so you were the logical one...

HL: Right. And he always took me in the car and we had cars back in the '20s, and see, I was 8 and 10 years old and I got a lot of things from him and he was aggressive and he wouldn't try to hold me back any way, and all that tied together.

LS: But he didn't pressure you...

HL: No.

LS: ...To continue in the family business, no.

HL: No, no. See, my brother next to me studied law.

LS: Right.

HL: So all that was a blessing. But these things came about by that, but I guess I respected those older people, and Senator George was beat by Herman Talmadge at a later time. And Herman Talmadge was in school with me at Georgia, I knew him there. And that's when Herman Talmadge sent me a letter appointing me as state forester for Georgia because he believed in having somebody that'd been in school, but his father didn't believe in that. (Laughs.) That's very interesting and I've had a good life like that. Things happen.

END OF ITEMS 37, 137 AND 132, COUNTER 10:07:12.

LS: I have just a few more things over here and I know...how are you doing? Would you have time to talk about one more group?

HL: Well I'm going to talk to you 'til it's at least 11 o'clock and I'm all right.

LS: I know Bill has to leave. Bill, what time do you have to stop, 10:30?

BM: Yes, no problem.

LS: Okay, that'll work. Alright, do you need to take a break or get some water or anything?

HL: No, I'm all right, I recovered completely.

LS: Okay.

BREAK IN TAPE

HL: ...Well that's made by two different plants.

LS: Okay. And what I'm going to ask you about in particular, I know you can talk about it and explain these, but I'll be particularly interested in, obviously, they have to do with the company and you really can't separate yourself from the company, you know, because you've been

involved in it so long, but if there's any particular significance to you about, you know, a particular type of product and what it represents, or if you had a particular...

HL: Oh, yes.

BEGINNING ITEM 93 (SMALL FRAMED PHOTO) COUNTER 10:15:43

LS: ...Or if you had a particular role in it, that's the kind of information that I'm looking for, so we'll wait until Bill comes back here...he's back, okay. He's right on cue. Alright, so, now I've confused myself here, what did I do with...I hope these are it, yeah, okay. I'm going to talk first just about Item 93, which is a small framed photograph, I just wanted to be sure that we got some i.d.'s of these before we started with the product. You're in that picture on the right, who are the other individuals in that picture?

HL: Well now, I know these people very well, but he's been gone several years, and I can't think of his name and I've got it in the office, I ought to have that on the tip of my tongue, because these are the two people that we worked with, and this...Skippy Reeves is his name...

LS: He's the one next to you.

HL: Yes, and he was in charge of the Okefenokee Swamp, but he's a forester...

LS: He was in charge of the...your...Okefenokee Swamp in terms of your holdings there?

HL: Well, let's see, our holdings on the west side of it, and a little bit on the south side of it, and the reason it's really necessary is that the wildlife people and the Fish & Wildlife Service of the United States realized to the culture of the Okefenokee Swamp that it has to burn out sometime, and so when it catches afire, they want to let it burn. Well, that fire builds up, and builds up more, and we own land on that side like several other people do, companies, too. And they don't know when that fire's going to come out of there, so we go to bed one Saturday night, and by Sunday morning, it's out and gone, and all of us have had experience with that. And one of the finest things, one reason the chief forester of the United States was down here was that it was an example of cooperation between the Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and individual private owners; some big owners and some individual owners. And it's outstanding, they call it "GOAL," G-O-A-L. Greater Okefenokee..Landowners...I don't know what the "A" stands for, I can't think. [*GOAL=Greater Okefenokee Association of Landowners.*] But it was a really wonderful cooperation, and the first time that we had ever been able to cooperate with the wildlife service, the U.S. Forest Service, the state forest service, and landowners of all types.

LS: So that's Skippy...what did you say?

HL: Skippy Reeves. R-E-E-V-E-S.

LS: Okay. And he works for the Fish & Wildlife...

HL: He's in charge of the Okefenokee Swamp.

