

C O P Y

CROSSETT WATZEK GATES
Chicago

August 8, 1936

Mr. John Woods
National Lumber Manufacturers Assoc.
Washington, D. C.

Dear John:

I envy all of you, because I know from experience what an interesting and delightful experience you are about to have in Germany and Austria this late summer and fall.

You probably will visit some of the places that we visited, and meet some of the people that we met, and if you do I thought it might be worth while to pass on to you some of the information contained in this letter. Ernest Kurth is going with you and I have already sent him a large number of strip Leica print pictures that I took, as well as a copy of "Weidmans Heil" (this means "Woodmans Greetings", and you will hear it continuously) which book our group published when we returned, for the purpose of mailing it back as a memento to the various people that we visited. Ernest, I believe, will have this group of pictures as well as the book with him, and if you have not seen either the pictures or the book before, you will be interested I believe in going over them.

Times in Germany were more acute when we were over there than they are now. Blood push had just occurred in Munich, the Austrian Chancellor had just been assassinated, and the day before we landed von Hindenburg had died. All of our group made up our minds that we would not talk politics but much to our surprise we found practically everybody we visited very willing and really desirous of talking politics. You should have no fear, therefore, of any embarrassing situation arising from this standpoint. The people that you will run into will be real people - open-minded, frank, and sincere. They really enjoy and appreciate frank discussions.

I imagine that some of you will take movies or cameras along, but if you haven't a camera don't buy one in this country. Wait until you get to Berlin and either buy a Leica or Contax. A Leica camera selling in this country now for approximately \$250 can be purchased under \$100 in Germany. The less expensive cameras can be purchased with like differentials. There is no movie, however, in Germany that as far as I know touches with our Bell & Howell or the new Eastman magazine movie. This Eastman magazine movie is the machine to use if you are going to take colored pictures, and those of you who are not familiar with the developments that have been made within the last six or eight months of colored movies, will be surprised how easy they are to take and how much more satisfactory they are than black and white movies.

Our trip was in charge of Professor Franz Heske of Tharandt, and he had with him three graduate students - Reinhart Trendelenberg, Roderich Schlubach, and Ivan Torunsky, who did the dirty work handling tickets and seeing about the busses and whatnot. All of these men are very capable and more than interesting persons, and if any of them are on the trip with you, I know you will enjoy each of them immensely. Reinhart is now located in Munich. He may not be on the trip but if you get to Munich you should look him up. He is connected with the technical university there and his address is 2 N.W. Eing, for Luisenstrasse, Room 187, Munich. He comes from an especially good family in Germany, his father at one time having been what is equivalent to our Secretary of State, under the Kaiser. He is one of the best posted men on forestry that we met, in addition to his being mighty good company. He is an authority on soil and you will hear soil talked from the time you get into a forest until you leave it. Infinite pains were taken to build up the soil and there are striking examples of good and poor growth in the same localities, where attention has been paid to soil over a long period of years and where attention has not been paid to the soil.

Professor Heske, probably the leading forester in Europe today, will talk at length how German forestry practices can be applied in this country in a practical way, and he speaks with authority because he is familiar with conditions in this country. He has been over here quite a few times and this also applies to Reinhart. Both of them speak English very well. In the evenings be sure to get Heske to talk about his experiences in Turkey as well as India. They are marvelous stories, about Indian Princes having plowed back hundreds of thousands of dollars into their forests and then investing the remainder in diamonds.

Roderich and Ivan were the youngest of the above four. Roderich speaks English. Even though Ivan could not speak English, he understood pretty well, and before you know it, if you know any German at all, you will be talking German to Ivan. Although he is German born, his family were imprisoned in Russia all through the War. There are thrilling tales to be told by him. He was the funmaker on the trip, always wanting to sing and at the same time was thoroughly posted on the various operations what we visited.

