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Private

Memorandum on the  
report of the Committee to visit  
the Harvard Forest

E. B. Merrill      May 15, 1945

The Harvard Forest endowment is a modest one, totalling \$369,410.09, mostly unrestricted. The present annual income from invested capital is about \$13,600.00 which is admittedly too small for the legitimate activities of this unit. Its annual budget has been supplemented by funds from other sources, income from operations (now largely non-existent since the disastrous hurricane, and the recent radical modification of the cordwood cutting operations), from gifts, and in the period 1935-36 to 1942-43 a total of \$20,167.00 from the unrestricted University income. It is financially much better off than is the Botanic Garden, the Atkins Institution, the Farlow Herbarium, and the Botanical Museum, among the nine separately endowed botanical units of Harvard University. And unlike most of these units, other than the Bussey Institution previous to 1940-41, has actually been the recipient of University funds to a modest degree as above indicated.

The Visiting Committee report picturing a decline of the Harvard Forest in the past ten years is far from correct - from a state of international reputation as one of the leading forestry schools to bare recognition. Tied in with this is the equally erroneous implication that the institution has had progressively smaller funds with which to work, and that the "University has permitted the Forest to become virtually reduced to the point of starvation." As a matter of fact more money has been received and spent in the past ten years than in any comparable period in its entire history.

One suspects that a part of the report of the Committee to Visit the Harvard Forest was prepared without very close consultation with staff members of the institution. It has not "been reduced to the point of starvation" (p. 197), and certainly the Director has never made this claim. There is no real basis for the statement that it is "a shock to consider its present condition"; as a matter of fact with the completion of the new buildings the institution is in better physical condition than at any time in its entire history - the hurricane damage was of course unavoidable. The effects of the 1938 hurricane are known to all. It involved heavy expenditures that were covered by a generous anonymous gift. The construction of the excellent modern buildings in 1941 was made possible by another even more generous anonymous gift.

There have been no students since 1942 because the Director, after discussing the matter with his superiors, very wisely decided that no students would be admitted for the duration of the war. From the beginning of the first world war until the early 1920's it did not have more than three or four students annually, and at no time since that date has it had more than six students at one time. It has never been the policy to build up a large student body, and it is not essential to its well being that this policy be changed now or in the immediate future. As to staff, all that is actually needed during this war period is a bare skeleton one; and this too was so decided by the Director who himself is absent, on leave, for special duties connected with the war.

"The University, however, as owner of the Forest, has an obligation it cannot well shirk. The impression seems to exist that the Forest, like so many of the so-called 'orphan institutions' in the Biological Department, with separate and inadequate endowments, was wished on the University. This is not the case. Harvard, in the person of President Eliot, went after the Forest - - - . The tract is rightly named the Harvard Forest, for it did not come unsought, but directly through the University's solicitation" (p. 206).

This statement needs modification. Probably nothing like the disastrous hurricane of 1938 was anticipated when the Harvard Forest was established in 1907, to be maintained, in part at least, on the basis of sustained yields; that is, by cutting and selling a certain amount of lumber annually. When the land at Petersham was acquired by the University, the governing boards stipulated that the Harvard Forest should be self supporting. The University was thus in no way obligated to contribute to the support of the unit. Yet from 1923 to 1934, I judge from the entries in the Treasurer's reports, that somewhat in excess of \$21,000.00 was assigned from University funds to take care of Harvard Forest deficits; figures previous to 1923 were not checked as the Harvard Forest accounts were carried under the Bussey Institution. In the period 1935-1944 approximately \$20,167.00 has been supplied from University unrestricted income to maintain balanced budgets. In general, when the budgets were prepared, the overdraft, for any single year, was approved in advance. Only a single one of the separately endowed botanical units has fared better, this being the Bussey Institution up to the time that its expenditures were kept within the limits of its restricted income in 1940-41. Generally speaking, at least in the past decade, none of the other separately endowed botanical units has benefited by the assignment of University funds except, in a few cases, where parts of certain salaries come from the general funds or from endowed Professorships.

Up to 1942-43 the University did contribute varying amounts each year to the support of the Harvard Forest, as indicated in the following tabulation, totalling \$20,167.00, plus somewhat in excess of \$21,000.00 previous to 1923.

	Expenses	Deficit	Credit balance
1935-36	\$33,090.	\$8,369.	
1936-37	45,341.	3,648.	
1937-38	40,216.	1,300.	
1938-39	92,529.	2,816.	
1939-40	31,148.	1,132.	
1940-41	37,690.	2,762.	
1941-42	29,594.	64.	
1942-43	21,950.	76.	
1943-44	23,040.		\$29.
		<u>\$20,167.</u>	

The figures given under annual expenditures do not include the construction costs of the modern, fireproof new buildings, their equipment, nor the cost of the Harvard Forest models, as these heavy costs were covered by an anonymous gift. The rather extraordinary excess expenditures from 1936-37 to 1938-39 were covered by anonymous gifts for special purposes, including hurricane rehabilitation operations. Reductions from 1941-42 to 1943-44 were due to retrenchment because of the war situation.

