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The Greatest Good

Char Miller
Pomona College

Rebecca Staebler

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THE GREATEST GOOD

by CHAR MILLER AND REBECCA STAEBLER



PLATE 34

The following is an excerpt from Chapter Two: "Early Growth" of *The Greatest Good: 100 Years of Forestry in America*. Through text and photographs the book explores the European roots of forestry, early forestry education and practice in the United States, the boom in research and production following World War II, and the technologies and practices that will see the profession into the 21st century.

I believe that there is no body of men who have it in their power today to do a greater service to the country than those engaged in the scientific study of, and practical application of, approved methods of forestry for the preservation of the woods of the United States.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 1903

PLATE 34

Biltmore Forest School, Asheville, North Carolina, c. 1900; Carl Schenk stands third from left. Cradle of Forestry



PLATE 107



PLATE 123



PLATE 56

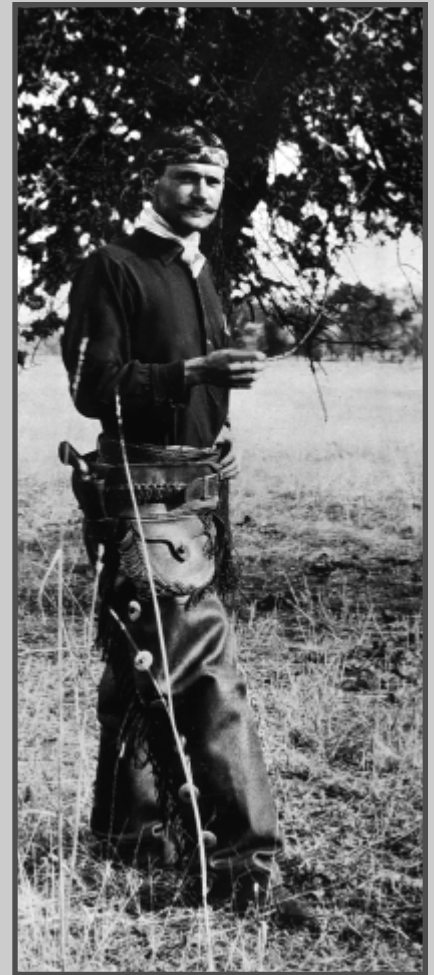


PLATE 55

President Roosevelt's confidence in the contributions foresters would make to the commonweal was not misplaced, just premature. The Society of American Foresters was then only three years old; and the first schools—Biltmore (1898), Cornell (1898), and Yale (1900)—had barely opened (and Cornell had already closed). But foresters' knowledge would increase rapidly, a result of investment in education, the creation of the Forest Service—which hired many forestry graduates—and practical experience gained in public and private woods.

The number of challenges these first professionals confronted, and worked to surmount, were many: fire and insect infestations led to scientific and technological breakthroughs; grazing on public

lands required research into the impact of livestock on grasslands; burned over or heavily logged property forced public agencies and, in time, timber companies to initiate reforestation projects.

None of these developments were free of controversy. The introduction of steam-powered skidders, ever-more efficient saw mills, and railroads intensified environmental despoliation and boosted demands for greater protection of the nation's forests. Public foresters were also under assault. During President Roosevelt's tenure, the acreage the Forest Service managed in the West multiplied quickly, an increase that was as hotly debated as was the agency's decision to raise fees to control use.

By the 1920s, a more cooperative relationship between industrial and

public foresters emerged, especially related to fire suppression. That decade also witnessed intensified recreational use of the national forests, leading to the first wilderness area, a trend toward tourism reinforced during the Depression when on public lands the Civilian Conservation Corps built cabins, trails, and other amenities. In response to the growing demand for new housing, which like recreation would only accelerate after World War II, scientists developed more efficient uses of timber to revolutionize the construction industry. The varied human benefits that now derived from their efforts gave professional foresters, as they headed off to war, the confidence that they had earned Theodore Roosevelt's early praise.

