

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

HARVARD FOREST
PETERSHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

June 15, 1939

The Board of Assessors
Winchester, N. H.

Gentlemen:

Some time ago I informed you that I had learned through indirect sources of the destruction of our 20-acre old growth stand on Pisgah Mountain by the hurricane of last September.

Since my last writing I have had an opportunity to visit the property in person, and I found only a scattering of trees still standing--not more than 15 to 20 trees all told.

At the request of Director Shepard, I wish to inquire what specific information is needed by your Board, or what action may be properly taken by us in order to assure a reduction in the assessed valuation of this property commensurate with its lowered value.

Very truly yours,


Assistant Director

Mr. Plunk - *Winchester N.H.*
Your property on Pisgah
Mountain has been assessed at
\$2000
Yours truly
H. F. Henderson
Secretary
June 19/39

February 3, 1939

The Board of Assessors
Winchester, New Hampshire

Gentlemen:

As you doubtless know, our 20-acre tract of old growth timber on Pisgah Mountain was almost completely wrecked by the hurricane. It has been reported to me by a friend who visited the tract recently that only five standing trees were visible from the point where the trail entered our property.

I wish to call this loss in value to your attention, so that the proper adjustment may be made in determining the assessed valuation of the property.

Very truly yours,

Assistant Director

TOWN OF WINCHESTER
NEW HAMPSHIRE



OFFICE OF
THE SELECTMEN

Winchester N.H.
7/24/35

Mr. A C Cline,
Petersham

Dear Sir:-

Mass.
In reply to your letter
of July 22 the Pisgah property
was reduced to \$8000⁰⁰/₁₀₀ —
from \$10000⁰⁰/₁₀₀ assessed valuation

Yours truly,
H. F. Henderson
Selectman

PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

24 MILK STREET, BOSTON 9, MASSACHUSETTS

WM. H. CLAFLIN, JR., *Treasurer*

March 26, 1947

Mr. Stephen H. Spurr
Harvard Forest
Petersham, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Spurr:

I am giving below the statement as to real estate and timber on the College property in Winchester and Moultonboro, New Hampshire, as reported on our April 1, 1946 returns. Will you let me know if any changes should be made in our 1947 returns.

Moultonboro:

About 700 acres of land with a valuation of \$6,000.
Merchantable wood and timber on the land as follows:
2400Mft. pine; 50M ft. hemlock; soft wood 300 acres;
hard wood 220 acres; average age 30 years.

Winchester:

"About 20 acres of forest land. This tract is situate in the town of Winchester in the vicinity of Pisgah Mountain, and previous to the hurricane of September 21, 1938 supported a substantial stand of old growth timber. This stand was completely levelled by the storm, only a few scattering trees of no value remaining standing. It was impractical to salvage any of the timber." \$200.

Very truly yours

Henry H. Cutler

Henry H. Cutler
Assistant to the Treasurer

HHC/P

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE



ADDRESS REPLY TO
STATE DIRECTOR
AND REFER TO

NEW ENGLAND FOREST EMERGENCY PROJECT
AMOSKEAG NORTH UPPER CANAL BLDG.
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, BOX 210

F (NEFE)
FIRE CONTROL
Hazard Reduction

38 Central Square
Keene, New Hampshire
September 28, 1940

A. C. Cline, Director
Harvard University
Harvard Forest
Petersham, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cline:

Your letter of September 25 has been received.

The trail leading from the Dickinson Camp to your old growth stand on Pisgah Mountain in the Town of Winchester, New Hampshire was opened last year by a CCC Crew.

I have not been over the trail this year, however, it is assumed that it is still open and usable.

Very sincerely yours,


HOWARD E. AHLKOG
District Project Supervisor

September 25, 1940.

Mr. H. E. Ahlskog, District Supt.,
NETSA,
38 Central Square,
Keene, N.H.

Dear Mr. Ahlskog:

A year or more ago I made a trip with the then supervisor of the Keene office to our old growth stand on Pisgah Mountain in the town of Winchester. The main object of this trip was to discuss the possibility of protecting this area against fire.

