

KENNETH NELSON

Interview 75b

September 27, 1985, Diboll, Texas

Megan Lambert, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT: In this second interview by Megan Lambert, Kenneth Nelson (1915-1992) continues his remembrances of experiences in Southern Pine Lumber Company's Land & Timber Department. He discusses early land and timber purchases and surveying, logging practices, the beginning of a sustained yield program in forest management, and provides information about his own employment history, including working for Dave Kenley. He also discusses his involvement in numerous civic, government, and professional organizations, including service clubs, forestry associations, the Texas Forestry Museum, water districts, planning and zoning, and the Diboll school board.

Megan Lambert: September 27, 1985. This is Megan Lambert interviewing Mr. Kenneth Nelson in Diboll, Texas. Mr. Nelson, I've been looking at your list of memberships and employment and I would like to go through that a bit starting with the clubs in Diboll that you belong to, Lions, Booster and the Quarterback club and ask about the civic activities of those clubs, and the relationship to the development of Diboll, if you don't mind talking about them?

Kenneth Nelson: Well, as far as the Lions Club, I was in on the – I was a charter member and that has been quite a few years ago, offhand I don't remember when we first started but, anyhow from the beginning I was elected secretary of the Lions Club and at that time we were the only service club in town and we had our monthly meetings, we had various ones on the program. We would carry on activities around the community, not any large projects because we were small and didn't have much money to work on. But I quit after five years because they kept electing me secretary and, as you know, the secretary does all the work and I told them, I said, "Now, I want to stay in the Lions Club but I don't want to be secretary." And they couldn't get anybody else to take it and they kept electing me so I had to carry out my threat – I quit. I didn't stay any longer than the five years. Now, I was on the original Booster Club. I haven't gone to any of the meetings in a long time, as you know now, they handle Diboll Day and I haven't been active in that but I had been a member of the Booster Club for several years when it first started and, as you know now, they make quite a bit of money on Diboll Day and they distribute it out to various ones like the library, the city park, the swimming pools, it has gotten to be quite a big thing but, as I say, I am not active in it now.

ML: Was it founded at the same time as Diboll Day was founded?

KN: Yes, it was.

ML: So its basic purpose was to support Diboll Day?

KN: That was its basic purpose.

ML: Do you know if Pineland has a Booster Club like that for Pineland Day?

KN: Yes, they have the same situation over there at Pineland. That's the reason they started alternating, having Pineland Day one year and Diboll Day one year. It got to be a pretty big thing and quite expensive and quite a lot of work involved and it just got a little too much to have in each place each year so they organized their booster club and they put on the same kind of program that we have here. That was the main purpose of having the club.

ML: The Quarterback Club?

KN: The same way with the Quarterback Club. Now when I had kids in school here I was real active in the Quarterback Club and, but since my kids graduated from school and left I got out of that. But I was in it for quite a while and I had to drive a school bus occasionally. One of my girls was a drum major and the other one played in the band and I got caught several times having to drive the school bus to carry kids to football games, you needed some ear plugs to drive. But, as I say, I haven't been in it for a long time, but I was active for quite a while.

ML: What about the Angelina County water district #2, what were your activities on it?

KN: I'm still on it now. I don't think I am secretary. We just have a five member board. It was organized for the main purpose. Mr. Temple wanted, one time always wanted him a paper mill, that was before our merger with Southwestern and out at what we call Boggy Slough in Trinity, I know you have heard that mentioned. We wanted to build a paper mill out there on company land. Well, we needed quite a bit of water for a paper mill so there is a creek that goes through nearly the whole area known as Boggy Slough and it is Kachina Bayou. He wanted to build a dam on this bayou and create a lake up there and use that water for paper mill use. Well, we had to get permission from the state in order to build the dam to impound the water, so we had to form this water district in order to build the lake. So we went through all the necessary forms and meetings in Austin etc. and were granted the permission to form the water district and when it was first organized I was secretary and we switched every year. I am still on the thing and I'm not sure what position I am, I might be vice president, I'm not sure. We meet about twice a year and, of course, we have an election every year, there's about two of us comes up for election. I think we serve three year terms and come up for re-election. But that's all we do, we are keeping it active in case we ever do want to build that lake out there. So that's the reason it is being kept active by the company. They are the ones who wanted it formed and at the present time I think there is only one man who works for the company who is on the board and that is Don Hendricks, myself, who is retired and Robert Ramsey, he is a retired principal of the school. He is on the board and Lefty Vaughn, he is a retired merchant here in town, he is on board, too, and Clyde Thompson

who is now in the nursing home down here and retired from the company. That's the board members. As I say, all we do is meet about twice a year and keep the thing active.

ML: What are the chances, do you think, that there would be a paper mill there someday?

KN: I doubt it now, because that was before we merged and we got the paper mill down here at Evadale, so he got his paper mill. He always wanted a paper mill. So I doubt now that we will ever get it built, but for fear he might want the water for something else he wanted do keep it active.

ML: Well, by coincidence, just a week ago I had a chance to go to Evadale for the first time and as I drove through town I sure knew there was a paper mill there, if he had that big one?

KN: Well, that was the reason because that was before the merger and at that time, as you know, the Kurths built the one in Lufkin, and he always wanted a paper mill because the Kurths had one, too; that's my thinking on it. But we had all the other types of wood using industries except a paper mill and, back in those days, a paper mill was real profitable, more so than it is now. So that was the story of the paper mill.

ML: Now, when you say "Before the merger" do you mean before Temple-Eastex merged or before Time-Life merger?

KN: Before Temple-Eastex. See, Temple-Eastex merged in '73, I believe it was, and – we were at that time Temple Industries and they were South West, they were Eastex Pulp and Paper and when we merged it became Temple-Eastex, then after Time took us over. Yes, that's the story; we haven't changed any since then even when time spun us off. Then a portion became Temple-Inland so we have changed names several times, Southern Pine Lumber Company, Temple Lumber Company, Temple Industries, Temple-Eastex and Temple-Inland but it is still about the same thing as in the beginning.

ML: Okay, well, let's go on to your work on the DISD board of trustees.

KN: Well, I was on the board of trustees when it was a common school district, we had three trustees and we weren't independent at that time. After a few years all the schools of any size wanted to become independent and since we were growing considerably here in Diboll we felt we could do better if we were an independent district rather than depending on the county school superintendent. In fact, it was only about three of us left in the county that was common, the rest of them were independent. So we decided we wanted to go independent and...

ML: What were those last three?

KN: One of them was out here at Bald Hill, and what they call Salem, I believe it was, and I'm not sure where the other one was besides us. Anyhow, we were one of the last of

any size to go independent. So we did, we spun off and I was instrumental in drawing up the first tax roll for the school.

ML: What year was that?

