

HERSCHEL PAYNE & JACK HOLLINGSWORTH

Interview 159a

January 4, 2001

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ABSTRACT:

In this impromptu interview with Jonathan Gerland, longtime friends Herschel Payne and Jack Hollingsworth reminisce about their employment with Southern Pine Lumber Company during the 1950s and 1960s. Herschel Payne's experiences in the sales department dominate the interview, including places such as Houston, Dallas, and Wharton as well as Pineland and Diboll. Persons mentioned are Arthur Temple Jr., Eck Prudhomme, Herbert Adey, Bob Burns, Ed Price, Bob Burnley, Bob Weston, Rick McElroy, and Latane Temple, among others. Payne also relates experiences as a night time ambulance driver at Pineland during the early 1950s. Jack Hollingsworth briefly mentions the company's particleboard operations during the 1970s.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): This is Jonathan Gerland and today's date is January the 4th, 2001.

Herschel Payne (hereafter HP): First of the year.

JG: Seems kind of odd saying that, but, anyway, I'm with Mr. Herschel Payne and Jack Hollingsworth. And we're going to talk a little bit about their experiences working for Temple Industries. And just a little summary, Mr. Payne was telling me that he first began working for the company in 1950 at Pineland right after he graduated from the University of Arkansas. And, I'll just ask him to retell me again what he had told me earlier this morning about how he came to work for the company and going to Houston, and Dallas. Can you just tell us a little bit about that Mr. Payne?

HP: Ok. Well, briefly when I left school I had, Bill Temple had told me that at that time Arthur was hiring a lot of young guys and starting to rebuild the company from...after the war was over. And I went to Texarkana and talked to Mr. Arthur Temple, Sr., and he said that they...I told him I wanted to get into sales. And he said, they only had two sales territories, one in Houston, one in Dallas, and that they could send me to Pineland and put me in a, you can put this in quotation marks, in a "training program" and maybe work me into the furniture sales side of the dimension plant the company had. So I went to Pineland and I spent a year there. And then, after that I went to Houston to the Heights Lumber Yard, they sent me down there for a year, worked in the retail lumberyard. And as I told you Ed, my friend Ed Price, told me one time, he said, "If you want to get in the better end of this thing, get out of that lumberyard and get into the manufacturing." And he helped me get moved back to Diboll, and then I went to...about a year I guess I stayed here and I got into yellow pine. And from there that was the first, I was the first salesman

that put in a territory other than two in those big ones. And they sent me to Wharton, Texas. And then later...I don't know how long I was down there, Jack might remember, but I...anyway Harry Walker, who was a Dallas, whole time Dallas salesman, retired and I got that Dallas territory.

JG: This would be Harry Walker, Sr.?

HP: Harry Walker, Sr. And then Jack came down and took over the territory I had and we just kind of followed each other ever since, and that was when Jack, about 1953 or...?

Jack Hollingsworth (hereafter JH): It was. It was '53.

JG: When did you start working for the company Mr. Hollingsworth?

JH: 1951.

JG: '51.

JH: Yeah.

JG: Where did you first begin? What plant or...what location were you at?

JH: Well, I got out of college and came up here and went to work for, in the land and timber division, or in the logging division. We had our own logging then, or Temple had their own logging then. And I worked in the woods for about 18 months, then I was transferred over to the treating plant, then the sawmill...

JG: So you were at Diboll at the beginning then, is that correct?

JH: Yes. That's right.

JG: Yeah, Diboll, ok. Where did you go to college?

JH: The University of Texas.

JG: And what did you major in?

JH: Engineering route, business administration.

JG: Business administration. And Mr. Payne said he had majored in history.

HP: In history.

JG: Alright. And you grew up in Texarkana.

HP: Grew up in Texarkana.

JG: And where'd you grow up Mr. Hollingsworth?

JH: Lufkin.

JG: Oh, in Lufkin. Ok.

JH: Uh huh.

HP: Jack's dad and Arthur Jr. were very, very close friends for years, weren't they Jack?

JH: Uh huh.

JG: Oh that's right. Archie's place, yeah. The place out Boggy Slough, that's right.

JH: But I met, I guess the first time I ever ran into Herschel was when I was working in the sawmill. He was working in the hardwood and I was working in the pine sawmill.

HP: I was on the green chain over here, which is where the lumber...

JG: In Diboll.

HP: In Diboll...the lumber comes out of the sawmill and goes across a chain and they've got a, really not a grader as much as it was an inspector that put a rough selection on the boards that came by and then they'd pull each buggy had a different grade. And I was on there just turning...

JH: He was sitting in a little swing up there. (laughter) Up over this lumber as it came across he was sitting in a swing and had this stick and he put...

HP: And I used to look down, Jack was down in the timber portion of that sawmill and I could look down on it. And I told a lot of people that Jack was the hardest working white man that they ever had working in this sawmill. He fought those timbers with – that old guy's name was Preacher wasn't it?

JH: Preacher.

HP: And it made me feel guilty, I'm sitting on this swing grading lumber and Jack was down there in the hot summer moving those big heavy timbers along. And we got to be friends after that and I watched his kiddos grow up and...

JG: So by timbers you mean these were the big 8 x 8, 12 x 12.

HP: Big 12 x 12...and it was all hardwood, that was a hardwood mill over there. And boy those hardwood...

JG: So that was mill No. 2 here in Diboll? Was it called mill 2?

JH: Well now, you were grading hardwood...

HP: Yeah, I was grading hardwood.

JH: But, that was a pine mill where I was.

HP: Well, I thought those timbers coming out of there were from the mill to you, 'cause I looked down....

JH: Well, maybe they were I don't know. That's a long time ago, Herschel. (laughter)

HP: It was down...he was moving some timbers...

JH: I guess you're right 'cause a lot of them were crossties.

HP: Yeah, uh huh.

JH: Uh huh. That were gum cross ties.

JG: Because I think mill 2 cut nothing but hardwoods, well no, maybe they cut both but...

HP: No they didn't, they just cut hardwood in that one. And I think later on they did switch over, well they did away with the hardwood yard. They didn't, you know...

JH: That's right.