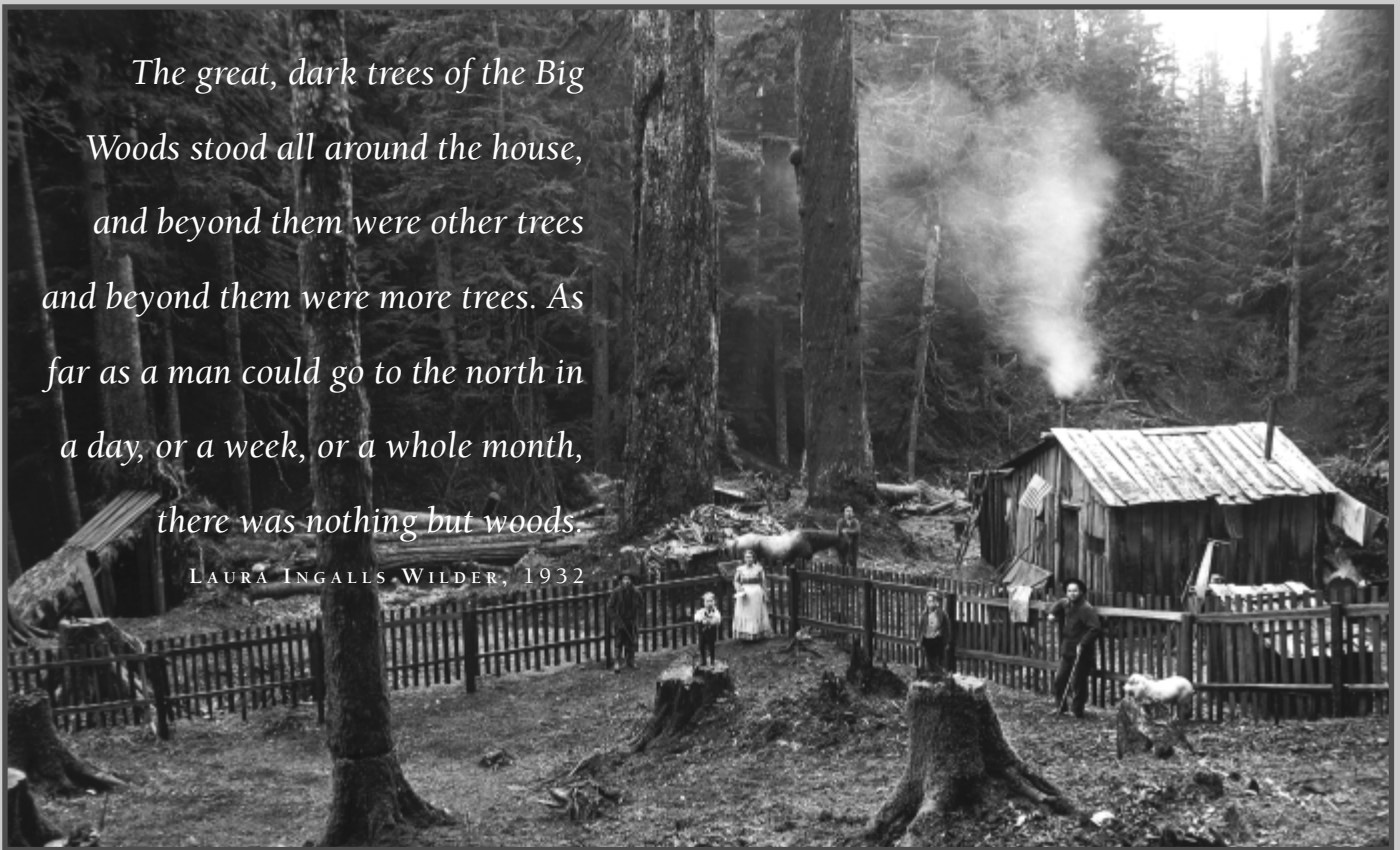


PLATE 97



PLATE 101

While young foresters were being educated and trained in universities, families from Texas to Washington continued to base their lives and livelihood in and around the forest.



