

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Martin DU 8-4211
Clark DU 8-4026

Washington, September 13, 1963

President to Dedicate Pinchot Home as Institute for Conservation Studies:

President John F. Kennedy Sept. 24 will dedicate the Milford, Pa., ancestral home of Gifford Pinchot as the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies, Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman said today.

Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the Forest Service, was America's most famed forester and conservationist. He was twice Governor of Pennsylvania, and advisor to President Theodore Roosevelt.

Now, the 83-year-old French chateau-type residence known as Grey Towers, where conservation as it is known today originated, will once again be a center for the advancement of conservation education in America, Secretary Freeman said.

The Secretary said the home and 100 acres of grounds and woodland have been deeded to the Federal Government by the families of Gifford and Amos Pinchot. Assisting in the arrangements for acquiring the famous estate was The Conservation Foundation of New York City, one of the Nation's leading private organizations devoted to conservation research and education.

"The U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service," said Secretary Freeman, "has entered into a cooperative agreement with The Conservation Foundation to establish and develop the Pinchot estate as a center for conservation studies and conservation education for the Nation.

"This is a milestone," Secretary Freeman added, "in developing greater public understanding of natural resources, our dependence on them and their dependence on our policies of wise use."

Under terms of the agreement, the Forest Service will provide facilities where conservation groups may meet, where writing teams may work and where scholars may study.

The Conservation Foundation, headed by Samuel H. Ordway, Jr., will finance

the Institute program, including conferences, seminars, and workshops for teachers. The Institute also will serve as a center for the development, testing, and publication of conservation materials, including teachers' manuals for all areas and levels of the school curriculum. It will be directed by Dr. Paul F. Brandwein of The Conservation Foundation and Dr. Mathew J. Brennan of the Forest Service.

"This cooperative enterprise between the Government and our private organization is unique," Mr. Ordway said. "It holds great promise for the future of conservation in America."

The open meadows and virgin white pine and hemlock forests, still on the estate, will be used as demonstration areas to serve as outdoor laboratories and to illustrate land types and methods of conservation for the development of educational programs.

It was at the Pinchot home in the 1880's that the conservation movement in this country had its origin. It was here, he says in his autobiography, Breaking New Ground, that his father, James Pinchot, talked with him about the relationship of forests to the national welfare, and suggested he study forestry, at this time an unknown profession in this country.

The Pinchot families that made this Institute possible are: Dr. and Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, Jr., (of Baltimore) son and daughter-in-law of the late Gifford Pinchot; and Mrs. Ruth Pickering Pinchot (New York City), widow of Amos Pinchot, brother of Gifford.

"I am sure my father would have wanted this very much," said Baltimore physician Dr. Gifford Pinchot, Jr. "Nothing could be more appropriate than making this property available to the Forest Service, the Nation's top conservation agency, which my father founded."

Dr. Pinchot added that four other men who later headed the Forest Service received their field training at the Pinchot estate which was the summer camp for the Yale University Forestry School.

In addition to serving as a conservation education and conference center, a part of Grey Towers will be renovated and preserved as a museum to the memory of Gifford Pinchot. His office and bedroom remain as he left them and will be kept for all time. With some renovation, many of the 41 rooms, still containing the original Pinchot furnishings, will be testimony to elegant 19th century living. The library and his office will be preserved just as he used and left them.

Considerable historical interest surrounds Grey Towers, since many notable conservation meetings were held there when it was the home of the famous forester-politician. Much of his life and times is chronicled in a recent biography: Gifford Pinchot: Forester-Politician, by M. Nelson McGeary, Princeton University Press, 1960.

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