KN: I can't remember that, I'm bad about not keeping any records over there but I stayed on the board thirteen years and I've been off I guess fifteen or so, so it has been quite a number of years ago. Anyhow I really got a good baptism when I started that tax roll because people hate taxes, as you know, and we had to raise taxes! We couldn't have gone independent we didn't have enough money. So it became my job, and I was the only one on the board at that time that had any experience with taxation because I was handling some for the company in my position down there. So I took it on myself to write the large companies and ask if they would voluntarily raise their taxes. I got some good answers to that. Oh, I got one from before W. T. Carter sold out down in Camden they owned a lot of land down here in the southern part of our district, in fact, they were the biggest land owner in the Diboll School District. Even, I believe, they might have been about the same as Temple. Anyhow, they were the main ones, and I wrote them to voluntarily do it and they said, "No, they weren't about to raise it. They were paying enough taxes anyway." Well, we went ahead and raised them anyhow and we had quite a round with them. They didn't take us to court but we had several meetings and finally compromised. We didn't get what we wanted but at least we got more than what it was on the county roll. Anyhow, after a couple of three years we finally got our rolls in order to where we hired a tax assessor-collector at that time, and started being where we had enough money to operate. But I cut my eyeteeth on that, I really didn't know what I was getting into. Anyhow, I served on the board thirteen years before I got off and that was after my kids graduated and I felt like I should get off and let some of the others who had kids in school stay on there. But I had a lot of fun on there, too.

ML: Yes, school boards are always a lot of controversy.

KN: Everybody ought to serve on the school board and the grand jury one time.

ML: I believe that, too.

KN: Yes, they would get an education, right.

ML: Well, the next thing, how about the Texas and Louisiana Forestry Association?

KN: Yes, well, I'm past member of that. I haven't been active in that for a long time either. I got in that when I was real active in the Texas Forestry Association and we had several meetings with the Louisiana Forestry Association and several of us would go over to their annual meetings and some of them would come meet with us in order to see what type of activities we were carrying on and we were kind of swapping information. So I didn't stay in the Louisiana Association just a few years and I got out. In all of my activities in the Texas Forestry Association, I served as president of the association for a while, well, for a year. I don't know if I have the date on that or not. I don't believe I put

down the date that I was president on here. But, anyhow, it was been about ten years ago when I served as president and I have been on all types of committees for them and on the board of directors half a dozen times, I guess. It's been a good association, still is it does a lot of good for forestry in Texas. In fact, it is the spokesman for forestry in Texas. Very good organization.

ML: Isn't it mostly a business organization?

KN: Yes, in fact, nearly – well, all the large companies and a whole lot of individual land owners are members. In fact, it has about 2,300 members I would say, contributors over there. They help finance some research and do a lot of publication of forestry papers and they distribute pine seedlings to people that want them planted and give all sort of advice and publish a lot of brochures, etc. pertaining to forestry.

ML: Do they have anything to do with the forestry incentive program? Or is that A&M extension?

KN: Well, they have what they call the Tree program, T.R.E., which a lot, some individuals and mostly companies contribute money to make up a fund and people who have land that needs planting, they will furnish the money to have the land prepared, cleared if he will put in pine trees. They will furnish the biggest portion of it, I've forgotten now, maybe 75% or 80% and the land just contributes a little but he has to promise to leave it growing in pine trees and take care of it after it is planted. They are sponsoring that program over there now, the extension service, they have one, too. And the Texas Forest Service, they furnish free advice and they will come out and help you do a certain amount but they are limited to Texas Forestry service as a state agency to about three days or something like that because they are competing with outside interests and that's about all they will do for you, about 3 days work and then they expect somebody else to do it.

ML: I see that you were also involved in several surveyors associations?

KN: Yes, we formed our chapter in Lufkin, Surveyor's Association. Well, it was, I'd say around 1959 or '58, and I was president of the local chapter a year or two and then, became a member of the Texas Surveyor's Association with headquarters in Austin and I was on the board of directors for a time and then I was elected president of the association in 1961 and '62. At that time we had our own secretary and officers, we were operating out of the general land office in Austin. Well, there has always been a little friction between the engineers of Texas and the surveyors. The engineers always took the position that they didn't have to take the test to be, to do surveying for the public and because they were already registered engineers they felt like they were qualified. Well, the surveyors didn't agree with that. They felt like they should take the test the same as the surveyors. So they got into, well, in fact we had a law suit with them over there and we lost out. But, at the same time, when we were operating out of the land office the engineers called our hand on it and said, "Look, you are using the facilities of the state there," and said, "We don't get that, we have to get our own." Well at that time Jerry

Saddler was commissioner of the general land office and I was president then so I went to see him. He said a few strong adjectives and told me – says “Ya’ll go ahead and do whatever you need to in my office and to hell with the engineers.” And he was our friend; he lived over in Palestine, or course. I knew him real well. And we were using his chief deputy as our secretary and he was using the facilities. Anyhow, after a few years, after that we decided we would get out and not cause any trouble so we have Don McCullough over there which they are professionals doing this type of work. They are not on surveyors business but they handle other societies, etc. so we have our own over there. But, in fact, I haven’t been active, I’m a life member of the surveyors but I haven’t been active in that for the last few years either. Once you are president, then you are a life member from then on, so I am still a life member. That’s a very good organization, too. They – and I served on the board of registration for two and a half years that is quite a story. At that time Price Daniels was Governor of Texas, there was a vacancy come on the board of surveyors and our association wanted to get a particular man in our organization appointed to the board, an old fellow who lived over in San Angelo. He was the first president of the Surveyors Association, a good man. Anyhow, there were a couple of fellows on the board who were against him, and they were old hardheads who had been on there for quite awhile and so they submitted some names of their own and asked the governor not to appoint George. So our bunch was real upset so I went over there to see the governor one time with Clyde Thompson on some company business and he called me aside and says, “Say, I wish you would give me some more names, I can’t appoint the fellow that you submitted his name.” I said, “Why?” He said, “Well, confidentially some fellows on your board over there don’t want him and I can’t, just can’t get into a squabble like that.” I said “All right.” Anyhow, I came back and I discussed it with some of our people and they were real disappointed. So it wasn’t a week later the governor’s aide called me and said, “The Governor wants you to take the job.” And I said, “I don’t want it, I just don’t want it for any purpose.” He said, “Yeah, but do the governor a favor.” I said, “What do you mean a favor?” He said, “Well, he doesn’t know who else to appoint and he can’t appoint the one you asked, he doesn’t want to appoint the one the board members want and he said ‘You’d be a good one in between and help satisfy everybody’.” I said, “I don’t know if it would or not.” So I said, “I’ll tell you what, you give me a week, I’ll let you know.” So I flew down to San Angelo and talked with Mr. George and told him what happened, I said, “Now, I won’t take it if you think it would cause you any hard feelings.” “Oh, no,” he said, “I’d like to have it but I understand the situation. You go ahead and take it because if you don’t he will appoint somebody that is not agreeable to all of us.” So I reluctantly took it and went on the board and one of these hardheads on the board, the first time I went up there, I hadn’t been sworn in at that time, I just wanted to sit in and see what transpired at one of the meetings, he got mad and said I shouldn’t be up there because I wasn’t sworn in on the board yet and the rest of them tried to explain that I was there for information. He stalked out of the meeting. The next morning I was back up there and he was there, too, and I asked them what happened and one of the board members went to see him at his hotel that night and explained to him to come on back up there, that it was proper for me to be there since I wasn’t taking part in it, so anyhow, it – he served on there another year while I was on there and it was kind of cool between us until right before the end of his term. He got a little closer to me. He and I had to go several places together on business

and he warmed up considerably, but that was quite an experience for me of my serving on the board of registration, so when my term was up I told the governor I didn't want to be reappointed. I had all I wanted of that.

ML: Well, it sounds to me like your life has been sort of one after another of people asking you to take over things and you have done so well and then they haven't wanted to let you go.