Because of its location, high up on a ridge top, and its inaccessibility, it was decided that a fire line or any device of that sort would be of little use. But it was agreed that the trail leading from the Dickinson sawmill to our old growth tract would be opened up by a fire hazard reduction crew. My purpose in writing is to inquire whether this trail has been opened.

In case you are not familiar with the location of the area in question, it is reached by going to the village of Ashuelot, taking the woods road from a point opposite the New England Box Company's plant to the site of the Dickinson sawmill, then going on foot over an old logging road for about a mile to a pile of rocks beside the road, then taking a trail to the right up a rather steep slope for about a quarter of a mile to our boundary line.

Very truly yours,

Director

April 4, 1940.

Mr. Henry A. Wood, Jr.
Harvard College Treasurer's Office,
24 Milk Street,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Wood:

I have your letter of the 2nd in regard to the present assessed valuation of our old growth tract in the town of Winchester, New Hampshire.

You are quite right in thinking that the land and timber fall far short of being worth \$2,000, unless one assumes that the old trees as they now lie on the ground are still sound and worth a good "stumpage" price because of their large size and high quality. It is probably true that the processes of decay and attack by wood borers have not yet gone far enough to ruin the trees, and it is not unlikely that some lumberman might be interested in carrying on a salvage operation. However, as far as the latter is concerned, our policy is to leave the trees undisturbed.

If no value is placed on the fallen trees, certainly the assessed valuation should be very low, perhaps around \$200.

Very sincerely yours,

Director

PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

24 MILK STREET, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

WM. H. CLAPLIN, JR., *Treasurer*

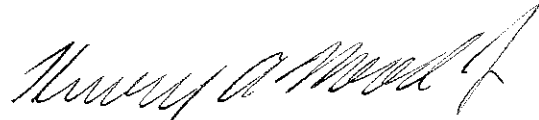
April 5, 1940

Mr. A. C. Cline, Director
Harvard Forest
Petersham, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cline:

I am much obliged for your letter of April 4th. It seems to me that we are perfectly justified in giving a valuation of \$200 for the land ex the stand of trees, since we have always valued it at \$2,000 with the trees standing, and I am therefore filing the return with this figure. It is, of course, extremely doubtful whether the Selectmen will tax the property at anything like this lower figure, but at least we will be on record with them.

Sincerely yours,



Deputy Treasurer

HAW MEL

April 1, 1940.

Mr. Henry A. Wood, Jr.
Harvard College Treasurer's Office,
34 Milk Street,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Wood:

The enclosed form was recently sent me by the selectmen of the town of Winchester, New Hampshire, in which our Pisgah old growth forest is situated.

According to Section 6 under Public Laws on the last page of the form, the blank is to be filled out by "the president or other principal officer" in the case of a corporation. I asked Mr. Lowes how we should handle this, and he advised me to forward it to you.

You will find a note attached to the form describing the present condition of the property. My thought was that, if this description seems satisfactory to you, it could be typed on the form under "Description of real estate".

Very sincerely yours,

Director

C. P. Fisher,
Lionel D-22
Harvard Univ.

October 1938

Description of Pisgah forest

Dear Mr. Gast:

Although you may have seen my note by this time, I thought I might as well tell you the details.

It took us a long time to get to the tract itself because of the windfalls, so that when we did get there we didn't have time to look over the whole twenty acres. We looked at what we could see from the place where the trail enters the tract proper, where the Harvard Forest sign is, and everything in sight was flat, except for an occasional very big tree, possibly a dozen in all still standing.

Since I have never been there before, I don't know whether the remaining ones were really of the biggest, but the fact that most everything is down made the remaining ones a very impressive sight. I sure wish I had seen the place while it was still there.