The author of the report apparently did not know that there was available to the Director for unrestricted budgetary purposes as of the end of June, 1944, a total of \$19,369.00 this made up of the balances in a gift for current expenses (\$1918.00), a fund at the disposal of the Director (\$11,469.00), and the Friends of the Harvard Forest fund (\$6,260.00). The balance available as of April 30, 1945, is \$20,219.00. Certainly it would not be wise to dip into these funds during the period when the staff is reduced and no students are admitted, owing to war conditions. This total is available for use at the discretion of the Director, in preparing the budgets after the close of the war. Clearly, with this reserve the University would not be warranted in further deficit financing as long as balances are available. It will thus be seen that the present situation is by no means a desperate one. In this period of ten years only the Harvard Forest and the Bussey Institution, two of the nine separately endowed botanical units have benefited from the allocation of University funds for budgetary purposes. Several of the other impecunious units could utilize additional funds to great advantage, but in the past decade they have all operated within the limits of their annual incomes; and actually most of them now have reasonably ample

Credit Balances. These Credit Balances, for the most part, were established in recent years, in some cases actually within the past decade and for the first time in the history of the units involved. These Credit Balances (in the Cabot Foundation its reserve fund) as of June 30, 1944, and most of them will be increased this year, are as follows:

Arnold Arboretum	\$40,302.
Cabot Foundation	39,302.
Gray Herbarium	21,678.
Bussey Institution	17,228.
Botanical Museum	16,826.
Botanic Garden	1,717.
Harvard Forest	29.

These funds are available, when proper authority is granted by the Corporation, for use if and when necessary for the various units; they form reserves for emergency use.

The statement that the Harvard Forest is no longer accredited in its own field (p.199) carries an unnecessarily alarming implication. The accrediting of Forestry Schools was undertaken shortly before the war and on a basis designed for the average run of publicly supported undergraduate institutions. The Harvard Forest is not an undergraduate institution, but has operated as a research center, demonstration forest, and for specialized graduate instruction. In the first year of the present war the Committee on Accrediting decided to make a new appraisal of the Harvard Forest and to determine new ratings, as the institution is actually not in the field of undergraduate Schools of Forestry; it is not directly comparable with any "Forestry School" in the country. Mr. Cline was unable to give his attention to this matter, because of his duties in Washington, nor could he even meet with the Committee. Accordingly, the chairman of the Committee decided to withhold action until some future date. This is not a serious matter. The appraisal of the Harvard Forest will of necessity have to be on a basis different from those standards selected for undergraduate forestry schools.

It is suggested (p. 205) that the Maria Moors Cabot Foundation "might logically be incorporated fully within the structure of the Forest, maintaining both a geneticist and a physiologist on the staff." This may be a suggestion from some staff member of the Harvard Forest itself, but clearly one made without any consideration of conditions of gift. This is a matter that falls within the field of the Cabot Foundation committee. The Foundation has cooperated in the past; it is a foregone conclusion that it will do so in the future when it is possible to secure the services of properly trained men at the conclusion of the war.

There is a good deal of exaggeration in the statements regarding the high quality of students; influence on the development of forestry in the United States; the perfection of the records system, etc., although it is true that, in relation to what the institution had to do with, a remarkably good showing has been made. Until the new buildings were constructed in 1941, conditions were unfavorable for attracting the highest type of student. It is doubtful if the Harvard Forest at any time, during the old building era, drew as large a share of the best students as did the better supported and better equipped larger Forestry Schools. With extremely crude living accommodations, meager library and laboratory facilities, and very small scholarship funds, it is scarcely to be expected that the Harvard Forest should have attracted the cream of the crop. With the excellently equipped plant now available, the opportunities for advanced instruction are immeasurably increased. In spite of the extensive hurricane damage, the construction of the new buildings marked the beginning of a new era for the Harvard Forest.

In addition to the points made in favor of what the institution has accomplished in the past decade, the following items are worthy of mention. During the past ten years, the Harvard Forest started its fruitful collaboration with Government entomologists and pathologists, developed the concept of silvicultural control of the gypsy moth, initiated a new technique for "shade-growing" white pine to reduce weevil attack, enlisted the services of the U. S. Soil Survey to make an intensive study of the soils and prepare a detailed soil map of the entire forest, began collaboration with the Department of Economics and the Graduate School of Public Administration in land use planning and forest economics (with excellent results), discontinued its program of institutional support on the basis of sustained yield (due to hurricane damage), supervised silvicultural operations in twelve CCC camps, helped to establish the general standards practice, played a leading role in establishing the Northeastern Timber Salvage Administration and the Petersham Forest Cooperative Association, to salvage hurricane felled timber, logged the equivalent of fifteen years' normal felling in a little over two years, helped to design and assemble most of the Forest Model collections, helped plan and supervise the erection of the new buildings, and started the Friends of the Harvard Forest, not to mention the routine operations. When one adds up the accomplishments during the war period, there is little doubt that the period 1933-44 shows more progress in a number of respects than in any comparable period.

