

HISTORY OF THE
U. S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Interview between:

Charles A. Wood

Retired Inspector

and

Fred L. Lofsvold

U. S. Food & Drug Administration

Winthrop, Maine

June 9, 1980

INTRODUCTION

This is a transcription of a taped interview, one of a series conducted by Robert G. Porter and Fred L. Lofsvold, retired employees of the U. S. Food and Drug Administration. The interviews were held with retired F.D.A. employees whose recollections may serve to enrich the written record. It is hoped that these narratives of things past will serve as source material for present and future researchers; that the stories of important accomplishments, interesting events, and distinguished leaders will find a place in training and orientation of new employees, and may be useful to enhance the morale of the organization; and finally, that they will be of value to Dr. James Harvey Young in the writing of the history of the Food and Drug Administration.

The tapes and transcriptions will become a part of the collection of the National Library of Medicine and copies of the transcriptions will be placed in the Library of Emory University.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

TAPE INDEX SHEET

CASSETTE NUMBER(S) 1 and 2

GENERAL TOPIC OF INTERVIEW: History of the Food & Drug Administration

DATE: 6/9/80 PLACE: Winthrop, Maine LENGTH: 81 minutes

INTERVIEWEE

INTERVIEWER *

NAME: CHARLES A. WOOD

NAME: Fred L. Lofsvold

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

ADDRESS: U.S. Food & Drug Administration

Denver, Colorado

FDA SERVICE DATES: FROM 1919 TO 1953 RETIRED? Yes

TITLE: Resident Inspector, Portland, Maine

(If retired, title of last FDA position)

CASSETT | SIDE | EST. TIME | PAGE
NO. | NO. | ON TAPE | NO.

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* Also present: Arthur J. Beebe, Jr., Regional Food & Drug Director, Boston, Mass. and Donald Stresser, Resident Investigator, Augusta, Maine.

This is a recording in the FDA oral history project. We are interviewing today Mr. Charles A. Wood, a retired Food and Drug Inspector at his residence in Winthrop, Maine. Also present are Mr. Arthur J. Beebe, Jr., Regional Food and Drug Director, Regional I and Donald Stresser, Resident Investigator at Augusta, Maine. The date is June 9, 1980. My name is Fred Lofsvold.

Lofsvold: Mr. Wood, would you tell us now a little bit about how you started with the Food and Drug Administration?

Wood: After World War I in 1919, an article in a New Bedford, Massachusetts newspaper indicated that there was a civil service examination coming out for Food and Drug Inspector in June and to write to the Civil Service Commission in Washington, D.C. for further details. So, I wrote to them and they sent back to me all the information necessary and said that I would have to be a college graduate and have two years of chemistry, or high school graduate with four years personal experience with either the food or drug business.

At that time, I had over four years in the food business so I applied on that basis. Five or six years earlier I was working for a country grocery store in Westport, Massachusetts while I was going to grammar school and high school. This store was operated by A. J. Potter and every

Saturday he loaded more and more work on me and finally told me one day to take the one horse wagon and go to Fall River to pick up supplies. That developed into a regular Saturday job of going to Fall River to pick up supplies for the store. Finally, one day, he wanted to know if I could handle a pair of horses. He said we had to get a big load and had to have a pair of horses. He had picked up an old white horse at an auction. He wanted me to take the big white horse along side of a little black mare to make a pair of horses. I had no trouble at all getting to Fall River when empty, but when you get to Fall River, there was the Allen Slade Co., a prominent wholesale grocery company there. Just below the wholesale grocery company was a feedlot where you could drive in with a horse rig and feed your horse while you went over to the wholesale company to do your business. I put the feedbags on the horses and there was no problem at all getting around there.

I put the feedbags on, went over to Allen Slade Co. and placed my order, and they stamped the order for 1:30 P.M. At 1:30, I was supposed to be backed up to this long loading platform to pick up my load. Just before 1:30, I went over and took the feedbags off and put the bridles on and got the wagon down to Second Street and got in my position to back in. In front of the loading platform there was an auto truck parked on one side and a four-horse dray hitch on the other side. There was about a nine foot space between the two, and I had to back up about fifty feet

to get to the platform to load. So, I started back and that little black mare started quicker . . . and threw the pole over, and the pole went one way and the wagon the other. I was aiming first for one of the horses or the truck and getting nowhere fast. Finally, a policeman came along and tried to help me out. One horse went quicker than the other and pulled the pole over and hit him right in the gut, so that ended his help. Then I was on my own. So, finally, I decided to adjust the reins, and got the reins so that the reins would pull the white horse back before the black one.

So, finally I got in between the truck and the four horse hitch, and I got the wagon back to the platform. When I got up there, my audience included this dignified man with a black derby hat and a gray suit, who proved to be Ben Gifford, the owner of the Allen Slade Co. His only comment was as to what Abe Potter was thinking of to send a kid out with any such mismated pair of horses as that. "I don't know what he was thinking of, he must be crazy."

From then on, Ben Gifford was my friend. He called me "Abe Potter." He would ask me how everything was out in Westport. It didn't matter whether I was placing an order or making a payment. One time I was making a cash payment of \$500 and he said, "You tell Abe Potter that paying \$500 a week isn't helping lower his bill any. Tell him he is taking more than he is paying for." So, next time I saw

Abe I told him and, sure enough, he gave me \$1,000 for the next payment and that appealed to Ben Gifford. From then on, he was my friend, and I would go into the office and pass the time of day with him.