LS: Okay, so he's the manager of the wildlife refuge, then, right?

HL: And you don't want to know this, but I've been, we've been dealing with those people in the Okefenokee (Swamp) and they are different people. They are different(ly) trained people, they are very, were difficult to talk to and very difficult to see our problems and how we had to have some help. And these people put it together, helped us put it together.

LS: Okay, so...

HL: That's my great-nephew.

LS: Okay, so on the far right, or far left, is your great-nephew. What is his name?

HL: John W. Langdale III.

LS: And the fellow (that) you can't remember his name is next to him?

HL: This fellow right here, he's left and he's a Georgia graduate. I can't tell you his name to save my name, but I can get it for you.

LS: And he is what? What is his significance?

HL: He was in charge of the Osceola National Forest, so he was in charge of the land that the Forest Service owned, which was a boundary to the Okefenokee Swamp some, see you had state land, you had federal government land, you had the private owners, then you had the Fish & Wildlife Service, and it took every one of them to agree on anything to get it done. And some of those people were not used to, like I know you, you know, coming from the North to coming to the South, you can't understand some of these people and what they're taking about, because it's a different deal, but his name, and I know it, and I could tell it to you when...

LS: Well, we won't worry about that now. I'll call you later.

HL: Okay. I'll get it for you.

LS: Tell me, this photograph, what is it's significance as far as your keeping it?

HL: Well, it was the beginning of the cooperation with them. And it's an outstanding deal. If you ever have the opportunity to talk with the U.S. Forest Service that knows anything about it, you'll see how it's changed completely. You usually don't get all those parts of the government, you know, they've got they're rights and their responsibilities, very difficult. I tell you what, I've talked to some of them and they would be from somewhere else, and I couldn't even understand what they were saying.

LS: Do you know when that picture was taken?

HL: Well, it's about, because he was there, he was there, and he'd been gone about four or five years, and bless my soul, they had a fellow by the name of Will Metts (Metz?) that took his place, from California. And now, they pulled him back to the western side of the United States.

LS: So would that be from the 1990s?

HL: Yes, well, wait a minute, yes, that would be, I would say that's somewhere around between 1995 to 1998.

LS: And did someone give that to you, or did someone take that...

HL: We took it, I think; I think somebody with the other group of people there took that with our...they came to Valdosta, and we like for them to come because that's the first time we'd ever had any wholehearted cooperation.

LS: Not until the 1990s?

HL: That's about right, I don't think I'm exaggerating there anywhere. It was aggravating, because you've got a group that's just as strongheaded just as you are that don't want it burned as you've got that want it burned, and I could see why, I guess the Okefenokee would grow up now, you know, with the shortage of water.

LS: Right. I had understood that this notion of burning as part of the natural ecological process and either to let it burn or even to have controlled burns was a newer thing, even in the wildlife refuge management. But you're saying you didn't have any cooperation on fire control and these kinds of issues until this?

HL: I would say it was the beginning, I want to say, maybe the early '90s, and I would say we didn't get much until '95. But it's great now.

LS: Good. Did you play a role in trying to...

HL: No, not that, but I was involved in the other fires, and we lost timber and land before I was doing more that way, but...

LS: So was your nephew the one that was orchestrating...

HL: ...but that was before this, yes, that was before.

LS: ...Now in terms of...

HL: That was with different people too.

LS: Right.

HL: Most of these folks are Georgia people and that's the first time that ever happened, that I remember.

END OF ITEM 93, COUNTER 10:23:52.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 27 (PHOTO OF OSB PLANT), COUNTER 10:23:56

LS: Alright. What about this other photograph here, which is Item number 27?

