The Beginning of Forestry Instruction at Ames and The Iowa State College Forestry Summer Camps

L. H. Pammel  
*Iowa State College*

Rolland Rotty  
*Iowa State College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/amesforester](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/amesforester)  
🔗 Part of the [Forest Sciences Commons](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/amesforester)

Recommended Citation

Available at: [https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/amesforester/vol15/iss1/5](https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/amesforester/vol15/iss1/5)
The Beginning of Forestry Instruction at Ames

and

The Iowa State College Forestry Summer Camps

By Dr. L. H. Pammel
Reworked by Rolland Rotty, '28

This paper is divided into two parts, one dealing with the Iowa State College problem and the State of Iowa, the second with the forestry camp and its value to the students.

I.

How came forestry to be established at Ames? The pioneers who settled in Iowa were lovers of trees. They came from countries or sections of our own country where trees were abundant. They were homesick because of the

Dr. L. H. Pammel in one of Iowa's State Parks.
absence of trees, and so the Iowa State Horticultural Society and the old Agricultural Society urged the planting of trees to break the force of the wind during summer and winter. The farms needed fences, but there was no wood to make posts, rails and boards, so an era of hedge planting started. The numerous osage orange hedges in the state bear testimony to the importance of hedge plants.

In 1873 Hon. J. Sterling Morton of Nebraska City, Nebraska, started a movement, now known as Arbor Day Movement. The Iowa State Horticultural Society for a number of years asked that a certain day be set aside for the planting of trees. Later the Nebraska Arbor Day movement was used by the society. In those days in Iowa many men were interested in planting trees. Prominent among these were J. L. Budd, Judge Whiting of Monona County, and Col. John Scott.

The State Horticultural Society sponsored the movement for the publication of a forest manual and brought it out in 1879. In this pamphlet directions are given for the planting of trees and the species to plant. It had a wonderful influence on Iowa forestry and did much to create a sentiment for the planting of trees and to establish a chair of forestry at Ames. In fact, the Iowa State Horticultural Society urged the trustees at Ames to establish such a chair.

About this time came another important movement, now generally known as the Conservation Movement. National legislation establishing national forests was the start of this. It is interesting to note here that Iowa had a large part in the legislation concerning national forests. That peerless Iowa statesman, Major John F. Lacey, as chairman of the Public Lands Committee, urged and succeeded in getting the necessary legislation for the establishment of the national forests.

The sentiment for forestry instruction at Iowa State College began in the seventies, when Prof. J. L. Budd was elected to the chair of horticulture and forestry in 1877. When Professor Budd became Professor Emeritus of Horticulture, Prof. John Craig gave some instruction in forestry to students of horticulture and agriculture. Prof. A. T. Erwin, acting head of the department of horticulture, for several years, in an admirable way, also gave some instruction to the same class of students in the college.

During the administration of Prof. S. A. Beach, the forestry work was recognized as of sufficient importance to have a four year course giving a degree of B. S. in Forestry established. The first distinctive forestry work was given
by Prof. H. P. Baker. He was a professional forester, a well trained man in forestry and a graduate of the Michigan Agricultural College. He resigned to go to the State College of Pennsylvania, and then to Syracuse University. Associated with him was Prof. N. C. Brown, who later became connected with Syracuse University.

Prof. Charles Scott followed Professor Baker. On the resignation of Professor Scott to become connected with Kansas State College, Prof. G. B. MacDonald, a graduate of the University of Nebraska, became the very efficient head of the department. I need only to say that the selection was a wise one because he has most efficiently carried on the work in this state.

Professor MacDonald was ably assisted by Prof. T. R. Truax, one of our graduates, who has done fine work in the U. S. Forest Products laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. Prof. Geo. C. Morbeck also became associated with the department. Professor Morbeck, a Michigan Agricultural College graduate, a legislator in Idaho and a practical forester, did his work most efficiently. He later resigned to become connected with the U. S. Forest Products laboratory at Madison. Then Prof. H. J. Andrews, a graduate of the University of Michigan and who is now connected with the conservation work with the State of Michigan, gave Iowa fine service.

At present four splendid men are associated with Professor MacDonald. Mr. I. T. Bode, one of our graduates, was...
an instructor and now ably represents forestry in the extension service. He is taking a fine message to the people of Iowa. Prof. D. S. Jeffers, a graduate of Yale School of Forestry and with a wide range of experience in the U. S. F. S., is a fine teacher. Prof. Perkins Coville, a graduate of the Cornell University School of Forestry, has also brought with him fine practical experience and is a most excellent teacher. Prof. J. A. Larsen, graduate of the Yale School of Forestry, was connected with the U. S. F. S., investigating some important forestry problems, before coming to Ames. Professor Larsen is a thorough student, familiar with the intricate problems of the forest and well equipped to give the students the benefit of his knowledge.

