

HOW AND WHY I WENT INTO THE FOREST SERVICE.

This introduction which is of no historical value and is purely personal, is given just to show what the higher ups, those who undertook to organize the forest service were up against, at the beginning.

I was raised in a back-woods town in Northwestern Pennsylvania, 30 miles from a railroad and was kept several years in my father's store, before I was ten years of age where he could watch and care for me till I recovered from broken bones in an accident. I hated the cold and yearned for out-doors and decided seven at that age, that when I grew up I would move to a warm climate and live out-doors. I went to Pittsburg, where I won my way to a good financial position in the mercantile business as a buyer for a department in a wholesale store. After more than 20 years, it dawned on me that, if I was going to a warm climate and live outside, I had better be at it.

I took my wife and two little daughters and we landed in Tucson Arizona, on February 3rd 1903, looking for a ranch where I might get into the cattle business. After spending more than a year looking, I found a place, bought a squatters right in what was afterwards made a FOREST RESERVE. It was called the Huachuca Forest Reserve. I settled there ^{May} ~~June~~ 30th 1904. The following January, rains started and we had the wettest three months Arizona ever saw. The bottom land on my claim was under water and had been for weeks. One day, in March 1905, I saw a man wading across the canyon, hanging onto fences and trees. He had a red bandanna handkerchief tied over his head and across his forehead. He landed in front of me, introduced himself as

W.H.B.Kent; examining the area to see if it should be declared a forest reserve. I had never heard of a forest reserve. From what I gathered from him I decided the reserve would be made, & later, in July 1905, went to Tucson, horseback, and took the examination for a forest ranger.

There were 23 in that class. Of them, 4 passed and if they had not had to have men, they would all have been flunked. I was one of the four, as was Robert J. Selkirk, afterwards Forest supervisor, located in Tucson.

Colonel McClure came from Silver City, N.M., to give the examination.

The questions were practical, all of them. Any person properly equipped should have answered them all, but none of us did. We four got by on the skin of our teeth. One of the questions was what is the compass variation at the place you are taking this examination? I answered that I did not know it ever varied. If you were going to make a survey and did not know the variation, how would you go about finding it. I replied, " Ask some one ~~xxx~~ who knew." Later Cuert Du Bois told me he had passed on those papers and gave me credit for answering them both, or I would not have passed.

Then we had a field test. It was a farce. We had to saddle a horse, ride him a few hundred feet, take off the saddle and put on a pair of leather hobbles connected with a chain, put on a pack, tie the diamond hitch, shoot mark with a revolver and a rifle, chop down a tree. After spending all the time allowed, my tree had just about lost its bark and it looked as though a beaver had been there. I simply could not hit the same place twice. A friendly member of the class cut it down for me or I would probably been there all night. I never cut down a tree in the 16 years I was in the forest service.

I ENTER THE FOREST SERVICE.

I received my appointment as an assistant Forest Ranger, Jan. 16th 1906, and was instructed to report to Thos. Meagher, Forest Supervisor, in Tucson, which I did. He gave me a badge about two inches square, heavy as boiler plate and a hatchet with U S on the pole and a leather sheath for it, for which I signed on the dotted line. The salary was \$75.00 per month & the equipment given was all I was to receive. Was told to report to Armor Scholefield. Rosemont, in the Santa Rita mountains. The ranger station at Rosemont was a two room shack of rough boards and the furniture consisted of a rough board table. The material for the house was stolen from a squatter down on the desert for which the Government had afterwards to pay to keep Meagher out of trouble. Scholefield lived at his Father's ranch several miles from Rosemont, so I was to have the castle to myself. Armor Scholefield was a true pioneer in the Forest Service. He was capable, honest and energetic. While he never grasped the Object of the Forest Service, yet he did his duty. He was of the cow boy type and had yearned to be an officer of some kind. He wore Chaps., high heeled boots, a ten gallon hat with an orange band on it and carried a 45 six-shooter and a 30-30 rifle & wore a double decked belt filled with cartridges, one row for each gun. He also carried a pair of hand-cuffs and a rietta and rode a 40 pound saddle. He spit through his front teeth and played a mouth organ, but he could not either whistle or sing a tune, but he could play any tune on the harmonica. I rustled an abandoned heating stove from an old prospector's camp, put a stone under one corner and brought my bed and cooking utensils from home, from

where I also drew my supplies, 35 miles on a pack horse each month. There was no water at the station and I got my supply from an abandoned miners shaft nearby, till it got a skunk in it and I had to rustle it farther on. The ranger station was not tight on the ground and there was a pack of pack-rats under it and they made nights noisy packing empty cans around the house and trading them for something else when they got stuck.