I hope that some of these same men will be with you on your trip, but if not you undoubtedly will have others who probably will be just as fine. Don't fail to get to know them intimately. None of them will be heavy drinkers but many of the most pleasant times, as well as instructive, that we had, were drinking beer with them in the evenings, or drinking a drink that they call Geswips, which is a small amount of wine in a glass that is filled with seltzer water. We learned many German student songs and taught them songs of our own. They know our Stephen Foster songs better than many of us did. They will tell you intimately about German student life, their sword fighting, why they do it, and Ivan even promised to stage a fight for us when we were in Tharandt so we could see it, but our time was too short. Many of the foresters which you will run into have gone to the University of Tharandt and are fraternity brothers of Reinhart, Ivan, and Rod's. They have all been cut up some.

In Berlin you will probably meet a man by the name of von Monroy, who holds approximately the same position that Axel Oxholm, with our Department of Commerce's Wood Distillation Department, held. He will be full of the latest developments of wood utilization particularly along chemical and wood gas lines, and will be willing to talk to you about them. These foresters in Berlin gave us a dinner outside of Berlin at a beautiful little lake, and on the way in that evening, I was in the same car with von Monroy and he told me frankly that the reason why they have developed the wood gas internal combustion engine was to insure a fuel supply for German airplanes. This was before Germany had started to rearm. Nevertheless, he was frankly talking about it.

At Berlin you will probably see and go out and visit Hohen Lubbichow, which is the estate of Baron von Keudell. The Baron at that time was what corresponds to our chief forester for all of Germany. Their family was a great friend of von Tirpitz of U-boat fame, and it was at this place that von Tirpitz hid after the Allied armies reached Berlin. The Baron will tell you how he used to take food up in the woods to a small house where von Tirpitz was concealed, and how the Allied soldiers would ride through their town below the castle, so near and yet so far to capturing him. The day we were there was a cold and rainy Sunday and the Baron had just come back from Tannenburg, where he had been with Hindenburg during his last sickness. He came home to spend Sunday with us and the next day he went back to the funeral. He is a very serious sort of a man and we probably judged him as being more serious than he actually is, because it was very evident that the death of von Hindenburg had affected him deeply. His own Chapel church-bell tolled for an hour at sundown that evening as we drove back through his woods to his castle for dinner. When the bell started to toll all the small carriages that we were in stopped and we got out, and following his example stood with our heads uncovered in the rain for about five minutes, with our heads bowed. He had a delightful young son that met us at the door as we came in and it was his first dinner experience. He was dressed as a boy scout in a brown shirt and behaved perfectly all through the evening. It was very evident to see that he had been brought up in the right way, and this is true of all of the children that you will meet.

One of the smaller forests that you will probably visit that is near Berlin is called Barenthoren. Von Kalitsch, whose home this is, is an old man over eighty. He will be more than anxious to show you the results he has obtained from natural reforestation and from not allowing his soil to be depleted by people picking up twigs for firewood in his forest. There is an excellent example here in the same stand of timber, part of which was owned by the Kaiser, where firewood had been gathered for years and just what damage this had done to the growth. Barenthoren is famous because Kalitsch was the first man in Germany, this was only about 1880, who conceived the idea of not cutting a forest clean and replanting. In other words, he followed the Swedish method of natural regeneration long before anyone else in Germany did.

You will probably go to the Schaffgotsch estate which is in Silesia near the Riesengebirge. This is one of the largest forests that we were on. Some 58,000 acres comprise this estate, mainly Spruce, and beautiful Spruce at that. There will be a whole corps of foresters that will meet you particularly in these larger estates, and they are always headed up by an Oberforstmeister. It is quite the thing to be a forester in Germany. Your reputation is made and rightly so because you not only have to be a University graduate but also have long years of experience in working up through the various private forestry organizations. They all dress in uniforms and you, yourself, will probably want to buy some of their green hats and wear them. Several of us did. This man Kohler will be continuously smoking a long, German pipe that his wife gave him on their silver wedding anniversary. His wife is a delightful woman, but don't make the mistake that I did by offering her a cigarette after dinner. She calmly refused it. Of course I thought she did not smoke until Mr. Kohler leaned over and laughed and said, "If you have a cigar, my wife will smoke that." Several were produced and she lit one up, saying that she was going to keep the blackest one to smoke the next Sunday. The Schaffgotsch forest is famous for clean strip cutting and replanting as well as a patented method of topping the tall Spruce trees to prevent windfall.