The great, dark trees of the Big Woods stood all around the house, and beyond them were other trees and beyond them were more trees. As far as a man could go to the north in a day, or a week, or a whole month, there was nothing but woods.

Laura Ingalls Wilder, 1932

PLATE 62

PLATE 55
Forest Assistant W.H.B. Kent, Huachuca (now Coronado) National Forest, Arizona, 1905. USDA Forest Service 422214

PLATE 56
Forest entomologist, California, 1903. USDA Forest Service 26875

PLATE 62
The Vanzer homestead in Washington, 1906. D. Kinsey Collection, 10157(a), Whatcom Museum of History and Art

PLATE 97
Breakfast, Round Valley, California, 1922. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the US Forest Service

PLATE 101
Using free timber, Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota, 1913. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the US Forest Service

PLATE 107
Xylotomists preparing wood sections for microscopic inspection, 1911. Forest

Service Photograph Collection, National Agricultural Library, 44051

PLATE 123
Tamping seedlings into transplant beds, Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia, 1927. National Archives, Still Pictures, Records of the US Forest Service

From survey to sawmill, from Arkansas to Washington and Michigan to Arizona, crews were at work in the woods, supported by cooks, saw sharpeners, and drivers. And when the work was done, the land cleared, and the logs transported by horse, train, or ship, the crews moved on to work in yet another vast and plentiful forest.



PLATE 68



PLATE 84



PLATE 161



PLATE 89



PLATE 60



PLATE 116

In the 1920s and 1930s a series of natural disasters swept through the country, destroying hundreds of thousands of acres of forestland. Fires tore through much of the country, and by train, horseback, foot, and airplane firefighters arrived to battle the blaze.

Got the fire under control. My knees have scabbed over and feel pretty good today, but my hands are in a hell of a shape. Damned if I'll ever fight fire with my bare hands again.