HL: Well, that's our first big plant after building in the naval stores business and the wood preserving business and the lumber business. That was our OSB plant, first one. First one in the South that was completely built from scratch. Now there was one, up in northern Virginia, and there was one in Louisiana, but the one in Louisiana did not have the modern equipment we had, and the one in northern Virginia didn't have all the modern...that was, we liked to say that was the first one in the South. But I'll tell you this about it. All the others, except the one in Louisiana used a little hardwood, but we were the first ones to use what we called the soft hardwoods and that is when you say black gum and sweet gum and bay and magnolia and yellow poplar. Not hickorys, not any of the oaks, not the cypress. And that was...we didn't know if people would buy it or not, but if you'll notice down there, you've got darker colored wood...

LS: Yes, let's bring that up in a second, but just tell me, what does OSB stand for?

HL: Oriented Structural Board. And if you want to see something, ride out to where the...do you know where the Lowndes County Conference Center is? And you look at that hotel they're building right, it would be to the north of it. And you can't see anything but OSB.

LS: And this plant is located where, now?

HL: It's in Brooks County, right across the river, if you're going to Quitman, after you pass the river, you turn to the left and it's right south of the railroad. And right now, I thought that was the prettiest plant and a well-planned plant I ever saw. And now, we have some problems with one gentleman's equipment, and we changed over to another and we're increasing the capacity of it to doubling what it was.

LS: But when this was built, this was a picture of it when it was new?

HL: That's right, that's when it was brand-new.

LS: And that was in what year?

HL: 1988, we started it up.

LS: And did you have a role in bringing that particular innovation to the company?

HL: I sure did.

LS: Tell me about that.

HL: I sure did. We were looking for what are we going to do with our hardwoods. We couldn't sell them, we couldn't give them away, we didn't know what to do, and 25 percent of our land is best suited for growing hardwood. And we didn't know whether that would all work or not, and then I picked up those kind of things from being a member of the Herty Laboratory for so long, that board, and that was great, because they gave me the idea that you can, they can do these things. I went to Europe and saw them and they weren't making OSB, they were making what we call...where you put it together and you don't process it and it's not flat like that and all, and it doesn't have any strength. You call that, gracious, well anyway, it's not glued and it's not just finished like this that you see now. They got a plant in Adel that Weyerhaeuser built, right side of the highway...

LS: Right.

HL: 75, and that one doesn't have any strength, what they make, if you stop there you can see it, well, you can take it like this right here and take it about like that (thumps board across knees) and you can break it. But the name of that board has slipped me. But that was a great, that was my whole life when we sort of went through that. Here we were, we knew the turpentine business was down, the lumber business was here today and this tomorrow, and all that and we had to see which way we wanted to go, and we were buying a little bit of land when it came on the market, so we had to do it, and I was very, very careful that we borrowed the money from the bank and we didn't...that was it, and we didn't get tied up with the other things that we had. And so I was really proud of that, the first three or four years the people wouldn't buy it, but then after that it caught on and has done fine.

END OF ITEM 27, COUNTER 10:29:05.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 62 (LANGBOARD OSB SAMPLE), COUNTER 10:29:19.

LS: Let me just get an example of that up here to talk about. It would be...here's one example of...I'll move this one. This would be Item 62, Langboard OSB, so this is an example, then of what is produced in this plant, is that right?

HL: Well, see, people really didn't know what it would do. People were a little bit dubious of using these soft hardwood. Nobody was using soft hardwood. And that's what I wanted, and I kept telling people that we have 25 percent of our land growing that kind of material—what are we going to do with it? We could sell it for wood, maybe, a little bit at a time, but then, after we get it in, we try to improve it all the time, and people didn't know, but see this is the finished product, and you see the different colored wood? That's different hardwoods. And nobody had that, ours looked a little bit different and then it got started, ours, and we've got customers that wouldn't buy from anybody but us unless they had to somehow or another. So then we start other things we wanted to do. One is that tongue-and-groove you have over there.

END OF ITEM 62, COUNTER 10:30:32.

LS: This one right here?

HL: Yes.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 58 (TONGUE-AND-GROOVE BOARD), COUNTER 10:30:35.