About three years later on, I graduated from high school in New Bedford. I was out of a job. So, I found a part time job at a grocery store right in New Bedford operated by a Lester Jenkins. He had a wireless telegraphy station in the back part of his store, and he was paying more attention to wireless telegraphy than he was to business, and his business was fast slipping away. I would go down to help him tend store and do odd jobs. He kept putting more and more time into wireless telegraphy and less in his grocery business. So, when I graduated, he proposed to me, why didn't he lease me his store. By that time, his stock had gone down to where he had practically no stock on hand, and he said he would sell me a four-year lease on his store. It sounded good. Nobody gave me any encouragement. So, I inquired around, and they said the first thing is you have to have some stock. So, I began running around to the wholesale grocery companies in New Bedford to see if I could get any financial backing or if I could get some stock on credit. They all turned me down cold. Finally, I heard that there was a new wholesale grocery company opening up in New Bedford and that a Sam France was running it for somebody over in Fall River. I

went in and, sure enough, Sam France was working for Ben Gifford, and Ben Gifford owned the Allan Slade Co., which was a big wholesale grocery company. So I went to see Sam France, and he turned me down cold and said that Ben Gifford would not give credit to his own son. He gave strict orders: cash or no sale.

I said, "Well, I know Ben Gifford." He said, "You know Ben Gifford? Well, go see him; he might give you a little advance to stock your store." So, next day I went to see Ben Gifford. His clerk pretended he was so busy he couldn't see anybody. While I was arguing with the girl there, Ben came out and said, "Abe Potter, what are you doing?" I said that I wanted to get a little credit to get into the grocery business over at New Bedford. He said, "You got the wrong place, but come on in." So, I went in, and he tried to discourage me. He told me that chain stores were coming in and that everything was getting rough. Old timers were going out of business, bankrupt, and everything else. Finally he said, "I'll call up Sam France and next time you are in New Bedford, go see him."

Well, Westport is about half way between New Bedford and Fall River, so I went in to see Sam France. He said, "What did you do to hypnotize old Ben Gifford?" I said, "Why?" He said that Gifford called him and said that if that Wood boy out at Westport comes in and still thinks he wants to go into the grocery business, stock him up.

Lofsvold: You were what, seventeen years old at that time? And then you were in the business for four years before you went into the Army in World War I?

Wood: About two years after opening my first store I bought a lot near my home and had a second store built so I had four and a half years before World War in the grocery business, four and one-half years in one store and then the last two years I was running two stores.

Lofsvold: Then, when you came back from World War I with your stores already leased . . . you were looking for a job?

Wood: When I came back I had the two stores leased out, but when I saw the four years' experience requirement, I said, "Well, that hits me." Because I had from '13 to '17 with the grocery business, and this was in '19, so that qualified me to take the examination.

Lofsvold: Was the examination kind of practical questions as to what an inspector would look for?

Wood: Yes, very practical. I can't think of the name of the Civil Service man, but he kept in touch with everyone that took the examination, and he would call you in and

quiz you about what they asked. On the basis of what everybody told him about the examination, he had a little idea about what the next examination would be like.

Lofsvold: Then, how long was it from when you took the exam before you were hired?

Wood: I think the examination was in June. The entrance salary for a Food and Drug Inspector was \$1,400 per year with a travel allowance of \$4.00 per day. It didn't take very long, because it was sooner than I expected to hear anything. I got a letter from the Civil Service Commission stating that I had passed the examination and qualified for appointment, and suggested that I go in and see George Adams, Chief of the Boston Station of the Bureau of Chemistry on Atlantic Avenue, at the first opportunity.

Lofsvold: He was the chief at Boston?

Wood: Yes, the chief at the Boston Station. He wasn't a doctor, but he had called himself doctor so long that everybody called him doctor.

Beebe: What was his first name?

Wood: George H. Adams. He was a good fellow to work for, and I liked him very much. I went in and had an interview

with him and then very soon after I had the interview I got a notice to report to The Bureau of Chemistry, 201 Varick Street in New York on such a date. I got down to New York on that date, and I ran into Leo Lusby, who had come up from Washington, appointed on the same date that I was.

Lofsvold: Who was in charge at New York at that time?

Wood: When I got to New York, 201 Varick Street, I asked for Dr. Brown or whoever I was supposed to see. A fellow named Leicester Patten from Buffalo was temporarily in charge of the New York District. I had to do all my business with Mr. Patten. He assigned one of the inspectors to help me find a place to live, etc. He told me about what the work was like and helped to get me settled. So, Leicester Patten got to be a good friend of mine. He would stop by and see how I was getting along. It wasn't long before he found out that I liked the job, and I didn't like New York City. It wasn't long after that that Mr. Patten was called back to Buffalo, where he was chief of the station. In about two weeks I got a letter from Mr. Patten saying he had a resignation in Buffalo, and was reduced to one inspector in western New York State, Western Pennsylvania, part of Ohio, and part of West Virginia. He wondered if I was interested in being transferred to Buffalo.

I was at that time interested in traveling and I wrote back to Patten and told him that there was no question in my mind that I would prefer anything other than New York and thanked him for thinking of me. In about two weeks, I was up in Buffalo working with Leicester Patten.

Lofsvold: How long had you been in New York?

Wood: One month . . . no question . . . in about a month I knew.

Stresser: What didn't you like about New York?

Wood: Oh, elevated trains running in back of the appraisers store building, steamboat landings in front of you, etc., etc. The population was wild. I just didn't like anything about it. I was a country boy and had no use for the big city.

Lofsvold: Was Buffalo any better?

Wood: Oh, yes. I've always thought of Buffalo as just a great big country town. I liked it much better, but the sad part of it was that when I got to Buffalo, I found that Walter Miller, the one inspector there, lived in Orchard Park and had come into Food and Drug inspection from the Customs Service. He had always lived in Orchard Park, and

he naturally got all the local work for Buffalo and vicinity, and I was spending all my time traveling between Buffalo and Pittsburgh and working western New York State, western Pennsylvania, and parts of Ohio, and West Virginia.

Lofsvold: What kind of work were you doing?