We had no stationery, no maps, no files of course. Scholefield had a hand compass, but no tripod, his personal property. However he knew how to work and set the vernier and we could run a fairly good line, if it was clear and open. At first, all I did was to tag along and tag was just it, for he could ride, had good horses and knew where he was going, so I was mostly far behind and caught up with him, sore and tired.

In a short time I have a vision of what was to come, a very faint one at that. I knew that the old Mowry mine at Mowry, in the Patagonia mountains, which had furnished lead to the confederates in our civil war, was operating extensively and was cutting cord wood from public domain in that vicinity. The area would be included in a new Forest Reserve, to be made soon. As it was Public domain and not Forest Land, I wrote to the General Land office telling what they were doing and was asked to go there and make a report. I left Rosemont Ranger station with my pack horse for Mowry, leaving my pack horse at my home, on the way, a distance of 35 miles. Next day I rode to Mowry, going through ~~the~~ a part of the area which had been cut over by the mining company. In the Mowry wash, there was a great grove of black oaks, beautiful trees, from 100 to 250 years old. They had been ~~po~~larded. All

limbs and tops not more than eight inches in diameter having been cut and there were many Mexican choppers still working at it. They had about 75 to 100 burros. I did not speak to any of them. Could not, not knowing their lingo, but went on through the cutting area or part of it and on to Mowry. I called at the company's office & met Colonel Faloon, the general manager, told him what I was after viz, to see how much he had cut and get him to sign a statement and pay for it. We agreed that I was to scale the wood at the smelter, and make my report stating that it was an innocent trespass, making the charge per cord on that basis and he would sign the statement and send word to their attorney in Tucson, to make payment. I scaled 3500 cords there and at 25¢ per cord the amount he agreed to pay was \$875.00. As there was no way to tell how much they had previously used I thought this the best thing to do.

I took the signed statement and went home, picked up my pack-animal and some eats and returned to the Scholefield ranch below Rosemont, to Armor. There was an inspector there, the first one of his species I had ever seen. I do'nt remember his name but he looked and acted like a college graduate without experience. I did not hold that against him. He was nice. Asked where I had been and why; who said I could go etc. I said nobody told me I could go. I did'nt need to be told for I knew enough to do it. He read the agreement Colonel Faloon had signed, made many remarks and asked many questions ofcourse, then said, well I'll bet that was the first time that ever happened and that it will never be done again. He left for Tucson, taking the agreement with him.

Some time later, I rode to Tucson, went to the office and the

Inspector still there . It was july and a horseback ride 100 miles across the desert is never taken at that time unless it is necessary, so when he asked why I left my district without permission, I told him in simple language, like Bret Hart dad and that was that.

He said my agreement with Faloon was no good as Clingan, their attorney had said he would not pay it, whoud stand a law suit first. I said, give me that letter of transmittal and I'll make Clingan pay it and be glad of the chance. I called on Clingan. Told him I lied when I said it was an innocent trespass, that Faloon was no fool. I had figured the price at 25¢ but where the trespass was wilful, the price to be figured was the value or cost of the wood at the place it was found. Colonel Faloon told me that it cost them \$9.00 per cord at the smelter and that unless he sent that check up to the office at once, a cashiers check too, that I would make a new report and figure it at nine dollars a cord. The check was delivered within a few minutes. The check was made payable to the Fiscal Agent of the forest service. As the trespass was not on forest land, the check was not used till after the Huachuca Forest Reserve was proclaimed, Nov. 6" 1906.

That year, the Empire cattle Co., asked for a permit to greze 4500 cattle. They were allowed 2500, but never asked to remove any stock. We had something to learn about grazing.