Well, that's the sad story. If there is anything I can do for you or the Department here, or in Petersham when I'm there, please let me know.

yours truly,

Charles P. Fisher

RTF's son

RTF's son

October 18, 1938

Mr. Charles P. Fisher
Lionel D-22
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Charlie:

Thank you very much for the note and the letter telling what you found at Pisgah. That you saw possibly a dozen big trees still standing gives us a little encouragement to hope that the area is not entirely destroyed. Thus, a few big trees near the pond at the bottom of the Tom Swamp road that goes by Spinney's may prove quite valuable relics for certain genetical work. Though many silvicultural possibilities have been wiped out, certain opportunities still remain.

I too am very sorry that you did not see Pisgah before.

Thanking you again for your thoughtfulness, I am,

Very truly yours,

P. R. Gast

June 13, 1939

Mr. Philip Rogers
Hardwick, Mass.

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I must tell you of a hurried trip made a few days ago to our old growth forest on Pisgah Mountain in Winchester, N. H. I regret very much that time did not permit getting in touch with you, but, as it turned out, I think it was just as well.

The old woods road was so filled with fallen trees that we not only found the traveling very difficult but lost our way and succeeded in finding the old stand only after wasting a great deal of energy in searching. We found it completely blown down with the exception of ten or fifteen old pine trees. However, even in its present prostrate form, it is something worth seeing.

The Fire Hazard Reduction Office at Keene has agreed to open up the old woods road, and I would suggest that we postpone our trip up there until this has been done.

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant Director

June 20, 1939

Mr. Thomas E. Hanifin
Belchertown, Mass.

Dear Mr. Hanifin:

I have been informed of your further inquiry regarding the possibility of a stumpage sale of the blown down timber in our old growth tract on Pisgah Mountain.

After thorough consideration of the purposes for which this old growth forest was originally acquired, it has been decided to let nature continue to take her course free from interference by man. I must inform you therefore that there is no possibility of making you a stumpage sale.

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant Director

October 16, 1939.

Mr. F. Lancaster,
U. S. Forest Service,
County Agricultural Building,
Keene, N.H.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

Some months ago I visited our old growth timber tract in the town of Winchester, N.H. in company with Mr. Payson of the Forest Service. The object of our trip was to see what was worth doing in the way of fire hazard reduction.

As far as the old timber stand itself is concerned, we decided that a fire line around it would not be effective; nor could we think of any other device which would be of much help in preventing or stopping a forest fire in such an inaccessible location, other than the opening up of the old woods road and trail leading into this country from the state highway at Ashuelot.

Mr. Payson agreed to have the old road opened up by the fire hazard reduction crews, and I am writing to inquire whether this has been done. There are a number of people who would like to see what happened to this old stand as a result of the hurricane, and I have promised to make a trip up there this fall. Unless the old road has been cleared, however, I fear that travel would be too difficult for some members of the party. I shall be very glad to know what the situation is up there.

Very truly yours,

A. C. Cline
Acting Director

April 10, 1939

Dr. E. D. Merrill
Arnold Arboretum
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Dear Dr. Merrill:

As you know, the old growth timber at Mount Pisgah was blown down by the hurricane. Cline and I have recently had some discussion on the pros and cons of salvage. This tract, Cline informs me, was donated on condition that it be left perpetually in a natural state. Cline takes the point of view, which I am inclined to share, that it would be best to leave the tract undisturbed. As you know, the tract is very isolated and it would take a good deal of road construction to get the timber out, and it is doubtful if we could break even on the logging.

Another factor, of course, is the question of the fire hazard from the public standpoint. I am taking this matter up with the Forest Service. It might be possible to surround the tract with a fire lane, if we decide to leave it as is.

I should be glad to have your views. You might like also to consult Raup and to get his views from the ecological standpoint.

Sincerely yours,

Director

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATOR OF
BOTANICAL COLLECTIONS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY
ARNOLD ARBORETUM, JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS., U.S.A.