Wood: Everything. You see the Food and Drugs Act had only been in force for about 13 years, June 30, 1906 . . . so it had been only about 13 years that the law had been in effect. The old original Food and Drug Act was badly mixed up and amendments had to be made. In fact, some of the judges who had a case would write an opinions as to why the law didn't apply, and why they could not take action. Judge Orr, in Pittsburgh, was one of the principal opponents. He had written several opinions on questionable Food and Drug violations. One of them was on drug misbranding. The law read that a drug was deemed to be misbranded if the labeling is false and fraudulent.

Judge Orr picked up a case that was presented to him and said that it was no trouble to prove that it was false, but to prove that it was false and fraudulent had a double barreled effect, and you had to prove both in order to bring a case. You could not prove a product fraudulent unless you could prove the manufacturer's frame of mind at the time of labeling. If the manufacturer believed it

would really do what he said it would do, it was not fraudulent.

Lofsvold: It was very difficult then to get anybody convicted?

Wood: It was next to impossible until Walter Campbell came along and started needed amendments. I think it took about two years to get the "and" changed to "or", "false or fraudulent". Then, you could get a case on false claims alone, or if you had a fraudulent case, you could take both.

Lofsvold: What kind of foods were you working on at that time?

Wood: Anything that came up, dried apple waste vinegar at one time.

Lofsvold: Is that the vinegar made out of dried apples?

Wood: Yes, that is right. I got in just in time to work on that one.

When I was working in Buffalo, I worked mostly in Western Pennsylvania and in parts of Ohio and West

Virginia. I would go through southern New York probably twenty five times in a year between Buffalo and Pittsburgh. It was always on a Pullman sleeper. Sherman, New York is about half way between Buffalo and Pittsburgh. An assignment came up in Sherman, someone had written in about wanting information on manufacturing and labeling flavoring extracts. We never got around to it, because we always went through there about midnight on the sleeper and never got around to it.

Finally, I said well, next week I am going to take a week and get odd jobs done, and I will go down to Sherman and see about the flavoring extract. So, I made my schedule out, and I think Wednesday or Thursday I was going to be in Sherman, and I could look at the extract place. Of course, when you made out your itinerary for a week, you had to show when and where you were going, how you were going, and you always had to be prepared for spending lots of time on the road, if necessary. You had to sign up to travel anywhere in the continental United States. We were assigned a big handbag with a brief case attached which had to be taken even on a one day trip. You had to always have every thing you needed for a trip. You had supplies enough to carry you almost indefinitely, except for buying clothes and finding a laundry.

So, I got on the train this morning and went down on the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad. Sherman was in the southern part of New York State, just before you

get to the Pennsylvania line. In going down you come through Mayville. We were just pulling out of Mayville, and I knew that Sherman was going to be the next stop. I was getting my stuff together and preparing to get off at Sherman. The conductor came down the aisle just as we were leaving Mayville and he said, "Telegram, telegram, telegram for Charles A. Wood." So I went up to meet him. Sure enough, the telegram was from Harvey Wagner saying to "remain on train to Pittsburgh and call the office."

That was right about the time that the waste vinegar was breaking, carload after carload of waste vinegar being shipped in from New York State into Pennsylvania, where we had jurisdiction, with "pure cider vinegar" stencilled on the barrels. I confirmed that personally, then called Harvey to tell him that was the set-up and that there had been several carloads shipped into Pennsylvania over which we had jurisdiction. It was just waste vinegar and was misbranded and I sampled it for seizure. This waste vinegar was made up from dried apple waste, skins and cores and mixed with a dilute acetic acid solution.

So, instead of being home that night for supper in Buffalo, I was in Pittsburgh and called my wife to tell her I was there on an indefinite assignment. That assignment lasted for five weeks.

Lofsvold: You traveled mostly by train, then?

Wood: All by train. Normally, I would go down to Pittsburgh on Sunday night and come back on Friday night or Saturday night by Pullman. Then go down to the office and spend a few days in Buffalo and then leave again the next week. For the first year or two, I was going back and forth between Buffalo and Pittsburgh.

Beebe: When you were in Pittsburgh, how did you travel around the city--on trolleys?

Wood: Trolleys. First we used government travel requests for each little town. Then instead of making out a travel request we would get a 1000 mile thirty dollar script book, and then you would hand it to the conductor who would pull the fare to wherever you were going and kept a record of it. When that was gone, you would buy another script book for traveling by train. That simplified matters.

Lofsvold: When you collected samples, what would you do? Hire someone to take them down to the railroad to ship them into the office?

Wood: Well, you could express or mail the samples. You were allowed drayage, and you could take them to the station or wherever you were going . . . I used to have them taken to the hotel or Railway Express Office because I

stayed at the Monongahela House in Pittsburgh. I was there more than I was in Buffalo.

Lofsvold: How long were you in Buffalo?

Wood: Two years. I'll tell you why it ended in two years. I got this telegram from Harvey Wagner to continue on to Pittsburgh when I was figuring on being home for supper that night. I was there for five weeks. So at the end of the five weeks, I wrote a letter in to Wagner telling him that I was running out of supplies and that I was running out of everything, including courage. I said, five weeks is a long time to be in Pittsburgh and that I was out of everything and please send me the following: sample collection forms, invoice copies, freight bill copies, etc., etc. -- things that I needed. So, I gave him a list of things to send me by return mail. Then, the further I went, the more disgusted I got and ended at the bottom with "one resignation blank".

The next morning Wagner called and said, "I got your letter and did not realize that you had been down there that long. I can appreciate the situation and how you feel. I know that sympathy doesn't go very far. All I can tell you is that we are pretty nearly through with this vinegar business, and you can come back before long." He said, "Surely you were joking about that resignation blank."

I said, "No, the more I think about it, you can forget about everything else and send the resignation blank." So I resigned.

Stresser: When was that, '28?

