

Hallie never married, as far as is known. But we are including her story in our collection because she was the first of many women, wives among them, who were to staff lookouts on National Forests. Russell W. Bower, retired Supervisor of the Klamath National Forest in California, on which Hallie served, has given permission to reprint excerpts from the "Chronological History of the Klamath Forest," Volume II, which he edited.



r. Bower wrote in the "History:" "May 12, 1913: Ranger M. H. McCarthy wrote to the Supervisor that he had three applicants for the Eddy Gulch Lookout job for the 1913 season. The first applicant has such a poor reputation that he couldn't possibly recommend him. The second applicant is noted as the best rifle shot in the country. 'In fact, he has the reputation of shooting more holes in the game laws than any other man in the country.' I would prefer to defer any recommendation on this applicant.

"The third applicant is, also, 'no gentleman,' but has all the requisites of a first class lookout, and it is in reference to this one that I want your advice. 'This most untiring and enthusiastic applicant is Miss Hallie Daggett, a wide-awake woman of 30 years, who knows and has traveled every trail in the Salmon watershed. She is not afraid of anything that walks, creeps or flies.'

"Mr. McCarthy wanted prior approval before hiring her. Apparently he received it, as he submitted the appointment papers on May 26. She went to work that season and stayed on the Lookout job for about fifteen years."

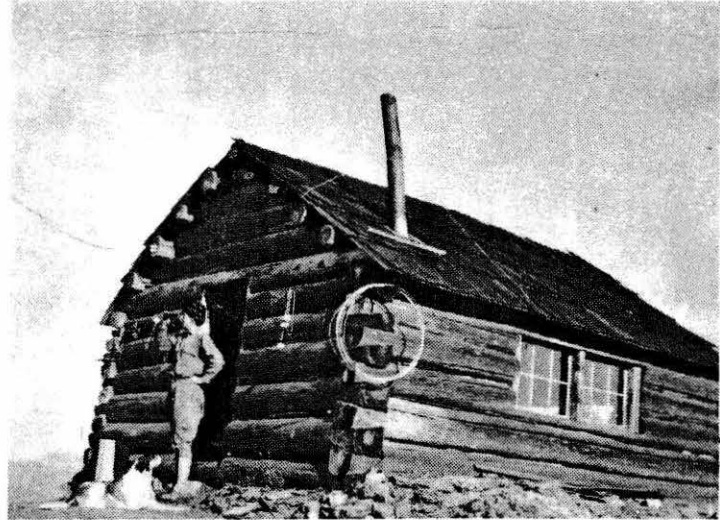
Mr. Bower noted that "Miss Daggett's appointment created nationwide publicity as the first woman field officer in the Forest Service. She was a most remarkable woman, daughter of John Daggett, part owner and Superintendent of the Black Bear mine, who also served as Lieutenant Governor of California and Superintendent of the San Francisco Mint. She had all the education and social status any woman could envy, but she loved the mountains and the outdoors. Her story is worthy of a book in itself."

He has a collection of clippings which recounted Hallie's accomplishments and experiences in the lookout post over the years. Such newspapers as the San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco Examiner, Sacramento Bee, Siskiyou News in Yreka, and papers as far away as Chicago, St. Paul, Minnesota and periodicals as Field and Stream and Leslie's Weekly published articles about her. By 1918 at least two other young women had entered this exclusive group: Harriet Kelley, on the Tahoe National Forest, and Mollie Ingoldsby, at a lookout post on Mt. Hough on the Plumas National Forest. Richard Hammatt of the Forest Service predicted that summer that more and more women would be taking the place of men as Forest Service lookouts in future seasons. This was the second year of America's part in World War I, and men were entering war service.

The San Francisco Chronicle called Hallie a "modern Joan of Arc." Her post was on the summit of Klamath Peak, in Siskiyou County, 6,444' above sea level. Her home was a small cabin, and her telephone was the link to the world outside. Her sister, who lived nine miles away, brought up her mail and supplies on pack horses.