The Director himself, in a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Visiting Committee, dated February 23, 1945, takes exception to various statements included in the document: "It is difficult for me to agree with the picture of recent decline painted in the report. It is true that there have been only two staff members at Petersham recently, but at no time in the past thirty years have there been more than four regular staff members. Dr. Grossenbacher's recent leave taking is not attributable in the main to a lack of opportunity at the Forest, but to personal considerations, and Mr. Spurr has not indicated more than temporary leave taking for a year's doctoral work.

"It also seems to me that the report places the burden of responsibility for the future of the Forest too largely on the University, though it is extremely important that University support and backing be obtained. It might be effective to mention the Friends of the Harvard Forest and the fact that this organization, formed only a few years ago, already has over 150 members and has contributed some \$7,000.00 toward the support of the Forest. Here is an indication of the possibility of raising considerable funds through enlargement of this group of Friends.

"With the adoption of a new and expanded program along the lines recently proposed - - - and a determined effort on the part of the Forest to help itself, there is no reason why the school at Petersham could not be made the outstanding center of advanced instruction and research in forestry in this country. Much depends now on the recommendations of the Area Committee appointed to study the whole field of biology in the University. Until the Committee makes known its findings, there will necessarily be a continuation of the present period of uncertainty." (This situation is admitted in the published report of the Committee to Visit the Harvard Forest). "This report should provide a clearer understanding of the framework into which forestry at Harvard may be fitted, and until this report has been submitted it would be untimely to advocate any specific program."

A pertinent quotation from letter from Mr. Cline, May 4, 1945: "There is no point in going into all the aspects and angles of the subject of your letter. There is some right and some wrong on both sides. But I do not like the thought of Mr. Spurr being dropped. Like most red-blooded fellows of his age and training, he sees how far short the real falls below his ideal and sets forth with all the zeal of a reformer to correct the situation. I went through a similar state of mind during my early years at the Forest and wrote a report to Fisher on the shortcomings of the Forest,

which he did not like at all. Spurr's marriage, this summer, will change his outlook and interests a great deal, and I believe that he will settle down and raise a family, even foregoing the attraction of a \$1,000.00 scholarship for a year of study towards the doctorate. To drop Spurr under the present circumstances in view of the outstanding research work he has done during the war, would likely do more harm than good, if only for the reason that it would shortly be known throughout the forestry profession, and no good explanation could be given. Furthermore, since I approved the proposed plan for the Forest [not the Visiting Committee Report, EDM], I would feel obliged to resign, which would add to the stir in forestry circles - - and no satisfactory explanation for it.

"I feel that the solution lies in the recommendations of the Area Committee. Our report "Forestry at Harvard" would not have been issued had I known that the Area Committee was considering the future of all the biological units. It was my very definite understanding that the Harvard Forest was not being included, which made it seem all the more desirable for us to speak up for ourselves and develop a postwar plan, and particularly so, since the Visiting Committee showed an unusual interest in us. So the issuance of our plan was not in the least intended to bring pressure on Dr. Bailey's Committee. Mr. Edmonds went beyond our recommendations and my desires in many respects in preparing his report to the Board of Overseers. My first draft of a reply to his note asking my opinion of it was so strongly critical that I tore it up. - - - A little later I received a letter - - - saying that the suggestions contained in my reply to Mr. Edmonds were being incorporated in the final draft of the Committee's report to the Board of Overseers, but, for some reason, this was not done. Thus while I felt cheered by the great interest displayed by the Visiting Committee in improving the lot of the Harvard Forest, I did not agree with their presentation of our case. It impressed me as being inaccurate and misleading in many respects, though not intentionally so, I am sure.

"In my opinion, the best way out of the present most unfortunate situation, all of it brought about by people who were trying to be helpful and constructive, is not to attempt to answer the questions raised by the report of the Visiting Committee until the report of the Area Committee has been released and carefully considered. No fair-minded person would want to see a decision reached on the future of the Harvard Forest before studying the findings of Dr. Bailey's committee."

Here is a quotation from a letter recently received from a friend and supporter of the Harvard Forest,\* but not a member of the Visiting Committee: "As I understand the situation there are enough funds for the orphan to maintain the buildings, to pay a Director and an assistant, and to carry on a certain amount of research work. After all, the functions of the orphans are primarily research. If the Harvard Forest continues as it has in the past, foresters from all over the world will want to come to look at what nature has done. The more I observe the function of mother nature the deeper my conviction has become that not only is a forest a very complex biological entity, but that the biological processes function extremely slowly. We poor mortals wish to see results much more rapidly than nature is willing to show us. We must be more patient when it comes to the growth of trees and even more so when we turn our attention to the maturity of soil. These years at Harvard Forest will not be wasted. Nature will go right on its own sweet way and possibly have more to show us because the clumsy hand of man will not have been interfering with her orderly procedure.