Wood: No, '21. So, anyway, I came up here to Maine. My father had bought a farm here in Leeds, Maine, an old country doctor's estate. I got the farm and went up there and stayed four years from '21 to '25. In '25, I got a letter from Bill Wharton in the Eastern District saying that there was a vacancy coming up in Baltimore and was I interested in re-instatement? At that time, I certainly was.

Lofsvold: Did you go to Balitimore then?

Wood: I went to Baltimore. To make a long story short, I had been there only a short time when I got a letter from Bill Wharton saying he was coming to Baltimore and wanted to see me. He was down a week or two later and said he had to have an experienced man in Buffalo. So, I was right back where I started. I was sent to Buffalo because he needed an experienced man in Buffalo, and I was familiar with the Pittsburgh territory. All I had gained was four years on a farm.

Beebe: Who was in charge of Buffalo then, do you remember that?

Wood: I don't remember. There were a number of changes in Buffalo after 1921.

Lofsvold: Was Mr. Wagner still in Buffalo when you got back there?

Wood: Wagner was in Buffalo for a long time. I remember he was all for detail. Everything was details, details, details. He wanted everything. While I was in Buffalo for a weekend one time, I got an unusual trip, which Walter Miller usually took care of. But, I had to go to Rochester to interview a fellow named Robbins who had taken the Food and Drug Inspector examination and was being considered for an appointment. They wanted an interview with him. They had a regular form that you had to fill out. So, I went to Rochester to interview this fellow Robbins. When I got there, I found that he wasn't too much interested in the job, but he went through with the questions. I got back to Buffalo with the interview and presented it to Mr. Wagner, and I told Wagner that we were just wasting our time. Robbins practically told me that he was not now interested, that in the meantime he had married the daughter of his present employer and that, under the circumstances, didn't seem interested in an appointment. I made it pretty plain

that I thought Robbins would not ever consider an appointment. Wagner said, oh no, no, you just follow the forms and give all the details that they ask for from the interview. So, I wrote a page on his history, a page on this and that -- a lot of work for nothing.

Wagner sent my whole report on to Washington, with a note from him that this was an interview with Robbins, an applicant for a Food and Drug Inspector. After writing about four pages to Washington, he put P.S., "Inspector Wood advises me that Mr. Robbins, since he took the examination, has married the daughter of his present employer and under no circumstances would be interested in an appointment." Then, later on, I ran across another fellow who had worked for Wagner, and we were talking about the details and he asked how Harvey Wagner and I made out on details. I said, I don't go for it much, I think it is usually a waste of time. He said, "Well, Harvey Wagner had worked up a reputation in Washington as a man with a diarrhea of words and a constipation of ideas.

Lofsvold: How long were you in Buffalo that time?

Wood: Oh, gee, I have lost track of time. Where did I go next?

Beebe: Did you transfer from Buffalo to some place else?

Wood: Oh, Yes. I am trying to recollect now. From Buffalo where I was reinstated . . .

Beebe: Baltimore?

Wood: Yes, Baltimore a short time, and then I went back to Buffalo?

Lofsvold: Then, where did you go from Buffalo?

Wood: I am trying to think where I went from Buffalo. Something went wrong there after a couple of years or so. Oh, when I was working in Buffalo, a man by the name of John G. Elbs was new in the macaroni business in Rochester. I was on an inspection there. John G. Elbs had gone into the macaroni, the alimentary paste, manufacturing business without too much experience. He was looking for a man to work the New England territory as a salesman. I guess he knew I was from New England, and I was anxious to get back there. Before I finished the inspection, I had made a deal to go to work for John G. Elbs in Boston, Massachusetts.

Lofsvold: So, you resigned the second time?

Wood: Yes, that was about '27 or '28. I resigned the second time. I think it was '28. Then I got a letter from

the Chief Eastern District, Bill Wharton, saying that he had heard that when I left the service before I was interestec in getting back to Boston. He said that he had a vacancy coming up in Boston and he thought he could get me into Boston. So, I was reinstated in Boston.

Lofsvold: How long had you been a macaroni salesman?

Wood: Probably less than a year, I guess. This was the chance to get back to New England I was looking for, so I grabbed it. I was about a year or so with Elbs. I went back for the chance to go to Boston, which I wanted all along. I went to Boston and went to work for George Adams, and I stayed there until after he died.

Lofsvold: How long was Mr. Adams at Boston?

Wood: He was there in 1919 when I took the examination. He was an oldtimer then. He had been there a long time then. Adams was a great friend of Walter Campbell and Walter Campbell was actually the head of the Food and Drugs Act from 1907.

Lofsvold: They probably started together in 1907.

Wood: They did, they did.

Lofsvold: But Adams was still the Chief of Boston in 1939, when I started.

Wood: Yes, and he was the chief when I started in 1919, and he had been there then for a long time. He called himself Doctor Adams, but this may have developed from his previous work as X-ray Technician in the Massachusetts General Hospital, in Boston.

Lofsvold: When did you go to Portland?

Wood: I stayed in Boston until 1948. In 1947, Cyril Sullivan was the Chief in the Boston District. He called me in one day and wanted to know how I would like to go to Maine. I told him that I would like it. He told me that they wanted to establish a residency in Maine, probably in Portland, and would I be interested. I said that I certainly would. So later on he got me appointed as the resident inspector in Portland, Maine.

Lofsvold: There had not been any office in Maine prior to that time?

Wood: No, it had been handled out of Boston ever since Boston Station had been established soon after the 1906 Act was passed.

Lofsvold: You had been working part of the time up here in Maine then?

Wood: Oh yes. I had been working on daily and weekly trips, I had been covering the canneries up here for years.

Lofsvold: When you got back there in 1928, how big a staff was there in Boston at that time?

Wood: Boston had really increased then. The staff was six or seven inspectors, a chief inspector, a staff of four or five chemists, two or three clerks, a wharf examiner.

