



Forest and the Trees: A Memoir of a Man, a Family, and a Company

Floyd McGowin

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Norman Floyd McGowin Jr., author of *The Forest and the Trees: A Memoir of a Man, a Family, and a Company*, was born into a prosperous family whose W. T. Smith Lumber Company dominated the small town of Chapman in Butler County in south Alabama. Family members achieved distinction in business, politics, the arts, and society. Floyd grew up, as he put it, during "periods of our region's and country's history that have encompassed momentous social, political, economic, and technological change. More took place in the last two-thirds of the 20th century along these lines than probably during any comparable period. My life has been full and interesting, and I have been privileged to know a lot of people and be involved in situations that illustrate change in both the physical aspects of life as well as the values that affect it." Thus while in that "era of my life between active employment and impotent geezerhood, where I see things with more clarity and truth than previously," he decided to write a memoir so that his grandson Peter and other young people "might better understand what is different and what is the same with regard to the past." His story unfolds in three parts: family, early education, and surroundings; Yale University and the Marine Corps; and his formative years in business. "It is my hope that this book will pay adequate tribute to those people and times that have formed mine," he wrote.

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