KN: Yes, it's hard to – you know, so many of these things that nobody wants them, especially these free jobs, they are like my – I didn't know better and we have, in 1982, we had our 50th anniversary, our high school graduating class. I graduated in Lufkin and I took it upon myself to get up a reunion and I won't do that any more, because I had a hard time locating everybody. And I did all this work and we had the reunion all right, and we decided we would have one every two years. Well, last year everybody wrote me and called me and asked me when are we going to have it? And I said “Whenever you all get it up because I've had all I want of it. I'll attend but I'm not going to do all the work again.” We haven't had one since then. Nobody wants it.

ML: Well, turning more to some of the things you might have wanted to be the head of, or part of, or an officer in, how about your vice presidency in the East Texas Logging Company?

KN: Yes, that was formed for mainly, from a legal standpoint of the company. Since I was head of the forestry department then we had a logging superintendent and Clyde Thompson was actually over the logging part of it for all the company. The legal department said if we would form an independent association, so to speak, it would protect the company in law suits. They wouldn't be...the contractors would not be working directly for the company; it would be working for the logging company over there and that way any trouble they would sue the logging company and not Southern Pine or Temple Eastex. So that was the reason that was formed and sure enough, we had a few law suits against the East Texas Logging Company and it got to where they were suing the company anyhow. In fact, they were filing suit against both, East Texas Logging and the company. In one case, a very stupid case, one of our logging contractors out on Farm Road 58, just south of Lufkin, one morning they had a truck stuck on this side of the highway. One of the employees pulls a cable out and hooks on to the truck with the cable stretched across the highway and it was just about daylight with no flagman out there. And here comes a man that worked at the paper mill that lived below there, in this pickup. It sheared off the top of that pickup and, of course, decapitated him and killed him, very young man, and naturally, they sued and we were fortunate in settling that thing. They could have got any amount of money, I think, that they wanted. Anyhow, we settled it. They sued each member of the logging company, Clyde, Spencer Knutson, and myself, got judgment against us as well as the company for \$100,000 a piece and Clyde and I and Spencer went to Arthur and said, “Arthur, we don't have that kind of money,” and he kind of kidded us along at first. “Well, the company is going to pay our part and you will have to pay your part.” So anyhow, he finally let us off the

hook and let the company take care of it. But we dissolved the East Texas Logging Company right after that. It didn't do any good because they sued us all anyway.

ML: What year was that that the accident happened?

KN: Oh, I guess that's been maybe fifteen-sixteen years ago.

ML: And what was the name of the man and his family?

KN: He lived down on Farm Road 58, I want to say it was a Squyres but I'm not certain about that. Their lawyer was a friend of the company's and he suggested, he said, "You know how bad this suit is." And of course, our legal department said it was the worst one we could get into. They didn't argue with him, he was – he recommended the settlement to his client, to the widow and she accepted it. She could have gotten a lot more if we had gone to court because it was a bad case; it was just stupidity. It couldn't have been worse, no flagman out there and just about daylight. That's the history of the logging department.

ML: Well, okay, how about let's move on to the "Build East Texas Committee?"

KN: Yes, now that – well, it is still going on but we didn't do too much on that thing. It was formed, oh, they must have had fifty members on that thing and I think I went to about three meetings and, of course, it wasn't only just forestry. They had forestry and agriculture and real estate, just anything to increase East Texas in the way of tourism, to increase the value of the forest or farmlands and that kind of stuff. I remember the last meeting we had, we had it in Austin and, of course, the head of the committee was the state agriculture commissioner, at that time was Mr. Brown and he got defeated. Can't remember his first name, but anyhow he was commissioner of agriculture. He got up and made a talk over there and there were a couple of fellows in the audience got up and kind of berated him and said there wasn't nothing to this committee...it was wasting time and wasting money and said all we were doing was boosting his image before the public. And they had to, more or less, escort them out of the meeting over there and that broke up the meeting and as far as I know, we didn't have another one while I was on the committee. But I think it is still going. I still see something occasionally in the paper but it didn't get near as far as they intended. They had good intentions but I didn't stay on the committee much longer than that. Actually, we weren't doing a whole lot, just meeting and talking, that was about it. No action.

ML: Well, I want to hear about the map making part, too, but tell me about the zoning and planning committee first.

KN: Well, I was a charter member on that committee, too. I'm not on it now, I got off of it two years ago but I stayed on it from the beginning up until two years which, I guess I was on it ten or twelve years. Of course, it was involved mainly in trying to work up some kind of plan for the city where it wouldn't be helter-skelter and people putting a mobile home here and so forth. We had a few touchy moments while I was on that thing,

too. At one time the colored people didn't have any kind of club over here so there was a fellow that had been raised here in Diboll and went to Houston and made a lot of money in the landscape business. In fact, he's still pretty well off so he wanted to come back here and build a club for the colored people over there, known as the Family Affair Club. Well, a lot of people were against it; especially the white folks were against it. Some of the colored but most of them wanted it over there. So, naturally he had to get a permit to build the thing over there. Well, at that time...

ML: What year was that?

KN: That must have been, I keep forgetting, I want to say this has been probably fifteen years ago, something like that. So we had to have a permit. Well, they said, "Yeah, I think we can give you one, all right, so he goes ahead and has the contractor pour the slab over there to put it on. Well, they got a little bit of it on another lot over there and so some of the people jumped on that. They can't build it because it is not on all that property. Anyhow, to make a long story short, we had a meeting of the zoning and planning committee and a public hearing to where they would grant the permit to build the thing over there. Well, there were so many people came in, we had it at night, we couldn't get them all in so we adjourned and said we would have it two or three nights later and were going to have it in the auditorium where they would have enough room. We had a filled auditorium that night, about half of them for it and half of them against it and, oh, a lot of protest going on. But we finally decided as a committee, the whites naturally had theirs, had their private club. The coloreds did not have one and we felt like in order to pacify some of those that we could live with some of the whites hollering about it, so we granted the permit to build the thing. And so far, as far as I know, there haven't been any real problems over there in all these years. He built a nice club; he spent a lot of money on it and seems to be running it pretty well. As far as I know. Oh, I guess, occasionally, there would be a drunk they would have to arrest over there but any major trouble over there I never heard about it. So it has worked out real fine. But there are a lot of hotheads and a lot of hard feelings went on about that and toward us, too, for granting it. They said we were trying to violate the law and all with them having liquor over there. And, of course, they didn't say anything about the whites have theirs. Anyhow, it settled down and has worked out all right. I got off of the zoning and planning committee about two years ago. I felt like I had been on there long enough. It is still doing a good job. We did hire a firm to come in here and make a survey and draw up a plan for the growth of Diboll for the next fifteen or twenty years, something like that. Zoned it out for us which we think is a good plan for Diboll.

ML: Could I get a hold of a copy of that plan?

KN: Yes, I'm sure they have one over there at the city hall.

ML: Oh, I'll ask Mr. Cupit. What was the name of the firm, do you remember?

KN: He was out of Tyler, he was, just had one name, you know, like John Jones, inc., or associates, something like that.

ML: That's okay, I'll find out about it.

KN: Yes, if you can't I probably have something over there in my files.

ML: And it is a plan which has turned out to be, it is to be implemented?

KN: Yes

ML: Who is mostly responsible, the city manager for implementing that plan? Okay, well, he would be the one I would have to see.

KN: Yes, of course, this is not the same city manager now.

