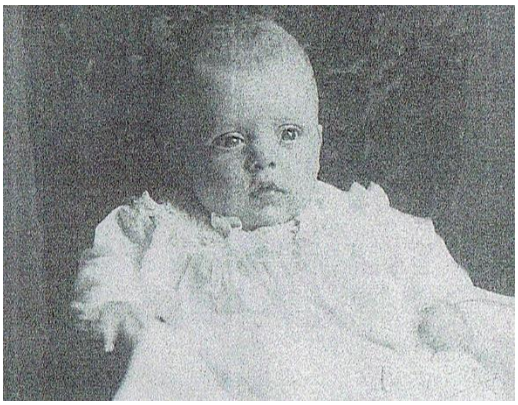
The Tree Surgeon by Robert Russell Lewis

Contents:

Growing Up



I was born on April 16th, 1905, Robert Russell Lewis. The place was a farm in Topsfield, Massachusetts, near the city of Lynn. My father, Herbert Lewis, was born in Great Sutton, England. My mother was Alice Belle Johnson, born in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. My sisters were Fannie, Helen, Abbie, Esther and Dorothy. My brothers were Arthur, Roger and Walter. (Photo of Robert at 3 months)

Because of a bad house fire, the family moved to Danvers, for five years to the Israel Putnam Farm. (Editor's note; the General Israel Putnam estate a part of which was leased for market garden purposes by the Essex County Agricultural School in later years. This fact is interesting because three sons of Herbert and Alice; Robert, Roger, and Walter have since returned to the same spot to learn gardening on the same plot of land, as students in the agricultural department of this School. Two daughters, Helen and Dorothy, have attended the Homemaking Department of the School. Photo of 183 Lowell Street.)

In 1911 we moved to Andover, on Osgood Road. My father purchased a farm at 183 Lowell Street in 1912 where I lived until my 21st birthday.

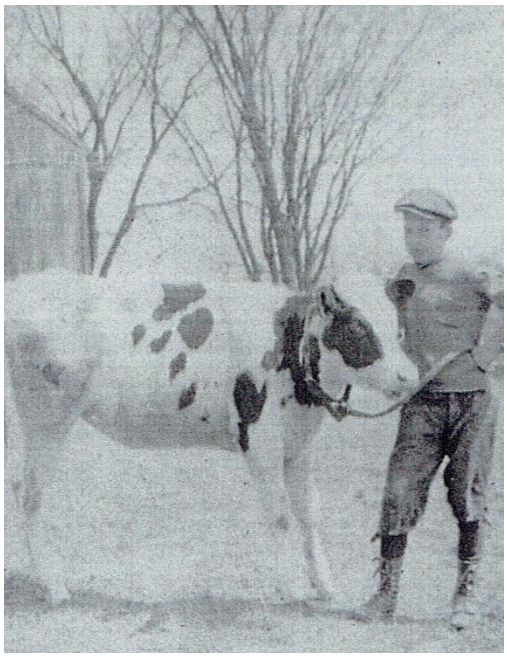
The place was 15 acres. In 1923 Dad acquired an adjoining wood lot of 54 acres for $15 per acre. About 1968 this was sold for $2,000 per acre. Each of the 9 children received $12,000 as their share. Dad, however, died of prostate cancer in 1943, so he never lived to profit from a wise investment.

Dad was a first class vegetable farmer. He had, in his younger years, worked in organ factories in Weston, Massachusetts and Detroit, Michigan. Because of his love of the outdoors he took $2,000 they had saved and started farming.

The farm in Andover had a fine old house that was built in 1812. This place is still standing and in good repair. However, after Father and Mother died, a fire bug set a fire and the large barn was lost. Mother died two years before father and before her illness mother was not only interested but active in getting Camp Leslie in Georgetown ready to be a 4-H camp.

Herbert raised and sold vegetables for many years. There were sold mostly in the public market. In their sixties they started a roadside farm stand. Mother initiated this. The farm stand did very well as they sold the vegetables raised by hard work at retail.

I and the other children went to a grade school consisting of 2 rooms through the 8th grade, then to the high school. Andover schools were rated high as one of the best preparatory schools. Phillips Andover Academy was located in town. This attracted high quality teachers. There was a clause in the Academy's charter that anybody living in Andover could attend at a reduced cost.
When I was twelve and older I spent much time on the end of a crosscut saw. I came to like the woods, trees, etc. (This photo of Robert was taken in 1917 when was 12 years old.)



I attended high school till the middle of March on the third year. Brother Roger had attended one year. Then we transferred to Essex County Agricultural School in Danvers. This was one of the first of its type in the United States. The program was 6 months in school, then 6 months of practical work in the summer on farms, orchards, poultry, dairy farms, etc.

I decided to leave high school in March. My father had a chance to rent out a team of horses and wagon on a contracting job for the summer. The work was unloading lumber from the cars. It paid the unheard sum of $60 per week for the team and driver. The work was for the American Woolen Company. They were building a model village called Shawsheen, an Indian name.

In September, I started at Essex Agricultural School in class 3C, which was for three years duration. The regular course was four years but I got credit for my nearly three years in high school.

During the years on the farm, we heated the house entirely by wood. The wood boxes always seemed to be empty. We had a guest room upstairs. Part of the year Grandma Mary Mason Lewis stayed with us. She was a calm woman, a great diplomat and we all loved her. The rest of the year she would visit with Aunt Anne in Portland, Maine, then Aunt Polly in New Haven, Connecticut.

Both Herbert Harrison, Aunt Annie's husband, and George North were in the organ business. The latter had a factory for many years, Hall Organ Co., in New Haven. Grandpa George

Lewis died of cancer of the throat caused by smoking a pipe. At the time few knew that smoking could cause cancer. He was Welsh and had been born around Mold, North Wales.

The family had moved to the United States as George was unsuccessful at farming in England. He secured a job as a gardener in Weston, Massachusetts. Then, a year later, brought the family over in steerage. My father, Herbert Lewis met our mother, Alice B. Johnson. They were married at twenty-two-years year of age.

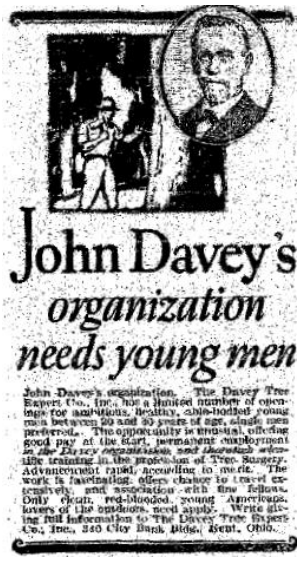
I spent three happy years at the agricultural school, then graduated in November, 1925. (Editor's note; Graduations used to be held each November.) During my last year of stay there, I formed a friendship with a fellow student, Stanley Bodwell. We had long discussion about our careers after graduation.

In all seriousness, we decided to save $1,500 each and go into the cattle business in South America. We talked this over many times on the twelve mile train ride from Andover to Hathorne Station, located down the street from the school. Land in South America was reported to be cheap and money scarce. A ranch which eventually could be ten thousand acres was considered about right. (Editor's note; the last train ran on January 2nd, 1926. The right of way for the train is still just South of the school.)

A solemn oath was made between us that all interest in girls was to be sidetracked for the most part. Plenty of time for that when our fortunes were made. From the movies, there seemed to be plenty of beautiful and exotic senoritas there in South America just looking for rugged outdoor men. Compared to the ordinary girls in high school, they seemed to be something worth looking forward to.

Three months passed and I had saved up to $200. I compared notes with Stan and got only a shifty answer. Enthusiasm seemed gone until one of the other boys mentioned that Stan had fallen in love with a girl in Groveland.

Well, in the meantime, I had been reading an "American Magazine". There was an ad for the Davey Tree Expert Company, Kent, Ohio. They wanted red-blooded young American to work at a new profession, tree surgery, care of trees, etc. "Travel and see the world through a windshield".


John Davey's organization needs young men

John Davey's organization. The Davey Tree Expert Co., Inc., has a limited number of openings for ambitious, healthy, able-bodied young men between 20 and 35 years of age, single men preferred. The opportunity is unusual, offering good pay at the start, permanent employment in the Davey organization and thorough scientific training in the profession of Tree Surgery. Advancement rapid, according to merit. The work is fascinating, offers chance to travel extensively, and association with fine fellows. Only clean, red-blooded, young Americans, lovers of the outdoors, need apply. Write giving full information to The Davey Tree Expert Co., Inc., 240 City Bank Bldg., Kent, Ohio.

The job would be available in the spring. So I got a job in North Andover for the winter. This was for a man named George Loring. He bought and sold standard bred trotting, pacers and racing horses. The winter passed fast, the most fun was exercising the horses. The pacers, with their rocking motion, were great to drive with a sleigh, particularly if you happened to pass a pretty girl and pretend not to see her.

The job with Davey called for a $100 dollar fee and also a correspondence course on things relating to trees, pruning, spraying, etc. This course was a breeze because I already had the fundamentals from my studies at Essex Aggie. After completing the correspondence course costing $15, about April 1st, I would be invited to take a training course of two weeks in climbing. After filling out the application and receiving the course, I breezed through it in less than a month.

The training in proper pruning practices of fruit trees, the components of a good fertilizer and how to apply, training in botany and how to prune shrubs, and other forms of plant care made the course a cinch. When accepted, I was told to bring receipts for train fare and $100 to take care of expenses until receiving my pay after being sent on to my first location.

Late in March, 1926, just before I was ready to go, there was a crisis at home. Money was very scarce and the folks got three payments behind on the monthly farm payments. So, as I was leaving, I gave them my $100. Then I borrowed some money from my oldest sister to make the trip to Kent. I had previously used up the $200 for clothes, some new luggage, boots, etc.

The 16th of April came and I packed and took the train out to Kent, Ohio. I took the Boston and Maine Railroad to Albany, New York, then the New York Central across the state through Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo. To me it was an exciting trip. Going through Syracuse the train ran down East Fayette Street next to the Erie Canal for about two miles. That was an uncomfortable night on the train. Also, the fancy service in the dining car was quite new including using finger bowls. We (trainees) kept the receipts and our cost were refunded later after the completion of the training. I changed trains at Cleveland and took a local to Kent, Ohio. There we were assigned a rooming house.