LS: Let me bring this up here. This would be, let me just say, this is ID 58, okay.

HL: And see, this was a great step because they're using this for subflooring now, and we've got ideas and other things that we can do. That's where this business is coming, and you've got to have it but...

LS: Did you...so that...did you have any particular role in...

HL: I had a particular role in the people that we hired and had the judgment that we had to do that. Now they kept their eyes open for other things we could do.

LS: Were there particular employees that you can recall, I know there's a lot of names in remembering, that were responsible for this...

HL: The people?

LS: The tongue-and-groove, right.

HL: Well, I don't know of any, it's our management...

LS: Right.

HL: I would say that everything we've done, that we've been lucky and certain size of people that were the right managers that stayed with us and the man that is still running that plant, he was one of the top men and he'd been with us ever since we started it.

LS: I think I have this backwards, there, because it's finished different on...

HL: Now, how'd you know that?

LS: Just because...

HL: Oh, you had this one on this side, and that one this side, oh, yeah, you're a good observer.

LS: Right, now, I'm assuming...

END OF ITEM 58, COUNTER 10:32:06.

HL: And see, the one we've got now, doctor, is this one...

LS: Which one should I get? This one here?

HL: That one right there. See, that's the last.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 65 (WOOD BOARD WITH METAL), COUNTER 10:32:15

LS: This is Item 65.

HL: Uh huh. Well now, see, this would appeal to every housewife you could think of, because that would cut your electricity bill down, because when you take this product and put this on the side of it, well, you're getting a pretty tight house. We're hoping that we'd be able to do some other things, but this is an energy lock, because you use less electricity to heat or cool.

LS: Okay.

HL: And you want it to do both. But that was a great deal, and we've got some more things that we're coming out with.

LS: So this is the most recent example of products that you...

HL: No...

LS: No?

HL: This was our first step in the products.

LS: Okay.

HL: And now we've got another product we call MDF, medium density fiberboard. And that's right over here.

LS: Okay. So did you have a particular role in, let's just talk about this one (Item 65)...

HL: Well, I...the only particular role I had about that is that I've got my nephews in it, we've got the best people we can hire, and we listen to them and we've been doing very well in it and we're going to keep on expanding and we're going to make other products, and I think as long as we can take wood and carry it, finish the product, then we're going to be all right and that's our goal, to use all of our wood, and I'll tell you what we're doing to do that. Now, there's an article in the Florida Times Union today that they're going to have or put up these windmills, to make electricity on the West Coast, because they're in tight out there, I guess. But we're putting in, we don't want to advertise, now, but we've also putting in, as we're putting in this and doubling the capacity, we're putting in a generator that will produce a lot of electricity that we're going to use our bark and our other fines and things that we can't use, are what we call "bypass," anything woody I guess you'd say is bypass and then we're going to be able to think about, and I'd hate for you to tell somebody this, but see this business, you've got to have a controlled burning, or if you don't you're going to build up your by mass and fuel so much, so when you do have a fire you'll kill everything there, just like Florida did. They didn't do it down there, they didn't let you burn close to the road and that's what happened with all those fires down there, built up too much fuel, and it's going to happen, anywhere. So we think we can take that material and make electricity with it.

LS: It would be exciting, wouldn't it?

HL: It would. So that's that. And see, that's a different plant. That plant that does that is in Willacoochee.

END OF ITEM 65, COUNTER 10:35:25.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 53 (LANGBOARD MDF), COUNTER 10:35:27.

LS: Okay. So this one is in Brooks County, the OSB, and then we're going to talk about this item here, which is Item 53, which is Langboard MDF, and you said that's a more recent product?

HL: That's right.

LS: And that plant is...

HL: Medium density fiberboard.

LS: And that has a date on it that says "1998."

HL: Yes, that's about right.

LS: So is this commemorating the beginning of...

HL: That's right, that's right. See, that's ten years after this one, well, it wasn't tongue-in-groove when we started, it was just like that solid one over there.