JG: Yeah, yeah they did away with the mill I think in '54, or '55, when they did away with...

HP: But Jack and I were the only two people at that time in the company that were hardwood guys. They were young guys, they were all yellow pine people. And Jack and I both, I started at Pineland in hardwood. And he was over here in that mill and you went to hardwood grader school I believe didn't you?

JH: Yeah, yeah, I did. That was in '60, I think it was. Yeah.

HP: In Memphis...but in those days they just kind of...when they were training you, you know, it wasn't a formal thing until Burt Lindsey came along with his class.

JH: Yeah.

HP: But in those days they just moved us around where they needed someone.

JH: Their idea of training was get out there and work.

HP: Especially Mr. Prudhomme, he didn't believe in any extra people around in any place.

JG: Is that Eck Prudhomme?

HP: Eck Prudhomme, yeah.

JH: Richie Wells was very much the same way.

HP: Uh huh.

JH: I know Richie didn't know for the longest time that I was on salary. \$250 a month that was what...but, he didn't know I was on salary and when he found out I was on salary immediately he started driving a bus up to Maydelle which meant getting up at four o'clock in the morning. Meant coming down here to get the bus, driving it up there, drove a log truck all day.

HP: No overtime.

JH: No, of course not. Drove the bus home and then he had me grading logs on Saturday and Sundays.

JG: When you say Maydelle, is that up in Cherokee County?

HP: Uh huh.

JG: Up there. Ok. What was going on in Maydelle?

HP: We were logging down there.

JG: Logging down there. Were you using the railroads any?

JH: No, I never did work for it. Well, I take it back...

JG: Well, I meant in the company...were they using railroads to log from there, or did they do it all by truck?

JH: Not there, they did originally.

JG: 'Cause that's right on the old state railroad, and I know in the '60's they leased that railroad. But in the '50's they weren't shipping any of that by rail?

JH: No, they weren't using it then. They did have a pretty good rail line that ran out well, to Boggy Slough, out in that area.

JG: Yeah.

JH: And I fired the boiler on No. 13 out there.

JG: Oh, you did?

JH: Uh huh. For a couple of days.

JG: For a couple of days.

HP: I got up one morning, I had made arrangements, and I drove down from Lufkin early, early and worked it out with George Honea to ride that locomotive. And I got to ride that locomotive, got on here and they switched the cars and took them to Lufkin and switched them across to the Southern Pacific and rode that thing back. And I'd never, 'course not many people ever got to ride on a steam locomotive.

JG: Yeah.

HP: And I'm really pleased that I did that, it was worth the time, worth getting up in the morning at four o'clock.

JG: Yeah.

JH: I don't remember the engineer's name, you probably do...

HP: Probably Minton...

JH: Yeah, it was.

JG: Ramsey or Lewis Minton?

JH: Ramsey Minton.

JG: Ramsey Minton.

JH: But, the reason I was firing the boiler was that the regular fireman got sick. Like Herschel says, they just moved you around where you needed to be and they told me to fire the boiler and I didn't know what to do. (laughter)

JG: That was oil fired right?

JH: It was oil fired, yeah.

JG: But you had to watch the gauges and everything didn't you?

JH: Well, yeah and you had to control the feed. He kept asking for more steam and I just kept feeding more oil...we wound up we laying oil down from the Neches River all the way into Diboll along the tracks down there.

JG: Well tell me a little bit about, you had mentioned just before I turned the machine on that y'all were the first two as part of the sales team or...you know, revamped sales team.

HP: Yeah, when Latane came from Little Rock he was the one that came and his primary purpose was to reorganize the sales force and get some company salesman out into the territories rather than sell the lumber through wholesalers.

JG: And about what year was that?

HP: Well, lumber went out in '53 I think...

JG: Oh, it was that early ok.

HP: Yeah, and then I stayed in...

JH: You weren't working too long and you...

HP: No, about six or seven months maybe.

JH: Yeah.

HP: And then Mr. Harry Walker, Sr., I don't know if he died or retired, I don't remember.

JH: Senior?

HP: Uh huh. Anyway the territory came open and that was really the...

JH: He died...he died Herschel, that's what it...

HP: And they sent, the company sent me up there and I was there five years.

JG: In Dallas?

HP: In Dallas, and all that North Texas territory. And then...

JG: Did you have, was there...did you have an office up there, I mean, were you by yourself or were there other...?

HP: No, I had an office in Temple Box Factory, in those days Temple had a box factory that manufactured Coca Cola cold drink cases.

JG: Oh yeah. Temple Manufacturing Company.

HP: And they had an old, old office building in the first couple of years and eventually they built a nice great big fine new building that fronted on the street. And it was a gorgeous big white building over in that part of town. And I moved my office in from that little one back up there in that building.

JG: So you were in the Temple Manufacturing Company's office.

HP: Yeah, and we flew all of those people there, their people...and they answered a phone that was my phone but their people answered the phone. I tell you a little bit strange, funny thing about that building, it was over there in the...I think it was the east end of Dallas which is, the population's pretty, at that time, was mostly black people. And a lot of people thought that was a brand new black funeral home, they went in because it was a great big beautiful white building on a front street. (laughter) But, it was a nice building, and those people at that box factory were fine, fine people, Lee Beddingfield and Curtis, and anyway, then when I don't know why Mr. Adey retired in Houston...anyway, the...

JG: Spell that name again.

HP: Adey. A-D-E-Y.

JH: Herbert Adey.

HP: Herbert Adey. Just a gentleman who had been with the company forever and ever, and he was the most well respected lumberman in south Texas. People in Houston loved him.

JH: Herschel, excuse me, you'll remember this. We had a sales meeting one time and like, you'd have to know Mr. Adey to really appreciate it, but he was a southern gentleman. He never said a cuss word in his life I guess.

HP: Never had a drink.

JH: Never had a drink. But he came to that sales meeting and he had a button that he had worn around all the time on the sales meeting. It said, "ICSSOMA." And, everybody was asking him what it was, what it was, what it was. He never would tell them. And finally at the end of the sales meeting, you remember what he said?

HP: I don't remember Jack.

JH: "I can't sell sitting on my ass." (laughter)

JG: He was just waiting for somebody to ask him.