Beebe: In 1928 there were five inspectors. When I started there in 1956 there were ten inspectors.

Lofsvold: What kinds of work were you doing then?
Anything special?

Wood: Most of the time I was in Boston, and I traveled quite a lot in Maine on cannery work.

Lofsvold: Is that fish cannery work?

Wood: No, vegetable canneries. At that time there were probably thirty or forty corn canneries in Maine.

Beebe: That is all gone now.

Wood: All gone.

Lofsvold: Did they can other vegetables too?

Wood: Oh yes, string beans, corn, succotash, squash, a lot of vegetables. I saw an article the other day about a man named Vance Wells up here in Wilton. I used to call on him. The only place in the country where they canned fiddle heads and dandelion greens. He developed a business on those two items: fiddle head greens and dandelion greens. Finally, it got so he couldn't count on buying them from the producers, so he would grow his own.

Lofsvold: Fiddle heads, are those ferns?

Wood: Yes. On the dandelion greens, he planted and cultivated acres of dandelion greens.

Lofsvold: Were they canning sardines too?

Wood: Oh, I spent a lot of time on sardines. A good many years..

Lofsvold: Were any other type of fish canned up here?

Wood: Oh yes, but sardines were the principal fish. There were a lot of fish cutting plants for filets too.

Lofsvold: Were you involved in some of the maple syrup work?

Wood: Yes. Every spring we would go into Canada. Most of the Canadian syrup was shipped in bond across into Vermont. It was shipped into Vermont to be processed. It was shipped in the form of these big 20 lb. blocks. It was in the form of sugar and reconverted back to syrup and sold as syrup.

Lofsvold: As Vermont maple syrup?

Wood: Right, as Vermont maple syrup.

Lofsvold: But most of it was from Canada?

Wood: That's right, I would say about 50% of the Vermont maple syrup was produced in Canada at that time. St. Johnsbury, Vermont was the center. The manager of the St. Johnsbury Maple Syrup Company said he was getting pretty sick of buying these maple sugar blocks and converting them into syrup. He was having all kinds of trouble with it. It was coming in to him on a weight basis of 20 lb. per

block. He said first they had it come in blocks for easy shipping, and they would have to be unloaded and put into an automatic melting vat and converted back into syrup. He said when you clean out the melting vats, you find horse hitching weights and horse shoes and every other heavy material in the bottom of the vat.

Lofsvold: We started looking at it for lead about when, do you remember?

Wood: Lead was something that was continuously with us; first in one thing and then another. Lead was found in maple syrup along with a lot of other foods. Lead would show up here and there.

Lofsvold: Was that from the paint they used on the equipment or the kettles?

Wood: Some of the containers themselves, like sap buckets, were not safe. There was contamination from the solder in the sap buckets that carried the lead through the sap. That was true of not only maple syrup, but there were a lot of things that lead was showing up in. Lead was being found and each inspector was given two items to find out how lead got into the product. The two I was given were sardines and cocoa. I had to see how they got adulterated

with lead. Sardines were easy, as the lead came from the lead solder used in joining the sides of the cans to the bottom of the cans. In the processing operation some of the solder would get on the edge of the cans and the heat would melt the solder and carry it through the oil and the sardines.

The cocoa was a simple thing. Certain cocoa beans came from the Gold Coast of Africa. Accra beans were most predominant in the blends. Accra beans were very plentiful. They would come in these great big heavy burlap bags sewn across the top. Among most African firms, each domain in the cocoa bean country was assigned a number. In the sealing of the bag, this number would be sewed in on a lead seal. The bag would be identified by a lead seal carrying the number of the section that it came from.

When the bags got to the chocolate factory . . . I was in one factory one day and they were opening the bags by drawing a knife across the sealed end of the bag and then dumping it into a bin. From there, the beans go to a cracker and a fanner. I asked the plant manager how they eliminated metal. He said they had magnets all along the line to catch anything metallic. He said that anything lighter than a cocoa bean would blow out at the top of the cracker and fanner and anything heavier would go to the bottom so that, at the end of the line, the only thing that comes out was cocoa bean.

I wasn't satisfied with that, so I watched the men draw a knife across the top and throw the bags out when they emptied the beans. I noticed that some of the lead seals would be on a little shorter fragment of the twine; some of them would be on a long piece of twine that would act as a kite string and carry it out in the air. If both sides of the twine had been cut close to the seal, the seal would go through with the beans. The magnetic detectors would take some metal out, nails and so forth, but it would not take the lead out. When they got to the end of the line, a certain amount of cocoa beans would have some pieces of lead in them, and that would go from the cracker into the grinder. The lead would get interwoven with the grinder wheels. I saw them cleaning the grinder one day with a wire brush, and the grinder wheel was all full of pieces of lead seals that had come through, carrying lead into the cocoa. So the ground cocoa beans were contaminated with lead.

Beebe: Was that Walter Baker?

Wood: Walter Baker in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

Beebe: They are not in business anymore?

Wood: No, they are all gone.

Lofsvold: They moved all that operation to Dover Delaware?

Wood: Yes.

Beebe: In your day, did you have much to do with the sprays on vegetables and plants?

Wood: That brings up another point. The Bureau of Chemistry enforced the Food and Drugs Act. That was in the Department of Agriculture. That was along in Walter Campbell's time. Everything came under Agriculture. One branch of the Agriculture was the Farm Bureau and the County Agents. They would go around to groups of farmers and fruit grower organizations, and they would advise spray, spray, spray, dust, dust, dust to control the crops, especially apples and pears. Then the Food and Drug Administration would come along at the end of the season and find spray residue on the apples and pears and would condemn them and seize them. That was a difficult situation within the same department.

Stresser: What happened?

Wood: Well, one group in the Department of Agriculture was saying control with sprays, and the other would seize fruit because it contained too much spray residue. I think that

that was the reason that the Food and Drug Administration was organized.