When I learned that the Huachuca Reserve had been made, I asked for a transfer to that reserve, which was approved, effective as soon as someone came to relieve me. In December 1907, R.J.Selkirk came through on his way to Patagonia where he had been sent to take charge of the Huachuca reserve and about Feb. 1" Jim Westfall came to my station in a deep snow storm and relieved me of my hatchet, badge and hatchet sheath and I was off for home after spending ax year in the Santa Ritas .

The stock men and others in the Santa Rita Reserve were not impressed favorably with the idea of control, but were not unpleasant about it. The Huachuca reserve was inhabited with an entirely different kind of men.

On my way home, I passed the pumping station on the S.P.R.R., where Jim Barnett, an old friend of mine was the pumper. He asked if I was going home to be a ranger and I said I was. He said do'nt do it. There were a number of cattlemen and cowboys here the other day and said that if you came here they would kill you. I said I did not think that would make much difference to the Forest reserve of the U.S. Government, that there would be many to take my place. I reached home. My wife was alarmed saying a woman in the vicinity had been there and told her they were going to kill me. At home was a letter telling me to go to Patagonia at once and relieve Mr. Selkirk. I left the next morning, having had the place I sought only over night. I felt quite discouraged as I had left my wife and daughter alone for a year and here I was off again. I found Mr. Selkirk with a room half full of equipment, files & every kind of a form the forest service had in stock, I think. Selkirk left immediately a caballo for Tucson, to take Meagher's place. Meagher had been peeved at something written him, locked the office door and went back to his tribe in Oklahoma without notice.

Well, there I was, an acting supervisor over a district of about 400,000 acres, most of which I had never seen and was only personally acquainted with a few of the inhabitants. I had no experience and no assistance other than the "Use Book" most of which I did not understand. The Mowey Mines Co., wanted cordwood and I sold it to them. While the limit of such sales, without advertising was one hundred dollars, that amount would not keep the smelter running

but a few days, so, I made several sales at once, and in a few weeks had sold seven or eight hundred dollars worth, when I discovered I had no right to do that. I did not know what else to do, so wired Washington for information and got a reply to "make class A sales to care for the demand BUT hurry class "C" sale as quickly as possible". I never heard of a class C before. In a few days I received a letter from Washington calling me down in no uncertain terms and I decided that if they did not have better administration control I did not care to stay put, so I sent in my resignation. On receipt of it, they wired asking when I would leave and I replied that I was not in a hurry; would hold on till they got someone to take charge. I was ordered to move the office to Nogales, which I did in April 1907. This location was 20 miles from the nearest boundary of my baliwic. No way to travel but on a horse. I locked the office and went to the field, coming back only when I had to. Couert Du Bois turned up in a few months and I accompanied him to have a see and make a class C sale. In preparing our itinerary, I laid out rides covering from 25 to 40 miles per day which made Du Bois roar. Why said he, the rangers in the north think nothing of riding 65 to 75 miles daily. I said they must have been BEE stung; that I could ride as far as anyone, but that I had never seen the sun go down when the fellow with me was not ~~xxxx~~ ready to get down, We rode 23 miles the first day, over the Patagonia mountains, made a class C report; next day about 25 miles to the Green Cattle Co.,s ranch, where we had a date with the manager Frank Moson to have a look over their range. The next night we were at their roundup wagon, over in Mexico, reaching there at sundown. Du Bois dropped from his horse and laid down under a mesquite tree, while Sherman Rinehart, the forman and I took the horses to the remuda. When I returned, DuBois was groaning and

he never was so tired in his life. Oh Yes, says I, your damned bluffs do'nt go with me any more. Du Bois was a nice fellow and trying, but he had no idea what he was trying to do for the next day we come to a squatters little board house. The owner was absent & Du Bois tacked a notice on his door that his place had been taken over by the Forest Service for a ranger station. BAH! Thought I. We rode (with Mr. Moson) to the "80" ranch at the base of the Huachuca Mountains. I got down while the other two sat on their horses. I went to the door; a man came to meet me. I explained who we were. He said "excuse me a moment" and came back with a 30-30 over his arm. We rode for about a half hour without a word being spoken, when Du Bois said "I wish Hall had been there. He would be running yet. He said to come out here and tell the inhabitants what to do". Upon our return to Nogales, DuBois made his report recommending that I be made Supervisor with a salary of \$1200.00 per year. I wrote Washington to get some one to take my place. Foscoe Wilson came and assigned me to Canille as the first Forest Ranger on the Huachuca Reserve, and business began to pick up from that moment for the ranger was an institution, the man to fight and curse and was he cussed They thought I was the cause of it all and said so. Quite naturally, stockmen who used the range grazed cattle and fenced what and where they cared did not like it. Some of them had come from Texas and New Mexico between sundown and sunup, horse thieves and cattle rustlers and some tin horn gamblers. I left my six shooter at home and went on with my work as ignorant a man as ever wore a badge. Conditions were in a turmoil in the spring of 1906, talks of having cattle removed & it was said the Forest Service would retain all homesteads etc. About that time I was ordered to go back to Nogales and relieve