JH: Well no he...they asked him all during the meeting but he...

HP: You could have set your clock by him coming in the lumberyard. And I know that he had an office downtown, which most people did in those days, 'cause all the lumbermen were downtown.

JG: Now this is Houston you're talking about?

HP: In Houston, after I'd gone to Houston. I'd go down there and I'd go up to the office and on Tuesday morning was his Galveston day. Always went to Galveston on Tuesday morning. And he'd sit at that desk and he'd do his business and he might nod off just a minute and I'd sit there and I'd think, "Well, what's he gonna do?" Well all of a sudden about two minutes until time to leave he snapped his head back, stood up, got his price book, walked out there and got on the elevator and went down and when he went across to the parking garage his car was at that gate facing out, he got in the car and we went to Galveston and I don't believe he was ever over two or three minutes late to that first call. He was the most punctual person, wasn't he Jack? (**JH:** Yeah) and organized, and...I stayed in Houston for five years I think, and then they moved me into the office when who left, Bob Burns left or what?

JH: Yeah, Bob went to St. Louis.

HP: Well with the Fleishel Lumber Company.

JH: Uh huh.

HP: And then I moved into the office and I was in the office until I left the company.

JG: You pronounce that Fleishel?

HP: Fleishel, I did.

JG: Fleishel.

JH: Fleishel, I did.

JG: Did that eventually become a Temple property?

JH: No, I don't think so.

JG: Don't think so.

HP: It was a big wholesale lumberyard in St. Louis. It was a lumber company wholesaler.

JG: Is that what they did, were they manufacturers?

HP: No.

JH: No, they were wholesalers; they were probably one of the better customers of Temple back in early days. They sold an awful lot of car siding, to build railroad cars.

JG: That's right, the wooden boxcars.

HP: And reel batts, remember those reel batts that was for big combines, you know, I guess they thrashed corn or whatever it is...

JH: Wheat and whatever up in the Midwest.

HP: And it had wooden slats across the arms that rotate and gather up, and Mr. Burns, Bob Burns, who was here for a long time, Bob's dad was a Fleishel Lumber Company officer. And he handled all of the mills in the southeast. Make his rounds and he'd get so many million feet of reel batts lined up. And he sold a lot of those, what do you call those things that make...

JH: Gosh, I don't know.

HP: No, they were a real high grade pine and it was...I'll think of it in a little while...

JG: Now, you're saying wheel, like a wheel on a car?

HP: Reel, reel batts.

JH: Reel.

JG: Reel. R-E-E-L.

HP: See, these were great big reels and these...

JH: On the combine, you know, on the threshing machine.

JG: Uh huh.

JH: They had these great big reels.

JG: That's what they were called reels. R-E-E-L-S?

JH: Uh huh.

JG: And then batts.

HP: Batts, like a board batt.

JG: B-A-T-T-S.

HP: Yeah. And it's an industrial grade for industrial construction of machines, and the other one I'm trying to think of was clipsaps. What did they call those Dixieland? Anyway, Southern Pine had really a reputation for furnishing good, fine grade pine lumber. And Faye Burns had come down here and he'd sit with a sawyer in the sawmill and tell him, "Well that one will do fine, and this one's got so much." He almost trained people to cut his own lumber. And we shipped those I think in New Orleans...

JH: They were slabs weren't they?

HP: Yeah. They went through New Orleans.

JH: They were slabs they weren't edged. They didn't edge them.

HP: But, people really liked whatever we called ours, they really liked that brand. Or that...and we sent a lot...anyway, Faye Burns was an industrial sales person. And Bob, his son, was here...he was in the office a long time wasn't he?

JH: Yeah. I think the Fleishel, didn't they become primarily hardwood people later on? I think they did.

HP: I don't know what happened to them...but they were always involved in...

JG: I've seen their name in some early, early books...when they were shipping everything by train.

JH: Faye Burns and the Temple family were very close through business relationship, but, I don't think that there were ever related owner-wise. I'm sure the company must have had an offer...

JG: I remember just as you were talking I remember...

HP: The accounts were receivable maybe he carried them for a long time.

JG: I remember Arthur and I think it was one of the Burns that Arthur arranged for one of the little league ball teams here to go to St. Louis and see the St. Louis Cardinals play. I remember seeing that in the newspaper. And they arranged it through the Fleishel Lumber Company.

HP: Yeah, because of them being in St. Louis. Uh huh.

JG: In St. Louis, yes sir, yeah.

HP: That was probably Arthur's team.

JG: That was in the '50's I believe. Well, Milford Ruby was one of the coaches.

HP: Oh was he? Yeah, Milford was in the office over there when I was in there.

JH: He was an accountant.

JG: Accountant. I think he was also the head of a safety committee or something. Louis Landers, who you met earlier, he's been going through a lot of the old Free Press photographs we have and he was joking with Milford about, he said, "Every car wreck or accident, there's Milford in the picture somewhere." And he said that...

JH: Yeah, that's when he was on the fire department too.

HP: Oh yeah, he was a volunteer fireman wasn't he.

JG: They had train derailments or truck...any type of accident he was on the scene.

HP: We were talking about Pineland a little while ago and you were asking about the railcars. I can remember when railcars came in from Evadale. They were, I think they belonged to the company, but Sante Fe had a contract...I don't know this I was just over there watching what was going on. But, I think Sante Fe picked those company railcars up and brought them to Pineland and set them up. But, there might be twenty-five, thirty, great big open cars with hardwood logs on them.

JG: Hmmm.

HP: That wasn't their own railroad, it was the Sante Fe.

JG: Yeah, they just shipped them out on the main line, the Sante Fe.

HP: Jack, grain doors were big then. Remember the grain doors they made in Pineland?

JH: Uh huh.

HP: In the old days, boxcars, they didn't have special cars to haul grain in, and they had to block the open door up so the grain wouldn't sift out when the train was moving. And all the way across the South I'm sure...but, I know in Texas down at Carter they had a grain door factory and there's one at Pineland and I think Angelina made grain doors. That was another big user of lumber. I don't know whether Temple owned that or they just furnished lumber...old Max William, I think, was the grain door guy over there. I don't think they made grain doors here.