She knew that her probationary appointment was in the nature of an experiment, as she was the first woman so appointed, but she was determined to make good and be a credit to the men who had given her the chance. From her lonely post, she could see some of the most beautiful scenery in the West. Forest creatures became her friends. She felt no need for a watch dog...anything or anyone coming near could be seen or heard easily.

She was at her post from the first day of June through early November, and performed her duties so well that first summer that an appointment was hers the fourteen succeeding summers. She was an expert horse-woman and a crack shot; early stories tell of her killing a bear, wildcats and coyotes. Within months



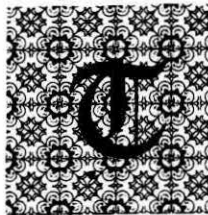
Hallie M. Daggett

after her first season of work, she was in demand as a speaker at gatherings in the state. She loved her job, and her enthusiasm was catching: an article in Leslie's Weekly in September, 1919, caused a rush of applications to the Chief's office from romantic young women eager to follow in her footsteps. He sent a letter to all Districts, pointing out that "the degree of publicity we are getting over the occasional use of a woman for fire lookout is becoming embarrassing."

#### THE FOREST PRODUCTS LEAGUE

Wisconsin

*The League celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1969. This is an excerpt from the history which appeared in the anniversary program.*



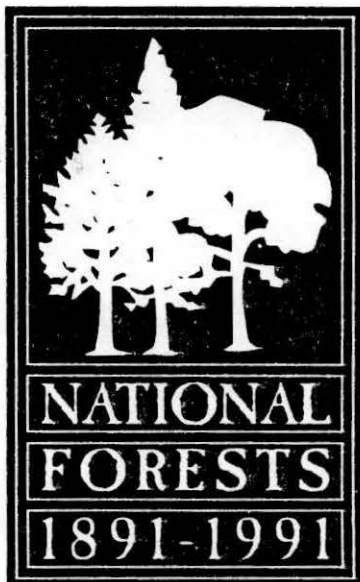
The Forest Products League in Madison, Wisconsin, had its beginnings in a little group of Laboratory wives who gathered to knit for the soldiers of World War I. They began the project at the suggestion of C. P. Winslow, then Director of the Laboratory, who had received a suggestion from Washington, D. C. that the Laboratory cooperate with local authorities in Red Cross work. Under the leadership of Mrs. O. M. Butler, the wives of the Lab-

### HALLIE DAGGETT

First Woman U.S. Forest Service Fire Lookout

## The Siskiyou County Museum

Where History Comes To Life



Wise Use of  
Your Natural  
Resources

In 1913, the Klamath National Forest Supervisor had a big decision to make. The Eddy Gulch fire tower needed a new lookout, and there were only three applicants to choose from. Of the two men applying, one had poor eyesight, and the other was "no gentleman."

Ranger McCarthy recommended Miss Hallie Daggett as the best qualified for this important job. He hoped the Supervisor's "heart was strong enough to stand the shock" of having a woman nominated since an appointment of that sort was unheard of at the time.

Hallie was 30 years old. She knew and had crossed every trail in the Salmon river area, and was thoroughly familiar with every foot of the District. She supported the Forest Service and promised to stick with the job until no longer needed. She was an excellent rifle marksman, rider and trapper, and was absolutely fearless of anything that walked, crept or flew.

Miss Daggett was hired at a salary of \$840.00 a year, and spent the next fifteen years on the job. Despite the rigors of such an assignment, Hallie continued to wear the popular ankle-length skirts and high-necked blouses fashionable in her day. But it was a rare experience to catch her without a revolver strapped to her belt, a weapon she readily used. During the fire season of 1915 for example, she killed one bear, four wildcats, and three coyotes.

Why did she choose to do such difficult work? As she said, "I love it! And that's why I'm here."