Roscoe G. Wilson, who had been recalled to Washington. On the train with me, was Max Axford, general manager of the Greene Cattle Co., whom I had met once. I arrived at Nogales in the evening and Wilson left next morning early after giving me the keys to the office which was located then in the Court house, where I went after breakfast. The first caller was Max Axford, looking for the Supervisor, who was to come. When? I did not know. Max would not sit down and looked mad clear through. What was the matter? He said Wilson had notified them that if they did not remove their cattle he would round them up and drive 4500 of them to the Baboquiviri mountains, 75 miles or more, across the desert. I told him I was the Supervisor for the time being and had all the authority of one while there and if he would sit down and we could go over the matter, he could not be more fair than I would be. He shed his overcoat, I called for the record in the files and we went at it. His company - their men - had torn out watering places, ripped up water pipes, torn down windmills etc. Bad situation indeed. I said, there was not going to be any such thing as attempting to drive their cattle; that their status would be gone over later and a proper and fair settlement made. He agreed that the Company's men would replace all damaged watering places and we would start over on a friendly basis. I went to lunch with him at Lully's, the only American eating place on the American side of the border & the matter was settled all to the good for us all. That night I had a telephone message from Will Barnes, at Phoenix. Who he was I did not know. Had never heard of him. I met him at Lully's in the evening and after eating, we went to the office where we went over the Greene Cattle case, which was what he had come for. After we had finished, he said " I was sent here on this case, told to go to the ranch and make a personal investigation, but I am not going there. I shall report that we have a man on the ground cap-

able of caring for the situation and I shall leave for Washington at six tomorrow morning". I was honored to have the friendship of Will Barnes during the rest of his life. He visited us at the ranch every time he came to the southwest during his life. Mrs. Rodgers enjoyed him as much as I did and said he was the best helper, for a man, in the kitchen, she had met.

I fretted and fumed at the delay of someone to relieve me. Cared for the work there and made frantic trips to my own district to care for matters there. Finally, W.H.B. Kent was sent to relieve me again and ME FOR THE OUTDOORS AGAIN.

The summer of 1908, O.A. Waha and a Mr. Powers, an engineer, came to my station. The Act of June 11 was the reason. I was appointed a land examiner and helped them make the first examination of a homestead under that Act. There were three rangers on three other districts on this reserve, but they were all eliminated and I was furnished so called assistants and given charge of the whole reserve.

I say so called, but I really and finally, had two real ones. Stanley Wilson and Billy Dougherty. As capable and worthy fellows as could be had. We worked together heartily and faithfully till they were given more important places where brains and honesty were needed. They both hold important positions in the administration of the forest and are the best possible men, in every way.

With Kent as Supervisor, we began to make some progress in administration, but with it the antagonism increased. Three times petitions signed by the "gente" were sent Washington asking for my dismissal. In each case, after an inspection, I was congratulated by the Forester and given a raise in salary of one hundred dollars " for doing my duty under adverse conditions" was the Forester's comment.