Learning To Be a Treeman

The training was hard. The first two days were spent learning knots, assembling personal tools, etc. Then the men were taken to a large stretch of woods in the country. Here were many tall oaks and other trees, some of them 80 to 100 feet tall. In each tree there were ropes hanging. First, however, we were all required to shinny up about 30 feet to a branch on the cucumber tree, a variety of magnolia. Many had done this before us and the tree was very shiny and slick.

I stood in front and was pushed forward to be the first up a tree. For me, who had climbed pine at home, this presented no problem. About one third of the class couldn't shinny up the 30 feet and decided they didn't want to be tree surgeons, the work was too hard and left.

The next morning we rode out in a truck to the woods. Everybody stood around while the instructor told us what to do. You climbed the rope hand over hand using your feet when tired by catching the one foot under and one over which would hold weight temporarily to give your arms a rest. When reaching the first crotch you then put the bowline over your shoulder and climb from branch to branch until you neared the top of the tree.

There, in a strong crotch, you put your rope through. Then you took the bowline, usually double tied, so that one part you sat in, the other around your waist. Then you had a short end extending out in front to which you tied the long end of the 150 ft. rope reaching the ground on the other end. This was done with a taut line hitch two wraps below, two wraps above, with the end of the rope sticking away from you.

When your weight was in the bowline, it tightened up. When you stood on a branch without your weight in it, you could slide the hitch along the rope. By keeping the rope at an angle, you could work your way out on each branch and all dead and surplus limbs could be cut off. Those that couldn't be reached by this method were cut off by a small saw on the end of a pole. The tree surgeon worked his way down the tree, branch by branch. By this time, the tree had a clean appearance.

On the end of the taut line hitch, or hooked to the belt, was a small can of paint. Until you learned how to be careful this paint got all over your clothes. This paint was used to cover all cuts large than a silver dollar.

In spite of my good physical condition, I was quite sore at the end of the day, which lasted about a week. This was from using muscles in all sorts of cramped conditions while scrambling around the trees. The men not interested in such hard work kept drooping out. When the two weeks were up, there were only twelve of us left.

Working In Pennsylvania and Massachusetts

We were then called into the office and given orders to go various places. I was sent to Philadelphia's Germantown. The salesman for the area, Charles Toner, took me up to Bethlehem. When there, we were working on the estate of a cement millionaire.

The place was huge and we worked on a huge number of trees in a pasture. This was the location of a new house. We were told that the owner was somewhat eccentric and to be careful what we said. They didn't want to offend him.

One day we were working on a large decayed spot at the base of a large oak tree. We were chiseling out the decay and preparing it for filling of cement. Eventually the cambium layer and bark would grow over the filled area.

This medium-sized man came up wearing a moldy looking green suit. He talked to us a while about the work. Then he said, "Young men, see this suit, best material there is. I have had it for twenty years." He was our client, spending thousands of dollars on the trees.

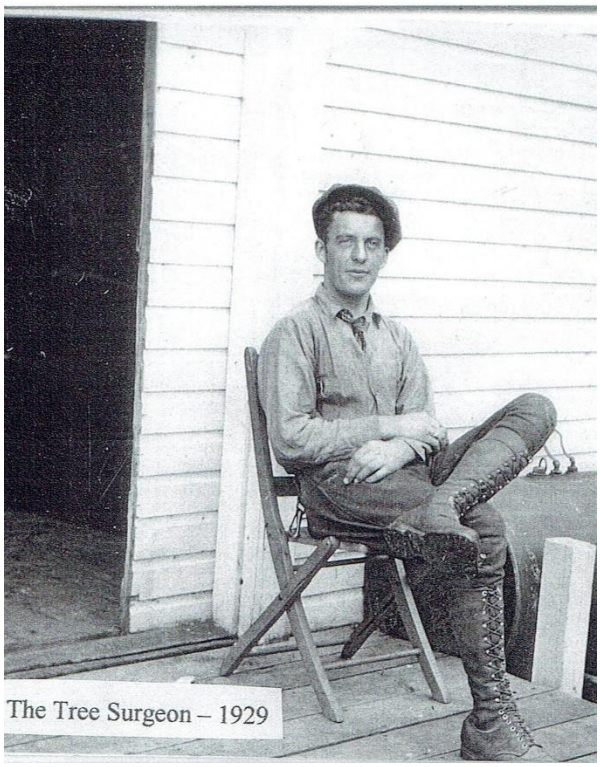
A week or two later Slim Ewbank, the foreman, and I were transferred further upstate. He had a new 1925 Ford runabout. Our tool boxes were tied on the running board. The suitcases were in the small trunk in the rear. To me, this was real adventure. We drove up through the Poconos to Scranton and Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania.

We stopped at a boarding house owned by a nice widow lady. She had a daughter named Violet, a tall, pretty, slim girl about thirty. Her husband had been killed in a motorcycle accident. For me she made a pleasant companion while Ewbank and I worked in Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania, the next two weeks. Then we moved further North to Towanda. It was along the river but the streets going West were quite steep. At that time the Fords had gravity feed to the carburetor. If your gas tank was low, you had to back up the hills.

After working here about two weeks, Ewbank was transferred South and another foreman, Horace Thayer, picked me up. We drove to Montrose, Pennsylvania. Our first job was for a restaurant owner, filling a cavity in a large sugar maple and pruning out other trees.

The rates the Davey Company paid was $1.80 per hour for each man. I was getting 55 cents per hour and Thayer was getting 72 ½ cents. This, out of $3.60 per hour left a health profit for the company.

The foreman furnished a car for travel to and from work for which he got 10 cents per hour. This average to 5 – 6 dollars a week. Some weeks we worked 60 hours but, because of bad weather, we averaged 50. On trips, the foreman got 4 cents a mile for use of the car. The client got nervous when his bill reached $300. This was about 10 days' work for two men.



The Tree Surgeon – 1929

After doing several minor jobs, we finally went to work on a large estate. It was owned by Samuel D. Warriner, a businessman from Chestnut Street in Philadelphia. He had coal mining and other interests. He was a first class person and cost didn't bother him. His place was on a large hill. The trees were mostly maples. We pruned and fertilized these.

He had a driven well and told us the story. The well was artesian and had a beautiful flow of water. The well driller said to drill in one spot. The gardener, who was a dowser, pointed out another spot 15 feet away. The driller went down 500 feet and found no water. Then Mr. Warriner brought up an explosive expert from one of his mines. They set explosives off at 500 feet, but nothing happened. They were about to abandon it. However, the gardener said his dowsing showed that there was water at 250 feet. So to please the gardener, Mr. Warriner had the expert set off an explosion at that depth. This was arranged in such a way as to break open the soil for 15 feet more sideways. There was a roar and water came gushing up in plentiful supply. Needless to say the dowser was right this time.

We worked in Montrose through August. Then, as Thayer lived in Rhode Island, we decided to go home over Labor Day. It was a long drive to Providence. Then I took the train to Boston and the local to Andover. I had been a little homesick. However, after being home for a few days, I was anxious to get back to work. I met Thayer at Providence. Then we drove back to Montrose. We finished there at the end of September.

Toner sent us to Stroudsburg for a couple of weeks. Next, we went to Catasauqua near Allentown, Pennsylvania. We stayed at a small hotel owned by some Pennsylvania Dutch people. They were very nice to us. A couple years later, Thayer married the daughter. She was a real pleasant person and quite pretty. We finished there in October, then we went back to Philadelphia for about ten days.

We received a wire to report to Ben Toner, Charles Toner's brother, in Boston, to work on a line job in Somerville, Massachusetts. I had wanted to attend the Davey Company's school for fourteen weeks in the winter. We drove to Boston and roomed and boarded at a large flat in Allston owned by a Swedish lady named Mrs. Ring. She kept a nice place and the food was good.

We worked for the Boston Edison Company. Their lines were in awful shape. Because 2300-volt lines rubbed against trees, burning into them sometimes nearly through, there was a great loss of electricity. When the lines were cleared much better service was forthcoming.

In some cases we really had to butcher the trees to clear the lines. The streets were narrow and the city controlled how much was cut. The adjoining property owner had no say. Later on, however, they got so many complaints it was necessary to get permission from property owners.

This was the first type of organized trimming the Davey Tree Company ever had because, up until this time, utility companies had not thought of hiring tree experts to do this phase of maintenance. In the next few years these contracts proved to be a large part of the tree business, which helped through the 1929-38 Depression. Compared to the old hit-or-miss way, we were much more efficient clearing rights-of-way. Our foreman, John Pollard, was a good leader. The workers all liked him. The lazy ones were sent on their way.

I got to go home weekends and was able to help the folks out with an average of 10 dollars a week. Brother Roger ran the farm in the summer of 1927. My first car purchase was a 1925 Ford Touring car for $50 dollars. It had new tires and I sold it to Roger for $100, a 100% profit. The constant climbing had me down to a slim 155 lbs.

Working In New York State, Vermont and Ohio

In early October, 1927 I received orders to go to Jamestown, New York. As I was one of the few men out of 1,000 working for Davey at the time who had line clearing experience, I was sent to work on this new job at a place called Falconer, just outside of Jamestown. The company was Niagara Mohawk. Jamestown was full of Swedish people. Most of them worked in the furniture factory there.

The foreman of the crew was an ex-sailor named Doc Lancaster. He was a lot of fun so I enjoyed working in the crew of four. The conditions were the same, i.e. much cutting to clear lines. About the middle of November I got a little careless one day. I didn't put on my safety rope. The dead limb I was standing one broke. I fell 25 feet, landing with the small of my back on the limb that broke.

I was in the Women's Christian Association Hospital in Jamestown for seven weeks. I fractured the third vertebrae in my back. After the fractured started to heal in a few days, other than the confinement the stay was pleasant.

There were some lively young student nurses, most quite attractive. Being twenty two years old at the time, I only had to groan a little and I could get three or four back rubs a day. I was in a semi-private room so they would slip in and play cards with me a lot. There was a head nurse, Miss Shepardson, who came around twice a week to see if the patients were care for properly. She talked in a prim, severe tone and the nurses giggled loudly when she was gone.

By New Year's, I was released. Then I went to Kent, Ohio, to school. I had seven weeks compensation pay and so I felt quite rich. School was quite interesting. During the time I was in Kent, I went to an osteopath.

By the time March 15th, 1928 rolled around I was ready to go. I was sent to Buffalo, New York, with a foreman named Howard Beal and another tree surgeon, Adelard Bergeron. Bergeron was from Rhode Island. We worked in Buffalo for two weeks. We took a short trip to Niagara Falls on one of the weekends.