JH: I don't think so either.

HP: But I think the company then, I don't know whether they realized it or you can call it that, but, it seemed like they always liked to add value to a board or a log. You know they put that dimension plant in, made all of that dimension, and that was just adding value to the raw lumber is what they did...instead of letting someone else do that. And the toilet seat thing was that way.

JH: Yeah.

JG: Yeah, they started making those...

HP: And then the studs, remember the studs they glued together?

JH: Yeah, the laminated studs.

HP: My house in Lufkin has those glued studs and I bet you they'll be there a hundred years before they...

JG: So is that Tex-Lam that you're talking about?

JH: No, this was before Tex-Lam.

JG: Before Tex-Lam.

HP: And it was a hand operation. They took two straight 1 by 4's and put them in a clamp and clamped them together. And they'd turn it over and then get two more, very slow process, but they were really super studs. They called them stay straights. And I guess today they...

JG: Made from 1 x 4's?

JH: Two 1 x 4's.

HP: Yeah, and then they, 'course they dressed them and it was hard to tell it was laminated.

JG: Seems like it wouldn't be as strong or solid.

HP: No, stronger.

JH: No, they were a lot stronger because you got grain running different directions. It would work the same principle as plywood.

HP: You know, they carried that all the way through this company when they put the plywood plant in, they were adding value to the rough log. And parquet flooring Jack...

JH: Yeah.

HP: Did the same thing with it.

JG: What do you remember about the toilet seats? I know they were originally laminated and then they started making the wood flour, made from out of wood flour.

HP: The first ones they made were made out of strips. And you said they were laminated and then they put them on those shapers. I've always said so, the worst job I ever had for the company was, they had a shaper that spun around real fast with blades on it, and they had a jig you had to move the toilet seat around to get the shape on the outside. I never saw it happen, but, they always said the danger was that one of those things would brake and you'd, pushing on it, you'd push your hand into the...

JG: I think I put a few pictures of that in the Pine Bough, the July issue, when we had one of those at the...

HP: You had something on toilet seats.

JG: ...at Pineland and it was the laminated one. It showed a piece of glue room, I mean it had glue everywhere.

JH: Well they had that glue room after they went to the molding seat, they still used that glue room for, you know they made all those...

HP: I remember that hot glue room.

JH: ...yeah, they made all chopping blocks.

HP: Chopping blocks in there, out of scratch.

JG: Yeah.

JH: Yeah, that's right, it was out of scratch.

HP: And another thing, you know Bill Temple told me last night in the house he owns over on...where his dad was?

JH: Rayburn.

HP: Rayburn Lake. He said a house he has over in the guest bathroom, which was probably never used very much, still has one of the old fashioned Temple seats on it. Not the molded ones.

JG: The laminated ones.

JH: I'll bet you this house we have over here, that we had over here, I bet it still has one.

HP: The old Temple seat.

JH: Uh huh. John Booker gave it to me. That was our house warming; we had two, three bathrooms.

HP: You know Jack, when I left the company, I don't know who...Milford might have done this, they got a rough toilet seat (laughter)...you might have done it. And someone took it around to all of the sales department and all of my friends in the company and they autographed it. And I don't know who did it but someone had a hot engraver type thing...

JG: Uh huh.

HP: ...and they burned those names into that toilet seat.

JG: Do you still have it?

HP: I still have it.

JG: You still got it.

HP: I still have it. Every one of them...I bet you there must be thirty signatures...

JH: I forgot about that.

HP: ...on there and they gave it to me before I left.

JG: When did you leave the company?

HP: Oh, in '67 I think, wasn't it Jack? Sixty...

JH: Uh...was that after I came back from Waco?

HP: ...I don't know but I always...it as '69.

JH: Yeah, it was. It was '67 or '68.

HP: When we got all those company salesmen here we actually had more salesmen than we could furnish lumber. There just wasn't enough lumber for them to make any money. And...I think it might have been my idea to go to some of these better sawmills around this part of the country and line up some additional lumber that we could sell on a wholesale basis. And...

JH: It was your idea, and you became the wholesale director.

HP: Yeah, and finally I got to be the wholesale guy and my job was contacting other mills around here and buying lumber. And we didn't sell it as our lumber. We told people we got lumber for sale, if you don't want this we can sell you some lumber from the lumber company or...

JH: Well, the studs were one, the Temple studs were one of them.

HP: Yeah, that was a Hart.

JH: Dewey Hart made the Temple studs.

JG: Who did?

JH: Dewey Hart.

HP: H-A-R-T.

JH: That Hart down in Jasper.

JG: In Jasper.

JH: Yeah, he had a stud mill down there.

JG: So was it done by contract or did Temple just...bought it from him and put Temple's name on it or what?

JH: It was a...

HP: Arthur and he were...

JH: He and Arthur were great friends. And we marketed his studs for him is what it boiled down to. We worked on it; we got a commission on it.

JG: Was any other company around here like Carter or Angelina, were they, did they have a big sales staff like Temple did?

HP: They sold through a wholesaler and I think Angelina had a man in Houston, Bobby Ridley.

JH: Carter did too. Carter had a man in Houston.

HP: In Houston. A lot of them had, a lot of the big mills had a man in Houston, and not necessarily in Dallas. I think in Dallas most of them use wholesalers.

JG: But did they have as an extensive, like this picture here from '65 there is more than a dozen salesmen there that nobody has...

HP: Not in the South. Weyerhaeuser might have had a crowd that big or Palco Pacific Lumber Company probably had a...

JG: But I meant in Texas.

JH: No.

HP: No. We were the first; Temple was the first one.

JH: Could you remember all those names?

HP: No, not all of them...but I remember, let me go over it again.

JG: We're talking about a picture that was made in '65.