AC -
We are all in agreement
Fls fresh the matter
with Raup
WJ

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

April 11, 1939

Dear Shepard:

My reaction on the Pisgah tract is that it should be left as it is. Certainly we are not justified in expending more than the salvaged timber would bring merely to "clean up" the place. The other alternative is, of course, to give the fallen timber to any operator who would take it out at his own expense, but frankly I do not like to contemplate this unless the work was done under very close supervision. I would then say leave it as it is and see if you cannot get the Forest Service or some other public agency to do what is needed to be done to reduce the fire hazard.

Raup agrees with me that the real future value of the Pisgah tract lies in its being left alone as far as possible; i.e., that there should be no lumbering operations permitted. We believe that the "fire lane" idea is a good one if it can be consummated.

I suppose that one of the reasons why this small tract was not lumbered originally was, in part, the actual expense of getting the timber out on account of the nature of the terrain; and now that extensive lumbering operations are not being carried on in the immediate vicinity of our tract it would seem to be unlikely that any satisfactory arrangement could be made with local operators.

Very truly yours


E.D. Merrill

Hinsdale, N.H.
Jan. 24-1939

Harvard College
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir -

Have you got anybody in view to cut your Old growth Pine in Pisgah that fell during the Hurricane. I have just finished a couple of lots and if you are looking for someone will you kindly answer this letter.

yours truly

Fred J. Veber

Hinsdale N.H.

P.S. I know the woods very well.

February 1, 1939

Mr. Fred J. Veber
Hinsdale, N.H.

Dear Sir:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of January 24 in regard to our old growth timber in Winchester, which was blown down by the hurricane.

This tract was purchased chiefly to study what happens under natural conditions, when there is no interference by man. And since the hurricane can be looked upon as an act of God, I believe that to carry out the wishes of the donors no effort should be made to salvage the timber. If by any chance the University authorities should take a different view of the matter, I shall be glad to let you know and to consider your offer to operate the down timber.

Very truly yours,

Assistant Director

May 16, 1939

Mr. L. T. Payson, District Supervisor
in Charge of Fire Hazard Reduction Work
U. S. Forest Service
Keene, N.H.

Dear Mr. Payson:

I apologize for not having gotten in touch with you again before now in regard to our proposed trip to the Mount Pisgah old growth timber in the town of Winchester. One thing or another came up to prevent my getting away, besides which I thought it might be just as well to let the road leading from the state highway to the old Dickinson saw-mill dry up a little. Even now I am not sure that this road is passable.

I am wondering whether you might find it convenient to make the trip sometime next week, in which case I should be only too glad to meet your convenience in setting the day.

I believe you were informed through Director Shepard that the University authorities feel that the old growth forest should be left undisturbed by man, in order that we may carry out the original purposes of preserving the area forever in a wild state. Whether any sort of a fire line around the 20-acre piece would be effective, or whether you would consider undertaking such a project, is of course a matter which rests with you.

At your convenience, will you kindly let me know what date would be best for you?

Very truly yours,

Assistant Director

May 23, 1975

Mr. Clayton N. Heath, Jr., Chief
Special Forestry Programs
Department of Resources and
Economic Development
P. O. Box 856
State House Annex
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Dear Mr. Heath:

Thank you for your letter of May 21, concerning the 20-acre lot that belongs to Harvard University in the Pisgah wilderness area. This parcel contained a stand of beautiful old white pines and was considered virgin forest. On July 4, 1926 an article appeared in the New York Times, entitled "New England's Virgin Forest in Danger", written by Mary Lee. In this article Professor R. T. Fisher (first Director of the Harvard Forest) is quoted to have said, "I would like to see it under the joint supervision of the Harvard and Yale Forestry Schools". It appears that this article was the beginning of a campaign to collect money to buy the 20-acre parcel from the owner which was the New England Box Co. in Greenfield, Mass. Many individual contributors made this purchase possible. A letter by Professor Fisher to Mr. W. E. Dickinson of the N. E. Box Co., dated December 24, 1926, acknowledges the deed. The purchase price was set at \$20,000; of which \$18,000 was paid immediately, the remaining \$2,000 after January 1st, 1927.