Next, we were sent on to Rochester, New York. Rochester was an impressive city. Eastman Kodak was the main employer, with advanced ideas on how to treat labor. Their profits helped them to do many things other employers could not. We worked there for a month, mostly on East Avenue, the place of beautiful old homes.

Finally, about May 1st, we received orders to go to Syracuse, New York, the Salt City. We were to report to salesman Charles Kerr. We pulled in on a rainy evening. Syracuse looked quite dull compared to Rochester and Buffalo.

We located Kerr on Roberts Avenue on the West Side. He was a tall Irishman who had been a Colonel in World War I. after that he ran a ranch in Western Canada. Then he was the superintendent of a hospital in Alberta. There we met his wife, a pretty nurse about 15 years younger than he. He proved to be a real nice person.

I worked there at a school in Baldwinsville, New York, and various other jobs. About the middle of June, I received a wire from Kent saying I was to report to Brattleboro, Vermont. I was to meet a salesman named Bradshaw and be a foreman of a crew of two men. One was Harlan Roberts of Towanda, Pennsylvania. The other was a tall good looking fellow from Indiana named Bill Seegar.

Seegar had a Ford Runabout to haul our tools, etc. on. Our first job was at a girls' camp in the country. There we pruned dead limbs out of a large group of tall pines. Roberts had the most experience other than myself. He had been South one winter. He was quite a ladies man and soon had a friend named Lucy. She kept him up quite late nights. We were staying at the Thetford Inn.

One day a supervisor from Kent came by. His name was Roy Parks. He looked around for something to be critical of although things were going well. I had excavated a cavity in a pine and had it nearly filled and braced with rods as the client wanted to save the tree badly. Because white pine did not have much tensile strength and the cavity was close to the ground, Parks told me that I should have turned it down. A dispute arose as I claimed it was shallow and there was little danger in the protected area it was in. So I went ahead and finished it. However, Parks sent a bad report to the office one me. Unknown to me, he even offered to make Roberts the foreman. Roberts refused but told me about it later.

However, I got quite a few orders after that, working in Montpelier, Vermont. Almost invariably, I found that people that could afford this type of work were nice people. One woman asked me what the future in the business was when it was no longer easy to climb trees and do physical work. She was kind enough to suggest that I had the personality to be good in sales and management work. This confidence from an outsider made a great difference in my outlook for the future.

We continued all summer working in Montpelier, Thetford and other places. On the 4th of July, we took a trip to Andover, Massachusetts. The summer, for the most, was a lot of fun and we saw a lot of Vermont.

In September, 1928 we got orders to break up the crew. I was sent to Alexandria Bay, Thousand Islands, New York. I reported to a foreman named William Grundy. He was a pleasant, small man about thirty years of age. That seemed old to me at the time. We worked for some time for a rich old maid related to Laughlin Steel Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She had a beautiful place on an island. I was back in Charles Kerr's territory. From there, we went to Syracuse and worked in the Village of Skaneateles for a widow lady. Then to Elmira to do some work for the New York Telephone Company.

In November, a job clearing electric lines for the Cortland Electric Company came through. We moved into a rooming house on Greenleaf Street. Because of the bad report from Parks, unknown to me, the Company didn't invite me to a second year of school.

I was under a new foreman, called Daddy Weeks, who had a reputation for heavy drinking. As I didn't drink, I worked for four months and became good friends with Daddy, who did not take a drink in that time.

The rooming house where we stayed was occupied by several roomers, a state trooper, two young girl office workers and others. I became acquainted with one of them, Hazel Ward, a petite brunette with a jolly laugh, full of good humor and quite pretty. All winter we dated, went to the movies, visits to her parents, etc. However, no flame developed but there was always a pleasant memory of Cortland in my heart.

By this time, I had been raise in pay about every six months, 2 ½ cents per hour, so that I was getting 70 cents per hour. A letter came with each raise, ending with an admonition to keep up the good work. Seventy cents per hour for skilled work was considered high pay in the Twenties and early Thirties.

The work finished in April, 1929, and for a month I was sent to Elmira, New York, to a congenial foremen named Warren Dall. Elmira was a busting city with the famous Mark Twain Hotel and somewhat infested with prostitutes who ran back and forth across the Pennsylvania-New York line when harassed by the police.

From Elmira, I went back to Syracuse and District Manager Kerr made me a foreman again. While in Norwich, New York, I had saved up $400 and purchased a green Chevrolet touring car

which was pretty nice. It had side curtains for the rain and snow, but no heater, so was cold in the winter.

That summer, I worked all over the Syracuse area until, in November, work ran out and I was sent to Toledo, Ohio. On the way out, I stopped at Jamestown, New York. I visited the boarding house where I stayed, but mainly wanted to see my blonde nurse friend. We were both somewhat disinterested so after an overnight I went on my way.

I stopped in Cleveland, Ohio for two weeks and worked for a salesman named J. D. Marria. I also slid over to Kent and picked up a two-wheeled trailer to carry my tools on. This was an innovation and proved quite useful, making it unnecessary to tie tool boxes on running boards. Also, three short, eight foot ladders that fitted together could be carried. The cost was $38.50, including tires. Years later a similar trailer cost ten times as much. However, running boards on cars were on the way out.

I continued on to Toledo where I worked for a month trimming away branches and dead trees from telephone lines. The crew was made up of mostly foremen whom they couldn't place elsewhere as work was short in the fall. Other than me, who didn't drink, the rest liked to go out on weekends and have some fun. The second weekend they were there they all went to the movies and, then to a bar. I was conserving my money as I was hoping to get back to New York State. Two of the men came in late. The other two, C. C. McCarthy and Outland, from Tennessee, didn't show up.

About ten Sunday morning the phone rang. They had been in jail all night and it cost twenty dollars to bail them out. They had been abusive to a town cop who found them wandering around in the cold. He took them to the station and couldn't book them for being drunk as they could talk rationally. However, they were set down by a warm stove and the effect of the heat and the alcohol already drunk cause them to pass out. Hence, the phone call. I was the only one who had any money, so I put up the twenty dollars which was refunded to me the next payday.

As soon as the job was completed, I was sent to Buffalo, New York, to work on a telephone toll line that ran South to Hamburg. The weather was snow, rain, etc., and so no matter how well boots were oiled the feet got wet. One evening, wandering by a shoe store, I spotted a pair of knee boots with rubber bottoms and leather tops. These were the famous Pacs invented by L. L. Bean Company of Freeport, Maine. These proved to be a great boon to hunters and others working outdoors.

After New Year's, the work was finished and I received orders to report to Lockport, New York. By this time, the Company was receiving an increasing amount of work from telephone and electric companies, as tree growth and dead trees falling through lines were causing many expensive outages. For the men, this was steadier work as they were in one place longer.

From Lockport I was sent, in April, 1930 to Clifton Springs New York, for about four weeks. Here I heard that Charlie Kerr had died from a heart attack and was to be replaced at Syracuse with an area manager, J. D. Marria, whom I had met in Cleveland the fall before. The stock market crash of October 29, 1929, had occurred but made little impression on me. However, in a few years I was to realize that my line clearing training was valuable. Many of the rich men, with their large estates, had been wiped out by the crash. Line clearing became an important part of the business.

At the end of April, when the job in Clifton Springs was finished, I was sent back to Syracuse. By this time, via 2 ½ cent an hour increases, I had reached 85 cents per hour. The car allowance on line clearing had increased to 15 cents per hour, making a total of $1.00 per hour or

$60 for a full week of sixty hours. Marria was a good salesman and worked hard keeping about 12 to 15 men busy.

I was sent to Norwich, New York, for two months, working on the Colgate University campus at Hamilton, New York, and trees around various fraternities. Also, the man working with me was injured in a fall. The company sent me a helper named Harold Vough. Vough stayed with me all summer.

Meeting the Girl from Fulton

In June, 1930, I finished at Hamilton and was sent to Fulton, New York, a small city North of Syracuse. Although I didn't realize it then, Fulton was to play an important part in my life. We had a room with a friendly down-to-earth lady named Lowden. Most of the work was right in town and continued all summer.

One day, while taking down a dead tree on Utica Street, we noticed a house across the street, one door down. There was a sign in a window, "Furnished Rooms for Rent". A slight built brunette, about 95 lbs., quite pretty and attractive, and bouncing around the porch, mopping it. Harold Vough was all for changing rooming houses. I said, "Oh, she wouldn't pay any attention to us, we have a good room".

About two weeks later, when doing some work for the Power Company, the superintendent came along and said to go to 411 Utica Street and remove a dead limb hanging over the service wires. We finished the job we were on about four o'clock and decided to do the Utica Street job to finish the day. An elderly lady, quite neat looking, came out and said she had put in a complaint. The job wasn't much so Vough took care of it and I expanded my knowledge of insects to pass the time until five thirty would come and the day finished.

About twenty minutes after five, who should come walking down the sidewalk but the same girl seen two weeks before. She looked about fifteen or sixteen but was, in truth, nineteen years old. To my surprise, one of her friends had married a tree surgeon the year before so that gave us something to talk about. She had graduated from high school and was now working at the Swiss chocolate works, Nestle Company. After some more small talk she suddenly said, "Well, I have some things to do. Goodbye." I was somewhat surprised at the abrupt dismissal but didn't take it too seriously.

Our next job was in the park in the area opposite the high school. Money had been left by a man named Red Head to maintain it. The chairman of the Park Board was a dentist by the name of Dr. Knapp. He gave me an order to proceed. While working there, the manager of the Nestle Company stopped and asked to have the trees around the factory taken care of. These jobs added considerably to the work in the area.

On Monday, the work was started at the Nestle Company. About five o'clock the pruning stopped and cleanup began. Suddenly, the gates of the plant opened and workers poured out. As I was standing by the gate I was suddenly confronted by Violet, the brunette of Utica Street, and another girl. Not wanting to lose a chance for a date this time, I quickly asked her if she had to walk home, which was about ¾ of a mile. She said, "Yes, but that's nothing". Then I offered to give her a ride as I was going that way. Guardedly, she agreed, if I had room for the girlfriend, also.

The next date was for a ride in the country, no great length. She sat over close to the door, which wasn't very encouraging to me. The usual thing was a close snuggle with an occasional pat on the hand to show the date was appreciated. My casual approach to dates soon evaporated along with my resolve to never get married because of the responsibility and hassle of raising kids, etc.

As things had been prosperous during the month in Fulton, I had recently traded my Chevrolet touring care with 20,000 miles and purchased a new, two door sedan with disc wheels. I had a balance of $35 per month for a year.