HP: Telling you about that wholesale thing, I got Woodville lined up and Tremont, and a lot of good mills. And most of these salesmen, I hate to say this, but they'd been babied a little bit with the quality and the service and the way we handle claims. And they were a little bit reluctant to sell lumber from some other lumber company, I found. But, we did sell a lot of wholesale lumber. But I got to thinking all the contacts I made with those other mills and...I really didn't like the office as much as I thought I was going to. And I just decided, "Well, I think I'll just get in the wholesale lumber business." So I talked to Arthur and told him that I just wanted to leave and I left under good conditions. And actually Temple, the Temple Industries, the furniture plant in Austin, the box factory in Dallas, Jack was still here running the particleboard plant. He couldn't get enough spacers to load these cars. And I found that Jack bought a lot of lumber from me, the Big Tin Barns, all of the retail yards I knew. Temple was my best customer. But it will always be known...

JG: What was the name of your company?

HP: Cane Forest Products.

JG: Cane Forest Products.

HP: And I just kept doing what I'd been doing all along. Moved to Houston.

JH: We missed it.

HP: Well, I missed Temple too, but, I was up here a lot then. But I still love this family and this company, I really do. And Jack does, every one, I don't know of anyone that has ever worked for Temple that didn't like it. 'Cause if Paul...anyone I ran into was fair weren't they Jack?

JH: Absolutely, absolutely. We didn't make much money back in those days but, we made a living and the loyalty that Mr. Temple, particularly, not demanded, but...deserved.

HP: He always said he didn't want any customer to be dissatisfied. Just go on and bring it back.

JG: Mr. Payne mentioned that you were over the particleboard plant. When did that happen? Or I mean when did you take over that?

JH: Oh let's see, I was in sales till '72, I believe that's right. Well it's when they built the plant, built the particleboard plant.

JG: Now that was the first particleboard plant.

JH: Well actually there was a pilot plant that was built over in Pineland originally. And it was a very small plant, single press. It was a German process and it was a little bit different, a good bit different than what we wound up with. But we did it, used it, to see if we could make good particleboard out of pine. And then we built this plant here, the one in Diboll. Started it '70 I guess.

JG: You were the first supervisor of that, the manager of the plant or...?

JH: Well, yeah, at first I was the sales coordinator, 'cause I was...my background was in sales. They needed someone to work between sales and production. And that was my first job out there. And then the, as the plant...we were there, well, I went out there during construction of the plant. And Bill Oates was forming his core team during construction. And then when we started up I was made the production manager for the plant out here. '74, we built the plant in Georgia, the particleboard plant. And they asked me to go over and start that plant up, which I did. And then I stayed over there until '79, then I left the company in '79.

HP: Jack and I have been friends all these years, I was surprised when he walked in the door; I couldn't believe it. (laughter) We've been friends a long time.

JH: A long time. Back to...

HP: '53.

JH: '52. '52.

JG: Tell me, both of you, tell me a little bit more about the early days of the sales team and who was in charge of it? Was it Latane?

JH: Latane...

HP: Before Latane, it was Bob wasn't it?

JH: It was Bob Burns. Bob was a pine sales manager and Ed Price was a hardwood sales manager. And Don Burnley had everything else, I guess.

HP: He had the toilet seats...

JH: Had the toilet seats and something else, treated plywood.

HP: I guess, was Mr. Webber...did they call him the sales manager then or was it just Bob and Ed? It was probably Bob and Ed.

JH: Bob and Ed were the sales managers, Mr. Webber was actually under them.

HP: Yeah, yeah.

JG: And that's when the sales was all done out of Temple, under the name Temple Lumber Company.

JH: Southern Pine Lumber Company. The retail was under Temple.

HP: And Pineland was Temple for a while and then they finally mixed it into the...

JG: Yeah, I think...yeah, we've got some notices on that. I think it was what...'64 or somewhere in there, early sixties, maybe late fifties, I can't remember. But, yeah, the retail end of it was always Temple Lumber.

JH: Yeah. And of course the sales department that we talked about and we came up in was the Southern Pine Lumber Company.

JG: Southern Pine Lumber Company. You always worked for Southern Pine Lumber Company.

JH: You remember the year that they changed the name from Southern Pine to...

JG: Great Texas?

JH: No, no. From Southern Pine to Temple, I guess.

JG: Oh, ok.

JH: And Jimmy Ferguson worked the switchboard for years and years and years. And she had a unique way of answering the switch board back in those days was the push pull...

JG: Plug.

JH: Plugs. She had a unique way of answering, "Southern Pine." (laughter) But they had, at one of the sales meetings Latane, no Bob Weston was the one that made the wheel. Wasn't Bob Weston the one that changed the name? Yeah.

HP: Yeah he was here when it got, well wait a minute Jack he was here when we did the T-wheel. I think it changed to Temple before he came.

JH: Well whoever was in charge of sales, it was either Bob or Latane, had a little skit that they put on out in Boggy Slough talking about, telling everybody about the name change and why and where and what and everything. And he had this little skit. And he said, "Let's go to the main office, of the new Temple Lumber Company and Temple Industries" I guess it was. But at any rate said, "Let's go to the office and see what's going on. Here's the switch board operator and a call comes through and he said, you know he made this big deal about the new name and all this, and a call comes through, "Southern Pine." (laughter)

JG: Can you tell me a little bit about the name change to Great Texas, was that the retail end?

HP: That's retail, that wasn't us.

JG: That's not y'all.

HP: I tell you, the only thing that did to us, that retail lumber yard made it awfully hard at some times to sell lumber in the town where a strong Temple yard was.

JH: Absolutely.

HP: Remember that guy in El Campo?

JH: Uh huh.

HP: One of the best yards Temple had and that was in Wharton territory. And I'm sure he told Jack the same thing. When I went over there, 'course I went to stop to see the Temple people, you know they were kind of first cousins. And I went in and introduced myself and that guy, Rick, it wasn't Rick, what was his name?

JH: No, Rick...

HP: Anyway, we talked a little while and he said, "I tell you what, as soon as you sell the first load of lumber in El Campo, I want you to call me 'cause I'll buy you a steak dinner." And he had the market wrapped up down there and I never did sell one load of lumber in El Campo.

JH: When I was out in San Antonio I had the same thing with Rick McElroy in Kerrville.

HP: Yeah, and he was one of the good managers, Rick was.

JH: Uh huh. Yeah. I never sold a stick...

HP: But see, it made it hard because they thought they were buying from their competitors and they accused Southern Pine, or Temple whatever they call it, of selling direct to the people. And they didn't like it. And then just like helping the competitor get up on top.

