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Elwood R. Maunder to John, 5 December 1956

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Forest History Foundation, Inc.

2706 W. Seventh Boulevard
SAINT PAUL 16, MINN.

December 5, 1956

Dr. John H. Moore
Department of History
University of Mississippi
University, Mississippi

Dear John:

Many thanks for your letter of November 30th which has afforded me a considerable measure of relief in the midst of an amazing number of pressures I am under at the present moment.

Thanks for the information concerning our scheduled appearance on the program of the AHA meetings. I still have not received a program and if you have a spare one please send it along.

I am working on my paper and expect to have it ready before the generous Christmas deadline you have given me. It's very kind of you to give me this much additional time and you may depend I shall send you the paper before Christmas if it is at all possible.

At the moment, as you might expect, I am awaiting news from Victoria concerning the outcome of the important Board meeting which was held there yesterday. The future of the Foundation was very much at stake in this meeting as you may be able to see for yourself in reading my enclosed report to the Board. We have reached the critical point in this whole operation where the Foundation will really grow as a result of increased support of its program by the industry or it will fizzle out very slowly and die like a lot of other good causes. It is unfortunate, I believe, that the industry is right now in a somewhat depressed state and may not be in the mood to accept the challenge I have thrown down. My feeling is, however, that we cannot continue for ever on the half-hearted basis of the past and we must now within the next six or eight months decide how important this work really is. If it is important, then it should be set up on a sounder financial basis.

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My condition of anxiety over the Foundation's future is paralleled by my anxieties over the anticipated arrival of our expected third child. Margaret is now well past the "due date" and we are all chewing our fingernails a bit over that.

In my talk in St. Louis I plan to sketch briefly the history of the Foundation from its inception in 1946 as a special project of the Minnesota Historical Society to the present development of the program under my leadership. I plan to give attention to the program of collecting which we have begun in a number of states through state committees on forest history such as your own in Mississippi. I shall make considerable point of the fact that Foundation is in itself ^{not} a collecting agency but serves as a clearing house for repositories such as the Lumber Archives in the University of Mississippi, and I would like to have from you for use as a part of my paper any information you can give me concerning your present setup, your accomplishments to date, and your plans for the future. In a very real sense I believe the Mississippi setup is more soundly established than that in any other state and this is due, of course, in large measure to the energy of Jim Silver and the leadership that you and he are giving to the program.

I am coming more and more to believe that the Foundation must now sponsor specific research projects in each of the major forested regions in order to command greater attention to its total program and therefrom win greater financial support. My proposal of a research project for ^{the} West in the meeting in Victoria yesterday is of course a trial balloon in this direction and I am of course still not informed as to the outcome.

Your continued evidence of concern for the success of this effort is most sincerely appreciate. Believe me, it would be most discouraging to me if I did not have the sympathetic understanding and good counsel of people like you and Jim Silver.

I am now planning to drive to St. Louis the day before the meeting and I plan to take with me my research associate, Clodaugh Neiderheiser, and my newly employed field representative, Bruce Harding, both of whom I hope you will get to know better during the coming year. I hope we shall be able to get to the Sheraton Plaza early enough on Thursday, the 27th, to hold a pre-meeting council with you and the others on the program. Dean Blegen has indicated to me that he expects to be at the meeting and will probably take part in the panel. This, of course, is a matter which is subject to change. I am now preparing for Blegen a few notes which he has indicated he would like to have on Stanley Horn. If you as a southern

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historian can give me a few personal evaluations on Horn's work both in the fields of Civil War history and regional forest history, I would be much in your debt.

With cordial best wishes,

Sincerely,

ERM:sl
enc.
cc:Dr. James Silver

Elwood R. Maunder
Director