LS: Right, this, like this.

HL: Right.

LS: Okay. So, what was...MDF, the plant is in Willacoochee, and what was your role with this innovation, specifically?

HL: Well, I was...

LS: You finally got to your 80s, so you had to have something new, is that right?

HL: Yes, and I still want to do something, and I like to be making something better. And it gets down to good management. And I'm happy that my nephews and great-nephews are playing a better part. I'm trying to help them every way I can, I might be old-fashioned and this or that or something, but they listen to me and we've got a pretty good organization but we've got some good people working with us.

LS: Now, so this is something, really, that, if I'm hearing between the lines, that you, yourself, weren't, what, as directly involved in this as you were in that, in terms of a hands-on kind of thing, other than the management?

HL: Well, I'm not getting out there and making sure this is working, I'm listening to the people we've got and telling them, "well, let's build it." And I guess I...that's my role now.

END OF ITEM 53, COUNTER 10:37:30.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 56 (FIRST PIECE OF LANGBOARD), COUNTER 10:37:31.

LS: Let me just talk about this piece here, which is Item 56, and this one has the, says "first board produced by Langboard, March 9, 1988." Now is this...this is the same as this...

HL: Yes, except...this is, yes, the same as this.

LS: Okay. So...

HL: See, you can't tell too much difference.

LS: Is there any difference between those two?

HL: Not that I know of, we're use the same resins and glues and all that on this time.

LS: So is March 9, 1988, is that like, the first run?

HL: The first run, I think, well, first week or so, anyway.

LS: And that was, but that's a different plant than this, because this is...what is that plant?

HL: No, this is the OSB plant, that's this.

LS: Okay.

HL: And this right here is made there, and this is too, and this is too.

LS: Okay, okay.

HL: And the MDF is right here, we just talked about it being in Willacoochee.

END OF ITEM 56, COUNTER 10:38:37.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 57 (SMALL LANGBOARD SAMPLE), COUNTER 10:38:38.

LS: Right, right. Now how about, this is Item 57; is there anything distinctive about that, other than...is it another example of Langboard?

HL: That's another thing of this at a later time that we had to give people some samples and all, you know, we just had that, there's nothing significant about this that would be different from making OSB.

END OF ITEM 57, COUNTER 10:39:03.

LS: Okay. And...

HL: That is a...

BEGINNING OF ITEM 59 (PAIR OF TONGUE-AND-GROOVE BOARDS), COUNTER 10:39:05

LS: Here's another pair of tongue-and-groove, 59 is the item number.

HL: I believe that's a little thicker, isn't it?

LS: Yes.

HL: See, we vary that thickness, and some people tell us they want this, and by the way, I think this might be a little different. We did not use any pine to begin with, we used all hardwood, which everybody thought, "well how did you do it," and a lot of people haven't changed yet, but that was the cheaper wood at that time, but now it's getting valuable, it's going in here, too (taps on MDF sample).

LS: Hardwood.

HL: Hardwood.

LS: Okay.

HL: You see, this is, that's pine, right there. You can tell by the rings.

LS: Can you actually look at a piece of...

HL: Most of the time.

LS: ...Langboard and tell which, what wood is where?

HL: Well now I'm not sure about most wood, but I can tell you hardwood from pine. I'm not a very good technician when it comes to that, now. But it's been...it's great, and then we're going on, and then you come to...

END OF ITEM 59, COUNTER 10:40:09.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 54 (LANGBOARD 2" THICK), COUNTER 10:40:10.

LS: Let me ask about, this is Item 54, this says "Langboard 2," I guess because it's two inches, is that...

HL: Yes, I guess that's right, and then, see, this is coming from the same tree, it's all pine, it's all pine, and it comes from chips, and we take it apart, and you know, you've got one bag there of fiber, of cellulose, and that's all put together here. We take it apart and then we clean it, and then we put glue and resin on it, and make this.

LS: Is that also made at this Brooks County plant?

