

Forestry researcher works against the wind



Andrea Hoy/Daily Nebraskan

Bagley takes notes while studying a green ash tree.

By Gene Gentrup
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

When Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated the massive Shelter Belt Project nearly 50 years ago, Walter Bagley, then a college teenager, wanted to be a part of it.

Bagley, now a forestry researcher at UNL, said he was first interested in the project because of the high demand for workers.

The Shelter Belt Project called for a 200-mile wide stretch of land to extend from the Canadian border, south through Nebraska and down into Texas. But his studies at Colorado A&M kept Bagley away from the project and he kept his concentration on animal husbandry.

"I took up animal husbandry because I knew what it took to do it," he said.

But after talking with friends and instructors, Bagley decided his interests were elsewhere. He switched to forestry and has studied it ever since.

After graduating from college, Bagley said, he faced a similar dilemma many forestry graduates experience today.

"They don't have anywhere to work," he said.

The expansion of emergency jobs in the Civil Conservation Corps and the Shelter Belt program were diminishing by the time Bagley graduated from A&M, so he returned to his home in Yuma City, Colo.

In the next year, Bagley applied at graduate programs around the Midwest but didn't get an immediate response. He joined a CCC camp in Wyoming and because of his four years in college ROTC, became a young officer.

But things began happening for Bagley three months later when Iowa State University offered him a forestry research assistantship in their master's degree program. He accepted.

Bagley said his life has been filled with "dream-come-trues." When he graduated from Iowa State in 1939, one of those dreams became reality. He accepted a research position with the Shelter Belt Project and remained there until its demise in 1942.

The forestry researcher turned soldier when he was called to serve his country in World War II. Upon his return, Bagley landed a job with the Nebraska Soil Conservation Service. He worked there until 1955 when he answered yet another call to war — this time in Korea.

Bagley came home again unscarred and immediately began working for the Dundy and Hitchcock County SCS and later as a forestry researcher for UNL in 1959.

Bagley's last 25 years have been memorable. He helped start the three improvement efforts on the Horning State Farm near Plattsmouth in 1959.

In 1958 the NU Board of Regents

ordered all farms donated to the university to be sold. One of the exceptions was the Horning Farm, because it was bequeathed to the university for forestry research.

"It was a grain livestock farm with only 20 acres of native woodland. Today, after much renovation, the farm contains more than 120 different tree species," he said.

Bagley has worked with many different types of tree shelter patterns and helped establish the Mead Windbreak Lab. Trees were planted at the site to study the effect of wind protection on crop yields.

Besides studying trees and pollination methods, attending conferences around the country and "developing disease-resistant varieties among hardwood trees," Bagley finds time to tend his hobby — his Christmas tree farm east of Lincoln. He calls this another one of his "dream-come-trues."

"The farm is a way of putting into practice what might be useful to farmers. The farm has improved the habitat for ourselves and for the animals," he said. "We're just trying to do what everybody else should be doing too. Take care of this land."

"Accounting firm sets up professorship at UNL

The international accounting and consulting firm of Touche Ross & Co. Thursday established a distinguished School of Accountancy professorship at UNL in honor of the firm's chairman of the board, W. Grant Gregory. The announcement was made in conjunction with UNL Master's Week.

Gregory is the former head of the Touche Ross Omaha office and is a 1964 UNL graduate. John T. Connor, national director of tax for the firm and a 1966 UNL graduate, made the announcement at a Thursday morning Master's Week press conference at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education.

The annual gift of \$5,000 to the NU Foundation will be furnished by the Touche Ross executive office in New York and the Nebraska offices, which Gregory established in 1971 and which now are headed by Joseph Pfeister.

Connor said the firm is honoring the professional accomplishments of Gregory.

D.B. "Woody" Varner, chairman of the board of directors of the NU Foundation in accepting the gift said, "we are grateful to have the name of Grant Gregory recognized on this campus."

A native of Tabor, Iowa, Gregory interned with Touche Ross in New York during his junior year as a UNL accounting major. After graduation, he was employed by the New York office and was made a partner in 1971.

Gary Schwendiman, dean of the UNL College of Business Administration, also was present to accept the School of Accounting professorship. Schwendiman said accounting is one of the most difficult fields in the university.

"We're proud of the fact that we have high standards in the School of Accountancy," he said.

According to the Touche Ross agreement, the candidates for the professorship will be evaluated on the basis of their accomplishments in teaching and research. The appointment will be made for a 5-year term, renewable for a similar term after satisfactory evaluation. An annual stipend will supplement the state-supported salary of the Gregory Professor.

UNL Chancellor Martin Masengale will make the nomination of the professorship and the appointment will be made by action of the NU Board of Regents.

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