In other words, every man connected with the department brings to the classroom and laboratory research matters which are worth while; they are giving the best material along their special lines and are doing it in a splendid way because of their experience and personality.

Part II.

The Summer Camps

I suspect the readers of the Ames Forester are more especially interested in the history of the forestry camp, at least my good young friend, Mr. Rindt, asked me to tell something about this phase of your work.

It is important, yes, very important. You know, I sometimes think it would be a fine thing if every college student could spend a month or two in the woods with a competent instructor. It would be a fine thing for the development of fine manhood and womanhood. Recently I heard a sermon by my rector, who mentioned the use of thanksgiving by the men of old during Bible times. They thanked God because they were men and women who had to do with the production of a crop. They were rewarded from the products of the soil. Hence they returned thanks. I think this contact with the soil has a peculiar significance for us of today. Most of us are away from it. We should get that touch as you are doing in these camps. From them you not only know the soil and what it produces, but you get to know your fellow men better and what a fine thing this is. It is one of the great things of your education, so this camp is a fine institution which you have established.

I find that the first mention made of a summer camp is in the Ames Forester for 1914. This article outlines the ideas and methods of your camp. It was in this year (1914) that the first summer camp was held. It was located near
Cass Lake, Minnesota, on Star Island, in the center of Cass Lake.

I remember the interesting times I had studying the plant life of the region. Lake Helen and Cedar Island were attractive. The Mississippi river and Cass Lake region, too, were interesting. There were present with the boys Prof. G. B. MacDonald, Prof. T. R. Truax; and of the students I recall I. Bode, Max Geisler and P. S. McNutt.

I brought back with me a great number of plants and later contributed a paper on the Flora of Star Island, which was published in the 1915 Ames Forester. Professor Truax, in addition to his intense work in the camp, wrote an interesting paper—Reproductive Studies on the Minnesota National Forest—a paper published in the Ames Forester of 1915.

The summer camp for 1915 was at Cloquet, Minnesota. This was in the heart of an important lumbering section of Minnesota. I spent about a week here. I was personally interested in making a brief study of the jack pine forests and the flora of this forest. The University of Minnesota has established an experiment station and nursery near here and I was interested in looking over the experiments made there.

In 1916 the Ames foresters did not have a permanent camp. Professor MacDonald and Prof. Geo. C. Morbeck ac-
companied the foresters on a seven thousand mile trip. Professor MacDonald gave an interesting account of this trip under the heading, "Seven Thousand Miles with the Ames Foresters," in the Forester of 1917.

This trip was made through Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota. The class was in the field for 12 weeks under the direction of 3 members of the faculty. The students had an opportunity to observe the principal timber types in all the important lumber regions of western United States as well as to make detailed studies of logging and milling operations. During the trip three Forest Service experimental stations several nurseries and 141 National Forests were visited. Camps were established at the different stops and, except in a few cases, meals were served in camp.

There were evidently no summer camps for the years 1917 or 1918, at least I can remember none nor find records of any.

The summer camp of 1919 was in the Arapaho National Forest. The students during this summer had an opportunity to see one of the fine glaciers in the Arapaho Mountains. The students made a study of the plants of

Ames Foresters in North Carolina—1922.
beaver swamps, Alpine flora of Beyer Peak, and the plant life of the plains adjacent to the mountains in the vicinity of Frasier, Colo. The Ames Forester of 1920 published an interesting account of "A Summer Camp on the Arapahoe." As this article has much of historical information, I quote from it:

"The first summer camp of the Ames foresters was conducted on Star Island in Cass Lake, on the Minnesota National Forest. Subsequent camps have not all been permanent, but rather have consisted of more or less protracted stops at points where various phases of forestry could be studied to advantage. An arrangement of this kind enabled the foresters in 1916 to study practical forestry operations on government and private lands in practically all of the Western states and in Minnesota. Other camps have included a shorter itinerary with longer stops. There was made desirable a change in the conduct of camp during 1918. Able-bodied men could not conscientiously be withdrawn from productive employment, so the summer camp students were placed in the woods and at the mill of the Crossett-Western Lumber Company at Wauna, Oregon, and patriotically did what they could to "can the Kaiser" by assisting in getting out ship timbers and aeroplane stock.

"The summer camp of 1919 was located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Professor MacDonald preceded the party to select the site. After confering with Forest officers at Denver and upon looking over the country with particular reference to the requirements in the work to be given, a location on the Arapahoe National Forest was chosen.