Lofsvold: Were there many apples and pears grown in New England?

Wood: Oh, yes. In Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Western Massachusetts, apples were a big crop.

Lofsvold: Did you have to collect samples of apples?

Wood: Oh, yes, lots of them.

Lofsvold: For lead and arsenic?

Wood: Arsenic and lead both. Of course there was a tolerance established for both arsenic and lead. I forget what it was, but fruit had to meet a certain requirement for arsenic and lead.

Lofsvold: Did they wash the apples up here?

Wood: First of all they didn't, then later on, some did. No, I don't think they ever really went through a real wash.

Lofsvold: I know that out west they got to the point where they would wash them in very dilute acid and also in very dilute alkali.

Wood: Yes, I know we have had some apples that we had seized for spray residue that would later go back to the packer, and he would run them through a solution. They would run them back through the line. I know one apple packer that would have women with towels wipe them to remove the spray residue.

There was quite a group of inspectors who came in early in the game. The Bureau of Chemistry, naturally, was fairly well equipped with chemists because of the nature of the Bureau of Chemistry. Walter Campbell came in as an inspector. Of course, he kept working up and working up. In the Bureau of Chemistry, he was head and shoulders above everybody else, including the Bureau of Chemistry's own officials. Campbell was still running the Food and Drugs Act. Then there was a doctor--was a Brown in there?

Lofsvold: Brown, I think, was the Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry about the time you started or shortly thereafter.

Wood: That's right. I talked with Dr. Brown right after I got the appointment. He said he noticed the testimonial I got from my Commanding Officer in World War I. He later

retired and another chemist that was in line for promotion took over Dr. Brown's job and all the time Walter Campbell was working up to the top. Campbell got pretty well up where he was eligible for being Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry. But no, they couldn't have an inspector as Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry; they had to have a chemist.

Walter Campbell started the ball rolling for a good many years, and he established the Food and Drug Administration and became the Chief of it. He just by-passed the Bureau of Chemistry and became Chief of the Food and Drug Administration.

Lofsvold: Did you know Mr. Campbell?

Wood: Yes, very well.

Lofsvold: What kind of man was he?

Wood: Wonderful. He would come into Boston, and we would get the inspectors together and chat. He would discuss different things and what the problems were. He was smart and he got us out of the Bureau of Chemistry and started the Food and Drug Administration and became Chief of Food and Drug Administration.

Beebe: Was there anybody in Boston between George Adams and Sullivan, or did Sullivan take Adams' place?

Wood: Adams was there all the time that I was there. Cyril Sullivan came in as an inspector from St. Louis, and became Chief Inspector. Adams was District Chief from 1907 on, until he died.

Lofsvold: I believe that he did. I don't think that he retired.

Wood: No, that's right. He died in office. When Adams died, Cyril Sullivan became Chief of the Boston District. That's right.

Lofsvold: Then, when he left, Leslie Hart came?

Wood: Right, but then after Adams died, the Agency established Maine, and Sullivan wanted to send me up there. Cyril sent me to Maine.

Beebe: Shelby Grey was there, wasn't he?

Woods: Shelby Grey was there quite a while and then he went to Washington. He was there two or three years.

Beebe: He was there before Les Hart?

Wood: That's right, Shelby Grey was there and then Les Hart came after.

Lofsvold: I think that when Cyril Sullivan became chief at Boston, Shelby came as Chief Inspector. When Cyril left, Shelby became the Chief of the District. Then, Hart followed Shelby.

Wood: There was a Ben Hart way back.

Lofsvold: Did you know him?

Wood: Yes, I knew him well. He was Chief of the Eastern District when I came in.

Lofsvold: Then later he was Chief of the Western District.

Wood: Yes.

Lofsvold: Is that when Bill Wharton became Chief of the Eastern District?

Wood: I had forgotten about Ben Hart. I remember now. He was Chief of the Eastern District when I went to New York in 1919, then he went out west.

Lofsvold: Then, he was followed by Mr. Wharton?

Wood: Bill Wharton.

Lofsvold: Did you know the other commissioners too, like Paul Dunbar?

Wood: Dunbar, he was a PhD, wasn't he? Paul Dunbar was a very close associate of Walter Campbell. He and Campbell used to come and visit the stations together quite often.

Lofsvold: Were you involved, after you came up here to Maine, with the Wilhelm Reich case?

Wood: That's one thing I don't talk about. My wife warned me about that. She used to work for Wilhelm Reich. Her father was in the real estate business up in Rangely, Maine. He was a game warden and sheriff up there, and assisted Reich in purchasing some lake and pond shore area as a site for his proposed Orgone Institute.

Wood: I was more associated with food work than I was with drugs, but I did work quite a little on drugs toward the last, the over the counter sale of prescription drugs.

Lofsvold: I understand that the first case of that kind that was ever brought was here in Portland on a complaint from the Health Department. Were you involved in that?

Wood: I think I was. I am trying to think back a little bit more.

Lofsvold: Doug Hansen told the story in one of these interviews that he was up here on a fish trip and the Health Officer complained that people from the air base were buying sulfa drugs without prescription.

Charlie, in connection with the illegal sale of drugs work, you had mentioned that you had an arrangement with the Maine Bureau of Vital Statistics to report to you any death certificates where foods or drugs had been associated in the cause of death.

Wood: In connection with those copies, one report showed the death of a Joseph Lee who had died of cincophen poisoning in a Bangor hospital. The report indicated that the cincophen had been procured for him by his employer in a sawmill. I went to the residence of Mrs. Lee, and she told me the whole story about how he had been going weekly back and forth to Seboomook where he worked as marker in the sawmill. On one homecoming trip, he was badly crippled with arthritis and said that he guessed he would have to quit his job because he couldn't stand to work. The next week he came home feeling more encouraged and said Cleal, his boss, had told him about a drug, cincophen, that cured his wife, and Cleal was procuring some for him.