"As this is the case, in the future as in the past, a certain number of students will wish to come to the Harvard Forest. What matters if there is only one student at the Forest? If, as time goes on, more money is accumulated, then the number of students could be increased, but the first and most important function is to maintain the Harvard Forest as a demonstration forest, just as the [grounds of the] Arnold Arboretum are maintained primarily as a place for the Boston public to spend a pleasant Lilac Sunday."

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as footnote

comments  
→ EGS

It should be remembered that there are a great many individuals who are interested in the welfare of the Harvard Forest. Like the Arnold Arboretum, it is a distinct asset to the University in the public relations field. After all, the true function of the Harvard Forest is primarily in the field of research, like that of all of the other separately endowed botanical units. In all of these, teaching is secondary. But like the Arnold Arboretum, the Harvard Forest does have a wide appeal to the general public. Its extension activities, like those of the Arnold Arboretum, are distinctly important to the University as a whole.

In closing I would like to emphasize the fact that the really outstanding contributions of the Harvard Forest have come about through a combination of circumstances, including of course the ability of its staff members. The very fact that the personnel and the students are in constant daily contact with the forest itself throughout the year is unique, for many Forestry Schools, and for that matter, Forestry Experiment Stations, are located in urban centers, strange as it may seem; it is this very fact of its location, practically within the forest, that has enabled the institution to contribute so much - infinitely more than many of the larger and financially much better supported institutions. Another point is worthy of mention. In government supported institutions "mistakes cannot be made", or if made, then not admitted. In privately supported institutions mistakes can be made, and if desirable, publicized, for not infrequently in such a field as forestry mistakes in the long run may be more illuminating than so-called successes.

EDM:CG

May 15, 1946



E. D. Merrill  
Administrator of Botanical  
Collections, Harvard University.

Supplementary memorandum on  
the Bussey Institution.

This unit has never been in really good financial condition, due to its relatively small endowment, and to the fluctuation of that part of its income from the Bussey Trust. Beginning in 1936-37 it was reorganized, and an attempt was made to bring its operating expenses within the limits of its income. This was not actually attained until 1940-41, from 1933-34 to 1939-40 a grand total of \$67,458.00 having been assigned from University income to meet the annual deficits, a high of \$16,218.00 in 1934-35 to a low of \$1,559.00 in 1939-40.

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Deficit</u>	<u>Credit Balance</u>
1933-34	26,491.00	40,793.00	14,311.00	
1934-35	21,334.00	39,919.00	16,218.00	
1935-36	23,746.00	36,864.00	13,117.00	
1936-37	20,724.00	26,617.00	10,219.00	
1937-38	22,176.00	28,498.00	3,421.00	
1938-39	14,351.00	22,965.00	8,613.00	
1939-40	18,291.00	19,561.00	1,559.00	
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1940-41	23,026.00	18,478.00		4,547.00
1941-42	26,686.00	19,748.00		6,938.00
1942-43	26,205.00	20,462.00		5,742.00
			<u>67,458.00</u>	<u>17,227.00</u>

With the beginning of the war its budget was stabilized, while because of the better returns from the Bussey Trust its income increased; yet with this increase in income its budget was deliberately not increased, but was maintained at an average of about \$19,500.00 for the three years covered. The credit balance funds, if actually needed, will be available for use after the war. This in the course of the past three years has been built up to \$17,227.00.

*E. D. Merrill*  
E. D. Merrill  
Administrator

EDM:CG

*Improve*

**SECRETARY TO THE CORPORATION**

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Members of the Corporation

**SUBJECT:** Plaque for Dr. Ernest Goodrich Stillman

The President has asked me to canvass the Corporation to see whether they are willing to approve for erection at the Harvard Forest of a plaque in memory of the late Ernest Goodrich Stillman.

Enclosed is a copy of the inscription prepared by Mr. Walter Edmonds, Chairman of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the Forest. If approval can be secured by canvass at this time, it is expected that the plaque could be in position at Commencement time.

D.W.B.

[David W. Bailey]

June 6, 1950

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COPY

ERNEST GOODRICH STILLMAN, MD  
1884 — 1949  
FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR OF HIS UNIVERSITY  
AND LIFELONG SUPPORTER  
OF THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF NATURE  
HIS FAR-SEEING GENEROSITY MADE POSSIBLE  
THESE HARVARD FOREST BUILDINGS  
AND INSURED CONTINUANCE OF THE RESEARCH  
NOW REACHING FORTH  
INTO THE NATURAL WORLD BEYOND THEIR WALLS

NOTE: We should like to use the Harvard arms at the head of the plaque to correspond with the plaque describing the creation of the Forest Models.

It has also been suggested that Stillman's Class be named but I can see no way that would not be awkward, of doing this if we retain the MD which his family think he would have liked this mention of.

I have stopped work, except for drawings, till we have the Corporation's approval.