After this date, an additional sum of money was solicited to provide a small endowment for the purpose of paying the taxes on the property and to study the area.

The Pisgah Tract has been set aside exclusively for the study of a virgin forest. As you know, the 1938 hurricane blew down all large trees with the exception of about 15 to 20 individuals. The University was then approached by Mr. Thomas E. Hanifin of Belchertown, Mass. and asked if it would not want to sell the fallen trees to salvage the valuable timber, but it was decided, in the interest of the original purpose of the purchase, to forego this sale. The letter from Asst. Director A. C. Cline of June 20, 1939 contains the following statement. "After thorough consideration of the purposes for which this old growth forest was originally acquired, it has been decided to let nature continue to take her course free from interference by man. I must inform you, therefore, that there is no possibility of making you a stumpage sale."

Mr. Clayton N. Heath, Jr.
May 26, 1975
Page 2

Our policy has not changed since then, and I can assure you that we intend to continue to preserve the parcel as a virgin forest and that we neither have plans to construct any buildings or other structures there, nor that we intend to sell it.

I hope that this letter contains the information you need.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Martin H. Zimmermann
Director

MHZ:ts



TRADE-MARK REG.

S. A. WOODS MACHINE CO.

MANUFACTURERS OF

WOODWORKING MACHINERY
AND
INDUCTION MOTORS

BOSTON, U.S.A.

CABLE ADDRESS:
"SAWCO, BOSTON"

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
AND WORKS
DEPT. A

JAN. 26, 1939

Harvard University,
Harvard Forest,
Petersham, Mass.

Attention Mr. A. C. Cline, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs:

Appreciate very much indeed your letter of Jan. 25th answering our recent letter to your people about the possibility of needing planing mill machinery.

Naturally, we are sorry to learn that in all probability you will not carry your operations to a point where you will need finishing equipment. However, if there is any change in the program, will be glad indeed to figure with you on any Planing Mill Machinery requirements.

Very truly yours,

S A WOODS MACHINE CO.

McRodge
PRESIDENT

HCD/p

January 25, 1939.

Mr. H. C. Dodge, President,
S. A. Woods Machine Co.,
Boston, Mass.

My dear Mr. Dodge:

Mr. Shepard has asked me to reply to your letter of January 18 in regard to our possible needs for planing mill machinery.

As you doubtless know, the sawing of the salvaged timber is being done under contract by the Northeastern Timber Salvage Administration. Under this arrangement it is doubtful whether we shall carry our operations farther than the delivery of logs to government receiving points, leaving the milling to those who are equipped to do it.

If there should be a change in this program and it became desirable for us to purchase any milling and planing machinery, we should be very glad to get in touch with you.

Very truly yours,

Assistant Director



TRADE-MARK REG.

S. A. WOODS MACHINE CO.

MANUFACTURERS OF

WOODWORKING MACHINERY
AND
INDUCTION MOTORS

BOSTON, U.S.A.

January 18, 1939

CABLE ADDRESS:
"SAWCO, BOSTON"

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
AND WORKS
DEPT. A

Mr. Ward Shepard, Director
Harvard Forest
Petersham, Massachusetts

AC
W. reply

Dear Sir:-

It has been reported that in connection with salvaging operations on the timber over at Harvard College at or near Petersham, certain planing mill equipment will be purchased. I am not at all sure that this report is correct or that there is a possibility of the college being in the market for equipment such as Planer matcher or inside moulder or resaw. However, if the report is true, then we naturally would like very much indeed to figure with the college on their equipment requirements.

Any information you can give us as to whether or not you ought to be in the market for woodworking machinery and, if so, the type of machinery involved, would be very much appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Herdige
PRESIDENT

HCD:ES

April 18, 1944.

Mr. H. W. Wellwood,
24 Milk Street,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Wellwood:

In accordance with our conversation on the telephone last Thursday, I am writing you the status of the growing stock on our so-called Pisgah Tract in Winchester, New Hampshire.