"The exact site of the camp was at the confluence of Spruce Creek and West St. Louis, about a quarter of a mile above the Byers Ranger Station, and about five miles southwest of the small town of Frasier, located on the railroad and also on the main highway."

The 1920 camp was in Montana in the Gallatin National Forest and ended by a trip to the Yellowstone National Park. I was not present.

The summer camp in 1921 was at Cloquet. The camp was located on the St. Louis River not far from Cloquet, 20 miles west of Duluth. Many interesting side trips seem to have featured this camp - Cloquet, Pelican Island, Duluth, etc. A most interesting account of this camp is in the Forester of 1922.

In 1922 the Ames foresters spent the summer in the Pisgah National Forest near Asheville, North Carolina, in
the heart of one of the most magnificent hardwood forests of the United States. Near Asheville is the famous Biltmore estate with its thousands of acres covered with fine hardwood trees and conifers. I was not at the camp, but I am sure that Jeffers, Andrews and the other instructors gave the students the best kind of training. In the Ames Forester of 1923 N. K. C. published a most excellent account of this summer camp.

In 1923 the camp was located in Frazier, Colorado. It was my pleasure to have been in this camp, along with Prof. G. B. MacDonald and D. S. Jeffers. The 1924 Forester has an interesting account of this and the preceding camps under the head of “Ten Summers of Camp with the Ames Foresters.”

The camp was located not far from the Moffett Tunnel, at an altitude of about 9200 feet, and not far from the highway going over Berthoud Pass. The timber in this particular area had been cut and burned over. In the vicinity were some fine swamps with little lakes and parks. A beaver colony had re-established itself in one of the swamps and the busy animals were building their dam. Several miles below the camp are some interesting marshes in the flood plain of the Frazier river which afforded the class in botany an opportunity to make a comparative study of the flora of the meadow swamp, dry mesa and forest. Above the camp was a fine forest of lodge pole pine and Engelmann spruce.

It was my pleasure to escort the students of James Peak, named after Edwin James, the botanist who explored the region about Longs Peak and Pikes Peak early last century. The timber line and alpine plants were particularly fine here.

The 1924 camp was located near Stambaugh, Michigan, in a most interesting section of the northern peninsula of Michigan. Much of this region had once been logged over and the coniferous trees removed, but there were magnificent yellow birch, elm, and hard maple in the region. The region is interesting because of the many fine lakes, the morainic hills not far from camp and the iron range and the archaean rock.

The camp was located on the shores of Lake Haggerman. A logging camp was close by. This was where I bunked, and took my meals with the foresters. The camp was in charge of Professors Jeffers and Coville. Professor MacDonald was also there to give the boys instruction. The students were willing to put in long hours to study the plant
life of the region. We made a study of the jack pine forest, lake and archaean rock plant types. "Slim" in a humorous way had given a most excellent account of the doings of this camp in the Forester of 1925.

The writer wishes to state that a most excellent series of papers handed in by the boys made possible the publication of a paper on the "Botany of the Pike Bay Summer Camp of the Ames Foresters."

The camp in 1925 was located at Cass Lake, Minnesota. It was my pleasure to have been at this camp. Mr. Harold F. Scholz has given an excellent account of this in the 1926 Ames Forester. As in all previous camps, the days were full days, with the boys and the instructors. This camp was on Pike Bay, one of the large bays of Cass Lake. There was fine timber and an ideal place for a study of aquatic plant life, Jack and red pine forests, and the botany of Itaska Lake region, the source of the Mississippi.

The camp of 1926 was located at Ontonagon, Michigan. The Ontonagon country is most interesting in many ways. The superb view of Lake Superior, the interesting Porcupine Mountains heavily timbered, the interesting peat bogs and tamarack marshes at Bergland and the burnt over areas near the camp made it a desirable place to study plant life. The region, too, is interesting from the standpoint of the old copper mine, and the old silver mines where the camp was located. It was once a station for the Hudson Bay Company in the early days. A large number of interesting plants were collected. It was interesting to note the succession of plant life. The days while I was there were busy indeed, studying plant life from morning until evening. The students here, as at the other camps, helped me in making a large collection of plants for the college collection.

Professors Larson and Jeffers were at the camp during my stay. The writer wishes to express his appreciation of the kindness shown him in this camp and all others and I can assure you that the students have received fine forestry training which will be of great service to them in the future.

I was interested at one little incident that occurred in our trip over to the tamarack marsh, and that was this: I told the boys that we ought to find the pitcher plant and the sundew. The boys seemed to have remembered this from their study in the freshman botany and at once started out to look for these plants and soon found them in the tamarack swamp. They had remembered some of their freshman botany.