*Harvard University Archives  
President James B. Conant Papers*

\*  
*Harvard forest*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

PAUL HERMAN BUCK, DEAN  
DAVID EDWARD OWEN, ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN  
GORDON PARK GILLIS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

5 UNIVERSITY HALL

June 13, 1945

OF RECORD

JUN 20 1945

Dear Mr. Conant:

I recommend the appointment of Dr. Paul Rupert Gast as Assistant Professor of Forestry for one year beginning July 1, 1945, at a salary of \$5000, to be paid from the income of the Cabot Foundation.

On May 23 I received from Professor E. D. Merrill a recommendation for the appointment of Dr. Gast as Assistant Professor of Forestry at a salary of \$5000, to be paid from the income of the Cabot Foundation. The date upon which this recommendation reached me was too late in the year for me to follow through the normal procedure which I have adopted for the orphan institutions of having a thorough review by a competent ad hoc committee for such recommendations. It seemed to me especially important to have such a review in the case of Dr. Gast because of his age (he is now forty-eight years of age) and also because of his long tenure at Harvard on annual and term appointments. Dr. Gast was first appointed an Instructor in 1924 and served in that capacity until 1929. Beginning in 1930 he has had a sequence of three-year term appointments as Assistant Professor of Forestry. He started out in the Harvard Forest and then a few years back ran into such difficulties there because of his personality that it was necessary to take him away from the Forest and to locate him in the Biological Laboratories in Cambridge. With this background it seemed obvious that a careful scrutiny must be made of Dr. Merrill's recommendation. It also seemed obvious that the real issue now is whether or not Gast should be kept here permanently or let go. Certainly another three-year term as Assistant Professor such as Dr. Merrill recommends would in actuality mean a commitment for permanency of tenure.

As I said, it was too late in the year to go through the normal procedure of an ad hoc committee, but I did call together a meeting of the botanists of the Department of Biology and of the various institutions. At this meeting the following individuals were present: Professors Merrill, Mangelsdorf, Bailey, Sax, Wetmore, Weston, Raup, Castle, and myself. The discussion

revealed unanimous opinion to the effect: (1) that Dr. Gast was not a research scientist of such distinction as to qualify him for a permanency at Harvard; (2) that neither his research nor his teaching fitted in any vital way into the needs of the Department and the institutions. It also came out in discussion that Dr. Gast had been receiving and still expected to receive a rather large amount of research money, a sum amounting to \$3000 annually. In short, Dr. Gast was a real luxury. When asked point-blank as to whether the group could make better use of the money going to pay Gast's salary and research program if Gast were removed from the picture, the answer unanimously was in the affirmative. On the other hand, the group did express a great deal of concern as to the "moral commitment" that the University had for allowing Gast to remain here for so many years. The group expressed great pessimism as to the possibility of placing Dr. Gast in any position away from Harvard.

This question of moral commitment will have to be faced before the Gast question is finally settled. I do not wish to paint in too negative terms his ability as a scientist, but it does seem clear that he is second-rate and a legacy of past mistakes.

In this dilemma I feel the wisest policy is to recommend an appointment for one year so that in the fall we can take up the question of his future in the University and deal with it with somewhat more leisure than we have at the moment.

Sincerely yours,

*Paul H. Buck.*

President J. B. Conant  
Massachusetts Hall

C O P Y

\*

November 20, 1944

Mr. A. C. Cline  
The Hotel Bellevue  
15 E Street NW  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Cline:

"Forestry at Harvard" in the form that it was prepared and distributed has resulted in severe criticism of it in administrative and other quarters, so much so that I have today written to Mr. Spurr directing him to discontinue any further distribution of the document.

The fault is partly my own in that I did not suggest that when the final draft was completed it should have been routed through Dean Buck's office for approval or disapproval. This oversight I regret, for the document can only be interpreted as an attempt to put pressure on the University on behalf of one of its units and this at a time when serious attention is being given to the whole matter of the relationships of all of the separately endowed units to the University as a whole. This naturally must take into consideration certain aspects of financial support. Doctor Bailey is chairman of a special committee making a survey of the entire biological field, and he takes exception to certain statements in the document. The survey includes not only the units in the botanical field, but also all others that operate on their own income. Naturally the University administrative officials are disturbed because of the inclusion of certain statements of a distinctly positive nature. The feeling is expressed that more harm than good may result.

I will not go into details here. A mistake has been made and the only thing that we can do now is to discontinue the distribution of the document. I am sending copies of this letter to Dean Buck, Professor Bailey, and Mr. Spurr.

Very truly yours,

/s/ E. D. Merrill  
Administrator

EDM:CG

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C O P Y

November 20, 1944

Dear Dean Buck:

I have a letter from Mr. Spurr who prepared the statement regarding the Harvard Forest to which objection is taken. On Saturday he discussed the matter with Dr. Bailey. From this I quote "(Bailey) did seem to think that our publishing the report was 'unethical'. He based this opinion on the premise that the individual institutions should keep quiet about their aims and plans until the Area Committee had made its report and it had been considered by the University. I pointed out that our report conformed in detail to his suggestions of last spring. This he agreed to, but insisted that he meant our report should be submitted only to his Committee."