ML: Who was the city manager at that time?

KN: Well, we have had two since he was here, well –

ML: I hate to throw you these curves, that's okay.

KN: I can't remember, it's been two since then, in fact, I think he left here and went to a little town, well, down close to Goliad, Cuero, he went to Cuero, I think. But they will have his name over there; it will probably be on that plan.

ML: Okay, good. The next thing I do want to hear about your map work for the city.

KN: Well, the first I remember of making any kind of a map was, oh, it was way back there. We had a company hired an engineer, a city engineer. I guess it was the first one they ever had. His name was V. L. Milner, and there wasn't any maps or any plans whatever showing where the water lines were, the sewer lines. Well, I say sewer lines; everybody had septic tanks at that time. That was before sewer lines were put in. But water lines, you know, they were getting old and breaking, didn't know how to replace them because they didn't know where they were. So he asked me one day if I would help him find these water lines and map them out where they would have some idea where these water lines were. I told him "Yes," so he and I worked together and we had a time locating these things. I made a map for the water lines in Diboll. Of course, back in those days Diboll wasn't very big so it didn't take a whole lot to do it. But, anyhow, that was the first map I ever made in Diboll, was the water lines. Then, later, there was no map of Diboll; I wish I could tell you when it happened. Mr. Henry Temple was mill manager here at that time. So he said he would like to see a map made of Diboll, of the town so he asked me if I would be willing to do it and I told him "Yes." Of course, at that time, I was working under Mr. Kenley. And Mr. Kenley heard about it and he said "No," that I had plenty to do without making a map of Diboll. I know Mr. Henry – I don't remember if he told me or told somebody he'd buy me a suit of clothes if I would make that map. Back in those days I didn't have many suits of clothes.

ML: When was this, approximately?

KN: Gosh, that must have been, oh, I'd say that was back in the early '40s. Anyhow, a little fellow came through here. He claimed he was an engineer but the more he was here by doubts – I don't think he was ever an engineer, he might have worked in the surveying crews one time but I don't think he was an engineer. I can't remember his name now. I've got it at home. I want to say it is – starts with a K. Anyhow, Mr. Kenley is the one that found him and so he suggested to Mr. Temple to let this guy do it and they would pay him daily wages while he was doing it and they furnished him a crew and he started out surveying the town. As I recall he never did finish it. He got quite a bit of it done and he was just doing the surveying. And the boy who worked under me in the office was doing the mapping. I did a little of it but was afraid to do much, afraid Mr. Kenley would say something about it. So this boy, named Ralph McKinney, I think, did most of the work on the map but he was using field work that this guy, drifter, that had come in here, was doing. And, as I say, that was back in the early '40s, and we finally made the map, but at that time we didn't have any sub-divisions, they just made individual, usually used a fence line, everybody had fences around their houses at that time. Later then, when they came in and made the new maps and made it up into lots, they disregarded the fence lines and started tearing them down, but that was about all we could do back in those times. If a fellow had his fence running way back out in here crooked, that's the way the survey would show it on the map. So that map was used up until they hired the engineering firm to come in and make a complete new map of Diboll and cut it up into subdivisions and some form of lots where they didn't run all over the place over there, they disregarded those. But, as I said, I think that was in the early '40s, that that map was made. Of course, after that, when they would add the little subdivisions around town, I surveyed some of them myself. I went over there in the edge of the quarters. Sabine Investment and them took over the selling of the lots here in Diboll and Stubby asked me to make him a map of the little subdivision he wanted over there in the edge of the quarters for the blacks. So I told him I would, during the weekends. I had my own crew and I got the thing all laid out and worked up, and I had paid them boys myself out of my own pocket. And Mr. Temple found out, Stubby mentioned to Mr. Temple that I did the work for him and I'd given him a bill, very cheap Mr. Temple said "Why, he is supposed to be working all the time for the company, he is not supposed to be doing that." Stubby said, "Well, I got him to do it," said "He is on call 24 hours a day." So Stubby didn't pay me. So I was out what I paid my help beside my own work. That was the last subdivision map I made for the company, Sabine Investment or anybody else over there. But, anyhow, we did do a lot of surveying around town, too. I'd do that before we got a full time surveying crew. But I did all the surveying for a long time when we first started running lines and painting property lines for the company. I did all the surveying for the company lands up in Anderson and Cherokee Counties, and Houston, Trinity and Angelina County, myself. I had a crew besides doing the work. We were one of the first ones outside of the forest service that painted their boundary lines and we painted it in blue paint so anytime you see that blue paint you know that is Temple lands and, since then, of course, others have come up with different colors, like the forest services uses red, Champion uses orange and, also Kirby uses orange and International Paper uses yellow, each one tries to use a different color so we would know his property line.

ML: Well, let's see, where were we? Mapping?

KN: Yes, we just got through surveying and painting the boundary line for Temple over there.

ML: I wanted to ask you about when you were surveying in these different counties, did you come home every night or did you stay out there?

KN: No, now that's a little story in Palestine. I went to Palestine and carried one body with me. We went up there and picked up a crew there. We were staying there during the week, at a boarding house, and came home on weekends. That went on for about three months, I say then that I was going to be up there a long, long time. Of course, I had a wife and a little baby then, about six months old then, our oldest daughter. So I went to Mr. Kenley. The company was paying my room and board which wasn't a whole lot, about \$15.00 a week, I think. So I told Mr. Kenley, I said, "I'm going to be there a long time, if the company will pay my rent I'll move up there and take my family and won't be coming back and forth. It will be cheaper on the company." He said, "See what you can find." So I went up and found a little old garage apartment and rent was \$32.50 a month. I came back and told Mr. Kenley and he said "Oh, the company will pay \$30.00 of it." That's some more of Mr. Kenley's tightness. Now he was tight with company money as well as his own. So I told him all right, and I moved up there, I didn't think I would stay but six months. But we wound up staying eighteen months. What made it so hard, it was during the war and I couldn't find any help. For a while there I worked by myself. This boy that was there, he didn't move up there with me. He got another job; he didn't want to move up there. Anyhow, I picked up some old farmers up there and sometimes they would have to work their crops and I wouldn't have any help, would be by myself. So that's the reason it took so long because I didn't have any help. Anyhow, I finished that but then I moved back here and I worked Trinity and Houston Counties. We'd commute everyday. For a while, when I was working Houston County, we were still running the log train then from there up to what we called Anderson Road Crossing, up east of Kennard. So we rode the log train for a while. We'd leave here about 6 o'clock in the morning and get back about 6 or 7 at night. We'd leave our truck at the road crossing, we'd work all day and ride the train and come back and get the train ride home. On days that the log train didn't run we used a motor car and ride up there which is about 22 or 23 miles, I guess. I know, one time we were coming home on that motor car and we hit an armadillo and that thing jumped the track. Luckily we didn't get hurt but it's a wonder we hadn't...that's how we worked Houston County at that time, was going back and forth and, of course, here in Angelina County, we went from Diboll. Clyde Thompson's son, one of his sons worked with me one summer before he went to West Point. And, oh, it was hot that summer and he told me later and Clyde did, too, said "You know, if I hadn't worked for you that summer I couldn't have made it at West Point because I hadn't been used to doing anything and you worked me over and made me lose a lot of that weight?" He was pretty heavy and he says "I was able to take it at West Point but, without that, I don't believe I would have made it."