Next time he came back he brought a bottle of 100 Sharp and Dohme cincophen 7-1/2 grain tablets, and he was taking them just like aspirin. The next week when he came home, it took two men to get him out of the car and bring him into the house. The next day they took him to the hospital in Bangor and he died. She said he had one empty bottle and one partially used bottle at the time that he died. So, from there, I went to Seboomook. I went to find the Cleal Lumber Co. logging camp, about 40 miles from Greenville and there I saw Ralph Cleal and presented my credentials to Cleal, and told him I was interested in procuring more information about where he got the cincophen that he gave to Lee. He refused to say where he had bought it, and said that it was none of my business.

Knowing the operation of a sawmill and that they buy everything wholesale, I went to the Bangor Wholesale Drug Company and, sure enough, Cleal Lumber Company had an account there. It showed the sale of 6-100's cincophen. I am not sure, I think 7-1/2 grains.

Lofsvold: Did we take any action against the drug company?

Wood: We could not take any action against Cleal because it was only intrastate, there was no interstate movement. Cleal brought it from the Bangor Wholesale Drug Company and took it to Seboomook. There was no direct violation of a

Federal law involved. But we did cite the President of Bangor Wholesale Drug Company for illegally selling a prescription drug. At the hearing, there was no problem in convincing him that he was in the wrong. He admitted it, but nothing was ever done about it.

Lofsvold: You asked him at the hearing why he had sold the stuff?

Wood: Right, he said that a sawmill in the woods was treated the same as a ship at sea. It was not required to have a doctor or prescription for prescription drugs.

Lofsvold: He had been selling to isolated sawmills all along?

Wood: He admitted that he had been selling drugs to sawmills all along; that having a sawmill was the same as with a ship at sea. He said it would never happen again, and I guess it never did. I talked to him several times since, and he said it was one of life's most embarrassing moments when he was called in on that.

Lofsvold: Charlie, weren't you involved in that bond forfeiture case involving Stinson Canning Company?

Wood: Yes, I sure was. That was a sad case. In the 1940's many changes were made in the transfer from Bureau of Chemistry under the Department of Agriculture to Department of Health Education and Welfare. At about the time the new Food and Drug Administration was being organized, George Adams called me into his office one day and said that a vacancy was developing for Chief Inspector and he would like to consider me for the job. He emphasized that the final decision would have to come from the Eastern District office - Bill Wharton. Very soon after this a letter came from E. D. saying that Cyril Sullivan was being transferred from St Louis to Boston to be Chief Inspector. Sullivan had previously worked with Wharton in Central District. Adams showed me the E. D. letter and expressed his regrets but said there was nothing he could do about it. Adams died about two years later and Sullivan became Boston District Chief. As District Chief, Sullivan often made his own rules and regulations, sometime contrary to FDA policies. A so-called "sick fish" problem developed in sardine canneries and caused disagreements with the sardine packers. Some fish showed small skin eruptions like small boils and some attempts were made to sort out the "sick fish" before packing, but in some cases "sick fish" were packed without sorting. Many packers protested the sorting and packed some of the spotted fish. Calvin Stinson, president of Stinson Canning Co., did not agree that the fish were harmful and a 250 case lot was seized in

New York. Disputes over this action developed after the seizure, and arrangements were made between Stinson and Sullivan to take the seized sardines out under bond for return of the seized goods to Stinson in Prospect Harbor, Maine. Stinson at first claimed that the 250 cases had been lost around the factory or warehouse. Later, when Stinson was in Florida, I called at the factory and interviewed Mrs. Annie Tracy, office manager and bookkeeper. She said she thought Cal Stinson and Sullivan had worked out a special deal for handling the seizure. She said the 250 cases of seizure returns were somewhere in the warehouse. The warehouse foreman showed me a stack of 250 cases stored by themselves and said they were being held for further sampling. I examined this lot and found the 250 case count right but the can cover labels were for "Sea Cliff" brand and not the brand seized. Annie Tracy then found the freight bill for the returned 250 cases from New York and a pencil memo on the freight bill said, "Re-shipped to _____ Georgia". My records at that time showed exact wording, and I think the freight bill was sent to Washington. Cal Stinson later told Rankin that he and Sullivan had worked out a deal to swap good fish for the seized goods, and would have gotten away with it if it hadn't been for Charlie Wood. At about this same time, I picked up a rumor that Sullivan was cruising the Maine coast in a boat owned by Francis O'Hara, president of O'Hara Fisheries. Also a rumor that Sullivan

had cashed a check for a sizeable amount, drawn on a food salvage company, at a Bath, Massachusetts bank. I had an opportunity to talk with Monte Rentz, Chief Inspector for FDA about some conditions existing in Maine. Soon after this, Winton Rankin and Stuart Schoonover were sent to Maine to investigate some rumors and other Sullivan irregularities. When they returned to the Boston office, after an extended investigation in Maine, Sullivan was told what they had learned and was forced to resign or face serious charges. That ended the career of the Chief of Boston District.

Wood: Then, about that time, I talked with the State Inspector who covered that Stinson Canning Company. He said that, along in the spring of the year, long before the sardine canning season, they had a boat out looking for sardines. They had to make a special run. They finally came in with a boat load, enough to can about 250 cases. They started running and called the state inspector in to inspect this fish and make it legal. The lot was run through and substituted for the seized goods.

Well, it came out afterward. About the time this happened, Calvin Stinson deeded an island to Sullivan off the Maine coast. He had picked up an island somewhere for a little or nothing, and he deeded it to Cyril.

Lofsvold: Well, I had heard that Cyril had some dealings with some people in the fish trade.

Wood: I couldn't say much about that because Cyril was my boss.

Lofsvold: Yes. I know that some other people that worked in Boston at that time found it very difficult to work under those circumstances.