"With Mr. Cline's permission we have sent copies to the Visiting Committee and other officers of the University, to Dr. Stillman, to botanical members of the faculty, to a few selected alumni, etc. We will make no further distribution of the report without your specific consent."

Apparently Mr. Cline, who is overburdened with his special duties in Washington gave Spurr's copy only a rather perfunctory examination, and apparently was not posted on the activities of the Area Committee. I am in fault that I did not suggest to Spurr that before sending the data even to a very limited number of individuals he should have routed it through your office.

Very truly yours,

/s/ E. D. Merrill

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45

~~HBC to~~ Forest

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

PAUL HERMAN BUCK, DEAN  
DAVID EDWARD OWEN, ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN  
GORDON PARK GILLIS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

~~Bailey~~

5 UNIVERSITY HALL

November 27, 1944

Dear Calvert:

The appearance of "Forestry at Harvard 1944" shocked me as much as it did the President. The preparation and publication of the document was apparently the bright idea of Mr. Spurr, who holds a rather junior appointment in the Forest as Instructor in Forestry and Assistant to the Director of the Harvard Forest, but who has been given rather too much responsibility by the leave on war work of Dr. Cline. Spurr sent the report to Cline for approval. Cline apparently approved it without reading it.

Dr. Merrill shares partly in the blame. He, apparently, informed Spurr that I had asked Professor Bailey to study and to investigate the entire botanical picture at Harvard and to report directly and confidentially to me. Bailey has undertaken this job, and to assist Bailey I had directed Merrill to request in my name that every one in his area give full aid to Bailey. Merrill at the same time told Spurr about the Committee on New Resources. This started Spurr off. Apparently Merrill did not make it clear enough to whom and in what way Spurr was to report.

Needless to say that Bailey was much distressed by the report made by Spurr.

When the report (in its published form) reached me, I phoned Merrill and directed him to take immediate action. I enclose copies of the letters he has written.

I see nothing more that can be done at the moment.

I trust that when Bailey's report reaches me, I shall have some basis for beginning an administrative reorganization in an area that has long been a headache and productive of numerous such episodes as the present one.

Sincerely yours,

*Paul H. Buck*

Mr. A. Calvert Smith  
Massachusetts Hall

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More to come.  
Survey recommendations  
not signed.

Forest

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATOR OF  
BOTANICAL COLLECTIONS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ARNOLD ARBORETUM, JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS., U.S.A.

Arnold Arboretum, *Jamaica Plain, Mass.*  
Atkins Institution of the Arnold Arboretum,  
*Soledad, Cienfuegos, Cuba*  
Botanical Garden, *Cambridge, Mass.*  
Botanical Museum, *Cambridge, Mass.*  
Bussey Institution, *Jamaica Plain, Mass.*

Farlow Herbarium and Library, *Cambridge, Mass.*  
Gray Herbarium, *Cambridge, Mass.*  
Harvard Forest, *Petersham, Mass.*  
The Maria Moors Cabot Foundation for  
Botanical Research

May 15, 1945

President James B. Conant  
Harvard University  
Cambridge  
Massachusetts

Dear President Conant:

I enclose herewith some notes on the rather disconcerting published report of the Committee to Visit the Harvard Forest, parts of which you may be able to utilize. I have not considered the report in all its aspects and implications for the simple reason that I believe that the proper time to discuss the situation, and to decide on definite lines of policy, should be after the Area Survey report, now in progress, is completed. The special committee, as you know, is charged with the preparation of a thorough survey of botany within the Department of Biology, and within the various separately endowed units, and the relationships of these units with the Department and with the University through the Department. There is every reason to believe that this report will be constructive, and that it will indeed show the way to a betterment of the situation, which, like Topsy, has just grown over a period of about 140 years. As Mr. James stated in his letter to me of May 9, "sometimes the Overseer's Committees go off the deep end in a disconcerting way."

I could present a pretty strong argument in favor of the Harvard Forest and its future development, but this, to me, appears rather unnecessary at the present time in view of the current Area Survey. It is frankly admitted that it would be well if the Harvard Forest endowment could be somewhat increased, for from all standpoints it is desirable that good men stationed at Petersham should have salaries more comparable to those paid in Cambridge. The time may come when this will be possible.

Perhaps it might be well, now that the Visiting Committee has evinced such deep concern regarding the Harvard Forest, its present position and its future, that official permission be granted to go ahead and see if it, as a group, could actually increase the endowment by perhaps \$100,000.00 to \$200,000.00, for such an addition to endowment would indeed stabilize the situation, allow for certain advances in salary, and for certain expansion activities. But perhaps it would be best to wait until the Bailey report is finished.