#### MUSEUM IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Jointly sponsored by the Siskiyou County Museum and Klamath National Forest  
1991 Program dedicated to the memory of Donald Messenger,  
Museum Volunteer and youth supporter

## First female fire lookout blazed pioneering trail

By Alex Breitler, Record Searchlight  
June 2, 2005

SAWYERS BAR -- Frankly, the first two candidates were no good.

One had poor eyesight -- he would've made a lousy fire lookout. On top of that, he'd shot more holes in the local game laws than anyone around.

The other lacked proper "virtues" to be a federal employee, fire ranger M.H. McCarthy wrote cryptically in a 1913 letter to his boss, the Klamath National Forest supervisor.

No, McCarthy had a third person in mind to man the Eddy's Gulch lookout atop Klamath Peak in southwestern Siskiyou County, a three hours' hard climb from anywhere.

But first he warned his boss that what he was about to suggest might take his breath away.

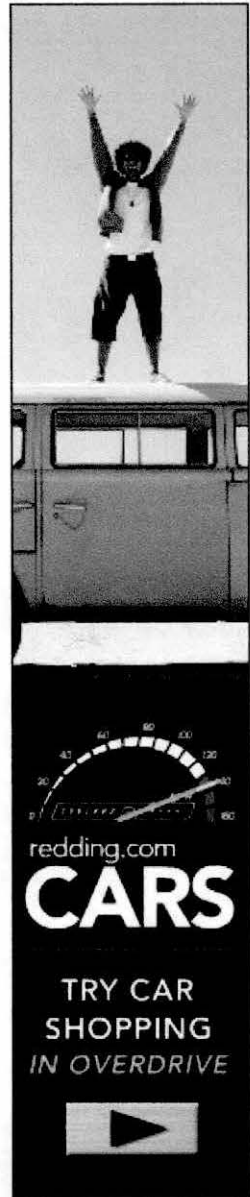
"I hope your heart is strong enough to stand the shock," McCarthy wrote.

After all, this third candidate was even less a gentleman than the other two.

She was a woman.

How the supervisor handled the news is unclear, but 30-year-old **Hallie Daggett** got the job. She was the first woman to staff a fire lookout on a national forest.

As the U.S. Forest Service celebrates its centennial this summer, things certainly have changed. Three of the four largest north state forests have female supervisors. And on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, at least three of the district rangers also are women.



The Shasta-Trinity National Forest will conduct its centennial party Saturday, **Through the years**

and on Friday night the Cascade Theatre will show "The Greatest Good," a Forest Service film that includes Daggett's story.

But the diversification of gender throughout the agency is only one of the often controversial highlights of the past 100 years.

### Looking back

Former Shasta-Trinity supervisor Dick Pfilf, who managed the forest from 1972 until 1980, saw his share of controversy. He recalls conflicts over the newly introduced Endangered Species Act, the beginning of the spotted owl timber wars and a fight over expansion of the Trinity Alps Wilderness.

Wrangling over herbicide spraying prompted a request for the Forest Service to test the breast milk of Trinity County mothers. Meanwhile, illegal miners in the Trinity area shot one Forest Service employee and beat up another, and battles with marijuana growers were frequent.

"The whole scene up there was pretty lawless," said Pfilf, 75, who now lives in Alexandria, Va.

He said he enjoyed his job, though the duties were immense. The Shasta-Trinity, really two forests that merged in 1954, covers 3,280 square miles -- an area three times the size of Rhode Island.

"I think we were having a whole lot more fun," Pfilf said. "Now it's so much more process and much more political."

Felice Pace knows about the process. The former Etna resident filed his first of many appeals to a Forest Service project in 1983 and soon made a name for himself as an environmental watchdog.

Landmarks for women in the U.S. Forest Service:

- **About 1905:** First female clerks

- **1913:** First female fire lookout (**Hallie Daggett**, Klamath National Forest)

- **1957:** First female forester

- **1978:** First woman to head a research project

- **1979:** First female district ranger

- **1985:** First female forest supervisor

- **1992:** First female regional forester

- **2002:** First female chief operating officer

Today, the Shasta-Trinity, Lassen and Klamath national forests all have female supervisors.