ML: Boot camp for West Point?

KN: Yes, and then, of course, Buddy Temple worked for me for a little while, one summer, too. But they knew it was work and in my crew, being what it was, they thought I could just work anybody. So most of the officials had a son, or nephew or something that needed work for the summer, they would send them to me – said “You work them for the summer.” I remember one time one of them sent me a boy, I don’t think he had ever done anything. He was a Yankee so all I had for him to do was marking timber and it was hot that summer, too. And, of course, I was running a crew in the woods. We were about three miles out of town one at noon, the ticks were bad, we stopped to eat lunch and this boy came over there and he said, he had been working two or three weeks and said “Is this all you’ve got for me to do?” I said, “Yes, I really didn’t have anything for you to do but Mr. Temple asked me to work you and that’s all I’ve got.” “Well, if this is all you’ve got I’m going home.” I said, “That’s fine, there’s the road there that leads back to Diboll.” I wasn’t about to bring him in. So he walked in and I haven’t seen him since. But anyhow, it fell my due to take care of the kinfolks in the summer time.

ML: So some of them made it and some of them didn’t?

KN: Yes, that’s right.

ML: Tell me about the Texas Forestry Museum and your work there?

KN: Oh yes, that was a brainchild of the Texas Forestry Association and people kept wanting to donate things to them, you know, old things. But we didn’t have any place to put them so we decided at one of our meetings that we should try to create a museum. But, of course, the subject of funds came up. So we decided we’d try to put on a drive and try to solicit enough funds maybe to get started and we did and, naturally some of the foundations were kind enough to donate some, like Southland Foundation and Temple Foundation and the, oh, one or two out of Houston down there. We got enough money to get started and we built the first edition down there and, of course, members contributed to it, too. If you wanted to set up a memorial, you could contribute to the museum in their name. So we got enough to finally get started getting it built and borrowed money from the bank to finish it and finally paid it off. Then people just kept wanting to donate, like this old engine out there. We have an engine up there that Carter donated and we’ve got an old caboose and we’ve got an old steam loader, then they wanted us to take an old depot that Camden had. We’ve got it up there and we’ve got a little fire tower that we got from Texas Forestry Service. All of that now is outside, but then we had all this stuff inside, like log wagons, tools and – have you been in the museum? Well, if you have been up there lately, before we started the new additions, you can see it was packed full, no more room to put anything. So we decided then that we had just about outgrown it and if we expected to expand any, we’ll have to build another building out here. So we decided we could hit up the Temple Foundation again and, since I was on the committee, it fell my luck to go hit up Arthur to see if he would give us some more. Actually, we didn’t expect him to do what he did. We figured he would give us ten or fifteen thousand dollars, but we told him and he said “How much do you need?” So we said “We figure

it's going to take two hundred and thirty thousand dollars to build the whole thing." So he made us that proposition. He said "We'll give you half of it if you'll make up the other half." It's one of these deals like he does, which is a good thing. So we said "That's fine," and we set out on a drive soliciting money from all our memberships and every other thing we could think of, until we finally made up our part of the one hundred and thirty. He gave us eighteen months, I believe, to get it up. Otherwise he wasn't going to hold it open any longer than that. So we met the deadline. We had our part of it and he gave us his part. So then we got started on the addition.

ML: Where did you raise the rest of the money?

KN: Well, let's see, that's been over the past three years, I guess, we only had it since last spring, about last march, I guess. When he gave us eighteen months and we got it before the eighteen months and, like I said, some of the other foundations gave us some, too. But individual members contributed quite a bit, too. Anyhow, we got the money and now they are in the process of adding the other building over there. You might have noticed the old steam engine that generates the power; they put it down and building the building around it. Otherwise we couldn't have got it in there. It was donated by Ogletree from the old mill down at Kountze, is where it came from. It is in working order, I don't know that they will ever work it in there, I hope not, because it might cause some problems, but anyhow, the museum is in good financial condition now.

ML: Who is responsible for the documentation on that museum? Is there a historian or somebody associated with it?

KN: Not necessarily. Ed, I suppose Ed Wagner would have to take most of the credit for getting that thing worked up. He has had a couple of different experts come in and look at it and make suggestions and criticisms, etc. We had one about two or three years ago that made a lot of suggestions that we just couldn't possibly do. We would have had to do a lot of changing around and spend a lot of money. Then we had one come in just recently, someone named Smith. He had written a report on it, Ed told us at our last meeting about three weeks ago. He hadn't submitted his final report but when he would, he would give us all copies of it and it was about on the same order and he had plans of our new addition that he was going to suggest how we fill in on it, too. So he has had some help, but I would say you would have to give him the most credit on the thing. He has been a good man on it.

ML: Well, could we move on now to talk about your employment? You list five main ones and if you would like to just talk in general, starting off as office clerk in land and timber and moving up to manager?

KN: Yes, Well, I think I told you on the first one how I got started, that this Mildred, at that time, Richards, worked for Mr. Kenley and they were neighbors of ours and I had had some typing and shorthand. As I say, there weren't any jobs when I finished high school so in order to have something to do, I went up there and just worked with her doing some typing and so forth to start with, just for a couple of months. Of course, I

wasn't getting any money out of it. I was trying to get some experience and, so, finally she asked Mr. Kenley if I couldn't work a little up there, that I was pretty good help. He finally said "All right, I guess it will help some." So that's when he suggested he pay me ten cents a page for these big pages, like they have in the clerk's office on deeds. The only trouble, we had a standard form of about ten or twelve lines that we put up at the first of the page about "To have and to hold," then if it had a description of the property it had to be all typed in and any special reservations, etc., had to be typed in. But then the rest was a general form of the deed, we didn't have to type it in, but it had a heading up there, the name of the survey, who you bought it from, the date, book and page recorded. Well, I had quite a few that didn't have much of a description in them so, as I recall, I think I made \$3.00 that first day, about 30 pages. Oh, Mr. Kenley couldn't stand that. That was more money than Mildred was getting. So, anyhow, he finally agreed to put me on salary of \$10.00 a week and that tickled me to death. That \$10.00 looked big. So I worked for the \$10.00. Oh, well, up until 19- let's see, social security started in 1936 for the companies, but the individuals didn't start until 1937. They asked me if I would keep the social security records for all the employees and they would furnish me with a big ledger, each person's name and how much social security the company would contribute for them. So I did that and they gave me \$15.00 a month more so that made me \$55.00 a month. Of course, I had to work some at night to get all that done, but, anyhow, I got the \$55.00 up until we hired a bunch of foresters in 1939. They came in here and helped us make an inventory of all the company lands to see if we had enough timber to go on a sustained yield basis and these are graduate foresters. I was in charge of them. In fact, I ran checks behind them on the field work and was making all the maps; I was doing more work than they were. Of course, they couldn't hire them for less than \$100.00 a month at that time. So I asked Mr. Kenley one day I said, "Mr. Kenley, I know I'm not a graduate forester, but I'm doing more work than those foresters are and they are making more money than I am." He hummed and hawed around and said, Well, he didn't know if he could get me a raise or not. Anyhow, he finally got me a raise to \$75.00 a month and they were still going for \$100.00 a month at that time. So, I believe it was in 19- well, I don't remember now when it was, anyhow, I asked for \$100.00 a month. I felt like I was worth a hundred dollars a month. He could pay it so we had a good friend over in Trinity, worked for Texas Longleaf Lumber Company. So he asked me one day if I would like to work for them. I said "What kind of pay?" And he said he would give me \$100.00 a month. So I asked Mr. Kenley for a leave of absence for thirty days. I wanted to go see if I might like that job. I went over there, but it was invoicing in the office and I couldn't take that invoicing. I did the work but I just didn't like that inside. So I quit and came back and took the \$75.00 a month again. I didn't last long on that. So then when Mr. Henry Temple died and they sent Arthur, Jr. down here to take over as manager, well, that's when he promoted me to manager. Mr. Kenley was, more or less, kind of semi-retired; he wasn't retired but he didn't come down and do a whole lot at that time. He still had his cattle, so Arthur told him he was going to put me in charge even though Mr. Kenley would keep coming down sometimes. We got along all right. That was in '48 and, of course, in 1958 is when Arthur set up about four divisions and had a vice president over each one. Joe Denman was over production at the mill and Carroll Allen was over the fiber products. Clyde was over the logging operation and me over land and timber. So that made four vice presidents at that time. That rocked along until up in