There is no need for me to discuss the situation of the various separately endowed units. The University policy has, in the past, been rather consistent. I do not know of a case where the University, as such, has actually sponsored an appeal for endowment funds for any of these units. It has, from time to time, granted permission to interested groups to see what could be done, an outstanding case being the special committee that was set up to work on behalf of the Arnold Arboretum. Through its efforts, with the consent of the University, but not through actual University participation, it did raise the Sargent Memorial Fund of the Arnold Arboretum, somewhat in excess of \$1,000,000.00.

I In the enclosed memorandum I have compiled certain figures from such documents as are available to me, regarding University assistance, in the past, to certain of the separately endowed units; these data you may wish to use. However, I have called attention to the fact that in the past the University did stand back of the Harvard Forest and took care of its overdrafts by dipping into University income, although under the terms by which the Petersham lands were acquired, it was definitely not obligated to do this.

If there be other points that you think I should cover, please let me know and I will do the best that I can with what is available to me. I may say in passing, that I rough-drafted the three-year report for the Committee to Visit the Arnold Arboretum, and that this is along lines totally different from that of the Harvard Forest Committee report. My notes will be more or less modified by the Chairman of the Committee, but doubtless he will submit a copy of his report to me in advance of publication.

Very truly yours



E. D. Merrill  
Administrator

EDM:CG  
encl.

\*

*Harvard Forest*

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

PAUL HERMAN BUCK, DEAN  
HENRY CHAUNCEY, ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN  
DAVID EDWARD OWEN, ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN  
GORDON PARK GILLIS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

5 UNIVERSITY HALL

May 22, 1945

OF RECORD  
MAY 28 1945

Dear Mr. Conant:

Dr. E. D. Merrill and I jointly recommend that Mr. Stephen Hopkins Spurr (B.S., University of Florida, 1938; M.F., Yale School of Forestry, 1940) Petersham, Massachusetts, be appointed as Instructor in Forestry and Assistant to the Director of the Harvard Forest for one year from July 1, 1945 at a salary of \$3000.

Dr. Merrill and I recently visited the Forest and are satisfied with Mr. Spurr's administration in the absence of the Director, Dr. Cline. We have also had a long talk with Mr. Spurr in Cambridge at which we thoroughly discussed the Forest and Mr. Spurr's work. Mr. Spurr expressed his satisfaction with the recommendation we are now making.

Very truly yours,

*Paul H. Buck*

President J. B. Conant  
Massachusetts Hall

\*

C O P Y

May 22, 1945

Dear Dean Buck:

I would like to express personally my deep regrets that so much trouble has resulted from our unfortunate report on the Harvard Forest. I hope that the situation will resolve itself satisfactorily, and I assure you of my willingness to cooperate in every way possible to help it do so.

I would also like to assure you that I was motivated solely by the desire to interest members of the governing boards of the University in the work and possibilities of the Harvard Forest. I had no idea that such a "tempest in a teapot" would be stirred up or I would have kept completely quiet. In any event, I shall do so in the future.

Sincerely,

/s/ Stephen H. Spurr

\*

DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
5 UNIVERSITY HALL

Forest

MEMORANDUM

DATE May 25, 1945

To President J. B. Conant  
FROM Dean P. H. Buck

---

I enclose a copy of a letter I just received from  
Mr. Spurr.

P.H.B.  
P.H.B.

*Stillman  
private*

\*

May 4, 1946

Dr. E. G. Stillman  
45 East 75th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Stillman:

I understand that Dr. Merrill has already sent you a copy of the vote of the Corporation passed at the last meeting, expressing their collective appreciation of your continued interest in the University and your generosity in providing Harvard with three new models. This note is to add my own personal gratitude and to send you good wishes.

I am sure these models, placed in Widener Library as arranged by Mr. Metcalf, will be of great interest; and I want you to know how much I appreciate your foresight in making this gift possible.

Very sincerely yours,

JAMES L. CONANT

# *The Friends of the Harvard Forest*

PER ARBORES AD SILVAM

SPONSORS

HENRY S. MORGAN  
Mrs. LLEWELLYN HOWLAND  
JOHN M. WOOLSEY, Jr.  
ROGER KINNICUTT

*declined 8/18/49  
Presidents*

AUG 18 1949  
August 16, 1949

To the Friends of the Harvard Forest:

You are cordially invited to attend the Annual Field Day of the Friends of the Harvard Forest on Saturday, September 10. The meeting will begin at Shaler Hall about 10:30 a. m.

An informal program is arranged for the morning in which members of the staff of the Forest will present brief reports of their work and of progress in the Forest's operations as a whole. There will be ample opportunity for inspection of the buildings and environs. Field trips in the afternoon will be devoted to the inspection of woods' operations and research carried on during the past year.

A buffet luncheon will be served at 12:30.

The Forest would appreciate it very much if you would return the enclosed card as soon as possible, stating whether or not you expect to attend and how many will be in your party.