Source: U.S. Forest Service historian Gerald Williams

He long has fought the Forest Service on issues such as old-growth cutting and fire danger in overstocked forests, debates that roar as loud as ever today.

"It's an institution that, in my opinion, is very resistant to the outside and has a hard time really working collaboratively, even with other agencies," Pace said. "Moving an institution like the Forest Service is sort of like moving a stubborn mule."

That mule might have been particularly unrelenting when it came to hiring women. When five housewives from McCloud were welcomed aboard in 1971 to work on a Shasta-Trinity road crew, the reaction from one construction foreman, as quoted, was: "Who thought that one up?"

Forest officials later credited the women with saving more than 40 miles of roads each summer from future reconstruction.

### **Lonely lookout**

Daggett, of course, paved her pioneering road much earlier.

She grew up in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Her father was superintendent of the U.S. Mint in the latter city and was the state's lieutenant governor. He also owned the Black Bear Mine in Siskiyou County.

Daggett had thoroughly explored the rugged Klamath Mountains and jumped at the fire lookout opening.

Wives of the rangers in those days often were put to work as suppliers, telephone operators or cooks. They sometimes were considered better leaders than their husbands, wrote Forest Service historian Gerald Williams.

Nevertheless, when Daggett climbed to her mountaintop cabin in 1913, some of the men predicted she would quit within a few days, frightened and alone, wrote Williams.

Instead, Daggett, who was said to be full of "pluck and high spirit," fell in love with the \$840-a-year job and didn't lose heart, even when the telephone lines were down and she was isolated from the rest of the world. She stayed on that mountain six months or more each year, supplied every week by her sister.

Newspapers as far away as Boston told her story.

"Few women would care for such a job," proclaimed a 1914 article in American Forestry. "Fewer still would seek it, and still less would be able to stand ... the loneliness, or the roar of the violent storms which sweep the peak, or the menace of the wild beasts which roam the heavily wooded ridges."

## **Progress continues**

Daggett's breakthrough was followed by the hiring of a Forest Service patrolwoman in Oregon during World War I. During the second world war, more female lookouts were acquired.

It was the 1970s and '80s before women made inroads into smokejumping and firefighting. Now they are involved in "every aspect" of national forest management, Williams wrote, with the first female forest supervisor hired in 1985.

"It is hoped that soon the employment of women in any capacity in the agency will no longer be heralded as another first," he wrote. "They will be considered as the most qualified person for the job."

Daggett staffed the lookout for 15 years. In the late 1920s, she moved to her homestead not far from the mountain, and later she retired to be with her sister in Etna, where she stayed until her death in 1964.

Though few folks are still alive who might claim to have known her, there are plenty who know her name. Daggett's cabin in Etna was donated and moved to the city park, where a historical exhibit was completed in 1996.

For the record, Daggett spotted 40 fires her first summer and was credited for her prompt alerts. In return, she praised the "liberal mindedness" of the men who'd given her a shot.

"I was given the position ... with a firm determination to make good, for I knew that the appointment of a woman was rather in the nature of an experiment," she said at the time.

And McCarthy, who'd had such trepidation telling his boss he was hiring a woman, boldly proclaimed that experiment to be "one big, glorious success."

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Photo courtesy of  
the Siskiyou  
County Historical  
Society

**PIONEER WITH  
PLUCK: Hallie  
Daggett** called the  
Eddy's Gulch fire  
lookout home for  
15 summer  
seasons, watching  
for plumes of  
smoke that might  
signal a wildfire.  
She was the first  
female fire lookout  
hired by the U.S.  
Forest Service.  
Daggett, pictured  
here in 1915, died  
in Etna in 1964.  
She is recognized  
in a new film  
honoring the 100th  
anniversary of the  
Forest Service.



