

HS 215 15048

These discussions are from a Forest Service Chief's meeting in 1924 including most of the Assistant Foresters (the equivalent of today's Deputy Chiefs). Miss J. S. Peyton is listed in the April 1924 Forest Service Directory as working in the office of Timber Management under "Compilation of State Forestry Laws."

MINUTES *of the* 1057th MEETING *of the* SERVICE COMMITTEE

MARCH 27, 1924

Present: Col. Greeley, Chairman; Messrs. Sherman, Barnes, Carter, Clapp, Headley, Kneipp, Norcross, Reed, H. A. Smith, Sudworth; Miss Adams, Miss Allen, Mrs. Armstrong, Miss Bauskett, Miss Bell, Mrs. Blackley, Miss Blaisdell, Miss Blaurock, Mrs. Brenizer, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Conway, Miss Daniel, Mrs. Deaderick, Miss Fackerell, Miss Flanagan, Miss Gardner, Miss Geddes, Miss Gill, Mrs. Greenley, Mrs. Haupt, Mrs. Heisley, Miss Holcombe, Mrs. Hoyle, Miss Keleher, Miss Latimer, Miss Leech, Miss Levy, Miss McDevitt, Miss McGowan, Mrs. Malcolm, Miss Mehurin, Miss Meynes, Mrs. Miller, Miss Moore, Miss Mowbray, Miss Murphy, Miss Nugent, Mrs. Pence, Miss Peyton, Miss Randall, Miss Edith Simonson, Miss Sizer, Miss Dorothy Smith, Miss Helen Smith, Miss Stewart, Mrs. Walters, Miss Warren, Mrs. Webb.

Col. Greeley said that the question before the house to-day was the good of the Union; and he delegated Mrs. Conway to open the discussion.

Mrs. Conway: Several Months ago—on November 30, to be exact—one of the usual large Service meetings was attended by a few Service women. The subject discussed at

that meeting was "Sympathetic and stimulating relations between coordinate units of the Service and between supervising officers and their men." After that meeting was over, the idea was advanced that it might be worth while to have a similar meeting of Service women, at which they would have opportunity to present their ideas and suggestions on this subject; and Mr. Headley designated me to arrange such a meeting. Later a representative from each Branch, one from Accounts, and one from District 7 were asked to form a committee to plan and discuss a program. To-day's gathering is the result.

We want it understood in the beginning that the women of the Service appreciate what has already been done to make working conditions pleasant; they appreciate the fact that the Advisory Committee was appointed with the object in view of improving working conditions and giving everybody a fair chance. We thank the Forester for appointing the Advisory Committee and we thank the committee for the excellent work it has performed. We believe that it has accomplished many worth while things. We also believe that we have one or two suggestions to offer which may be helpful. With these introductory remarks, I will present Miss

Peyton as the first speaker, to be followed by Mrs. Pence and others.

Miss Peyton: Before making any suggestions, I would like to invite attention to a matter of vital importance, not only to the Forest Service but to all of the Government departments, since it is one that involves considerable lost motion in respect to the operation of one and all more or less. The matter I have in mind is the fact that the departments rarely get the full value of women's services, owing apparently, to failure to pursue a line of policy calculated to secure that result. Reduced to figures, the matter may be summed up as follows. Women probably comprise at least 50 per cent of our Washington force, which numbers approximately 200 employees; while the entire departmental forces in the city are reckoned at about fifty or sixty thousand, with women doubtless in somewhat the same proportion. Consequently, this matter we are speaking of appears to affect fully 25,000 Government workers in this city alone. Add to that figure the number of women forming part of the Government's field forces throughout the entire country and it would seem that the total reached would be conclusive upon the point that failure to pursue a policy that would insure getting the full value of the services of any such army of workers must necessarily involve a large per cent of lost motion. That fact is clearly susceptible of mathematical demonstration.