Amount of standing merchantable timber	None
Amount of immature softwoods	None
Amount of immature hardwoods	20 acres
Average age	5 years

The timber on the Pisgah Tract was completely windthrown by the hurricane of September 21, 1938. Only a dozen or so trees were left standing on the entire 20 acres. As there was practically no advance growth under the old stand, the area is now covered with seedlings which have established themselves since the hurricane.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

August 28, 1939.

Dr. E. D. Merrill,
Arnold Arboretum,
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Dear Dr. Merrill:

I have received your letter of the 23rd
and copies of other correspondence.

In regard to our Pisgah old growth tract,
I took up the matter of reduced assessed valuation with
the Board of Assessors of Winchester last June. They
decided to place its post-hurricane valuation at \$2000
as against a previous valuation of \$7000. This reduction
means that the taxes will amount to less than half the
income from our Pisgah Forest Endowment Fund. Previously
the taxes exceeded the income by about \$60.

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant Director

Information given on tax blank sent to town of
Winchester, New Hampshire

1940

Question 1. Description of real estate:

20-acre tract of woodland in the vicinity
of Pisgah Mountain. Prior to the hurricane of Sept.
28, 1938, this tract supported a stand of old growth
timber. The stand was completely blown down by the
hurricane, with the exception of a few scattered
trees. No timber was salvaged.

All other questions

No or none

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FEDERAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES CORPORATION

ADDRESS REPLY TO
DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
AND REFER TO

NEW HAMPSHIRE TIMBER SALVAGE ADMINISTRATION

Keene, New Hampshire

October 19, 1939

NEFE
PLANS
Current Work

Mr. A. C. Cline
Acting Director of The Harvard Forest
Pebersham, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cline:

Reference is made to your letter of October 16th., regarding the opening up of the old road and trail leading into your old growth ~~of~~ timber stand in the Town of Winchester.

The road is opened as far as the Dickinson camp but as yet the trail from the camp leading into the woods has not been cleaned. A crew will be put to work on the trail starting Monday, October 23rd. This will be finished by the 28th., if not sooner.

We are sorry that this work has not been done but we have held this work area up in anticipation of getting a W.P.A. crew.

Very sincerely yours,

VIRGIL M. LANCASTER
District Project Supervisor


By Howard E. Ahlskog, Acting

October 23, 1939

Mr. V. M. Lancaster
New Hampshire Timber Salvage Administration
Keene, N.H.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

I am very glad to have Mr. Ahlskog's letter of the 19th informing me of your plans to open up the old road leading into the woods beyond the Dickinson camp in the town of Winchester.

I might say that this old woods road continues almost straight in a northerly direction from the Dickinson camp, and that we are interested in it chiefly from the point where it leaves the camp to the point where our side trail to the east takes off. This latter point is marked by a cairn some two feet high on the right-hand side of the woods road somewhat over a mile north of the Dickinson camp. Our side trail leads up a dry stream bed and is marked by blue paint spots on the trees. Once the cairn is uncovered, I am quite sure that anyone interested in seeing what is left of our old growth stand will have no difficulty finding enough of the paint spots to lead him to the former entrance to our tract.

Very sincerely yours,

Acting Director

June 9, 1939

Mr. Henry A. Payson
New England Forest Emergency Office
Keene, N.H.

Dear Mr. Payson:

I am very glad that it was at last possible for us to make a trip to our former old growth forest on Pisgah Mountain in the town of Winchester, and may I say again that I greatly appreciate your giving your time to the trip.

If it comes within the bounds of your fire hazard reduction work, we should of course be very glad to have the old woods road opened up so as to lessen the amount of exertion required to get up to our property. I am frank to say that it provided me with quite a workout, and I am very sorry that we overshot our objective and went to a lot of extra work for nothing.

I should be only too pleased to show you around Petersham and what is left of the Harvard Forest at any time when you might find it convenient to come down.

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant Director