In the meantime, Harold Vough and another man named Cal Pickens went on joints dates with Violet's friends. Cal was a real ladies man and make quite an impression on the girls. Harold had a steady girl but, as he and I were close friends, we were suspicious of Cal's luck with the ladies. On night Cal, emboldened by his success with the girls, boasted the he was going after my girl, as she was the cutest of the bunch. Harold conveyed this to me quietly. As "all's fair in love and war", I decided to remedy the situation.

The policy in the Company was to usually work the jobs with two or three man crews, depending on the size of the jobs. As work was slowing down in Fulton, it was reasonable to cut the crew down to two. The custom was to wire Kent for a transfer of a worker. This I did. Of course, when the order came for Pickens to go elsewhere, many crocodile tears were shed for the loss of our friend and buddy.

On day, while riding along, Violet coyly asked who the car belonged to, me or the boys. I proudly said it was mine although there were ten payments still to be made to General Motors Acceptance Corporation. At the time, banks didn't consider that financing automobiles was a good investment. Most people paid cash or bought a car second hand and paid cash.

Violet's mother, Florence Darling, was a thrifty, hardworking woman of the old school. She had a pretty good temper at times when things didn't go well. Violet's father, Francis Darling, had been a rural mailman, hardworking. He developed an illness when Violet was six and died when she was seven. He was fifty-four years old.

Violet's mother received a pension of $35 a month plus $10 a month for Violet, and Violet's brother Kenneth, two years older than Violet. However, as they both were over eighteen, it went back to $35 and later $45. This, and money she could earn from roomer and one boarder, a man named North, were Florence's whole income. Being the able and thrifty person she was, she had finished paying for her home, and by this time, twelve years later, had a bank account.

She saved out money for taxes and insurance so that the money in the bank was her reserve. The coal she bought to heat the house was purchased in the late spring. At this time, the dealer was hauling from Scranton and would allow a reduction of 2 to 3 dollars a ton to put it directly from the truck into the bin. Florence was a good cook and I had many a tasty meal in the three years before Violet finally, reluctantly, agreed to marry me.

The work finally ran out and I was transferred to Binghamton, New York. The work there was moving some large maples, 24" to 30" in diameter. A very successful lawyer, Roger P. Clark, was renovating the old Homestead in Vestal, New York. There was a long drive leading to the Homestead. Some of the old maples, 75 to 100 years old, had been badly damage in a storm. As Mr. Clark was a man in his sixties, replacing with smaller trees was out, as they would not mature in his lifetime.

The Company had large Mack trucks with winches. These pulled a ten-wheel outfit called a loader. When a tree of 24" to 32" diameter was found in vigorous enough condition to move, a deal was made with the farmer. This was usually $25 to $50. Once in a while a particularly rare specimen of nice shape brought $100.

Mr. Clark spent about $30,000 on this project, right in the middle of the Depression. By this time, long lines of unemployed were developing. Herbert Hoover was getting the blame for all of the country's troubles. This led to his defeat in 1932 by Franklin D. Roosevelt who came forward with his famous New Deal, Social Security, etc. A man named Townsend pushed a

retirement plan for everyone over sixty-five of $200 a month. This was debated and generally dismissed as pretty for out.

The job lasted until December and I got a second chance to go into school. During the fall, on weekends, I drove to see Violet. I became acquainted with her sister Myrtle, and husband, Mark Osborne. Myrtle was a kindly person and quite hospitable. She had lost two young sons, one with a brain tumor and the other with spinal meningitis. As she was a person who dearly loved her children, she never quit grieving for them. This led to an interest in spiritualism and Christian Science for the rest of her life.

Violet also had an older sister named Hazel who lived in Cleveland, Ohio. She was twenty years older than Violet, and Myrtle was sixteen years older. Myrtle's two living children, Ronald, eight years old, and Beverly, two years old, were very bright and healthy. Beverly was very pretty and of calm disposition, a darling two-year old.

The Osbornes were dynamic people and very hospitable. Mark was a paper mill equipment salesman for a firm in Fulton that manufactured machines that made paper in various stages from pulp to the finished product. These were expensive and required expert knowledge of same. In spite of the deepening Depression, he was such an able man that his sales continued.

Towards the end of November, after the large tree planting job in Vestal was finished, I received a letter from the Company. It was inviting me to the Company school in Ohio for the fourteen week course. This proved to be very useful in later years, although no diploma or degree was given. The studies were business management, dendrology or identification of trees, how to use modern equipment, etc. Christmas week I was invited back to Fulton. Although it was a long drive back and forth from Ohio, I enjoyed the holidays very much.

On March 20th, 1931, much to my relief, I received orders to go back to Syracuse. The Fulton work was small that year and I was sent to Binghamton, New York, and Honesdale, Pennsylvania, to work on the Miller Estate. These people were related to Barbara Hutton of the family who first started Woolworth's Five and Ten Cent Store chain in Watertown, New York. I and my helper, E. D. Davidson, from Columbus, Georgia, worked nearly all summer in Honesdale, then back to Binghamton. There, the large trees moved the fall before required a lot of care fertilizing, watering, pruning, etc.

That fall, while straightening a tall spruce in front of Roger Clark's mansion, we came upon a full skeleton of a man buried there. This was while excavating under the tree to get it back in place. After some investigating, it was found that the whole farm was an Indian burial ground. Roger Clark got in touch with a museum in Rochester and an archaeologist came down with a small crew. He dug a couple hundred holes all over the place, recovering many artifacts. However, he incurred the wrath of Mr. Clark by failing to fill the holes before he left. Mr. Clark, being a lawyer, got in touch with the museum and, after some wrangling, they sent someone to fill the holes.

Work got slack at the end of August, 1931, so I decided to take a trip home to Massachusetts. Davidson headed for Columbus, Georgia. I was home for two weeks when I got orders to report to Ithaca, New York, to work on a job for the Telephone Company. After getting there, I, along with everybody in the Company, received a cut in pay from 85 cents to 67 ½ cents per hour. I worked there near famous Cornell University, the first land grant college in the United States, started by Ezra Cornell.

By the time Christmas rolled around, the work was finished and nothing else as in sight. I was getting serious about Violet but funds were low so I decided to hang around a while to see if the economy would get better. I rented a room from Mother Darling and got by on the occasional

job that came along but income was barely enough to pay expenses. I polished my car, which was still in good shape, painted the trailer, cleaned the yard, etc.

The winter of 1932 was very open, no snow until March 5th. Then suddenly, the sky opened up and it snowed off and on for three weeks. Nearly six feet of snow fell. The City of Fulton was pressed to keep the streets open. They had one piece of equipment that made this possible, a Linn tractor, very powerful which, though slow, saved the day.

All summer work was scarce and the depth of the Depression was reached. My total income for the year 1932, including $5 per week car allowance was $1,100. Suddenly in November, Marria received a job from Northern New York Power Company in Potsdam, New York. He made me foreman and gave me a crack crew of five men. L. B. Swope, C. C. Smeltzer, Kit Carson, Ray Pfeifer and Howard Beal. The trees in Potsdam were huge old elms and maples. The limbs were entangled so bad that a major clearing job was necessary. My experience in Boston and Jamestown was a big help and good progress was made and the job continued into 1933.

Kit Carson was the morale booster for the crew. He had a strange ability to attract dogs by imitating their bark. He would be in a tree, see a dog on the street, and start barking and soon have all the dogs on the street barking at him. Another of his tricks was when school children came along, he would balance himself on a limb, scratch like a monkey and make gibbering noises. This caused the kids to think they were really seeing an ape.

We stayed at the boarding house where a nice Irish woman and her daughter lived. The daughter worked and the mother ran the place. Kit Carson was one of those persons who had boundless energy. He would work all day and then at night, refreshed by a bath and supper, want to wrestle and fool around. This was supposed to be strictly taboo.

It was an unwritten law that none of the men would tell the landlady who the foreman was. This was to prevent her from bringing up every petty complaint about the actions of a house full of tree surgeons. One night Smeltzer and I came in from a movie. As we stepped in, the landlady was talking to a friend in the front hall, just as you go up a winding staircase. We heard a commotion upstairs and somebody running down the hall. From where I was standing I could see Pfeifer running after Kit Carson with a basin full of water. Just as he got to the top of the landing he threw the water at Kit, who ducked.

The water came down and hit the landlady's friend who was so surprise she didn't even cry out. The culprits made themselves scarce. The landlady's Irish temper flowed on for several minutes, full steam ahead. I managed to keep a straight face, marched up the stairs, got the two offenders and had them apologize and clean up the mess. Nevertheless, she never did find out who the foreman was.

Marria was very successful getting work from the power and telephone companies so work was steady that summer.

Getting Married

Violet finally agreed to get married to me. The date was set for November 11th, 1933, Armistice Day. Violet's sister, Myrtle was married to Mark on that day twenty years earlier when they were both 18 years old. I was 28 and Violet was 22 years old but still looked 16 years old, lively, demure and pretty.

We wanted to get married in church but the date had already been taken. Violet's friend Pauline Elliot, was the bridesmaid, a tall, good looking and very nice person. My best man was Harlan Roberts, the man who had worked with me in Vermont. He proved to be something of a rascal when he took a couple parts off the honeymoon car, the Chevrolet.

About a month before the wedding, arrangements had been made to rent a small apartment on Cayuga Street in Fulton. The owner was a pleasant woman named Grace Hall, who had worked with Violet at the Chocolate Works. Dad and Mother Lewis as well as my sister Esther arrived two days before the wedding. I was extremely happy to see them as the commotion about the wedding was getting me down.