But does the Government fail in this respect? In reply let me illustrate. The first summer after I came to the Service a group of freshly-graduated students arrived from one of the forest schools, painfully young, immature looking, and inexperienced, to such an extent indeed, as to cause quite a number of facetious remarks at their expense, one young forester going so far as to remark that they looked too young to be out without their mothers. That's the way their fellow workers viewed them and giped them. Then suddenly something else caught and held my attention. The heads of the Service evidently saw those boys from some different angle. The Service didn't see mere boys. It saw *potentialities*. It was not looking at the present. It visioned the future. It took into account that the diplomas held by the students sponsored the fact that they had gone one-half of the way towards becoming fine foresters; that they already

possessed two of the four requisites to that end, namely: (1) They were endowed with faculties—their working capital; and (2) they had added to that an education specially fitting them for their line of work. Nor was that all; those men of broad vision saw not only the diplomas sponsoring the boys' past, but they saw *themselves* in the light of sponsors for the boys' future.

They discerned clearly that the career of those young fellows called next for responsibility, that developing force that ultimates in experience; and which could only be bestowed by the Service. Consequently the time had now come for

the Service to play its part in the matter of education by placing upon the young shoulders the needed weight of responsibility; and the Service saw and met its opportunity. It played its part and played it well; with the result that the boys gained for themselves, through discharge of their duties, the final requisite, experience. All that was nearly 20 years ago. To-day, if that group of students could be with us we would doubtless recognize some of the pillars in the Forest Service of the present.

That pictures the wise and altogether rational course that is pursued with regard to men when they enter the Service—a course of development, fine in both its concept and execution, and equally abundant in good results. It stands to the Nation's credit.

Now, glance for a moment at its counterpart, when women enter the Departments. For far more than 20 years I have been watching closely a steady flow from the Civil Service to the Departments, not of boys but of girls—most of them very young and fresh from a high school or other course sufficiently broad in its general scope to fit them for growing up to and grappling with much of a vast amount of high grade clerical and other work (especially when supplemented with special courses, as need arises.) Has it been the custom to meet these young workers also at the threshold; to vision their future; to sponsor their interests, by placing needed responsibilities on their shoulders; as a means towards an end? Has broad vision again recognized its duty and thereby put these inexperienced workers in a position to use their mental faculties and *grow*? Has it exercised a guardianship over their life interests such as would insure to them also a process of development?

A few figures may again prove helpful at this point. In our own Bureau, the records in our Office of Accounts show



FOREST HISTORY SOCIETY PHOTO

Women had handled office jobs almost from the beginning of the Forest Service, but it wasn't until 1913 that a woman was hired for a field position. This office photo shows the 2nd version of Forest Service uniforms in business sack coat style. Leadville, Colorado, 1909.

that to-day out of our force of 100 or so women, but six stand in the \$1,800 salary class and but one has passed up to \$2,000; and salary grade should be a good index to the nature of the work. In other words, mere routine work seems largely to measure the opportunity of the remaining ninety-three women, and the term "routine" is far from suggesting either opportunity or growth. Taking such a case at random as furnishing something of a sample, it would seem to indicate that the process with regard to women workers in the Departments takes scant thought of their development. Their history might in fact be written to a large extent in four words: No responsibilities, no experience. And the result? Have they just stood still through all these years of arduous toil? By no means. What has happened to them might easily be indicated in three fateful words: Unused fac-

"I expect to see the women running Public Relations one of these days. I am not sure but what they are doing it now."

ulties atrophy. Think of it—25,000 Government workers in this city, and many times that number throughout the country, retrograding instead of developing! And that in the face of the fact that nothing was ever yet gained by lost motion. Now, reverse the picture, and thereby get a glimpse of these same women as an army of well-developed trained workers. How great the gain!

What the women need is to be tested out at the start; not by any elaborate system, but mainly by being given responsible work, as far as they show capacity for it. Let me illustrate. Soon after entering the General Land Office, some years ago, a paper was given me to copy—one bristling with the usual survey technicalities. When the copy was duly turned in, it was found to be accompanied with a diagram, "short-circuiting" the technical and tedious description. Instantly, the heads thought they glimpsed budding faculties, which is but another term for potentialities; and quite as promptly they proceeded to test those faculties by the altogether reasonable and logical process of substituting responsible work for routine, with the result that I was soon in charge of a desk conducting the preparation of cases for the Department of Justice, involving suits for timber depredations upon Public Domain. Now look back over the years that have since passed, picture what would have resulted had I not been given a chance for original work. To-day I would doubtless be right where I started docketing papers in all probability. Other similar cases in the Land Office could be cited that worked out to the same good purpose.