1974 when Temple-Eastex was formed. You know, we had the merger in '73 and in '74 I was made a vice president of Temple-Eastex Land and Timber division. Then after the – I mean after Time [Inc.] took us over I was made a group vice president in the forestry division in 1977.

ML: What does that mean, a group vice president?

KN: Over a certain group, mine was just forest products, you know, and...

ML: Was there anything we needed to finish up about the group vice presidency that you were talking about?

KN: Well, later after Tme took us over they had another group vice president and that was Don Hackney with Temple Associates. I understand he was retired now, too. But, anyhow, that's what the group vice presidents were. And that's what I was when I retired.

ML: Okay, well, shall we just start off with that outlined history that you have made. Any comments you care to make and anything you think I ought to know about I'll surely appreciate it.

KN: Okay, well, as I say, my information came from a lot of files in the company offices which I had charge of as being head of the land and timber division. And then some are by talking with the old employees of the company and natives of Diboll about the way the company was founded from information I could get with in 1893 when Uncle Tom Temple was known as, he came south from Virginia to Texarkana and decided he wanted to get in the sawmill business. He heard of this acreage that was for sale in Diboll which was owned by the Diboll heirs, it was 7,000 acres right around the town of Diboll. It was three separate leagues of land and he came down and bought it, bought the timber for 75¢ a thousand at that time and they didn't have any particular time limit on when they would move it. But anyhow, after he bought it he put up a little mill here in Diboll since it had a railroad here known as the HE&WT at that time, which was Houston East and West Texas was what it stood for which is now Southern Pacific and he built the mill after he bought this land. It was a single circular sawmill about 50,000 ft. a day and he started it up, from my understanding, in June of 1894 and he named it Southern Pine Lumber Company. In 1897 naturally, he was still cutting this timber he had bought, he found another 8,000 acres of timber right close and owned by several owners and he bought it. So he kept buying up land, as I say, when he first built it he had no intentions of building up into a large mill and staying here too long. Back in those days you moved in, bought and cut out and moved out but he kept finding timber. Then in 1898 there was a narrow gauge railroad built in here by a fellow named W. N. Atwood and it was only seven miles in length. I'm not sure where it went to but it was as far as it went it might have made a circle and came back into HE&WT. He bought it and named it Texas South Eastern Railroad in connection with his sawmill to haul his material in and out on. In 1903 he built another mill beside the original and it was a double band, in other words double band as it cuts on both sides of the saw, when the carriage goes down it cuts off a strip

and then when it comes back it cuts off another board, that's what they call a double band. Then in 1907 he built a hardwood mill that made two pine mills and a hardwood mill all in line over here in one spot. And it was put in operation, cutting hardwood lumber. In 1908 he kept buying land and timber, while, I say land, you could buy the timber, they wanted to give you the land more or less because the land was no more good when the timber was cut so you got the land and timber for about the price you paid for the timber. He kept buying up until he had a total of 124,000 acres in fee simple and 84,000 acres in timber rights. That's when he had started moving up the Neches River on both sides and they found that most of the best timber was in a radius of forty or fifty miles of each side of the rivers, so he – and that's when he started buying up in Anderson, Angelina, Houston, Trinity and Cherokee. Of course, they followed the Neches River. By a rough estimate in 1908 they figured they had a billion feet of pine and 175 million feet of hardwood. That's a whole lot of timber of course, they had virgin forests in those days and so you could have a whole lot of timber on a little bit of land because of big trees. And in 1908 is when he extended the TSE and he extended it up to where it connected with the St. Louis and South Western Railroad in Lufkin and, also, with the Houston East and West Texas, so he had an outlet by rail of his lumber products by going over the TSE and, you know, as I understand it the originating railroad gets the biggest hunk of fare when you ship anything. So they were making pretty good money out of that. They were hauling the lumber, not only hauling the lumber out but they were hauling logs in on the railroad which had away of getting logs in because that was before the days of trucks, etc. And they had to use log wagons and carts. Of course, they were using slip tongue carts in those days with mules and log wagons. They also had what is known as a "skidder" which was used on the rails and it was a steam skidder. It had these log cables that would run out in the woods for two or three hundred yards and they would pull them into the track and all that wasn't cut down, those skidders knocked down over there, so it was really ruining the lands but they stayed in operation several years and they were finally outlawed.

ML: Can I ask a question about that skidder? Did they attach cable to each end of a log they were bringing in or just one end?

KN: One end.

ML: One end but it still knocked down a bunch of stuff?

KN: Right, well, they may have one extending out to the left and one to the right and they would pull them together, more than one at one time and that's what was doing that damage. Anyhow, it was a good thing that they were outlawed because it was really doing more damage than even a clear cut is doing now because it knocked down the little stuff, too.

ML: Let me also ask how they got the logs up on to the train after they got them close enough?

KN: They had a steam loader that worked just sat right on the log cars and they ran on a track and they were set on this car and loaded the one next to it, see? And they used tongs, they called them “tong hookers,” the man would – they came down from this crane and would stick a tong on each end of the log and lift it up and put it on the track. When they got this car loaded the skidder would put a cable on the next car and he would skid himself over on the next car and load this one that he was on. That’s what they called a steam loader and they operated with steam and they used pine knots for firing their boilers on there. They had men who would just gather up pine knots and stack them beside the railroad and that’s what they would use to burn in their boilers. That was used for the skidder.

ML: I’ll bet you some people made their living by selling pine knots, huh?