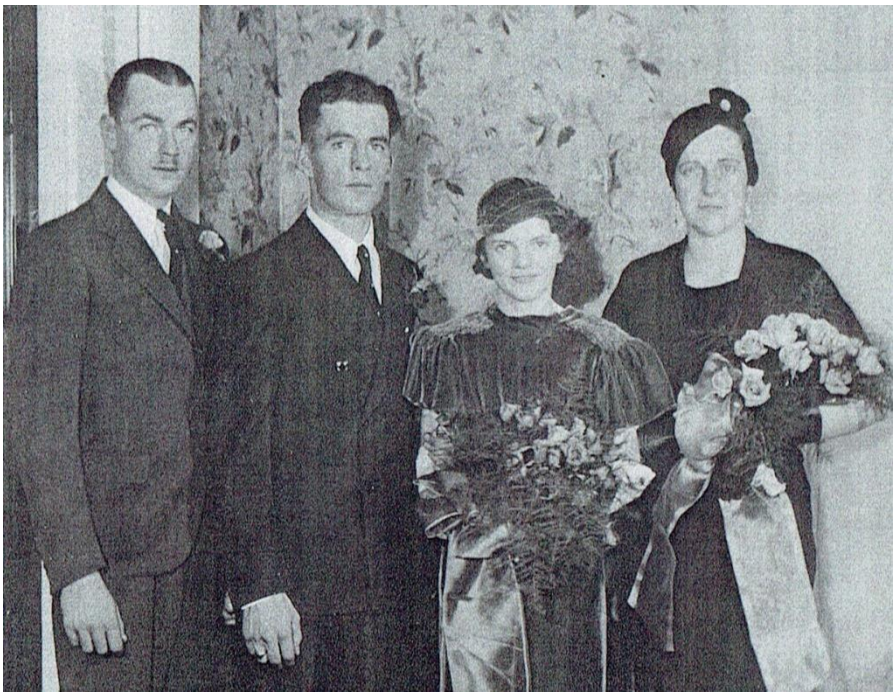
The day before the wedding Marria called on the phone to say that I had orders to go to Atlanta, Georgia, to run some work for the Southern Bell Telephone Company. Marria wanted me to go the next day. When I told him I was getting married, at first he said, "Too bad". Then he quickly added, "That will be a nice place for your honeymoon".

Full of delight, I rushed to tell Violet that night. I got a strange reaction, she wanted to call the wedding off until later. Feeling hurt and annoyed, I decided to talk to Grace Hall. She proved to be a good help, saying that Violet probably had pre-marriage jitters caused by emotions and that I should just insist that things go through as planned. Somewhat relieved, I went back and the next day we were married in Violet's home at 411 Utica Street.

Hazel's husband, Ralph, and the rest of the family were there and everybody was watching to see how we would get off. We weren't sure about the apartment. My car being out of service, I finally called Dr. Bill Short, Grace Hall's son-in-law to be, a student at Syracuse University. He agreed to come down the street until he was two doors away and park. He had a coupe with a heater that would seat four.

As Ralph Brown was sitting where he could watch our coats, it was tough to get loose. Finally, looking up the street, we saw Short's car parked. Ralph went to the kitchen to get a drink of water. The others were elsewhere at the moment. Quickly we slid out the door without coats and we were getting in the car before being missed. We quickly pulled away and drove to Hannibal, a few miles away.

The others scoured the town trying to find us. They even knocked at the door of Grace Hall's but she wouldn't let them in. Sister Esther and Mark Osborne had done a little drinking in celebration and were the most persistent. They even got a ladder and climbed up the back roof but couldn't loosen the storm window to get in the apartment.



Bill parked in Hannibal then, about 11 p.m., drove back. By this time, things had quieted down. Grace let us in the apartment. Just as we were getting settled for the night, Mark and Esther came back, quite insistent that they get in. So Grace hid Violet and me in a closet and let them in. Next morning, about noon, we went up to 411 Utica Street and gave everybody the "Ha Ha" about giving them the slip.

On Monday, the folks from Massachusetts left. Also, Vi and I headed for the South. The two door sedan was piled in the back with luggage. We pulled a small, two-wheel trailer with tools.

The first night we stopped in Pennsylvania. The next night we made Washington, DC, where we stayed with a friend, Charles "Red" Smeltzer. We took a day and Red showed us Washington. Then on to Roanoke, Virginia.

Shortly before getting in to Roanoke, a big Pierce Arrow passed us. Somebody in the back waved frantically for us to stop. It turned out to be my brother Roger, on the way back to Colorado to see his friend, Helen Newton. He had seen an ad in the paper in Boston for someone to drive an older man to California, expenses paid. As he couldn't afford the trip otherwise, that's what he did.

Violet and I stopped at a tourist home, which was in vogue then. Roger came back from the hotel and visited for the evening. Next day, we continued on, finally pulling into Atlanta, Georgia, and found a place to stay on Peach Tree Street with some people named Bailey.

The elder Bailey was a retired businessman whose business had failed because of the Depression. They were supplementing their income by renting rooms to tourists. He told me to put my car in the barn so it could be locked up. I said that it would be OK and left it out.

Next morning, the front end was jacked up and the tires and wheels stolen, but nothing else taken. This was a blow but, fortunately, they hadn't taken the back wheels and tires, which were new. The theft was reported to the police, who did nothing. However, I found two wheels and tires quite cheap at a second hand place.

Later, we drove to the Company office at Five Points in the central part of Atlanta. There we met the salesman named Bauer who was to show us where the work was. He had a pretty wife named Elizabeth, a Southern girl from Alabama.

I had parked near the office in a crowded area. When I got back to the car, there were several teenage black boys standing around. They offered to shine the car with a rag for 10 cents. They seemed so good natured about everything that I gave them a quarter to do it even though money was scarce. As I was getting out of the parking place, I bumped the car ahead and behind. One of the boys sagely observed that, if it wasn't for bumpers, cars would be dented to death.

Bauer and his wife proved to be friendly and helpful. First, they took us out to show the line to be trimmed and, next we went to work. We stayed in Atlanta two weeks. So on the following Sunday, we visited Stone Mountain where some Southern heroes were being carved in stone.

When the work close to Atlanta was complete, we moved to Griffin, Georgia, South of Atlanta, to complete the work. The big oaks growing into the line made quite a bit of brush and debris. I located the local Superintendent of Public Works and secured some help; two mules, a wagon and three black men for the sum of $2.00 per day. In the North, at that time, a man and a one ton truck could be hired for $1.00 per hour.

The little hotel where Violet and I and two crewmen lived was a comfortable place. The men were, Stan Haines, a young Canadian, and Crawford, a rather wise guy type whom I didn't like very well. The weather was dull, sometimes rainy. The crew didn't want to work except when the sun shone. I, having been used to Central New York's weather in the winter time, considered this quite warm and not too uncomfortable. So the work progressed and the paycheck was real good for Depression times.

The meals were real good at the small hotel. The cook, a black man named Jesse, did a good job with the Southern diet of grits, gravy, chicken, peas, etc. He made especially good pecan pie. He recognized the difference in attitude towards blacks of people from the North and South.

He had lived in Cincinnati for short while. At Christmas he made a special meal and offered to come North with us to work but that wasn't possible.

Two weeks and the work was finished. I received orders to meet Jerry Landis, the salesman for South Carolina, at Columbia, the capitol. This I did, enjoying the ride over from Atlanta. Landis went around with us to locate a place for the night. I noticed that usually a black maid answered the door, which she would very cautiously open. About the fourth place we tried we got a suitable place. I questioned Jerry who said these young women were afraid of rape, as there sometimes were questionable characters, black or white looking for rooms. Next day, we drove to Summerville to look over a lot of work for the telephone company there.

During our stay in Atlanta, Violet and I got in touch with Boots Davidson, who was in Charleston, South Carolina. Therefore, when we got with Landis, he said it would be a good place to stay and work out of for some work he had at Magnolia Gardens, North and West of there.

Davidson and his friend, Hazel, later his wife, were glad to see us. She was a calm, pleasant girl who lived with her mother in a section of town close to the old slave market. They showed us the sights of the old slave market and many others of this famous old city. Davidson was still doing tree work on his own but had applied for a job at the U.S. Naval Yard. This job he got and made his life work, finally retiring in the early 1970's.

Magnolia Gardens proved to be a lovely place with a great variety of shrubs and trees. The work force of blacks was clearing additional areas, cutting brush and dead trees which they burned, making it comfortable to work, as they liked the heat. (Editor's note: Magnolia Gardens is the oldest public gardens in America, here is a good video of Magnolia Gardens)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4ZHrdSas3w
(This photo was taken in 1934, Robert and Vi.)

One of them, a tall, muscular, pleasant man named Sam West, was assigned to help. The work was to brace two trees that leaned out over the water and were in danger of falling in. I put the necessary bolts and long cables in, then tightened same with Sam's help.

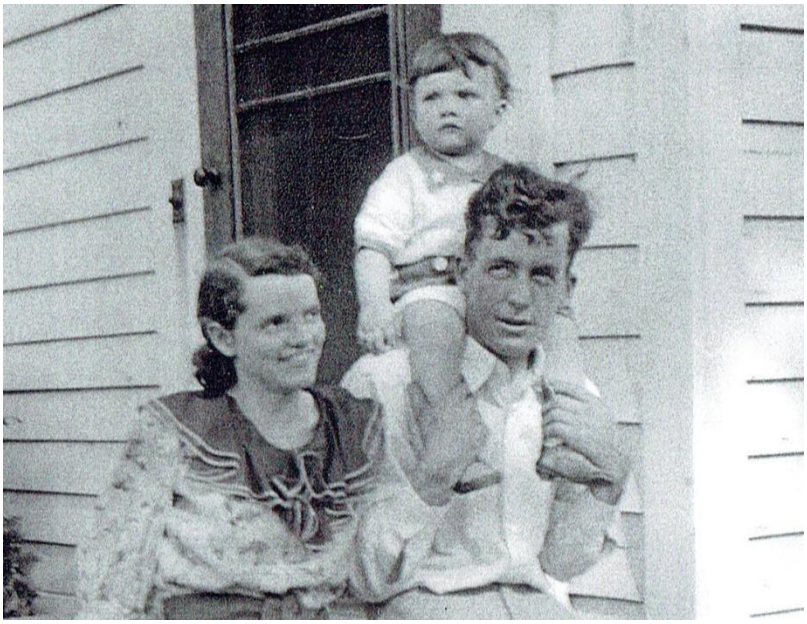
The water was ten to twelve feet deep under the trees, as they lay out over the water almost horizontally. I asked Sam if he could swim and he said no. I told him to be careful and don't fall off. Just then a group of the blacks was coming by for lunch and they made a great joke of it. "Look out there, boy. Don't let the sun shine in your eyes so you all fall off that log and drown." This was followed by deep laughter, which Sam fully appreciated and so did I.

By this time, Violet and I were getting a little homesick. We could stay and do the job on Summerville but Marria had written that he had work for us. Therefore, we decided to head back North to our apartment to set up housekeeping. The trip North was uneventful. As we arrived in Syracuse it was raining hard. Next day the weather turned very cold, 16 degrees below zero.

Jumping from South to North in the middle of the winter clear up to Fulton, New York, near Lake Ontario, was a real change.