One the case of a stenographer who, given a chance, rose to the point that when an Indian Reservation was to be opened to settlement, she was sent out as the agent to arrange preliminaries, which included negotiations with the Governors of two States.

Col. Greeley: Miss Peyton, have you any specific suggestions as to the kinds of increased responsibility which should be given to the average woman entering the Forest Service?

Miss Peyton: We know there is work for women in Accounts and Computation. There is a lot of valuable data which the Forest Service needs to compile, similar to Miss Leech's work. There is the work that my desk carries in the compilation and codification of laws. And I think there is great room for developing understudies. Women can also give considerable much-needed instruction with regard to particular duties. And the Service could accomplish a great deal by sending out women to a greater degree than it has to work up the subject of Forestry with women's clubs and in schools.

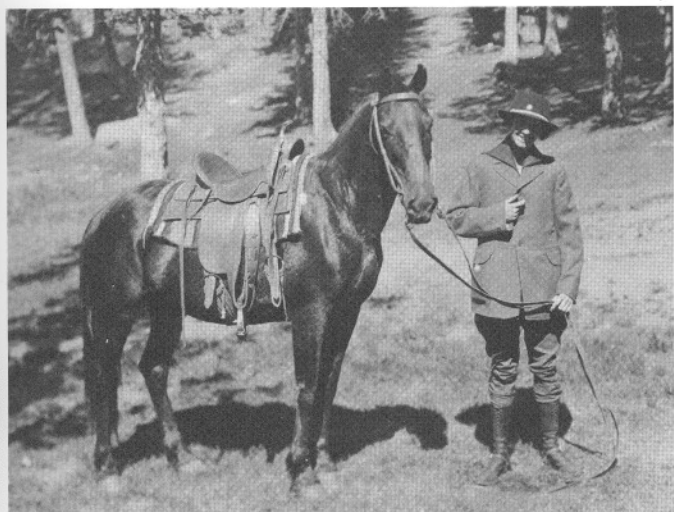
In conclusion, I want to move that the following matters be referred to the Advisory Committee for consideration and report, with recommendations thereon, namely, the advisability of:

(1) Devising some definite, well-thought-out plan to provide for giving women, when they enter the Service, the necessary amount of specialized and general instruction to acquaint them with the general purpose and scope of the work of the Service, and thereby stimulate a sympathetic interest in the work.

(2) Suggesting ways in which women employees may be given additional responsibilities so that they may increase their value to the Service and at the same time afford a basis for advancement in rank, salary, and self-respect.

Miss Adams: My experience in connection with newly appointed stenographers and typists suggests to me some ways in which instructions in the groundwork of the Forest Service may be broadened, strengthened, and made more clear and thus enable them to become more efficient. Hoping that the Advisory Committee can work out something of this kind, I heartily endorse Miss Peyton's resolution.

Miss Gardner: I would like to second Miss Peyton's resolution, too. I cannot speak for women in other lines of work, but we all know that the women in Public Relations have done constructive, original work with women's clubs and the public schools. We would be glad to show you some of the complimentary letters which have been received about the work that has been done. I think the women have shown that they are capable of and are doing something original and worth-while. We all know that the child is the hope of the nation and it is through the woman you reach the child; and it seems to me one of our best opportunities in forestry is to give the women in the clubs and schools the best possible knowledge of forestry. The public school teachers and the women's clubs have been eager to cooperate with the Forest Service and we have had very pleasant relations with them. Speaking for the women who have had an opportunity to do this work, I can say that we love the work and would be glad of an opportunity for more responsibility.



Miss Helen Dowe, observer at the Devil's Head Fire Lookout for the 1919 season. Pike National Forest, Colorado.

Col. Greeley: I expect to see the women running Public Relations one of these days. I am not sure but what they are doing it now.

Miss Warren: When Miss Peyton spoke of loading us up a little more, I thought she was speaking of routine work. I think we are all anxious to have more responsible work given us to handle than we now have.