Sincerely yours,

ROGER KINNICUTT

for the Sponsors

*Private*

K

*Stillman*

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram	
FULL RATE TELEGRAM	SERIAL
DAY LETTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NIGHT LETTER

# WESTERN UNION

1206

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	DEFERRED
CODE	NIGHT LETTER

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED
			President's Office, Harvard U	

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

December 17, 1949

Mrs. Ernest G. Stillman  
 45 East 75th Street  
 New York City

Deeply shocked to learn of your husband's sudden death. Harvard University has lost a loyal alumnus and far-seeing and generous friend. His many activities reflected an imaginative outlook on life and his going will be felt in many quarters throughout the United States. Please accept my sincerest sympathy for you and the children.

James Bryant Conant

Harvard Forest

Actual Budget? For formal  
meeting of June 21

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

June 6, 1950

OF RECEIVED

JUN 21 1950

Dear Dave:

Mr. Walter D. Edmonds, Overseer of Harvard College, has informed me that The Overseers Committee to Visit the Harvard Forest proposes to put up, at its own expense, a small bronze plaque in memory of Dr. Stillman at an appropriate place either in the Fisher Museum or Shaler Hall at the Forest.

A copy of the proposed inscription to go on the plaque is enclosed.

I have told Mr. Edwards that it was proper for his Committee to put up the plaque, and he is proceeding to have it done.

It occurs to me that I should have consulted the Corporation before authorizing the Committee to proceed to the installation of the plaque. But the request did not reach me in time for the June 5 meeting of the Corporation; time was running out from the Committee's point of view; the Stillman family had been consulted by Mr. Edmonds and I wished to avoid creating the impression that anyone within the University had doubts about the propriety of so honoring a generous donor and lifelong friend of the Forest. Hence I acted as I did, and now request formal approval of the Corporation of what I have done.

Sincerely yours,

Paul H. Buel.

Provost

Mr. David W. Bailey  
Massachusetts Hall 25

ROPES, GRAY, BEST, COOLIDGE & RUGG  
50 FEDERAL STREET  
BOSTON 10

TELEPHONE, HANCOCK 6-9214  
CABLE ADDRESS "ROPGRALOR"

June 7, 1950.

David W. Bailey, Esquire,  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Dave:

I favor the plaque to Dr. Stillman.

Sincerely,

*CAC*

C. A. Coolidge

*P.S. I want to get you to sign our Corp's picture, at the next meeting*  
*e*

ERNEST GOODRICH STILLMAN, MD

1884 -- 1949

FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR OF HIS UNIVERSITY  
AND LIFELONG SUPPORTER  
OF THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF NATURE  
HIS FAR-SEEING GENEROSITY MADE POSSIBLE  
THESE HARVARD FOREST BUILDINGS  
AND INSURED CONTINUANCE OF THE RESEARCH  
NOW REACHING FORTH  
INTO THE NATURAL WORLD BEYOND THEIR WALLS

HENRY L. SHATTUCK  
10 MILK STREET  
BOSTON

June 7, 1950.

Mr. David W. Bailey,  
Massachusetts Hall,  
Harvard University,  
Cambridge 38.

Dear Mr. Bailey,

I approve the suggestion for a plaque in memory of the late Ernest Goodrich Stillman at the Harvard Forest, and also the suggested text. If it is desired to insert the college class I think this might be done by adding a line just below the dates of birth and death, and I suggest, in the alternative, the following:

Class of 1908

or Harvard A.B. 1908

I am returning the text herewith.

Yours very truly,



[Enclosure]

*Harvard Forest*

SECRETARY TO THE CORPORATION

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Corporation

SUBJECT: Plaque for Dr. Ernest Goodrich Stillman

The President has asked me to canvass the Corporation to see whether they are willing to approve for erection at the Harvard Forest of a plaque in memory of the late Ernest Goodrich Stillman.

Enclosed is a copy of the inscription prepared by Mr. Walter Edmonds, Chairman of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the Forest. If approval can be secured by canvass at this time, it is expected that the plaque could be in position at Commencement time.

D.W.B.  
*CD.*

I approve.

Roger I. Lee

6/7/50

June 6, 1950



ERNEST GOODRICH STILLMAN, MD

1884 -- 1949

*Class of 1908*

*or  
Harvard A.P. 1908*

FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR OF HIS UNIVERSITY  
AND LIFELONG SUPPORTER  
OF THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF NATURE  
HIS FAR-SEEING GENEROSITY MADE POSSIBLE  
THESE HARVARD FOREST BUILDINGS  
AND INSURED CONTINUANCE OF THE RESEARCH  
NOW REACHING FORTH  
INTO THE NATURAL WORLD BEYOND THEIR WALLS

*Arms*

Note: We should like to use the Harvard ~~Seal~~ at the head of the plaque to correspond with the plaque describing the creation of the Forest Models.

It has also been suggested that Stillman's Class be named but I can see no way, that would not be awkward, of doing this if we retain the MD which his family think he would have liked this mention of.

I have stopped work, except for drawings, till we have the Corporation's approval.