HL: No, not that one.

LS: No?

HL: That one can't do this.

LS: Where is this made, then?

HL: Made in Willacoochee.

LS: So that's the same plant as makes the...

HL: Yes (gestures to MDF sample).

LS: Okay. Is there a relationship then, between these two products, or no?

HL: Well, I'll tell you what, this told us we could do it, these things, and that keeps us excited that we want to do more and more with our wood, in other words, we want to come to that ultimate crop, and in between, see, we have a lot of wood just making a log that doesn't bring much because it's a lower grade, but we can take some of that and put into this, because you take it apart and you don't see a knot in any of that anywhere, so we're happy with this, and I'll tell you what happened, our management knew about it, and this was built by a group of people, or one main person who was in the oil business and had a lot of money and he thought he wanted to get into it and he did it in Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada. Now that's not the Las Vegas that you and I might know and so he put it up and he thought that he could make something out of it out there. Well, there's some national forests north in Nevada and so he started out and had Indians as most of his labor and they weren't very satisfactory about working.

LS: And what was his name? The man we're talking about?

HL: The man's name? I don't remember. I never did have any contact with him, but he sold it to us at a reasonable value and he just put it up and it never had been run very good. And we bought it and took trucks and brought it over to Willacoochee.

LS: So you brought the whole operation from Nevada?

HL: The whole operation back and put it together and replaced everything we thought ought to be replaced or changed. And that's our management that did that. I did not have a hands-on deal about that.

LS: So that's the story behind this particular..this is Langboard, though, right?

HL: Right. All of it's Langboard. We call it Langboard, Langboard, Langboard (points to each piece). And now, we've got another plant, and that's this one over here.

END OF ITEM 54, COUNTER 10:43:26.

LS: Okay. Let's see, this one here?

BEGINNING OF ITEMS 63 & 64 (MOULDING SAMPLES), COUNTER 10:43:30.

HL: Both of them.

LS: Both. So this is Item 63 and 64.

HL: We call it Harmony. And that is moulding. M-O-U-L-D-I-N-G. And we had an article at "Panelworld" written by this man who had been there writing for them a long time and he called part of it M-O-U-L-D and then he'd spell it M-O-L-D-I-N-G, so I don't know which, you'd have to talk to him. But this is, this just pleases me to no end, because this is moulding that you use it for so many things. It makes the best...we've got a...two German machines with an Italian machine in the middle of it, and I didn't know that Northern Italy was so equipped to make products like they're doing, you know. For woodworking, they're pretty good, Georgia Tech is just starting working with them and this big company there in Northern Italy, and I can't think of the name of it, is giving them a lot of their equipment, and I sent my nephew up there with a couple of more people from the plant, thinking that there would be...you've got that board, you know, that long board, they made one, Langdale Company up there, you know?

LS: Right.

HL: We thought maybe we could make some more products out of it and buy the machines from there, but we haven't come to any conclusions.

END OF ITEMS 63 & 64, COUNTER 10:45:14.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 89 (CARVED LANGDALE SIGN), COUNTER 10:45:23.

LS: Let me just get that, since you're talking about it, here. You were talking here about Item 89.

HL: Yes, right there, exactly. They made that at Georgia Tech, and Georgia Tech hadn't been interested in wood, they've been interested in engineering and metal and steel and things like that, but this is their first attempt. So I wanted to know what they had that we could make, and they...this is one of the products they brought back.

LS: So, Georgia Tech actually made this?

HL: Georgia Tech made this.

LS: And it's an example of what? What is that?

HL: They're just doing that because we were going up there and they thought we might be tying in with Georgia Tech and...

LS: So they made it out of a piece of your Langboard, you're saying, or did they actually...

HL: Well, they didn't tell us that, but I thought they did, I thought they did.

LS: Okay. So what this represents is a possible partnership between you and Georgia Tech.

