

**FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE FOREST
COMMISSIONER OF THE
STATE OF MAINE, 1891**

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First Annual Report of the Forest Commissioner of the state of Maine, 1891 by Various

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VARIOUS

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1891.

AUGUSTA:
BURLEIGH & FLYNT, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
1892.

Feb. 1912

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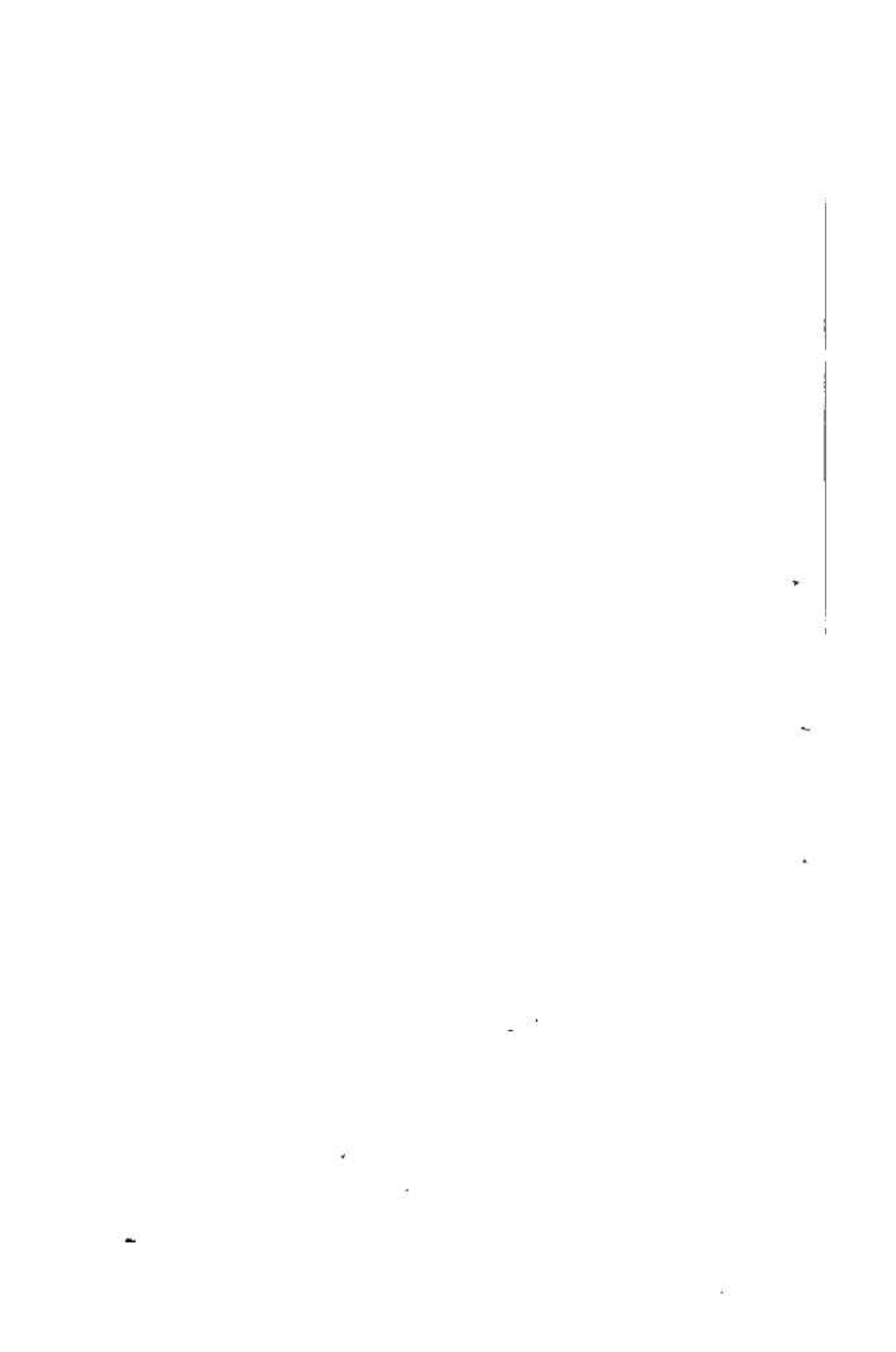
STATE OF MAINE.

To the Honorable E. C. Burleigh, Governor of Maine:

The Forest Commissioner respectfully submits his first annual report, as required by the act of 1891, chapter 100, creating a Forest Commission.

CYRUS A. PACKARD,

Forest Commissioner.



STATE OF MAINE.

CHAPTER 100.

AN ACT to create a Forest Commission and for the Protection of Forests.