R. L. WOESNER, N. D.

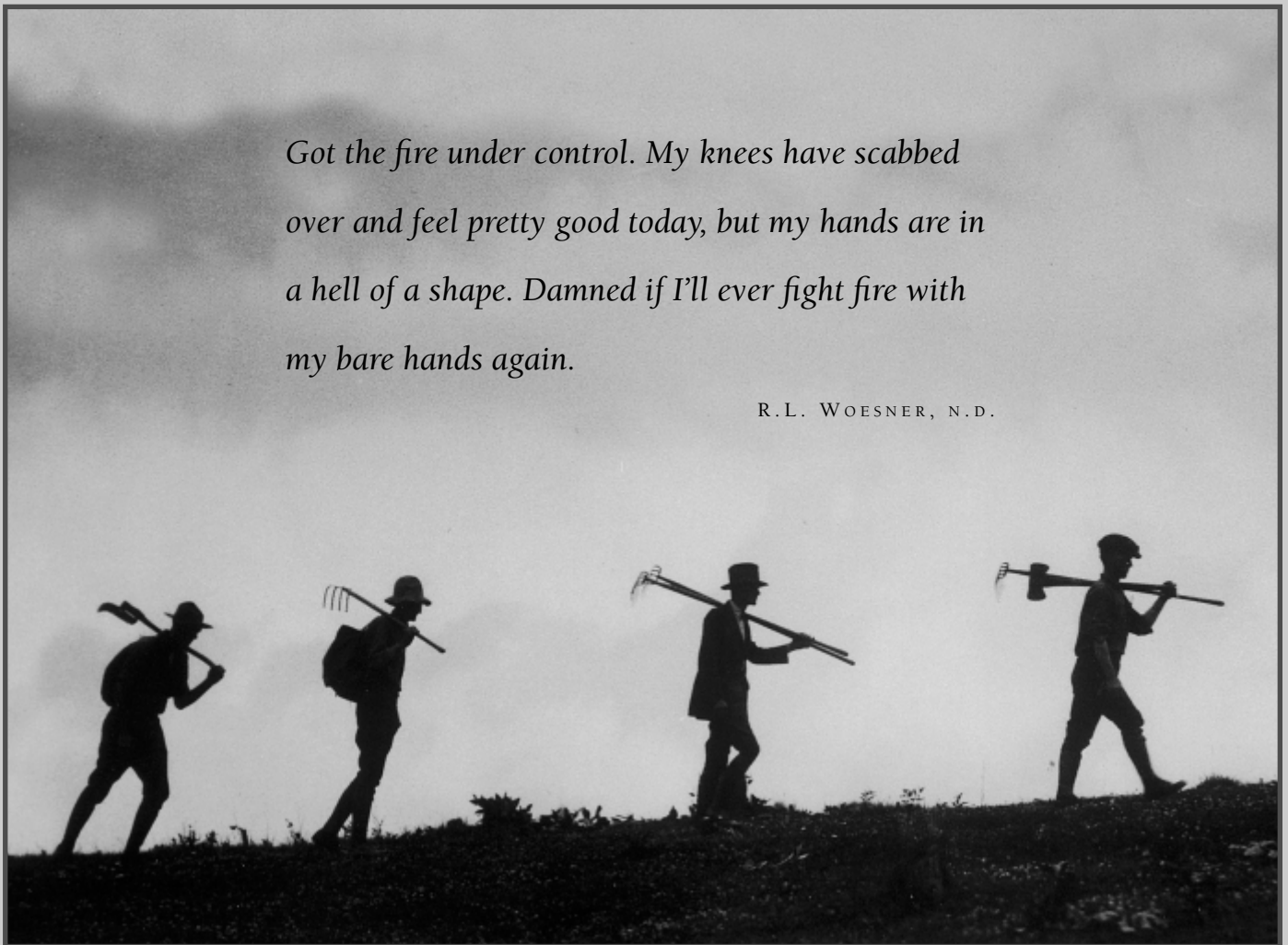


PLATE 135

PLATE 60
Helen Dowe using Osborne Fire Finder, Devil's Head Lookout, Colorado, 1919. USDA Forest Service 42827A

PLATE 84
Marquette Dead River sawmill, Presque Isle, Michigan. Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections

PLATE 116
Speeder fire patrol, San Joaquin and Eastern Railroad, California, 1913. USDA Forest Service 18263A

PLATE 161
Caterpillar logging, Pacific Northwest, 1937. D. Kinsey, negative 194x, University of Washington Libraries

PLATE 68
Cypress timber, southern Arkansas. Forest History Society

PLATE 89
Moving day, Cherry Valley Logging Company, Washington. Weyerhaeuser Company Archives

PLATE 135
Firefighters, Pisgah National Forest, North Carolina, 1923. USDA Forest Service 176513



1999 First Prize winner, books category, Association Trends

If a picture is worth a thousand words,



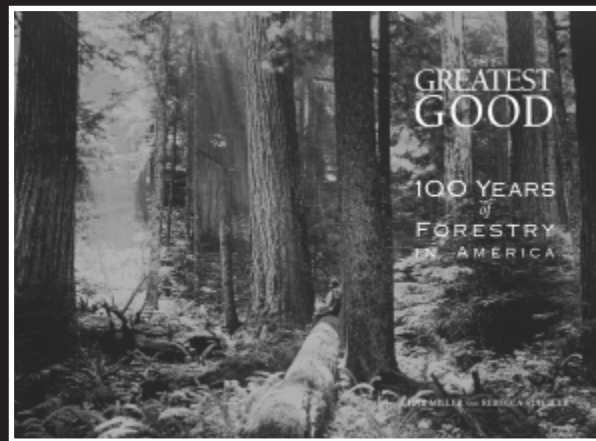
Biltmore Forest School, 1905



Rabbit Fire, Idaho City, 1994

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The Society of American Foresters celebrates its centennial with the release of *The Greatest Good: 100 Years of Forestry in America*. This pictorial history of forestry features 350 exquisite photos, gathered from a wealth of sources. *The Greatest Good* proudly illustrates the innovations, challenges, and successes of foresters and forestry, from 1900 to today.



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Char Miller and Rebecca Staebler

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