KN: Yeah, well, mainly they were gathered up and down pretty close to the railroad track where they wouldn’t have to haul too many of them in. But then later, though they went from steam to air and hydraulic and diesel, too, you know, they used all of them anyway to get away from burning that wood, it was getting scarce and, also, they were getting hard to, not only hard to find but labor was costing so much. But then in 1910 Mr. Temple bought two-thirds interest in the Garrison-Norton Lumber Company in Pineland that later became Temple Lumber Company. Then at various times the company would purchase different tracts of lands of size till 1912 and then 1917 he bought a 16,000 acre block of land up from North Texas Lumber Company in Cherokee and Anderson Counties. In 19- well, this is – we don’t want to get into Pineland, I don’t guess. Then in 1924 they made a big purchase of 9,100 acres here in Angelina County from John Renfro, he was an old ex-senator, state senator. In 1928 the company discontinued the use of the horse skidder in its logging operations and that’s when they went to rubber type tractors, etc. And also, bull dozer tractors. In 1932 that’s when I went to work for the company in the timber division and in ’32 they purchased 2,200 acres from Carter-Kelly which used to be down here at Manning, they had a mill at Manning. In ’34 was when the company started using log trucks, the first time. They would haul stuff in because it was getting so far back to use wagons and slip tongue carts. They had to get something to haul farther back and bring them in and they still hauled them in to the railroad and reloaded them on the railroad but they did use trucks. In ’37 the company purchased its first speeder loader, now that was loaded on a tractor with a crane and it would move around in the woods like a regular bull dozer does that caterpillar tractors on it and – only they couldn’t make anything but a 90 degree turn. The loader wouldn’t go any further around because it hit its machinery on the other side. But, anyhow, they used those to load; they still had to use tong hookers because they had a stiff boom and it couldn’t pick them up and lay them down like the loaders did. They don’t have to use these men to hook the tongs on there: it does it themselves. And they made a big purchase in 1938 of 12,000 acres from old WM. Cameron and Company who used to have a mill over in Polk County. In ’38 the company exchanged 47,000 acres of land in Angelina, Trinity, Polk and Houston Counties for Southland Paper Mill Stock. In fact, they were, the company was the biggest stockholder in Southland when it was first built. And then in ’39, that’s when we got the U.S. Forest Service to come in and agree to help us make this inventory of company lands, as I mentioned a while ago, and we did

discover that we did have enough land to go on a sustained yield. In '39 is when we brought in these four graduate foresters to help us inventory the property. In 1940 we marked our first timber on company lands on a single tree selection and this fellow, E. J. Slater of the Forest Service and myself marked it; it was in Houston County and we marked the trees to be cut with spots of paint. We estimated it as we marked it and we gave the inventory to our woods crew and they came in and logged it. There is a little story about that, too. About six or eight months later, now that was the first tract the logging crew had ever cut marked timber where you just cut a few of them. About six months later Mr. Slater was down for a visit and looked over some of the stuff we were doing, seeing if we were following the plan. It so happened that Mr. Arthur Temple, Sr. and Mr. Temple Webber and Clyde and Richie Wells, oh, there were about six or eight, ten maybe, decided we would make a little field trip. Mr. Slater said, "Why don't we go around the tract that you and I marked the first time?" I said, "That's fine." We got up there and it had been slaughtered again. Boy, you talk about somebody mad, Mr. Slater was about as mad as any human I ever saw. Mr. Arthur Temple didn't know what we were talking about, so we told him we had already marked that six months before, they cut it and it looked real good and they had come back then and cut the rest of it. Everybody denied knowing who did it and why. Of course, Richie Wells was there and he is the one that had it cut. He wouldn't tell who told him to do it but it boiled down to the fact that it was wet weather; they needed some logs real bad and they could log that real good. So he asked Clyde and Clyde, of course, asked Mr. Henry and he said, "Well, if you think you can get us to keep from shutting down, go cut it again." Without saying anything to me, so they got out and cut it again. Anyhow, Mr. Arthur Temple said that would never happen again and he, I thought some heads were going to roll, it boiled down to the fact that Mr. Henry finally admitted he told them it was all right because they needed logs, they got out of it that way. But that never happened again. Mr. Arthur, Sr. said that would never happen again and as far as I know, it never did.

ML: Because it was a wasted effort?

KN: Yes.

ML: In marking them in the first place.

KN: Oh, we were so proud of that because it did look good and that was the initial marking on company lands and they murdered it. Anyhow that was the story on the first tract that was ever marked. Then we moved our logging camp, the last one was at Fastrill, and they moved it in here in 1941. They put a place across the highway over here and they called it Red Town. They moved those sort of shotgun houses, they hauled them on rail cars, logging cars and they would move them from place to place. They would put them all over here across the track at that time, across the highway at that time.

ML: So they are actually still there now?

KN: Some of them are, a lot of them have been added to, some of them have been torn down and other houses put there but that is where they were moved to. We did away

with our last logging camp. Then in '41 is when we started painting our boundary lines with blue paint.

ML: Were you able to get rid of the last logging camp because of improved transportation?

KN: Right, the roads and the logging equipment and all that cost us so much to run our log trains back and forth and then still, you had to truck them over and put them on the train, reload them and bring them in to the mill, so actually it was cheaper to haul them direct to the mill, and we had better trucks at that time.

ML: Would you like to stop for just a second and get a drink of water?

KN: It wouldn't hurt.

ML: I'm about to freeze to death – have to get a jacket.

ML: Where had we gotten up to?

KN: Well, let's see, we painted the boundary lines. In '42, 1942 is when they started using their first crawler tractor for skidding logs out. That is a regular caterpillar, had hooks on the back and as they cut the trees and the log, they would hook on them, maybe three or four at the time and skid them up to a landing where they would load them on trucks. They were hesitant to use those for a long time because they would do so much damage in the woods, they thought. They were still using mules up to that time to skid them. Anyhow, now, instead of a crawler type they use a rubber tire and it doesn't do as much damage as caterpillar tractors. Then in, let me see, in 1950 is when they first started using power saws in the woods. That was quite interesting, we had a lot, you know, the sawyers they call flatheads and they use crosscut saws, two men, one on each end, called a two-man crew. Nobody wanted to buy a power saw, none of the flatheads, they just said they won't work, you know, they just won't last long and they just wouldn't use them. So the company had to buy one and put it out there and get somebody to volunteer to use it. When they first came out those things weighed about 50 pounds.

ML: I've seen them, up in the forestry museum, they are terrifying looking.

KN: Yes, and in fact, they were a two-man saw. Anyhow, some of them agreed to try them and they didn't and, naturally, they liked them after they once started, but it was just getting them to start, they had trouble doing that. So then, after the company financed the first one for them, then they started buying their own, but then they came out with a smaller, lighter saw and, finally, got down to a one man saw. Now, of course, you never see a cross cut saw anymore. It's all these power saws. Anyhow, that's when they first started; it was 1950, with power saws.

ML: I heard that there was a saw demonstrating salesman who come outside of the movie theater and everybody came outside the theater and watched him cut a tree down with it.