HL: Yes, or something. You see, we've got to be tied in with these universities that are really broad enough that they want to do something for what we've got and see, that's one reason that wood is so depressed right now, we've got every kind of material that's taking the place of wood, if you went to build a house, they would use every opportunity to build one without any wood in it, and it would be a wood-looking house. They're making this...what they call this cement lumber and putting...mixing fiber with cement and they're making all kinds of things. But to finish that up, to tell you, this was a different venture.

LS: Is that the same as, this is Item 69, [*sic*, it's really 89] this is the same as this two-inch board here (Item 54)?

HL: That's the same...that's MDF, yes, you make it out of...that one goes mostly into furniture.

LS: This. Are these two the same, 54 and 69?

HL: Yes, yes.

LS: And it's the same as this (gesturing to Item 53).

HL: Yes.

LS: So these are all samples of MDF processing.

HL: Right. Different uses, sort of.

LS: Different uses.

HL: Yes.

LS: And this you think, is one of...

HL: Georgia Tech's.

LS: Right, but you...

HL: That's where it was made.

LS: But you...

HL: They sent me one of the arch, you've seen the University of Georgia advertisement, they've got an arch there, and that's quite famous?

LS: Right.

HL: And they sent me one of that and the dean of the University of Georgia School of Forestry got it, and he's now provost with the University of Georgia. And that's the first time that the University had ever brought anybody out of the forestry school to do an important position like that, so that shows we're getting somewhere, I think.

LS: I think you're right. There's one...

END OF ITEM 89, COUNTER 10:48:19.

HL: They took him over there for a trial, Mike Adams did, and he told me, Mike Adams came by and spoke to me in my office, and told me that he was one of the deans that he had that would keep everything organized about as well as any dean he had and he had the dean of the school of business there, and he had the law school dean, all that, so I thought that was a big honor.

LS: They say foresters are the best sort.

BEGINNING OF ITEM 90 (BAG OF WOOD FIBER), COUNTER 10:48:48.

This is the last item we've got a big pile of stuff here, but this is I.D. 90.

HL: That comes out...yes, that's what we break the wood down to.

LS: So what is this stuff called?

HL: Called fiber, wood fiber. I would say cellulose either. You know, when they built the paper mill over in Savannah, that was sort of the first one that they had down there, and I never will forget, I read that you can grow more cellulose on an acre of trees at a cheaper price than you can by producing cotton--that's cellulose, too.

LS: So is this a product that, a by-product, or something that you actually produce?

HL: This is something that we want to work with, more and more, and I really believe that we're going to come up with something like this, and I know that Herty Laboratory is working, now I'm not a member of that board, but I was for 25 years, and I think this is where we've got to get some help to make other products from, is the fiber like this, rather than making solid things over there.

LS: So is this used for anything in the company currently?

HL: No.

LS: No.

HL: Well, I don't know now, Raynal has a sulfite mill, and I have seen bales of cellulose, or wood fiber, that go out of there that they tell me for all kinds of things that's used, and Raynal stock has been holding up pretty good, if you'd noticed.

LS: But within the Langdale enterprises...

HL: No, it's not in our business at all.

LS: Is this something that's a by-product, though, as you say, that's a by-product of your manufacturing?

HL: Yes. Well, it's what we're making this (points to MDF) out of is this, and we're putting glue and resin back in it and then making that board just like that.

LS: Okay, so you are using this wood fiber, then, in making MDF.

HL: Yes.

LS: Okay.

HL: And that's what we think we can make something else out of.

END OF ITEM 90, COUNTER 10:51:11.

LS: So this is, this is all the MDF and your fiber are all sort of the latest things that you're...

MORE INFO ON ITEMS 63 & 64 (MOULDING SAMPLES), COUNTER 10:51:18.

HL: Uh huh. And then, see, we're trying to go ahead and make the finished product, as much as we can, and this is going over big with us, is the moulding.

LS: The moulding. Here. There's an example right there.