Photo courtesy of  
the Shasta-Trinity  
National Forest

**THE OLD WAY: A**  
pack train leaves  
Mount Shasta to  
supply the Black  
Butte lookout in this  
undated photo. The

Shasta-Trinity  
National Forest will  
conduct its  
centennial  
celebration on  
Saturday from 10  
a.m. to 4 p.m. at  
the Redding  
Convention Center.  
The film "The  
Greatest Good" will  
be shown at 6:30  
p.m. Friday at the  
Cascade Theatre in  
Redding.





Etna Cemetery  
Siskiyou County, Oregon

Daggett, Hallie M. "Before the White Man Came." Siskiyou Pioneer 2:3 (1957): 13-14

Daggett, Hallie M. "Early Day Mining Camps of the Salmon River." Siskiyou Pioneer 2:10 (1957): 2-9.

Daggett, Hallie M. "Discovery of Quartz Mines." Siskiyou Pioneer 2:10 (1957): 3

Daggett, Hallie M. "Placer Mines of the Salmon River." Siskiyou Pioneer 3:5 (1958): 63, 71-73

Tickner, Bernita "Hallie Daggett, 1st Forestry Service Woman Lookout" Siskiyou Pioneer 3:5 (1958): 71-73

From: A searchable index to the Siskiyou Historical Society's annual Siskiyou Pioneer Yearbooks.

**Siskiyou County Library**  
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## ***What Really Happened?***

In 1972, coin journalist James Johnson, attempted a complete accounting of the 1894-S story. After the article ran in *Coin World Collector's Clearinghouse* (9/13/72), he received a letter from Guy Chapman of California. Chapman wrote that he had been shown two of the dimes in 1954 by California dealer Earl Parker, just after Parker had acquired them from Hallie Daggett, daughter of the San Francisco Mint superintendent John Daggett. Ms. Daggett told Parker that her father had minted 24 S-mint 1894 dimes as a special request for some visiting bankers. According to her account, Daggett struck the 24 pieces and presented three coins each to seven people. The remaining three, he gave to Hallie, telling her to "put them away until she was as old as he was, at which time she would be able to sell them for a good price." (Breen) As the story goes, Hallie immediately proceeded to spend one of the dimes on ice cream, but kept the other two until she sold them to Parker.

Today, most experts accept the "made for banker friends" theory as the more likely one. Further evidence is in the fact that all seven of the remaining high grade coins seem to be proof strikes, made from specially-prepared dies and were carefully struck. It's quite unlikely that such care would be taken simply to "round out the books," but the process is logical for such purposes as presentation to bankers.

## **Etna**

Enterprising ranchers and businessmen joined together and started the town of Etna by establishing mills to utilize their produce. In 1853-54 two competing business areas started just one mile apart. Both contained a sawmill and a flour mill, and they took their names after their respective flour mills- Rough and Ready and Aetna Mills. Stores, hotels and dwellings sprang up around the mills and trade flourished between the ranchers, the businesses and the Salmon Mountain mines. The Aetna Mills post office is now a private home. Then in the 1861-62 flood, Whiskey Creek (Etna Creek) became a torrent and destroyed the town of Aetna Mills. The people rebuilt their businesses in Rough and Ready and moved their post office to that community. There was some confusion as the post office was one name and the town another. Also, there was another town with the name of Rough and Ready in Central California. Soon everyone was using the name of Aetna Mills which officially became Etna on March 13, 1874. People still refer to the former area of Aetna Mills as "Old Etna." What is now the Scott Valley Drug Store was one of the eleven Denny Bar chain stores-Denny Bar was the first Northern California chain store.

Some famous people came from this town-Anita Beers Loos, author of the screenplay and book, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" was born here as was Randolph Collier, a well-known California Senator. Hallie Daggett, first woman fire station lookout, is buried in the Etna Cemetery next to her father, John Daggett, a lieutenant governor, president of the U.S. Mint in San Francisco and mining engineer. Hallie's cabin was moved and is now on display at the Etna City Park.