KN: Yes, that was Shirley Daniel. He had the first power saw here. He had a pulpwood operation and he bought one, more or less to play with it than anything else. But yes, he was the first one to buy one. But then the Lufkin Foundry, which is now Lufkin Industries, they handled the Stihlson when they first came out and they were heavy. So when they first started the dealership they asked Mr. Temple about having the demonstration out at Boggy Slough, bring in all the different companies and let them see these power saws where they wanted to try to put on a show for them and try to sell some saws. We picked out an area out there in Boggy Slough, and marked several trees for them to cut. Oh, they had a lot of people out there and they were going to have a barbecue for them. The first tree they cut, it lodged in another tree and they worked for an hour or two trying to get that tree down because it was lodged over there and it was a flop if I ever saw a demonstration. So, actually they did more harm than they did good with their saws with things turning out that way. Let's see here, of course, as far as the plants, in 1954 when they built the fiberboard plant here, to use the wood waste and then, of course, at that time we had a whole-tree chipper, it was a huge machine. It was on wheels that we put out in the woods and we would skid hardwood logs up to it and run the whole log through there, bark and all, and make chips and they used that in the fiberboard plant. We did that for quite some time, for several years, until they finally got more chips than they needed just from the wood waste from the mills, so we discontinued the use of tram roads and log trucks and started disbanding all the company logging operations and went to contract crews at that time. It was all contract, in fact, I think we had one truck that the company used, that went around picking up lightning struck and beetle kill timber, but that was all. Then in '62 they installed a stationary chipper at the fiberboard plant and they would bring in tops from the logging operations and run it through the chipper and make chips. But that didn't last long because they got to be too expensive, too, but anyhow, that was when it was first used. In '63 they changed the name from Southern Pine Lumber Company to Temple Industries and in '64 the company built the first plywood plant in Texas in Diboll. Before we built it we had some of the Champion officials come down and look at some of our logs that we had barked out to see if they thought the logs were suitable to make plywood. They had a plant in Cornell, British Columbia, that used similar type logs which are fairly small, so they asked if we would like to send some logs up there and they would manufacture them into plywood and see how they would turn out, so we picked, I think, three Gondola loads of logs and loaded them and shipped them up there. Joe Denman, myself and Spencer Knutsen flew up when they got there. They processed them through the mill and, sure enough, it turned out good. They made plywood out of it, so we got some pictures of the first sheet of plywood made from our logs down here. So, after that then that's when they started construction of the plywood plant in a joint venture with U. S. Plywood. When it was built, I think they had a five year contract at a "Buy or Sell" at the end of five years so the company decided to buy them out at that time, so it became all company's. That's when they built the plywood plant. In '68 they put in this whole log chipper, you know, I was talking about chipping up the whole tree and used it for quite a

while and discontinued its use because that got to be quite expensive, too. And they could buy wood waste cheaper from these other mills. Then in '73 is when Temple merged with Eastex and Southwestern Timber Company and, which was owned by Time, and changed the name to Temple-Eastex and had a total timberland, had an acreage of a million sixty-nine thousand acres with the two companies together. And then, in '74 is when the company built the particleboard here in Diboll and it started operation. In '74 we put the whole tree chipper back into the woods then, making chips for the fiberboard plant.

ML: What does a whole tree chipper look like?

KN: It's got a big intake, I think, up to about 21 inches of throat, that's as big a log as you could put in it. But it looks similar only on a larger scale, you've seen these little, say Trees, Inc. that go around and they cut and trim away from these telephone lines and take the limbs and you will see a little thing they run behind the truck and they run them through there and it grinds them up to chips and throws them. Well, it is similar to that only it's about ten times larger. It grinds them up and it blows them into these vans, the chips over there, and they are hauled off. But you can move it around but it's got its own crane and everything else to pick up the logs and shove them through there. It is quite an expensive piece of machinery. As I recall, it was about two hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars a piece. Then you have to have your skidders and all that to skid your logs up there to it and so it is pretty expensive operations. Let's see, in 1982 the total timber lands owned were a million and seventy-eight thousand acres and they were in twenty East Texas counties and had one tract in Louisiana and that was all over there. Then in '82 they really started increasing the size of the nursery for pine seedlings and they produced forty million in 1982. Then at the end of '82 they planted fifty-two thousand acres of pine seedlings. Now that doesn't mean that all of them took; some of them were crop failures but they planted that many acres in '82. Then in '76 was when the Big Thicket Preserve started taking lands and the company had twenty-six thousand five hundred acres that went into the big thicket in Hardin, Jasper, Polk, Orange and Tyler Counties and they still haven't been paid for all the lands they took because money got tight and the government didn't have enough money in the budget to take care of it, but anyhow, they are holding some in limbo down there now that uh, company lands that haven't been paid for but it is still in the Big Thicket Preserve. So that's about the thumb nail sketch of what has happened here in Diboll as far as land and timber and manufacture is concerned.

ML: Okay, well, that is a wonderful outline sketch and you have filled it in for us. I don't have any other questions but if there is anything else you think I should know, tell me now.

KN: Well, I'm not sure what all I had on that first tape down there.

ML: I would have brought the transcript to you but it hadn't been prepared yet.

KN: Well, that's all right, I don't think I repeated too much in what has been put on these.

ML: Any more stories like the cabbage sandwich?

KN: Oh, well, I don't know if – Mr. Richie Wells, he was wood foreman, and he was a man of few words. You never did get much conversation out of him. Clyde Thompson is just the reverse, you know, he talks all the time. He knew how Richie was and he and Richie had to go a lot of places together since he was over the woods and Richie worked under him. One day, this is one of Clyde's stories. He said he and Richie were, we had an operation going on down at Hull, Texas, a camp, so they left here and were going down there and Clyde said, "I'm just going to see if I can get even with him, I'm not going to say a word unless he says something." And so they started off and got a good ways, Clyde said he was just dying to say something but he wouldn't say it because Richie hadn't said anything. They passed these little churches and most of them were Baptist churches. They kept going until right before they got down to Hull, he said Richie says, "You know, the bitter weeds and the Baptists have taken this country." Clyde said that was the best thing he had heard in a long time. Because it broke the silence and he was able to talk. He said that he was determined not to say anything until Richie said something. Richie was one of these that didn't say much, but had a dry wit about him. When he did say something, it was real funny. Just to look at him he was a real serious minded fellow over there. He was one of the characters we had, too, down there.

ML: Bitter weeds and the Baptists.

KN: Yes – one time we were all out at – we had to go to a big tract of timber down close to Sheldon and they all like to ride horses and I detested riding horses even though the company made me get one. And when I'd ride I'd have to ride all day and it just knocked me out for several days. Anyhow, they carried a bunch of horses down there and Clyde, Barty Breazeale, who was a logging man, and Richie Wells and one other fellow and myself. We went down there and had to spend the night. So we kept the horses over and we were going to go ride the next day. There was a little old motel on the east side of Houston over there where we spent the night. Anyhow, they had had a few cocktails before dinner that night. Richie is one of these that he didn't say much, he didn't say much anyhow, but if he had a snort or two he would take a little bit more. There was a room that had a curtain – instead of a door, they had a curtain over the closet and a curtain for the bathroom, then you go into the bathroom. Richie, I saw him, he was going to go take a shower and he went in the wrong curtain, went in there in the closet. In a minute he came out and he said "Where's the bathroom?" I said, "It's behind the other curtain over there, Richie." He came back out and I said "I thought you were going to take a shower?" Said, "That's enough." He had stuck his foot under there and the water was cold so he said "That's enough." But he was one more fellow; I'll tell you right now. This Barty Breazeale, he was one of our contract logging fellows and he was one of those who believed in doing every thing on time. We were down below Cleveland one time looking at some logging operation and it was right before noon and, of course, we didn't

have lunch. There were two of us together and Barty was in his pickup ahead of us and told him we would go out and have lunch. I thought he was going to go with us and eat at a restaurant in town. Before we got to the highway he pulled over to the side of the road. I stopped and I said "What's the matter, Barty?" He said, "It's lunchtime." I said, "Yeah, I know it, that's why we were going in town to eat." He said, "I've got my lunch, it's twelve o'clock, I eat at 12 o'clock." Said, "I believe in eating at 12 o'clock." So we told him we would go on in and eat and he could come on later and he did. Oh, there are so many of these funny ones, sometimes you can't remember half of them. But it has been lots of fun.

ML: Well, shall we stop there?

KN: I guess that's just about it.

END OF INTERVIEW