Wood: Arthur Checchi knew the whole deal. He is down in Washington. He went with his brother last I know. He had a brother who was in some other service.

Lofsvold: He is a consultant now. Charlie, earlier you were telling us about the problems of how an inspector traveled early in your career. Can you tell us some more about that?

Wood: Well, when you got to your railroad station, it was a question of walk, find a trolley car, or find some means of transportation to get to where you were going. I was, at one time, covering cheese factories in western New York State. They were cheese factories because they were too far away from the railroad station to ship fluid milk. I think there were around 400 cheese factories in western New York State at one time. They were all located anywhere

from five to ten miles from the nearest railroad station -- five to ten miles apart. So covering them without transportation was a problem. I finally found a fellow with a Ford to take me around to the cheese factories, and he agreed to take me for so much a mile and a dollar and a half an hour for the time that he was waiting for me.

So, after three or four factories in one week, I sent the expense account in. And there was very expensive travel, considering that I had four hundred cheese factories to do. So, just about the time that the expense account was getting in to Washington and a little time afterward, I sent in a request for permission to use my own car on a mileage basis, and it came right through.

Lofsvold: How much did they pay you?

Wood: Seven cents a mile.

Lofsvold: You know that sounds like what we do now-a-days in Alaska at the salmon canneries, where we hire a man with a small airplane to fly us around from one place to another.

Wood: . Walter Miller helped me out on that. He said it would work, and it did.

Beebe: You know, when you rented a horse, did you have a buggy? How did you do that?

Wood: I tried two or three times. I was in Franklin, New York one time. I had to see somebody who was making a proprietary remedy. I had to go out in the country four or five miles. There was no transportation available. I went up to the livery stable. I think the rate was \$2.00 a day, but he wouldn't rent a horse for less than a day. So, if you were only going a short distance, he would still charge \$2.00 for the rent of the horse. He would give you a hitching weight to tie the horse while you were making your call. That did not work out to any extent because, in covering the cheese factories, the first one was five miles, the next one was five miles further along. Then at night, you were too far to get the horse back home.

Lofsvold: About when did the Food and Drug start getting its own cars?

Wood: I got the first one in Buffalo, I think.

Lofsvold: What kind of car was it?

Wood: Ford, Model T. I was trying to think of when Harold Humphrey was in Buffalo--did you ever hear of him?

Lofsvold: No.

Wood: Harold Humphrey was the chief of Buffalo for a short time. It was during his administration -- this must have been the second time out . . . '27 or '28. We got Fords, what they called roadsters.

Beebe: Did you use the mail service to mail in your reports from the road?

Wood: Yes. We had to go to Western Union and, in Pittsburgh, I was supposed to go twice a day to call at the General Delivery window at the post office. We also had to stop at Western Union daily and you put on your schedule what towns you were going to cover daily.

Lofsvold: Did you type reports or write them in long hand?

Wood: I tried to type but, I won't go any further than that on typing.

Lofsvold: Then mailed them in to the office, shipped the samples by railway express.

Wood: Right. Mailed them into the office and shipped by railway express.

Stresser: Did you ever take samples that you needed to freeze or hold on ice?

Wood: I took all kinds of samples. You didn't have to freeze them, but pack them for safe delivery. In bulk vinegar sampling you had to take a bung starter and start the bung on the 50 gallon barrels. A bung starter was a mallet with a long handle, almost like a bamboo handle. It is surprising what those things can do because they don't look powerful enough to do anything. Believe me, if you got the barrels in position in the car or warehouse so the bung was at the top, then you would take the starter hammer and tap one side and then the other and, within a few minutes, the bung would loosen right up. Then you drop a pipette in and draw it up full and transfer it into a quart jar.

Lofsvold: Did you have to carry the bung starter and the pipette with you all the time? Or, just take it out for a special job?

Wood: I carried it in my bag, or in a special case. It was a permanent companion. You couldn't do a thing without it. Then you had to trace a stencil on a barrel, on tracing paper. Of course, you would have to label your bottles according to the mark that was on the barrel, if there was any on it.

Lofsvold: Did you use the strip paper seals on samples?

Wood; I used a good many paper seals on a good many samples. I don't know how they ever got there without being broken.

Lofsvold: At one time, I think we had some lead seals too, did you ever use lead seals?

Wood: Yes, I used to use them on bags of grain, etc. We had an insignia that we used on lead seals.

Lofsvold: Put a string or wire through the seal and connect the ends?

Wood: Yes, connect the ends and it was fool-proof. Could see if it had been tampered with. Most of these things go back 50 or 60 years.

Lofsvold: That time before 1939 was what I was hoping you could help us with.

Wood: I can't help you much, because I have forgotten most of it. I get things mixed up.

Lofsvold: Charlie, you were telling us about the vinegar seizures in Western Pennsylvania.

Wood: Yes, they were coming so fast and furious. You could hardly keep track of them. By the time you got one seizure accomplished, a new shipment was coming in to sample. Then you would wait about a week to get the report of that sample, and then another seizure would come through. Joseph Irons was the Deputy United States Marshal in Pittsburgh. After a few seizures, he could not see any sense in me going out just to identify the goods for the Marshal, so he deputized me as Marshal to make the seizure and that worked for ten or a dozen times.

Lofsvold: So, you would take the papers and serve them just like the Marshal?

Wood: Right, I would serve them just like the Marshal. It was kind of embarrassing. They would say what are you anyway. When you were in here a couple of weeks ago, you identified yourself as an inspector and now you come around identifying yourself as a Deputy Marshal. It was hard to get it through their heads, what I was doing. But they could see the light afterwards. After all, I had to come there to identify the goods for the Marshal, and he had deputized me to make it legal. I never got any pay for it. Joe Irons, I remember him well. He was a really nice fellow too.

Lofsvold: Charlie, thank you very much for the time you have taken to help us with this recording.