JG: Now you said they didn't like it. Who's they?

HP: The other dealers.

JH: Other lumber dealers.

HP: The other lumber dealers. See, we always sold retail lumberyards; we never sold builders in those days. And a good retail lumber dealer like Stalman in Houston, who was bidding against Temple's Lumber Company in Houston, resented someone showing up in a company car with a card representing Temple Lumber Company. He thought, "Well, why should I buy from them they just knocked me out of a hundred houses over in some subdivision." So it was sometimes difficult, but you know, just something you had to work around.

JG: Now Temple Lumber Company was the name of the retail end.

HP: Right.

JG: Did they sell stuff that was made here in Diboll?

JH: Yeah.

HP: Oh yeah, they did. They didn't buy it; they didn't have to buy it from Southern Pine, or Temple here.

JG: Right.

HP: They could buy it wherever they wanted to and often times did.

JG: Oh, so they didn't even necessarily sell Temple made products. Oh ok.

JH: They were a separate entity more or less.

HP: They had their own purchasing agent. Bill Hinkle, I guess you've run across that name.

JG: So they would have sold Angelina County Lumber Company's lumber and W. T. Carter's and all that. Oh, okay.

HP: Yeah, uh huh. That's right.

JH: And the, Temple's Southern Pine competitors loved to sell to Temple Lumber Company, oh they loved to do that. Because they were beating us out of our own company.

JG: What was the...maybe y'all aren't the ones to answer this, but, what was the management? I mean, essentially wasn't it Temple Lumber Company and Southern Pine Lumber Company? Same people, management wise, stockholder wise? So what was going on there?

HP: In the manufacturing, Temple in Pineland was Temple Lumber Company, and over here it was Southern Pine Lumber Company.

JG: Right.

HP: Now I don't know, you'd have to talk to some of the family...

JG: As far as the manufacturing unit.

HP: The stock divided, Mr. Webber I think was heavy over there and Mr. Temple...I don't know what it was. Arthur could tell you, but, there were two separate companies and there was a little bit of confusion. The symbol in those days was a great big circle with a pine tree on it. And over there was....

JH: A star.

JG: A star, yes.

HP: ...it was red, it had Temple Lumber Company and over here it was Southern Pine. It was the same thing. And then eventually, I don't know why, I guess the stockholders decided just to mesh them together. But, always the retail division was called Temple Lumber Company.

JH: Until Great Texas.

HP: Until they merged the two together. Mr. Webber was kind of the one that was heavy into the retail end and Arthur was always heavier up here in this end. But you'd have to talk to some stockholder.

JG: Yeah, that's what I...I mean, I understand the...

HP: And then the lumberyards were always Temple. Oh, and then they did change their name to...

JH: Great Texas.

HP: ...Great Texas Lumber Company, which we were all in favor of because it wasn't quite like having the same Temple symbol.

JH: Yeah.

JG: But that didn't last too long did it, Great Texas?

JH: No. That's...

HP: They ran out of money. (laughter)

JG: And I think that was one of Latane's projects.

JH: That was Latane's project.

HP: I think you'd have to talk to someone else about that.

JH: Yeah, I think you better talk to somebody else.

JG: I've heard some stories, but...yeah, in fact, you know, now that I understand you a little bit better from what you're talking about that y'all actually worked for Southern Pine Lumber Company and not Temple, most of these scrap books and these things that we've got here are actually Temple, probably the retail end of it.

HP: Put them together, yeah.

JG: But y'all would probably...

HP: Like at Polk out of New York.

JG: Right, like Polk out of New York.

HP: I've thought about that man's name, Arthur, I asked him, he said it was Matt Barr.

JG: Matt Barr.

HP: The manager of that yard.

JG: Ok. So, now that was a Temple retail yard...

HP: In Houston.

JG: ...and you were there, but you actually, your paycheck came from Southern Pine Lumber Company. Is that right?

JH: Right.

HP: Uh huh. And this is one of the three. This Heights Yard is one of the three. The other one was on Kirby Drive and the other one's on Polk Avenue. Let me get a picture of it.

JG: Yeah, I think the actual first one was at Texas Avenue, the very first yard.

HP: The company history I think.

JG: And then the second one was one that they purchased was Heights.

HP: So this was before Texas Avenue, where is Texas Avenue?

JH: I don't know.

JG: But, anyways that was from an early, early company history. And I think that Sim McWilliams was the one that was over all that. He was the Secretary-Treasurer, but, he was involved with getting that first one started.

JH: Herschel you said earlier that you went to work for Temple in Pineland.

HP: Uh huh.

JH: Didn't you go to work for him in Texarkana?

HP: Oh I worked for Arthur Temple and Associates.

JH: Yeah.

HP: We built those little Sussex Downs houses in Texarkana.

JG: During World War II?

HP: Yeah, right after the war when I came home they had a program, if you couldn't find a job you'd get twenty dollars a week for fifty two weeks...

JH: Fifty-two/twenty. Yeah.

HP: And I was just like everyone else. When I came home I went down there and signed up and it didn't take me long to decide that you had to work. You had to do something. You couldn't just sit there. And I went out there and talked to Ben Anthony about going to work at Sussex Downs. But it's like I said...

JG: Say that again.

HP: Sussex Downs. It was a subdivision that Temple Associates...

JH: Temple Associates.

HP: Arthur's company...he was, was he running that lumberyard then, when he set that up Jack?

JH: Yeah.

HP: Jack's dad was involved in it. And...

JG: Now this is when Arthur was still a teenager huh?

JH: Absolutely, nineteen years old.

HP: But I came back from the Navy and I went to work there, and I worked there, I think before I went, I know before I went to the University of Arkansas I went and worked about a year. And you know I still have my check in a frame on my wall. Mr. Anthony went through his bank statements and pulled that check out, I think it's fifteen or twenty dollars, I don't know. Arthur tells the story, I told him, "I just want a job, I don't care whether you pay me or not." I don't know whether that's true or not. (laughter) Then I've got my first orders framed that I got in...

JH: Wharton.

HP: No, what's that woman, that Jewel, what is that (laughter) one of those great estates in Brookshire.