# Hallie M. Daggett: Early Woman Lookout

*Excerpted from American Forestry circa 1914*

Although the Forest Service has employed women since 1905, for many decades, it hired very few women to do field work. Yet as early as 1902, during the General Land Office days, wives (who were not employees) sometimes accompanied their forest ranger husbands into the wild forests. One of the first accounts of women employed as forest-fire lookouts comes from California's Klamath National Forest. The lookout, Hallie M. Daggett, worked at Eddy's Gulch Lookout Station atop Klamath Peak in the summer of 1913 (and for the next 14 years). A 1914 article in the *American Forestry* magazine described her work:

Few women would care for such a job, fewer still would seek it, and still fewer would be able to stand the strain of the infinite loneliness, or the roar of the violent storms which sweep the peak, or the menace of the wild beasts which roam the heavily wooded ridges. Miss Daggett, however, not only eagerly longed for the station but secured it [the lookout job] after considerable exertion and now she declares that she enjoyed the life and was intensely interested in the work she had to do. ...

Some of the [Forest] Service men predicted that after a few days of life on the peak she would telephone that she was frightened by the loneliness and the danger, but she was full of pluck and high spirit ... [and] she grew more and more in love with the work. Even when the telephone wires were broken and when for a long time she was cut off from communication with the world below she did not lose heart. She not only filled the place with all the skill which a trained man could have shown but she desires to be reappointed when the fire season opens this year [1914].

[In describing her life as a lookout, Hallie said:] "I grew up with a fierce hatred of the devastating fires and welcomed the [Forest Service] force

which arrived to combat them. But not until the lookout stations were installed did there come an opportunity to join what had up till then been a man's fight; although my sister and I had frequently been able to help on the small things, such as extinguishing spreading campfires or carrying supplies to the firing line.

"Then, thanks to the liberal-mindedness and courtesy of the officials in charge of our district, I was given the position of lookout ... with a firm determination to make good, for I knew that the appointment of a woman was rather in the nature of an experiment, and naturally felt that there was a great deal due the men who had been willing to give me the chance.



USDA Forest Service, Klamath National Forest

Hallie Daggett in elegant attire, suited for her high society adventures in the theaters and opera houses of San Francisco

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"It was quite a swift change in 3 days, from San Francisco, civilization, and sea level, to a solitary cabin on a still more solitary mountain, 6,444 feet in elevation, and 3 hours' hard climb from everywhere, but in spite of the fact that almost the very first question asked by everyone was 'Isn't it awfully lonesome up there?' I never felt a moment's longing to retrace the step, that is, not after the first half-hour following my sister's departure with the pack animals, when I had a chance to look around ... I did not need a horse myself, there being, contrary to the general impression, no patrol work in connection with lookout duties, and my sister bringing up my supplies and mail from home every week, a distance of 9 miles."

**More on Hallie Daggett:** Hallie Morse Daggett was the first woman to serve as a USDA Forest Service fire lookout. She was hired by the Klamath National Forest in 1913 and served on the Eddy Gulch Lookout for 15 years. She was the daughter of John and Alice Daggett, a pioneer family. Her father was a successful miner who also served as California's lieutenant governor and superintendent of the U.S. Mint in San Francisco.

Hallie was a refined woman educated in San Francisco; however, her deep love of her childhood home at the Black Bear Mine near Sawyers Bar, California, drew her back to the mountains. She learned how to hunt, fish, ride, trap, and shoot early in life—skills that came in handy at the lookout high above the Salmon River.

In her later years (1951), Hallie's home town of Etna, California, built her a cabin on a Main Street lot next to her sister Leslie's home. She lived in this house until her death in 1964. The cabin was donated to the City of Etna by the Rosemary Holsinger family in 1993. The City of Etna, through a volunteer citizen's committee, moved the cabin to the city park and developed an historical interpretive site that was completed in 1996. This project was identified as a priority in the Etna community action plan and was funded by Forest Service grants from President Clinton's Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative and the Ore-Cal Resource Conservation Development Area. The project was also sponsored by the Native Daughters of the American West.