You may go to Milkel, which is the home of Countess Holnstein in Saxony. Her husband was alive when we were there and they gave us a beautiful Sunday noon dinner and a garden party afterwards when we came in from their forest. I mailed back several of the pictures that we had taken at the various places after I got home. The Countess immediately wrote back a mighty nice letter with a broad, black mourning band around it, stating that she was so glad to have the pictures because they were the last ones taken of her husband, he having died from pneumonia two weeks after we were there.

Right next to the Holnstein estate is the Vietinghoff-Riesch. The eldest son is in charge of the Estate. The interesting thing here is the facts and figures that he will produce of the profits and the bookkeeping methods that they use. Timber at Vietinghoff-Riesch as well as at Holnstein is growing on very poor, sandy soil, with a result that it is not good timber; but nevertheless, they are making use of this area for the only thing that it can be used for. The soil is much too poor to grow any food. Vietinghoff is an enthusiastic lover of birds and because the timber is poor, they have had a great deal of bug trouble. Vietinghoff is famous for introducing the control of these insects by encouraging the increase of birds in his forests. You will find bird houses all over his forest. He also hunts with falcon and will show you how the falcons and the dogs work together.

The next place we visited was von Arnim's at Muskau. This is a beautiful park. His castle was one of the finest that we were in and it is located in the center of a beautiful park. He is a young fellow about 28 years old and speaks English very well, and is quite familiar with the United States. Two years ago he drove a Ford from New York to the Pacific Coast and back, visiting

practically every point of interest that we have. This operation, outside of the beautiful park, is primarily famous for the utilization of forest products. They not only are a timber growing concern but also manufacture lumber, paper, pottery, etc. It was here that we saw several of the wood gas tractors in the woods hauling pulpwood.

The last place in Germany we visited and which is located right on the German-Czech borderline, is the Dr. Schonberg estate. This is the home of the Belmont family, the family having established itself there about the year 1250. They have records of having regrown this Spruce forest four times and the rotation is 120 years. It is the heaviest stand of timber that we saw anywhere, some acres running pretty close to 100,000 feet. Dr. Schonberg and his wife are delightful people. He gave us a wonderful dinner after having spent all day in their woods and we were off late that evening, crossing into Czechoslovakia, all of us in a swips mood. (This word "swips" comes from the drink "geswips" and means on the crest of the wave - in other words not quite tight). The castle on his estate was full of beautiful pictures, wonderful tapestries, and an excellent armory, no piece of which had been used by anyone except their own soldiers.

In Czechoslovakia we visited three places: one the home of Prinz Max Hohenlohe-Langenburg, the second Graf Czernin, and the third Prinz Schwarzenberg. The latter two were the most interesting. Both the Czernin's and the Schwarzenberg's are famous families. The Czernins have always been Czech. The Schwarzenberg family is part German and part Austrian. The Czernin visit was interesting primarily because of this delightful family and the hard road they had to travel in arbitrary laws passed by the new Czech Government, which laws took his farm lands from him to give to the peasants, and much of his better timberlands. These difficulties were gradually being surmounted but when one heard the story, you could not help but hark back to the difficulties that this country experienced in the South after the Civil War.

The Schwarzenberg estate is an enormous one, the largest of any that we visited. They are the most wealthy family in Austria and live in twelve castles, all at the same time. One of the castles looks just like Windsor. Their large land holdings came primarily from royal gifts because one of the ancestors led the Allied armies against the invasion of the Turks, and a few hundred years later another head of the family led the Allied armies against Napoleon in his campaigns in southern Germany and Austria. The part of his estate that we visited was named Budweiss. This is where the name Budweiser comes from. Also, do not be fooled, as some of us were, over the name "Bevo." This is the Czech name for beer, so don't turn down a fine glass of pilsner thinking that it might be a drink like the near beer made by Budweiser during our prohibition days.

This letter has already turned out to be much too long, but nevertheless I could go on and talk for many pages more. I undoubtedly have overlooked some of the interesting things that we saw, as well as telling you about some of the other interesting people we met. Nevertheless, the purpose of this letter will be served if it will in any way make your coming trip even a more pleasant one than I know it is going to be.

(Signed) J. W. WATZEK, JR.