We began to try to find how many cattle were being grazed on the forest, which raised the antagonism to a high pitch. Kent had the Huachuca reserve attached to the Tucson office, where Selkirk was the Supervisor, and went to New Mexico. Selkirk and Kerr came to my district to try to help. Kerr! He was the most untalkative man I have ever met. He had forgotten more about the cattle business than most stockmen can ever learn and knew the grazing regulations absolutely. Kind, honest & considerate always, but I often thought, when I heard him give a decision, that he must sweat icicles. Kerr talked not at all while I talked all the time, so we got along wonderfully well and were always great friends. We had at the time many great characters among the settlers and one of them was Daddy Clark, an old patriarch, white haired (of it was washed) bright minded, witty and honest to a fault. He could neither read or write, but could quote the bible from end to end and beat any man I have known swearing. Swear! He breathed it. He told stories of his experiences during his childhood and during the civil war (if it could be called civil) . I amused Kerr by telling him what a lovable profane character he was. One day, when we had finished our work on the range, rather early, Kerr said he would be glad to go and see my old friend, so we went, as it was only a mile off our line of travel. Daddy was at home. It was late afternoon. When we reached his house, a box board structure. Daddy brought out chairs on the shady side of the house for us. He had heard we were trying to count cattle and had come to me and said, when you want to count mine, let me know the day before and I will shut them in when

they come to water, as they do every day. I told him it would not be necessary for I knew how many cattle he had as well as he did. So, when we sat by his house, he, being very friendly started the conversation. Both Kerr and Selkirk were large men. Kent was a small man. Daddy started blithely- Mr Selkirk, you are a larger man than your predecessor? Selkirk said YES. Mr. Kerr, is this your first visit to this section? Kerr said YES. Daddy kept this up for sometime but finally ran out of something to say as he could not get any help from either of them. The silence became oppressive and to stir the old man up, I said, Daddy, we have come to count your cattle and want you to put them in the corral so we can. The old man's eyes flashed and he said "Rudger, you goddam son of a bitch, you know where them cattle are as well as I do and if you want to count them, go and get 'em". If you could have seen the expression on Kerr's face and heard the laughter it would have done your heart good. I never saw Kerr after that when he did not ask "how's your old friend".

Daddy was a great friend of our family, especially of our two girls. They attended school in Tucson and each summer when they would come home for the vacation, Daddy would spruce up. Put on his Sunday-getto meetin' clothes, wash his long white hair and beard, don his clean cowboy hat and with his native walking stick in his left hand, walk over to spend the afternoon with the girls. They had a great regard for him. He was most entertaining, telling the best and most original stories, all about himself and his experiences. The girls paid no attention to his profanity for they knew he knew not when he swore.

He was telling of his boyhood down in South Carolina. Said his Mother made him a shirt of cotton grown on the place which she spun and wove. The shirt had no sleeves, was wide and only came to his knees, and by the way, that was the only clothes he had till after he was ten. He said the menfolks had made a little clearing and he was sent in to

stir the land, with an old blind mare, [&] a shovel plow with a heavy coulter on the beam. The handles were a little high and he had to reach up for them which raised his shirt a little. The coulter would cut a root, the shovel plow bend it forward and it would slap back and hit him on the bare legs. He always hollowed and when he did the mare always stopped while he rubbed his shin and dried his tears. Once he plowed up a bumble^{bee's} nest. A bee stung him and he yelled, the mare stopped with him standing just over the nest. He said "Mr. Rodgers, them bumblebees just fogged up under that shirt and if I ever get sent to hell for swearin' that's where I got my start." I still regret that I was never able to have a dictaphone to carry under my shirt to get what I have heard these characters say in their own style and brogue. Cattle rustling was not legalized then, though there was little said about it for everybody was doing it. Only when a friendless chap got caught was he taken to court. Most cases were settled on the ground at the time, and many times one man was ~~left~~^{left} on the ground when the case was closed. Cattle rustling was down to a fine art with some. A young man came here from the east and went to work for one of his kinfolks. He could throw a rope as though he had been born with one. He got himself a brand and soon his kin canned him. He built himself a shack in the mountains on his kinsman's range. He would brand a few big calves ^{belonging to his kinsman} shunt them over the line into Mexico, bring back a few belonging to ~~the~~^a big rancher along the border, shove them inland to another of his kinfolk's range, leave them there and bring back a few of ~~the~~^{that fellow's}. He would go to see his sweet heart, across the range and on the way back bring a few of his prospective father-in-law's big calves with him. Did he make it pay? A few years after, he sold his bunch of 600 head. Nobody could prove anything, and no one tried. I have a great regard for that man. I trespassed him three times, and he paid, with a smile. I ^{could} not touch ~~with~~ him. We both knew it.