Col. Greeley: No one can question the soundness of these principles. The problem as I have thought of it is, how far and in what specific ways can we, with the work we have to do, give additional responsibility to the women who enter the Service. There are individual offices where the women can step up as they qualify for it, and we are all glad to see them step into positions of greater responsibility. In many other lines of work there appear to be more or less definite limits, but I am not sure they are as definite as we have thought. I do not know that we could ever expect to see a woman filling the position of chief fire inspector on the National Forests. But as far as I am concerned, we will approach this whole question with no preconceived notions and I will be glad to have the Advisory Committee take these suggestions and submit their recommendations.

Mrs. Pence: The other day at an informal meeting of the committee in charge of this meeting, I made the remark that I did not think the different Branches know as much about the work of all the other Branches as they might. The other evening while talking with some friends, one of them said: "Mrs. Pence, you are an old-timer in the Government; please tell us something about the work of the Forest Service." I was glad to tell them what I could about Lands work but, O my, I felt so empty minded about the rest of the work that I was surely embarrassed. However, I told them some things and they were polite enough to appear satisfied, but I have wondered since whether there are any other women in the Service who feel as I do—that they do not know as much about the work of other Branches as they might. I would like to hear from somebody who can support me in this.

Miss Levy: I have puzzled over this for some time and can see only worthwhile results, both to us as individuals and to the Service as a whole. I think it would be of great help if the Forester would designate once a month, or as often as is deemed advisable, a time when each Branch in turn might present to the members of the Service a brief resume of its work—its scope, achievements, what it hopes to accomplish. This would mean perhaps an hour or so each month, but it would be of immense value in enabling us to see the work of the Service from more than one angle, which would give us a feeling of pride and loyalty to the organization as a whole, and also give us an increased respect for those who are carrying out the work. I remember Mr. Dort's lecture on Alaska and Mr. Wheeler's on the National Forests; and I think all who heard them came away with a broader knowledge of the meaning and the possibilities of the National Forests.

It would of course, have to be left to each Branch to present its work as it sees fit—either in the form of a lecture, illustrated or not, or as an exhibit of some kind which would be open to all members of the Service. Any achievement of general interest to the Service should be presented at such meetings; or notices might be placed on the bulletin board, stating where a particular thing could be viewed, special information obtained, etc.

I should like to make a motion that the Forester's office and each Branch, once a month or as often as may be decided upon, shall present a resume of the nature of its work—its scope, its achievements, its objectives—in order that everyone may understand what the Forest Service stands for, what it is doing, and what it proposes to do.

Col. Greeley: Would you limit these general meetings to matters of particular interest or make them include systematically the work of the whole Forest Service?

Miss Levy: Anything that is of particular interest should be presented, but the main object is to promote a thorough understanding of the work of the Service, as a whole. To me this seems essential, not only for general information to the individual, but also as an aid to intelligent work. When a Branch gets in a rush of work and needs to commandeer outside help, as sometimes happens, those detailed to assist can be of greater service if they have some conception of the work in hand. Certainly it will save the one in charge from explaining every detail of that job.

I would like to add, too, that I have found that the work of the different Branches sometimes overlaps. If one realized what the work of each Branch is, he would doubtless find some logical reason for this apparent duplication of work and would know that, instead of feeling impatient, he should endeavor to carry out the whole scheme rather than his particular corner of it.

Col. Greeley: We have had two definite and valuable suggestions presented; one contained in Miss Peyton's resolution, the other this scheme whereby we would all get together at frequent intervals and hear about the work of the Service as a whole. Are there any other ideas you want to put on the table under the general subject of sympathetic contacts and opportunities for women in the Service? If anyone has sug-

gestions as to particular kinds of additional responsibility that could or should be given to women employees, I would like to hear them. Of course I will ask the Advisory Committee to consider this resolution of Miss Peyton's and go into it thoroughly, but if you have any other suggestions I will appreciate having them.