Learning To Be a Salesman

Marria had been promoted to an area manager for the Company. He asked me if I would like to try out as a junior salesman and take care of that part of the work in the Syracuse territory. Pay was $35 per week drawing account against commissions, plus gas and oil for my car. This was standard compensation then.



My car, after three years use, was beyond its best service, so I decided to get a new one. Violet had $300 in a savings account which I borrowed, getting a trade-in allowance of $200 for my car. This left about $300 to pay to GMAC over the period of twelve months, which was the limit of credit at that time.

I liked selling but orders came tough, about one in fourteen calls produced an order of some sort. Most of the big work in the territory, such as line clearing, still belonged to Marria as he had sold the original jobs. By the end of October, 1934, I was in debt to the drawing account by seven hundred dollars. The Depression was still on but this training period was good and I could see that, when the economy picked up things might get better.

The Company sent another salesman by the name of Fred Ahlers and put me back in charge of a crew. They wrote me a nice letter saying I could make more money as a foreman, as I was a good one. I went along with this because a lot of work came through in Oswego County for the Power Company. Ahlers, in spite of the fact that he was experienced, didn't produced more private work than I. He was transferred out the next spring and Harry Edwards came in. A full paycheck and steady work was fine for me for the next two years.

On December 22nd, 1934, Robert Neil Lewis was born. He was a healthy, happy baby. Meanwhile, Grandma Darling had been having fits because Violet and I weren't living with her, because she wouldn't rent us a separate apartment although she had the room. Therefore, there was a certain estrangement for a while. About four months after Bobby was born, one day she came tripping down the street just as if nothing had happened. From then on, he was the apple of her eye.

Marria sold a big job with AT &T to trim all the toll lines in the state. I was to work those lines out of Fulton and elsewhere as needed. During December I was working with my crew on a long line from Oswego to Williamson, New York. In places it ran through long stretches of right-of-way but, in general, along Route 104.

Shortly before Bobby was born, on December 22nd, I was going to work one slippery morning with Glenn Williams in the front seat and Clyde Bolick in the rear seat. A mile from

Alton, New York, I met a sanding truck. Behind it, coming East, was a Model A Ford sedan with three hunters. The truck slowed up to sand a particularly slippery section of road just as I was approaching from the opposite direction. (This photo was taken in 1936, Vi, Bob and Bobby)

The Model A Ford put on his brakes fast. These Ford cars had a tendency to brake or catch on one wheel because of the type of mechanical brake. This skidded the car directly across the road sideways in front of my Chevrolet, coming West from the other direction. I was going 40 miles per hour and I hit the Ford head on. Williams, the man in the front seat, pushed his head though the windshield but, because of a heavy, fur-padded cap, received only minor cuts. This was before the days of safety glass. Bolick was unhurt as he was sleeping on the back seat. His heavy clothing protected him as he slammed up against the back of the front seat.

The weather had been unusually cold, so I had two suits of heavy underwear on, and a sheepskin coat, heavy hat and lumberman's mittens. There was no heater in the car. I broke the steering wheel off with my body. The clothing saved me from serious injury, although my chest was sore for weeks.

One of the men in the other car shot through the top of the Ford, which was made of wood and cloth, not steel. He died in an hour. The driver was unhurt but another man had severe injuries. An onlooker picked up the partly used bottle of wine but there was no proof of drinking otherwise. The driver said they were going hunting.

The work was suspended for two weeks until the car could be repaired. Fortunately, I had covered my new car with suitable limits of insurance for the first time. The case was settled in court at Lyons, New York, at no cost to me. The work continued all winter and the long line from Oswego to Williamson, and some others, were cleared to the satisfaction of the Telephone Company.

In the meantime, all was well with the small apartment. Little Bobby gained steadily in weight and was a joy to have around. The spring of 1935 came and a lot of work on the power lines developed in the area. The Depression was still on but beginning to wane. The Democrats, with the leadership of Franklin Roosevelt, repealed Prohibition. This was done by claiming the gangsters and crime wave was caused by bootlegging. This was true to some extent, but the real cause of repeal was greedy politicians wanted the large taxes that legalizing booze made for the states. Bootlegging still continues to this day, especially in the South.

(Editor's note; Harold Lewis, son of Robert R. Lewis, states that his father was a staunch Republican and disliked FDR immensely.)

I worked all summer on power line clearing and, in the fall, picked up Telephone Company work again. Some time was taken out to work the best private jobs. I had two jobs in Athens, Pennsylvania. One was for a maiden lady named Marion Maurice. She was quite rich, and the daughter of an engineer who owned the local Ingersoll Rand plant. He had something to do with building the first suspension bridge.

She and another lady named Perkins, about 80, lived next door to each other. They took good care of their grounds and were a pleasure to work for. Over the years, it puzzled me greatly why so many rich single women were never married. On the average they were attractive, reasonable and all around fine people. I decided that marriage for marriage sake was probably a poor bet for them, perhaps with other reasons.

This type of work, being quite varied, continued through 1936. In the spring of 1937, Harry Edwards suddenly quit, as the selling of private work was tough. The Company wrote to me and wanted to know if I would try selling again. I decided to do this as the economy was getting better.

Social Security had been passed, one of Roosevelt's real accomplishments. Roosevelt had run a second time and won big.

The going was still slow and wages were the same $35 per week plus gas and oil for the car. I, of course, bought a new Chevrolet, 1937 model, which ran over eighty thousand miles and was an extremely good car. Winter private work was so slow that the Company finally had me supervise the local work for Niagara Mohawk Power. This was reasonable as I had ten years from Boston to New York State.

(Pictured below are young Bobby and his sister Sandra with Vi between them. In the back are Alice and Herbert Lewis, Robert's parents. Behind Robert is Vi's mother Florence Darling. Photo was taken at Christmas 1940.)

My pay was 2% on all sales of power trimming. This, with commissions on private work, kept my drawing account out of the red most of the time. The Telephone work was now state wide and the Company sent in a supervisor by the name of Robert Sours, whose original home was close to Fargo, North Dakota. Sours and I got along well and worked together good.

Sours had one fault when it came to swapping men for special jobs. He always insisted that telephone work came first. My two phases were power and private work. Storms often caused quick jobs of an emergency type. Telephone trimming was much the same year round and, except in ice storms, was seldom of an emergency nature. I finally found out, if I borrowed Sour's men for a couple of days and that worked well, even though it stretched out to two weeks sometimes.

I felt I was making slow but steady progress and my pay had been increased to $45 per week plus 15 cents per hour for the car, besides gas and oil.

In 1938, a call came into the office one day about moving some trees. A retired construction engineer for the New York Central Railroad, by the name of David Small, had called. He had a new home in the nice section of Syracuse. Feeling that he could not wait for trees to grow, at age sixty, he had decided to move some large trees. That fall, and the next in 1939, three large elms, 16" to 18" in diameter, a large white cedar 16" and two cucumber Magnolias 10" and some smaller trees were located and moved. The exposure was Southeast and the soil was good so, with lots of care, all the trees lived.

From time to time, I tried to get work from the City of Syracuse and other towns and cities around. However, spraying for control of insects were the main jobs, as most places used their own men, although unskilled and very inefficient. The newspapers were full of the rantings of Hitler and Mussolini. Most people didn't realize it but war clouds were gathering because of these two monsters.

On March 28, 1938, Sandra Elaine Lewis arrived. She was beautiful, dark-haired baby with brown eyes and loads of hair. Grampa and Grandma Lewis came out from Massachusetts to see their grandchildren. Grandpa Lewis told me that Violet was a wonderful mother, keeping those kids so clean and neat all the time. She had so much other work to do.

Moving To Syracuse

In 1938, living in Fulton meant too much extra driving so, after much searching, a small house was rented on North Edwards Avenue, Syracuse. After about a year, we joined the Eastwood Baptist Church. This was a mission church originally started by the First Baptist Church downtown.

Eastwood Baptist had a property on the corner of Homecroft Road and James Street. The building used for a church was the old Senator Nichols so-called mansion, a large green building with the front center enlarged. This had old theatre seats installed for pews. The other rooms, upstairs and down, were used for Sunday School, including two rooms in the cellar. Behind this, a building had been constructed to hold church socials and other functions. Square dances were held once a in a while and were quite popular.

The pastor was a young, boyish-looking man, Harold Clark. He had a wife who was rumored to be from a rich family. They were both pleasant and well liked. In the meantime, the clouds of war were gathering. Two mountebanks, Mussolini and Hitler, were bullying the smaller nations of Europe. They openly proclaimed they were going to expand. The persecution of Jews in Germany was going full swing. Later it developed into the Holocaust, but the full story didn't come out until after the war. Isolationism was strong and politicians, including President Roosevelt, said American boys would never go to Europe.

Harold Clark, the minister, gave a stirring sermon one Sunday, denouncing war. The next year we were closer than ever, as Hitler attacked. France and England were drawn in. Japan was very militaristic and, of course, at Pearl Harbor we were pitched into it anyway in 1941.

In the meantime, I was going along fairly well as sales slowly increased and it looked as if we were going to come out of the Depression altogether. However, increasing income was still tough, but I slowly build up a clientele. I purchased a 1939 Chevrolet, which was the last car I got until after the war ended in 1945. By that time, I had driven it 135,000 miles. The car was certainly well built.

In 1939, a flat became available at 345 Woodbine Avenue, Syracuse. As it was much nicer than the small house on Edwards Avenue, we moved. In the meantime, I was very busy keeping crews lined up and operating. A lot of work was done for the electric companies. Marria had bought a summer home at St. Lawrence Park, Thousand Islands, New York. He was now an area representative and traveled all over the county but, during the summer months, he was at the Thousand Islands. His home, now, was in Cleveland, Ohio.

There was a sales convention in the winter of 1939 in Ohio. I attended along with the Rochester salesman, Hugh Cook, and Urban Throm the Buffalo area salesman. I didn't get much out of it as the boss spent most of his time with the high volume salesmen. I felt rather frustrated with the restrictions on the line work to sell. In the spring, it was hard to get necessary spray

equipment after working all winter selling a lot of jobs. These had to be done at a certain time and required a lot of planning.

Things drifted along this way until December 1941, when suddenly we were pitched into war with Japan. The draft came and started taking the men. The Company wrote a nice letter asking me to go back to work as a foreman, assuring me that I would be put on sales, again, when the war was over. This worked out OK after getting my muscles in shape. Also, I still got my commission on jobs I sold and worked, along with my regular hourly rate. I was still in charge of the territory.