SECT. 1. The state land agent is hereby made forest commissioner of the state of Maine, and in addition to the salary now received by him as land agent, he shall receive as compensation for his services as forest commissioner two hundred dollars per annum, and his actual traveling expenses incurred in the performance of his duties, an account of which shall be audited by the governor and council.

SECT. 2. It shall be the duty of the forest commissioner to make a collection and classification of statistics relating to the forests and connected interests of the state, and to institute an inquiry into the extent to which the forests of Maine are being destroyed by fires and by wasteful cutting, and to ascertain so far as he can as to the diminution of the wooded surface of the land upon the water sheds of the lakes, rivers and water powers of the state and the effect of such diminution upon the water powers and on the natural conditions of the climate. The information so gathered by him, together with his suggestions relative thereto shall be included in a report to be made by him annually to the governor on or before the first day of December.

SECT. 3. The selectmen of towns shall be, ex-officio, forest fire wardens therein and shall divide said towns into three districts, bounded as far as may be by roads, streams of water, or lot lines, and assign to each of their number the charge and oversight of one district as district fire wardens therein. A description of each district and the name of the fire warden thereof shall be recorded with the town clerk. The services of such selectmen acting as said fire wardens, shall be paid for at the same rate as is paid for their other

official services. It shall be the duty of the fire warden of the district in which a fire is discovered to take such measures as may be necessary for its control or extinction. For this purpose he shall have authority to call upon any persons in the territory in which he acts for assistance, and such persons shall receive such compensation not exceeding fifteen cents per hour as said selectmen may determine, the same to be paid by the town. But no town shall be holden to pay for extinguishing forest fires in any year an amount greater than two per cent upon its valuation for purposes of taxation. If any person so ordered to assist, and not excused from said service by said forest fire warden on account of sickness, disability or some important business or engagement, shall neglect to comply with any such order he shall forfeit the sum of ten dollars, to be recovered in an action of debt in the name and to the use of the town, by the treasurer thereof.

SECT. 4. County commissioners of each county in which there are unorganized places shall annually appoint, when they deem it necessary, such number of fire wardens as they deem necessary not exceeding ten, for all such unorganized places in any county, whose duties and powers shall be the same with respect to such unorganized places as those of the fire wardens of towns, and they shall also have the same authority to call out citizens of the county to aid them in extinguishing fires, that town fire wardens have to call out citizens of the town. The compensation of such fire wardens shall be paid by the county, and the compensation of persons called upon by them as aforesaid, to render aid shall be the same as that provided in the case of towns and shall be paid one-half by the county and one-half by the owners of the lands on which said fires occur.

SECT. 5. Any person who shall build a camp or cooking fire in or adjoining any woods in this state, shall, before leaving such camp, totally extinguish such fire, and upon failure to do so, such person shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one month or by both such fine and imprisonment, provided, that such fires built upon the sea beach in such situation that they cannot spread into forest wood or cultivated lands or meadows, shall not be construed as prohibited by this act.

SECT. 6. It shall be the duty of selectmen in towns within thirty days after this act shall take effect, to cause to be erected in a con-

spacious place at the side of every highway as they may deem proper, and at suitable distances alongside the rivers and lakes of the state frequented by camping parties, tourists, hunters and fishermen, in their respective towns, notice in large letters to be furnished by the forest commissioner, substantially in the following form. Camp fires must be totally extinguished before breaking camp, under penalty of not to exceed one month's imprisonment or one hundred dollars fine, or both as provided by law. Signed, Forest Commissioner. The forest commissioner shall furnish owners of wood lands situated within this state when called upon so to do, notices of similar tenor to be posted at the expense of said owners upon their respective lands.

SECR. 7. All persons engaged in hunting game on any of the wood lands within any town or unincorporated place in this state, shall use non-combustible wads in the loading of firearms used by them.

SECR. 8. It shall be the duty of municipal officers in towns, and county commissioners, the latter with respect to unorganized places, to proceed immediately to a strict inquiry into the cause and origin of fires within wood lands; and in all cases where such fires are found to have originated from the unlawful act of any person, to cause the offender to be prosecuted without delay.

SECR. 9. The selectmen of towns in which a forest fire of more than one acre in extent has occurred, and the county commissioners where a forest fire of more than two acres has occurred in any of the unincorporated places in any county, within a year, shall report to the forest commissioner the extent of area burned over, to the best of their information, together with the probable amount of property destroyed, specify the value of timber as near as may be, and amount of cord wood, logs, bark or other forest product, fencing, bridges and buildings that have been burned. They shall also report the cause of these fires if they can be ascertained, and the measures employed and found most effective in checking their progress. Blanks for the reports required in this act shall be furnished by said forest commissioner at the expense of the state.

SECR. 10. Every railroad company whose road passes through waste or forest lands, shall during each year cut and burn off or remove from its right of way all grass, brush or other inflammable material, but under proper care and at times when fires are not liable to spread beyond control.