HL: Yes, this piece of moulding. But we're making...and it's amazing to me, we didn't know anything about it, but we started off making it, and the people like it, and that's where I told you we had two German machines in a line with one Italian machine, and it goes through, and the first machine cuts it down, and the second machine paints a primer on there, and the third machine dries it, and when it comes out, it's finished.

END OF MORE INFO ON ITEMS 63 & 64, COUNTER 10:52:05.

LS: On the back side of that it mentions the MDF millwork in Las Vegas, so this is just part of the same story you told me of bringing that technology back, right?

HL: That's right. Las Vegas, New Mexico. I said Nevada, but it's New Mexico.

LS: Okay.

HL: But that was quite a time. Some of those Indians were calling me at night and said they wanted to know if they could get a job with us over here, and I think a few of them came over, they didn't stay very long.

LS: There has to be a big difference between South Georgia and New Mexico.

HL: I know, then they got to telling me, they said that they weren't that good a workers anyway.

LS: Who told you that?

HL: The people that went over there and moved it.

LS: Okay.

HL: And we moved it by truck, all the way in there and that was a great thing. And now we've got a new product that we've got out that you don't have anything on, when they can put the hardware on doors and making doors, inside doors, we're not making outside doors yet, but we might have this (points to MDF) inside of a door and then put the holes in it and metal on it and everything else and got trucks to deliver it and we're doing that in Quitman. We bought the textile plants where they all moved South, you know, and we're coming out of that, but that hadn't jumped off right to begin with that we're making money, but I think it will be right quick.

LS: All the plants that you've been mentioning are here you know, in the region at least, and you are a company that is using local labor and not outsourcing like many companies are?

HL: (Nods affirmatively). All local labor.

LS: Is that a philosophy that you personally...

HL: We try to. And mostly, mostly, we use white labor, white people too, but we have a good many black people, and always have, and we work with black people and so, they, the black

people realize that they can get a job with us and get a good job. We've got black men driving our trucks and all that, and they, after we have them a while, and I guess it comes from us being in the turpentine business and we were close to our labor. And the black people realize us and we can kind of maneuver with them and got along pretty good and that's our heritage, I reckon.

LS: All right. I think Bill has to leave at 11 a.m., so maybe we should wrap it up here. I guess the time...

HL: You're great, but I'll tell you, you impress me.

LS: We whipped through these, didn't we? There's a stack of stuff here.

HL: You impress me.

LS: Well, thank you, thank you.

HL: I tell you what, that's fine, I guess we're coming along. Now we've got some other stuff, do you want to see some of that before we leave the office or with it?

LS: Bill, you can probably turn off the tape recorder. We'll end this session with Mr. Langdale and then we can talk, okay.

END OF TAPE

Directory of Harley Langdale Jr. Collection, Tape Two

Tape Counter Nos.	Discussion Topic
8:39:45-8:57:30	ID Nos. 96-101, bottles & cans for Lanco turpentine
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10:15:43-10:23:52	ID No. 93, small framed photograph
10:23:56-10:29:05	ID No. 27, photograph of Langdale OSB plant
10:29:19-10:30:32	ID No. 62, Langboard OSB sample
10:30:35-10:32:06	ID No. 58, tongue-in-groove board sample
10:32:15-10:35:25	ID No. 65, Langboard with metal sample
10:35:27-10:37:30	ID No. 53, Langboard MDF sample (round)
10:37:31-10:38:37	ID No. 56, First piece of Langboard produced
10:38:38-10:39:03	ID No. 57, small Langboard sample
10:39:05-10:40:09	ID No. 59, tongue-in-groove board sample
10:40:10-10:43:26	ID No. 54, 2" thick sample of Langboard
10:43:30-10:45:14 and 10:51:18-10:52:05	ID Nos. 63 & 64, moulding samples
10:45:23-10:48:19	ID No. 89, carved Langdale sign
10:48:48-10:51:11	ID No. 90, bag of wood fiber (cellulose)