Mrs. Haupt: I would like to suggest a weekly meeting between the immediate office chief and his subordinates. I think perhaps once every three months would be sufficient for Branch meetings such as have been proposed; but it would be very helpful if each office chief could give perhaps half an hour a week to a meeting at which he would present to his clerks a brief description of the projects in hand and invite questions and discussion. Take, for instance, the major part of our current work; we do a portion of some particular project and then it is taken from us and we rarely know what becomes of it. We would like to know just why we are doing that work and to what end. If a little more light were thrown on our daily work, we feel that closer cooperation and greater efficiency would result.

Col. Greeley: Is it often true that a special load of work is put upon some particular office, such as getting out a lot of special letters, without the people who are doing it really understanding what it is about and why it is urgent?

Miss Warren: I do not think it would be possible to do stenographic work without having some idea of what the work was about. We learn a great deal from the correspondence itself.

Mrs. Chapman: I am a newcomer, having been here but 7 or 8 months, and am just beginning to feel that I know something about the work in our office. But I do not know anything about Service work generally.

Miss Mehurin: I am in Drafting, and personally I have been embarrassed by lack of knowledge of the work of the Service as a whole. I would suggest that a notice of new bulletins of general interest be sent around or placed on the bulletin board. I have had a great deal of pleasure from some of Mr. Mattoon's bulletins on forest trees, and there are probably other publications which would interest us if we knew about them and where to get them.

Mrs. Deaderick: When I first came into the Service I was in the section of Computing and knew nothing at all about the work of the Service in general or what it was driving at. We were working merely with figures and might as well have been calculating machines.

Miss Flanagan: I might say about photographs what has already been said about other interesting work in the Service. We get out from five to ten thousand photo prints a month and also a great number of enlargements for display in schools and exhibits; and it would certainly be instructive and interesting to us all to know where these exhibits are held, etc., and to hear some of the lectures made on them.

Miss Fackerell: In District 2 all new clerks are required to take a study course covering the Manual and related instructions. Examinations are given, and after answering questions regarding all phases of Forest Service work the clerk has at least some knowledge of the objects and activities of the Service. It is believed that even a cursory reading of the

Manual, particularly the Regulations, would give some degree of familiarity with the various lines of work conducted and the general purposes of the Service.

Mrs. Webb: It seems to me a good clerk would go after the knowledge she seeks. There are ways of finding things out; and if you want to learn there are ways of doing so.

Col. Greeley: There are many things we all ought to learn, but we do not seem to unless the method is systematized.

Mr. Headley: I would like to ask if a good line to follow in the presentation of Service and Branch work would be to take as the point of departure the work that is done here in Washington, showing by exhibits or otherwise what those activities mean and tying the presentation to understandable things here instead of jumping directly to aspects of Service work as they appear in the field.

Miss Levy: That is what I had in mind and I think it is what we all want, for lack of knowledge or general information in regard to the Service and its work is distinctly embarrassing. Recently I was told by an outsider that Col. Greeley had appeared before a Congressional committee and testified that a requested appropriation of \$70,000 would yield a revenue of \$200,000. I asked how that could be and he said through timber sales. Then a man connected with a well known lumber company asked me one or two questions about timber sales and I knew nothing at all about them. He knew and understood lumbering thoroughly, yet when he asked me in what capacity he could get into the Forest Service, what openings we had, what he could qualify for, I could tell him nothing specific, for I knew too little about the organization as a whole. I think that we should all know what each Branch does, the nature of its work, and that it should be presented to us in concrete, understandable form.

Mrs. Conway: We want each Branch in turn to have its opportunity to make the rest of the Washington office understand that Branch thoroughly—what it is doing and why. In the course of a few months we will then have an idea of the work being performed by each Branch and its relation to Service work as a whole.

Miss Sizer: I would like to suggest that Mr. Sudworth give us a talk on trees. Few of us know how to identify them or know much about them.

Mr. Sudworth: I feel thoroughly in sympathy with the suggestions which have been made for the advancement of our women in the quality of work they may be fitted to do. There are some instances known to me in which added responsibility, which has been shown to be so necessary in broadening the service women can perform, actually has been worked out. I shall be very glad to give a talk on trees and otherwise to help in any way I can those desiring to increase their knowledge of trees.

Col. Greeley: This has been a very helpful meeting, and I thank you for coming and giving us these ideas.

Adjourned.

EDNA F. CROCKER
Secretary