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## Conservation Loses A Leader

By Harold Titus, in the  
Grand Rapids Press

WILEN P. S. Lovejoy died, the man who made today's Michigan Department of Conservation passed out of the picture.

This is no disparagement of those countless individuals, from director to townerman within the Department, and from governor to the least articulate citizen that ever made a suggestion outside, who have done their part and added their increment to the bureau's value. But it was P. S. who dreamed the major outlines of the dream years ago; it was P. S. who translated the dream to blueprint; it was P. S. who was everlastingly leading and prodding until the plan was more than wish or lines on paper and had become reality.

P. S. was a lot more than a conservationist. He was one of those chosen few who see government as a clean and precisely integrated set of machinery, functioning for the good of the many. But the conservation movement happened to be his medium, his idiom, his natural field of expression, and so, for the state at large, he will be remembered as a worker and leader in the conservation and restoration of natural resources.

Take a look at the Department as it stands today. Scarcely a division within it but bears the imprint of Lovejoy's sharp and dynamic mind; not a single function that doesn't run more smoothly because he gave its objectives and problems long and orderly thought.

Not a native of the state, he became impressed with Michigan land problems 40 years ago when, as a student of forestry at the university, he did research work on the last big pine operation in the lower peninsula, near the headwaters of the Manistee river. From that time on he never rested easily unless burdened with Michigan problems.

There was, of course, the interlude when he served with the United States forest service in the northwest, but that, after all, only prepared him for greater service here. Then it was back on the university faculty, infecting forestry students with his vigor and straight thinking and determination. Then, for a time, he worked as special writer for *Courtesy Gentleman* and while his assignments were wide in scope he managed to keep editorial eyes often turned this way and there must still be uneasy lossings at night by those almost forgotten unwise or unscrupulous land boomers who operated in Michigan years ago and who were



finally driven from the scene largely by the torch P. S. turned on them.

And all that time he'd been watching the conservation movement, long before he dreamed he'd be on the staff; all that time planning how the vast technical tools on university and college campuses, so often whirling solely in academic fields, might be geared in with specific need of state administration.

Who introduced the idea of resource inventory to the state? Lovejoy. The land economic survey was his baby; it was his foresight and persistence that assembled factions within the Academy of Science to drive the need of adequate information on which to base a program into Lansing's understanding. The survey no longer exists. It served its great purpose and passed on, but its existence developed technique and redefined problems which today are fundamental not only in Michigan's conservation administration but in that of many other states.

Who brought in the institute for fisheries research? Lovejoy. Not under that name, of course. But it was his parables, spoken in his inimitable manner into the ear of John Baird, that made Michigan aware of the hopelessness of trying to solve fisheries problems without technical aid. He sent Baird to Ruthven, Hubbs, Creaser; Metzlaar and others came; today it's the institute.

Who made Michigan hate forest fire? Lovejoy, again. He was preaching against and teaching about fire when most of our

eyes smarted for weeks at a time from taken-for-granted smoke. He later took Charley Peterson and Hoss Andrews and Spike Sayre successively by the hand and made the division what it is today.

Who got up the Department's game division? Lovejoy, of course. It was my privilege to go with Bill Loutit and put it in his lap, away back in 1927, and when he was rather new on the staff. "It's yours; it's a division," we said. "Game farm, refuges, a staff for research, plans for public hunting grounds. The works! Hop to it!" How he hopped!

Who brought the state forests out of obscurity? Lovejoy, and no one else. He bludgeoned and scoffed and went into his chuckling parables again with John Baird until Marcus SchAAF got a chance.

You could go straight through the list: Lands, parks, education—the whole lot of them owe something fundamental and irreplaceable to Lovejoy's vision and drive.

Those of us who knew him best realize that his was one of the truly great personalities. Intolerant of the cheap or shoddy or usual, his logic and expression could blister. Loathing the self-seeker or factions with axes to grind, his wrath could be colossally righteous. Quick at appraising human values, many a student on the campus and, later, many a recruit in department ranks, owes today's outstanding achievements to the kindly and patient coaching of P. S. Always the skeptic, even of his own enthusiasms and procedures, he examined each movement with an intelligence as clean and as sharp as a surgeon's scalpel until he could find it wholly good. Hours did not matter then; he was behind it from then on.

Lovejoy's mind was that of the research specialist. He had the language of a scholar. Yet, often in his most profound moments he chose to slip into the idiom of the upper country and talk in the simple colloquialisms of shanty-boy, trapper, pioneer farmer. Because of that, some day, on some upper Michigan hill-top I'd like to find a rock. Just a good, tough boulder dropped there by a glacier and likely to be there until the ice comes again. And I'd like to hire a stone cutter to walk in with his tools and roll up his sleeves and light his pipe (craftsmanship always intrigued Lovejoy) and there alone, in the tranquillity that is Michigan's out-of-doors, whittle out a legend about like this:

"P. S.

"He done a lot of good."