A lot of young men were hired from Tennessee and other places. They however, were taken when they reached eighteen. I had the job of seeing they were clothed properly. This took a lot of doing, as Central New York weather in winter is no fun. Also, the winter of 1942-43 was one of the coldest on record.

Gas was rationed but was allowed for necessary work like utility trimming. So that was not a problem. Sugar and meat were rationed and we had waiting lines. I, being 36 when the war started, registered for the draft. I was never called as I had two children and Leigh and Harold arrived in 1942 and 1943.

The flat was quite comfortable and well heated, as coal was still fairly cheap. The main hardship was going out of town to work. This left Violet with four small children and was quite hard on her, although I got home most of the weekends.

I finally got started on a job for the City of Syracuse, taking down dead and dangerous trees. The commission was good as the job was large. The trees in the city had been neglected, so there were many to remove. Dutch Elm disease had started ten years earlier. This was now spreading slowly through the state

Some of the trees were large and spreading, with wires and obstacles underneath. They had to be taken down piecemeal and lowered with ropes. While this was hard work, I soon was in shape again.

The Company had promised at the start of the war, that when it was over there would be a new deal. The Syracuse district in Central New York, was one of the best during the war. There were five foremen with fifteen to twenty years' experience that continued working in the tree business. Many people could do better working in the factories. Our customers were glad to get needed service, especially the utility companies. From time to time we heard from the men in the service. Some didn't come back. Ezra King was in Biloxi, Mississippi, for three years.

Gradually, the Allies defeated the armies and navies of Hitler and Mussolini. The first A-bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This brought the Japanese war to an abrupt end. They surrendered to MacArthur, etc. I was in Ithaca, New York, doing some work when the war ended. There was a terrific celebration in August, 1945.

In the spring of that year, I had been taking a large section of tree off a telephone cable at a client's place in Fayetteville, New York. I had two green men, about sixteen, holding the lowering rope. This was wrapped around the pole so the section to be lowered could be let down swiftly, but stilled controlled. I had my safety rope on the remaining, rather weak, section of the tree that was left.

The reason to let the control rope slide fast was that it was on the same section, higher up. I signaled that I had the thing nearly cut through, and for them to let the rope slide gradually. Instead, they leaned back on the rope. This brought the whole weight on to the weak branch, still upright, on which both safety and lowering ropes were attached. This quickly snapped the limb, breaking it off and tossing me about 35 feet to the ground.

I hit my back, slightly sideways, knocking the wind out of me and stunning me. In about a minute or two, I looked up to see two faces peering at me. I tried to move and my pelvis pained me severely. The two sixteen year olds were still gawking with their mouths open. I told them to have the lady call the ambulance. As the Village Hall was nearby, they came in a few minutes. Being in shock, the injury didn't pain much going to the hospital.

I was put in the emergency room. After what seemed an eternity, a doctor came. Nobody had covered me, so I was shivering violently. After being put in a warm bed, I had recovered enough to call home. I thought it better to talk to Violet myself, as I didn't want her to get too excited. This worked out well and, next day, I was visited.

I had to stay in the hospital for a month before going home. I felt happy that I hadn't been struck by the falling limb. Because a cracked pelvis takes a long while to heal properly, it was July before I could foreman a squad again. It was fall before I could do any work. That's when the war ended.

I was anxiously looking for a new contract with the Company. With the experience of the past four years behind me, I felt fully qualified to renew sales and management of the territory. However, the men were coming back from the war slowly, and experienced men were needed for the actual tree work.

I wrote a letter to the president of the Company. The answer was evasive and suggested that I continue field work for a while, which was quite indefinite. As I was now 40 years old, with four children to bring up and educate, I was pretty upset.

Working For a New Company

A rival company, Tree Preservation, Inc. of Elmsford, New York, had entered the picture during the war. They were doing part of the Niagara Mohawk Company tree trimming. They were poorly organized and I knew they needed experience help. I had spent 19 years with the old company and, financially, I was just beginning to get ahead.

Mark Osborne, my brother-in-law, had been doing well in the paper mill equipment business, which he started about 1937 or 1938. He called me up on day and said he had a Chrysler car, 1940, with only 12,000 miles on it. This he had bought from a friend, an old man going blind. He said the price was $1,300. My Chevrolet, with 135,000 miles still ran good and one of Mark's employees wanted it to go back and forth to work. I got $300 for it and, now, had practically a new Chrysler sedan, with automatic drive. "Fluid drive", they called it, and it was the first model to have this.

Several letters went back and forth with the Davey Company and I saw they weren't about to give me the job I wanted. So, regretfully, I decided to send a resume to the Elmsford outfit. I got a letter back in a few days saying the owner, Tom Brady, would be in Syracuse and talk to me in a few days. This was an increase of about $15 a week, which looked good.

I sent a letter of resignation to the Company. Things were in an uproar in Ohio as some of the other key men were quitting also. The president of the Company, a former Governor, had a heart attack and died. His son, more or less a playboy, took over.

I waited a few days, contacted Brady, and asked him to make up his mind as to whether I would be hired. We met again and I started out. First, however, I made a trip to Elmsford. I met Brady's wife, who handled the office. The warehouse and garage was in a mess. As trucks weren't available, they had only some old ones formerly used for car transports. These had aerial ladders mounted on them which were quite a help in the line trimming.

The crews with the former Company had been trained and were used to climbing only with ropes. Some of them who had worked with me before hired on with the Elmsford Company. Two were Mohawk Indians who were very skilled climbers. It took me several months to get four crews organized and the equipment in shape.

Brady made promises and say absolutely such and such a thing would be done, such as give a raise to a good man. Invariable, he would forget about it and a call would have to be made to Elmsford. On the whole, things moved along fairly well. My experience was a big help as the Power Company trusted me.

Gradually, in 1946, good tools and other equipment became available again. They put me in charge of the central part of the state. Utica, Syracuse, Olean, etc. When March of 1947 came around, I decide to quit and go into business for myself because I didn't think they appreciated the long hours I put in. Also, the territory was making money and I wanted a better contract. This time, Brady agreed to a slight raise plus a three percent on all power work and ten percent on private work. I had Maurice Sharp, a lawyer, write up contract which Brady signed with tongue in cheek.

This was in bad shape from heavy tree growth, dead trees, etc., that caused constant interruption of service. During the latter part of 1946, Ezra King, a friend and former worker with the Ohio Company, got back from the service. He was a great help to on the supervising. He had a congenial personality and got along well with the Elmsford office. He worked into 1947 and, then, decided to go on a sales job. The office like him so well they offered him my job, which he declined.

Things rocked along and in the fall of 1947, about December, they closed the Old Forge job until spring. The end of January, 1948, Brady came to Syracuse from Elmsford. I had been after for new equipment, as it was very difficult to keep an important job going, particularly with the volume of business which had more than doubled over the year 1946.

There was a certain amount of bad felling and, two weeks later, I received a letter saying I was fired. They expected me to stay, however, for two months to break in Brady's brother Bill. Bill was a little squeaky-voice guy. I decided to stay until April 1st, as I couldn't start much of anything until then anyway.

Starting My Own Business

It was a relief to put the two companies behind me and, at 42 years of age, start my own business. I realized that I probably should have tried much sooner. With four children and no money I didn't feel adventurous.

I had my car and trailer to carry the tools around. I also intended to rent a truck. Then I hired a man by the name of Eugene Pyke who had worked off and on for some years with me.

The first step was to get some money in the bank for payroll, insurance and other expenses. Having no savings, I found I could borrow on my life insurance at five percent. There was a cash value of $2,000 that had built up since 1930 when it had been purchased from Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company when I was in school at Kent, Ohio. I went back to the local bank for the first of many trips when I needed money for payroll and the cash flow was slow. The manager, a typical banker of the time, groaned and moaned but allowed that life insurance was good collateral.

My years of experience selling and doing actual work were much in my favor. One thing, I didn't have, as, I discovered was enough experience in all around management and of course, made mistakes. Sometimes contracts were taken too low, with little or no profit. The first year, from April, 1948 to January, 1949, produced a volume of $50,000, with a reasonable profit.

Some of my firs jobs were with the cities of Fulton and Oswego, with some telephone work in between. That fall, a job came up in Syracuse, the first of many, taking down 150 dead and dangerous trees. By this time, I had acquired good equipment.

Earlier, while taking down a huge poplar in Fulton, I was using an old fashioned bull saw. This was a saw about three feet long, with course teeth, used to cut through big limbs fast. I was cutting off a limb about 18 inches through when a salesman stopped. He had an electric saw run from a portable generator. He allowed that he could cut that limb off in minutes. All that was necessary was to put up a ladder so that he could reach it. Looking at the well-designed equipment, I thought he could. After he cut the limb in two minutes I told him, "You know, I have been looking for you for twenty years!"

In fact, just before the war started, a salesman had come along with a Mall, two-man saw which worked beautifully on tough, old elms and other wood hard to cut. At that time, 1939, I wrote an enthusiastic letter to the president of the Company, asking if they could buy one for the district. To my utmost amazement, I got a letter back from the president's chief-flunky-and-brown-nose saying forget it, that they weren't practical and would never be used much. So much for prediction from one of the head men of a company supposed to be a leader in the business.

The Homelite proved to be very practical and was one of the reasons I was able to get the first Syracuse contract. By this time I had hired several good men and things were rolling. Winter work, which was difficult to find, was solved mainly with tree removal and line clearing for the Telephone Company which could be done in any weather except the worst.

During July and August of 1950, a hurricane swept up the Eastern seaboard and as far inland as the Great Lakes. This toppled trees 100 years old or more and made an awful mess. It made all kinds of work and took over a year to clean up. (Editor's note; This most likely was Hurricane Abel, formed August 12th, 1950).

By this time, chain saws were getting into general use. The companies were improving models every year. At first, the opposition claimed the men would cut their legs off if the chain saws were used up in a tree. However they were proved wrong when proper precautions were taken.

The first contract with the city worked out well. However, competition was getting keener and profit margin was not very big. During this period, a state organization of tree surgeons, foresters, etc. was formed, called the New York Arborists Association. They met every winter at Cornell University Hilton Hotel. This gave a chance for those involved to swap ideas, new methods, etc. Another organization, called National Arborists, did the same thing on a national scale with Canada making it an international organization. This proved to be quite helpful.