JH: Oh yeah, uh...

HP: That widow woman had that lumberyard.

JH: Yeah.

HP: And that's the first order I ever got and I've got it framed too.

JG: I'm taking some notes down.

JH: That was Jewel's friend.

HP: Jewel's friend, yeah. (laughter)

JG: I'm taking some notes down. At some point I want you to consider maybe donating some of that stuff to us. You know, we're getting a new building...

HP: Well listen, as old as I'm getting, when I'm gone it will be thrown away. Anything I find that's got Temple on it I'm going to save for you.

JG: Right.

HP: If you already have something...just do with it what you want, but, whatever can go in here is fine with me, I'd like you to have it.

JG: Great. What we're planning is eleven thousand square foot building. Most of that's going to...

HP: Carry a lot of pencils. (laughter)

JG: Yeah. Most of that's going to be storage. But, we're also going to have a little museum section, an area a little bit larger than this room where we're going to have some displays. And you know a lot of these things you're talking about, I don't know, you know, some of that would be on permanent display, but some of that, you know, we could bring it out at different times. Like that toilet seat that was signed and this first pay check.

HP: You can put my mind on display. (laughter)

JH: Louise. Wasn't that her name Louise?

HP: Louise Grey, yeah. Yeah, that was the first order.

JH: Yeah.

JG: Were you in the service Mr. Hollingsworth?

JH: No, I was...

HP: He's too young.

JG: He's too young. And you served in the Navy you said.

HP: Uh huh.

JG: During the War?

HP: Two years, yeah.

JG: Ok.

HP: I didn't really fight any Japs, I was in the Pacific, but I never did...I was on an island on Naval Air station.

JG: Oh, ok. So you didn't serve on a vessel?

HP: No, I went over and came back on one, but, I was always...I was on Guam and Sai Pan then, but, I was always on a Naval Air Station.

JG: Ok. That's my dad, he was in the Navy during Vietnam and he said he only went out in a boat twice, and that was to go fishing. (laughter)

HP: I went I guess twice. I went over on a LSC and stayed sick all the way over and came back on a bigger one.

JG: But he was just stationed there at the base there.

HP: I'll tell you something else that was interesting to me, and Jack said we were on a salary. It wasn't a big salary, but you know, we were on a salary. But we weren't hourly employed. And Bill Temple, whom you've met, went to Pineland when I did. He was over there with his brand new bride at Pineland. And the company in those days, at Diboll and Pineland, had ambulances to take people that got hurt to the hospital. And...the one at Pineland was a nice, brand new Pontiac ambulance. And Eck Prudhomme or someone asked Bill Temple if he wouldn't drive the ambulance occasionally and take people wherever they went. Sometimes you'd have to go to Tyler with them. And Bill said, "Yeah, I'd like to, but, I don't want to go at night." He just had a brand new bride and I got to drive the ambulance at night. And they did put me on an hourly basis. Every time I got the ambulance after five o'clock, I made a little hourly rate. And I used to, every time the fire whistle blew I got up and got my clothes on, and I just lived around the corner from the ambulance garage. And I'd get to go to the, wherever the fire...false alarm, it didn't matter, I'd be back in bed in fifteen minutes. And I always got an hour, 75; I got 75 cents. (laughter) What you start at Jack? 75 cents an hour?

JH: No, I started on salary at \$250.

HP: Oh I was making 75 cents.

JG: So y'all really did do a little bit of everything huh?

HP: Oh yeah.

JG: Ambulance servicemen.

JH: I worked at...in '60 I worked over at Pineland grading hardwood, after I came back from this hardwood school. And at that time there was no restaurants in Pineland at all.

They'd all closed down. And the place we stayed, which used to be a boarding house wasn't it? We were right across the street...

HP: I stayed with a couple; he was a sawyer. I had a front bedroom in his house.

JH: But they had a little tourist closure, remember over there.

HP: Oh yeah.

JH: I stayed in there, nearly froze to death. And if it hadn't been for Ruby Booker I'd have probably starved to death. (laughter)

HP: I thought you were going to do this.

JG: You said Reuben?

JH: Ruby.

JG: Ruby.

JH: Yeah, John Booker's...

JG: John Booker, Sr.

JH: His wife.

JG: His wife, ok.

HP: The company had an old house over there they called the Library for guests that wanted to...

JG: Oh at Pineland, like here? Okay.

HP: Uh huh. And I stayed in that Library until I got my room lined up over there. And I was over there when they built that nice little shopping center, when they first put that in. That was...

JH: Uh huh. Ok, the motel was on the backside of the shopping center.

HP: Yeah. And before that Mrs. Hall had a boarding house.

JH: Right, right across the street from there, right.

HP: Uh huh, cost 50 cents a meal. And I mean she put some food on the table.

JG: What was her first name?

JH: Mrs. Hall, is what we called her, Mrs. Hall.

HP: She had a pretty daughter, I'll tell you that. I used to go with that daughter some. Laura Lee.

JH: You gave these boarding house women's daughters hell didn't you? (laughter)

JG: He got around too didn't he?

JH: That was Mrs. Pogue's daughter.

JG: Yeah.

HP: Uh huh. But that ambulance deal was a good deal, because every once in a while if you had to go to pick someone up maybe that they'd be sent to Tyler, and that was a real treat, you'd get to have lunch and drive around. You know, I didn't like taking someone that got hurt to Jasper.

JG: Yeah.

JH: It's like going and picking them up.

HP: And the biggest scare I ever had, they called me one Saturday morning and I went over there, and Dr. Jones, the company doctor, he was a doctor there that....I would think he was on salary, he was a doctor...but, there was a little colored boy in the quarters I went and picked up and, nice looking little guy and he was just completely still and he didn't make a move. And I got him in the ambulance and just before I closed the door I said, "What's the matter with him, Dr. Jones, he doesn't look sick?" And he said, "Well, I think he has Polio." And boy that was in the '50's, you know, Polio was dreaded. It was just something that people couldn't tolerate. And I rolled those windows down in the ambulance and I turned on all the lights that we had, and I got to that hospital in Beaumont in record time. But I was scared to death I was going to get Polio. (laughter) Oh, and old Vernon Burkhalter drove the ambulance over here. I used to run into him every once and a while.