During the cleanup of the hurricane, I was driving home from Fulton. Traffic was heavy. As I reached Three Rivers, going South on Route 57, I crossed the bridge and went about a mile. Suddenly, a car going North darted out to turn into a side road. The driver saw me, pulled back in again, then, right out. Later it was determined that the driver was drinking at the roadhouse shortly before. (Editor's note: Route 57 later became Route 481. Route 57 mostly paralleled Route 48. The Roadhouse 48, is still in business.)

Too late. The two cars crashed head on and bounced up onto a low bank. They were both totaled. I was cut under the chin with the steering ring. Later, the doctor told me it missed my jugular by an eighth of an inch. Some friends came by and took me to the hospital in Syracuse. I stayed overnight and the cut was sewed up.

This happened in November and, by Christmas, the insurance company had settled in full, the other driver being fully to blame. Just another in a long line of accidents caused by drunk driving. The family nearly lost a father.

I purchased a new, 1950 DeSoto which was a sharp-looking and economical car. The long battle with the Dutch Elm disease was going full swing but didn't end until they were nearly wiped out, almost as bad as the American Chestnuts were. There were 27,000 elms that had to be removed in Syracuse alone.

About 1952, I had a problem in removing these elms. They were 60" or more though the butt. Some were 100 to 125 feet high. In some instances, they were tangled up with utility wires which ran about 35 feet above the ground. Often the elms were decayed when left too long after they died. This made them extremely dangerous to climb around in, even with a safety rope. Sometimes a large limb would appear OK to put the safety rope on and would break when the man put his weight into the rope.

So after the hurricane of 1952, in the fall of 1953, I hired a construction crane. This had a boom around 90 feet tall. There was an extension of 20 feet more that could be added. A good crane operator could maneuver this in such a way that huge limbs cold be cut and lowered quickly to the ground. This solved most of the problems of safety and eliminated the time consuming, small-limb-by-small-limb-on-ropes, which was the old way. This put me ahead of the other companies on bids. It also gave a lot of steady work for the crews.

In 1955, a new type of machine came along called a bucket-mounted lift. This was a machine with a basket on the end of a long arm. This was mounted on a 2-ton truck and could lift the man hydraulically 50 feet in the air. It could go in a full circle and could be maneuvered to any height. This was quite advantageous and, also, an efficient way of removing trees on crowded city streets.

In 1953, I purchased my second and last Desoto Six. The engine was fast and ran on much less gas than most of the cars. It was a very durable car but Chrysler Corporation phased it out and largely replaced it with the Dodge.

The Arborists Association had a national convention in Syracuse, in 1950, where I got acquainted with Frank Karpick, city forester of Buffalo, New York. He mentioned later that in the spring of 1955 the city would have a large tree-trimming contract. During the winter and spring of 1955, I looked over the districts, ten in all, to be trimmed. After much figuring and careful analysis, I came up with a price total of about $150,000. This was, of course, the largest contract I had ever bid on. The bid came in June and I got seven district, totaling over $100,000.

Hugh Cook, from Rochester, tackled one district and Bergeron, from Niagara Falls, another. Towards the end, I became acquainted with Phinney Williams and his brother-in-law, a big, tall Arkansan, Charles W. Hubbard, usually called Bill. Towards the end of the contract, they took a district. An outfit called Acer Tree Experts took another district. This all made it possible for me to make some money on the job and not expand my efforts beyond one large crew.

Robert Neil was, by this time, going to college at Syracuse University on a business course. During August 1955, there was a Shade Tree Convention in Santa Barbara, California. Violet and I decided to attend. Bill and Helen Kolfrat went along and everybody flew out. At that time everything was opening up in California. Prices were still reasonable. Santa Barbara is always lovely and we stayed at a plush motel.

I met Riley Stevens, from Oregon, who had trained with me for tree work in Ohio, 29 years before. As we had two weeks, we decided to drive up the coast to Coos Bay, Oregon, to visit Violet's cousin, Edith Reckard and her husband Ken. First, we flew to San Francisco and saw all the sights there for a couple of days. Then we rented a car and drove North to Oregon, visiting the giant redwoods on the way. This was Violet's and my first real vacation. An occasional call home ascertained that the business, particularly the job in Buffalo, was going well. Young Bob and Lloyd Davey, the bookkeeper, had things well in hand.

After a good visit, and some deep sea fishing which I didn't enjoy, as the catch wasn't good that day, we headed for Portland to visit Riley Stevens and his wife. There were more sites as Portland, Oregon, was a vital area.

When the contracts in Buffalo were finished in November the crew was brought back to Syracuse. All traveled was by New York State Thruway as this had been completed in 1954. It cut the time traveling 140 miles from Syracuse to Buffalo by be a good hour. There were no stop lights or city traffic all the way. 2 ½ hours was a reasonable time.

Considerable work was received from the small telephone companies in the state. At one time there were about 80 companies. These were bought up or absorbed by New York Telephone, Mid Continental Telephone Company and Continental Telephone Company, the last two based in Ohio. This work got me over a lot of the state.

Much work was done in the villages, also, such as Liverpool, Fayetteville, Cortland, Phoenix, Auburn and Fulton. The work in Oswego dropped off as politics entered in. Lewis Tree was doing the work for several years at an average cost of $12,000-$15,000 per year. Then they hired their own crew who was so inefficient that, in two years, the cost jumped to $50,000. About 12 years later, they finally went back to contracting. This only served to point out how politicians waste money.

The best run village, from the taxpayer's stand point, was Liverpool. They were fortunate to have a village board who were completely honest, all businessmen who spent tax money wisely. The others varied from good to lousy, depending on how much they loaded their payroll with inefficient people.

There were usually two or three men in top positions who were capable, such as superintendent of public works. They had a tough time keeping down expenses because of being loaded down with help they didn't need, some who were practically useless. One main reason they hired outside contractors for tree work was unskilled help could quickly cause thousands of dollars damage in removing trees. Also, they could easily injure themselves.

The improvement of equipment was steady. The chain saw companies developed lighter and more powerful gas saws. A new type of chain, called a chipper, could be sharpened on the job easily. A machine called a brush chipper, developed by the Asplundh Company, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, chopped up brush and smaller limbs, similar to an ensilage cutter. This made disposal easier as the load wasn't too bulky.

Finally, an outfit in Iowa made a machine to cut out stumps. This had a wheel with carbide-tipped teeth. This was run at high speed across the stump, peeling off two or three inches at a time. It was mounted so that it could go back and forth between wheels set six feet apart. The stump could be cut usually six to twelve inches below ground level. The chips were then cleaned up and the area filled in with soil. Some huge, old stumps, ten feet in diameter, could be removed without using expensive digging machinery.

With some help from Dr. Howard Miller of the New York State College of Forestry research department, we kept up with the progress of the Dutch Elm disease. The City of Syracuse lost 27,000 elms, leaving only a scattering of these beautiful trees throughout the city. The same applied to the countryside throughout the Northeast.

(Editor's note: Robert Lewis ended forty-six years in the tree business by selling his company to Monroe Tree Service of Rochester, New York. The name and company were preserved as a separate business entity and now, the Lewis Tree Service, Inc. has over 4,000 employees operating though out the United States and Canada. Harold Lewis transcribed his dad's notes in 1997 and Bob Lewis sent me the typed copy. Robert Russell Lewis passed away in 1996 at the age of 91.)

(Editor's note; I would like to thank Robert Lewis for sharing this wonderful article about his dad and mom. It brings home the fact that while we are Aggies, past-present-future. Sometimes we live our lives not knowing the impact we have on others. Robert's hard work and due diligence that he learned at home and the Aggie paid off, not only for his family but for over 4,000 present day employees of the Lewis Tree Company. Robert Russell Lewis was also the brother-in-law of Instructor Ellery Metcalf. Ellery married Robert's sister Fannie. This photo is of the Lewis homestead in its current state.)

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical High School
Natural Resource Management/Arboriculture
ASSOCIATED TEACHERS/FACULTY
Mr. Paul Crofts, Ms. Jill Rasmus, Mr. Andrew King and Mr. Stephen Noble

Water to drink, food to eat, and materials for shelter; the three essential things that keep us alive. The management of natural resources is essential to keeping our communities safe from need. The Natural Resource Management program uses inquiry-based projects to develop student skills in observation, assessment, analysis, and management of our most vital resources; water, soil, forests, and wildlife. Our field-based program immerses students into the full range of New England environments, including mountains, forests, ponds, streams, and coastal shorelines.

Our goal for each student is to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience that will give them an edge in the expansive field of natural resources, environmental science, and civil engineering. Freshman begin with a general introduction to the ecology and geology of New England by accessing campus and state parks. Sophomores continue to develop specific field skills in forest management, soil analysis, and forest zonation. Mapping the local topography, students begin using surveying equipment and GPS to make digital maps and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Students learn the basics of drinking water and wastewater technology, and practice new skills in water chemistry testing both natural streams and our Atlantic salmon aquaculture systems.

Juniors study hydrology using canoes to access local rivers, ponds, and wetlands. They use prior skills to make water quality assessments, calculate the flow of water in the ground, and delineate wetlands. Students learn to assess and manage stands of trees, calculate the value of harvestable lumber, and explore the role of natural resources for fun and recreation. These field studies include advanced laboratory analysis, greater independence of fieldwork management, and more computer mapping skills in GIS.

As seniors, students get to apply their knowledge, skills, and experience to physically manage campus resources such as tree stands and wetlands. Co-op is highly recommended to enrich student experience, and the breadth of skills our program offers opens up an expansive career field from environmental enforcement, academic research, resource management, or construction and engineering.

Students will receive certification in: OSHA 10, National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Certified Interpretive Guide, American Canoe Association (ACA) Flat Water Canoe Certification, and Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP) Massachusetts Boat Safety

Arboriculture is the cultivation, management, and study of individual trees, shrubs, vines, and other perennial woody plants. More than 80% of people in the United States live in areas filled with trees, and planting trees in all settings is increasing. As this trend continues, arborists and urban foresters strive to preserve trees in urban and suburban areas. In this program, students learn how arborists and urban foresters ensure healthy populations of trees to provide sustained benefits to people, including of the removal and replacement of hazardous trees. Students in this program are prepared for immediate entry into the workforce or to continue their education at either two- or four-year colleges for arboriculture or urban forestry. Students are prepared for the following *certifications: Massachusetts Pesticide License, ISA-Certified Tree Climbing Professional, and ISA Aerial Lift Professional.*

Editor's note; I wonder what Mr. Robert Lewis would think?