JG: Yeah, running the...

JH: He burned it up.

HP: Did he burn it up?

JH: Uh huh. Burned it up. And it was a Pontiac also...

HP: Yeah, they were both...

SIDE TWO OF TAPE

HP: I was telling to Bill Temple last night.

JG: He was saying that Vernon Burkhalter didn't burn it up with an electrical fire but just drove it hard, he drove it hard.

JH: It was a real cold night, he had to go some place and he jumped in that thing without warming it up...

HP: It froze it?

JH: Yeah.

HP: You mean the radiator frozen and it burned up or...? He probably forgot it was on.

JH: All I know is that it burned the motor up on him.

JG: I didn't mean to interrupt. I just noticed there's a leader on that tape and I just wanted to make sure we finished that up.

HP: I was going to say...I hardly ever get depressed about anything, but, when my friend Frank Sloan died, who was a manager over there for a long time. He's the one who kind of took me under his wing and helped me out when I first went over there.

JH: This was at Pineland.

HP: Good friend, and, you know, I was all alone down there and they were nice people. Anyway, when he died, someone called me. And I was in Houston then, I got up at like 3 o'clock in the morning and drove up there to that funeral. And when I, I hadn't been to Pineland maybe in fifteen years, ten or fifteen years. And I drove in there, and everything was so different. You know, it was a pretty little town, it had picket fences and it was a really nice little town, that little shopping center they put in there. When I went through that thing early in the morning there wasn't any sign of life and it was completely different all over, the sawmill was gone and something new. And then I had to go up to Hemphill for that funeral and I really did get down over that, 'cause that was a nice...

JG: Do you remember what year that was?

HP: Frank died?

JG: That you revisited Pineland.

HP: I just don't know, someone would know when Frank died. He was a second-generation employee; his dad had worked there forever.

JH: I think that was when I was in Alaska.

HP: Yeah.

JH: Which would have been in between '81 and '88.

JG: So sometime in the early to mid eighties.

HP: Yeah.

JG: Ok.

JH: And that funeral was in Hemphill. And he had Monte, his wife, in Houston, and we lived down near then. We used to go to M.D. Anderson or Methodist hospital to visit her when she was there.

HP: They were good people. Boy that town is full of good people. Old fashioned, Old Raspberry was a tough old nut. He was a planer foreman.

JH: You know what I remember about Frank, was in his house...

JG: You talking about Frank Sloan?

JH: Frank Sloan, his house, he had saved back exotic hardwoods and what not that he'd in different parts of the house. But the mantle, you remember that mantle he had, mantelpiece?

HP: One big piece of something.

JH: One big piece of cypress, it was clear cypress. It came out of 16 feet by, now what did he tell me...36 inches I believe...36 inches wide and 16 feet long. You know, clear hard cypress.

HP: Boy there were some logs that came in there.

JH: Oh yeah.

JG: Yeah, I was telling Mr. Payne that I was going through some records that came from Pineland fairly recently.

JH: 30 inches wide.

JG: And it was in the '40's, early, late, mid late '40's, early '50's. An awful lot of hardwood timber that they seemed to be cutting, you know, where the lakes, Toledo Bend and Sam Rayburn.

HP: Yeah they brought a lot of logs in here.

JH: Yeah. And they did a moratorium on the cypress cutting on down in the Big Bend.

JG: Big Thicket?

JH: Big Thicket, yeah. Gosh I guess they never have cut...there used to be some huge, huge cypress coming out of that thing.

JG: Yeah, they started cutting that cypress even before the Civil War, took them down out of Beaumont.

HP: What was that big company in Beaumont, Lutch Moore?

JG: That was in Orange.

HP: Yeah, and they cut out. They finally just cut all this stuff...but they were big.

JG: Yeah Lutch Moore was pretty big.

HP: You know, I tell you, over at Pineland, one thing that was strange over there in the early days they had, when I first went over they had all the stripped down, early V-8 Fords that they called a jitney. And that those, they'd pull the lumber off the green chains 'till one of those wagons was full. And the drivers that would hook onto that and they'd pull it out on those high trams to a stack that was of similar grade, similar species. And the lumber stackers would then, by hand, pull it off of those buggies and stack it so it could air dry. Hardwood has to air dry one month per quarter inch before you can put it in a dry kiln.

JG: Hmmm.

HP: And those things were built high because it was easier to start those stacks down. They didn't have to jack them way up in the air.

JG: Right

HP: And those jitneys would bring that lumber out there and then they'd get all the way up, and I mean those things were high. They'd pull those things down on a great big lumber jack. You remember they'd...

JH: Uh huh.

HP: And put them up at the top. And then put cuffer boards on them. And later on when Ed Price...they got one of those, it was a funny looking machine, you'd pull it up to the stack and...

JH: Straddle truck.

HP: No before that Jack. Don't you remember, it was that thing that went up and around. It had...

JH: Oh yeah.

HP: ...cleats out here and they put the boards on there and that thing would jack it up and then someone on the top would pull it off and they'd stack it that way. They didn't have to jack those boards up. And then later they changed it all to those big straddle trucks and they stacked it side by side and layer by layer with a machine at the sawmill for the straddle truck came up and picked the whole thing up. And they redid the hardwood yard and made great big cement runners that the straddle truck went along and just dropped it down. And they got rid of all that heavy, heavy hand labor. When I first went over there, those colored guys probably were the highest paid employees on that yard. And they'd come out to work every morning with a big thick denim jumper on. Sleeve button, collar button, and a pair of overalls under them. And I was there with a little thin knit shirt on, trying to stay cool. And I thought, "How in the world are those guys ever going to make it through the day." Well once they started working and all their clothes got wet from perspiration, it was like an air-conditioned suit they had on. They never got hot all day. But that was hard work over there.

JG: Well, I didn't mean to take all your time that you wanted to spend talking, but, you're welcome to go through these scrapbooks and pictures if y'all...

JH: That's Temple.

HP: That's Temple Lumber Company isn't it?

JG: Yes sir, I'll go ahead and stop the tape now.

END OF INTERVIEW