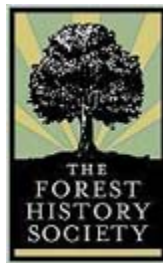


**Inventory of the
Images from The Dawn of Private Forestry
in America Manuscript, 1892 - 1913**



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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Images from "The Dawn of Private Forestry in America" Manuscript,
Dates:	1892 - 1913
Creator:	Schenck, Carl Alwin, 1868-1955
Abstract:	<p>German-born and -educated Carl Alwin Schenck (1868-1955) was a pioneer in American forestry education, known for his contributions as premier forester for the Biltmore Estate and as founder of the Biltmore Forest School.</p> <p>The collection includes black-and-white photographic images dating from the 1890s to the 1910s used to supplement the memoirs of Carl A. Schenck, which Schenck titled "The Dawn of Private Forestry in America, Recollections of a Forester Covering the Years 1895 to 1914." Significant topics documented by the images include: Schenck's impressions of the years when he, Gifford Pinchot, and Bernhard Eduard Fernow were the only trained foresters working in the United States; life and work on the Biltmore Estate; the founding, development, and closing of the Biltmore Forest School in Asheville, North Carolina; and the various professional and community contacts Schenck made while working for George W. Vanderbilt.</p>
Extent:	1 bound manuscript
Repository:	Forest History Society Library and Archives
Call Number:	7206
Language of Material:	Material in English

Biographical and Historical Note

Carl Alwin Schenck

German-born and -educated Carl Alwin Schenck (1868-1955) was a pioneer in American forestry education, known for his contributions as premier forester for the Biltmore Estate and as founder of the Biltmore Forest School.

Carl Alwin Schenck was born 25 March 1868 in Darmstadt in the state of Hesse, Germany. As a young man he studied forestry and law, earning a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Giessen in 1895. On the recommendation of Sir Dietrich Brandis, then considered the world's leading professional forester, American entrepreneur George W. Vanderbilt hired Schenck in 1895 to manage the woodlands on his vast estate in Asheville, North Carolina. Schenck succeeded Gifford Pinchot, the first American trained in the field of forestry, as manager of the estate's forests, taking charge of such forest management tasks as implementing erosion control measures, supervising logging practices, marketing timber, and reforesting harvested lands.

Forest History Society Library and Archives

In 1898, with George Vanderbilt's permission, Schenck founded the Biltmore Forest School, the first forestry school in the United States. The school primarily admitted high school graduates with lumbering experience and trained them to work as foresters in the private sector rather than as government employees in positions that required extensive education. The school offered a one-year course of intensive lectures supplemented with extensive field work in practical forestry and lumbering. Schenck ran the school in his spare time, conducting most of the lectures and personally leading the students on lengthy horseback rides through the Biltmore forests so that they could view firsthand the various forestry applications being implemented on the estate. The school flourished for a number of years, but in 1907 George Vanderbilt fired Schenck over a disagreement, and Schenck was forced to move the Biltmore Forest School off the grounds of the Biltmore Estate. For a time Schenck used as his headquarters a schoolroom and student housing provided by Champion Paper and Fibre Company in the town of Sunburst, North Carolina, and he began taking his students on extensive field trips to Germany, France, New York, North Carolina, Michigan, and Oregon. Schenck eventually disbanded the Biltmore Forest School in 1913 due to declining enrollment after having graduated over three hundred fifty students.

In 1914, Schenck was recalled to Germany to serve as a lieutenant on the Eastern front, where he was wounded in action. In the decade following World War I, Schenck gave forestry lectures at several German and American forestry schools, and he conducted field tours of European forests for American forestry students. During the 1920s and 1930s, he wrote numerous articles and textbooks while continuing his work as a lecturer. In the wake of World War II, Schenck worked with American authorities to help set up forestry and relief programs in Germany.

In his later years he received numerous honors, including an honorary degree of Doctor of Forest Science from North Carolina State College awarded in 1952. In that same year, Schenck returned to the United States and spoke at numerous banquets, meetings, and dedications around the country. On May 16, 1955, Carl Alwin Schenck died at the age of eighty-seven in Lindenfels, Germany, after having been ill for quite some time.

"The Dawn of Private Forestry in America"

Late in his life, Dr. Carl A. Schenck recorded his memoirs in a manuscript he titled "The Dawn of Private Forestry in America, Recollections of a Forester Covering the Years 1895 to 1914." In this manuscript, Schenck described his impressions of the years when he, Gifford Pinchot, and Bernhard Eduard Fernow were the only trained foresters working in the United States. He reminisced about such topics as life and work on the Biltmore Estate; the founding, development, and eventual disbandment of the Biltmore Forest School; the various professional and community contacts he made while working for George W. Vanderbilt; and the American way of life and the American people. Schenck included numerous photographs in his manuscript to illustrate the details of his reminiscences. The images and the captions Schenck provided for them greatly enhance the manuscript, offering visual representations of the life and work of one of the first practicing foresters in the United States.

In 1955, the Minnesota Historical Society published a revised edition of Schenck's manuscript on behalf of the American Forest History Foundation (later Forest History Society) under the title *The Biltmore Story: Recollections of the Beginning of Forestry in the United States*. The Forest History Society, in cooperation with the Appalachian Consortium, reprinted the 1955 book in 1974 under a new title, *The Birth of Forestry in America: Biltmore Forest School, 1898-1913*. In 1998 the Forest History Society, in cooperation with the Cradle of Forestry in America Interpretive Association and the U.S. Forest Service History Program, reprinted Schenck's memoirs again under the title *Cradle of Forestry in America: The Biltmore Forest School, 1898-1913*. The original unpublished manuscript, the photos used to supplement it, and published versions of Carl Schenck's memoirs reside in the collections of the Library and Archives of the Forest History Society in Durham, North Carolina.

Collection Overview

The collection includes black-and-white photographic images dating from the 1890s to the 1910s used to supplement the memoirs of Carl A. Schenck, which Schenck titled "The Dawn of Private Forestry in America, Recollections of a Forester Covering the Years 1895 to 1914." Significant topics documented by the images include: Schenck's impressions of the years when he, Gifford Pinchot, and Bernhard Eduard Fernow were the only trained foresters working in the United States; life and work on the Biltmore Estate; the founding, development, and closing of the Biltmore Forest School in Asheville, North Carolina; and the various professional and community contacts Schenck made while working for George W. Vanderbilt.

Collection Arrangement

1. Images Supplementing the Schenck Manuscript, 1892-1913

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

No restrictions.

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Subject Headings

Biltmore Estate (Asheville, N.C.)
Biltmore Forest School -- History
Foresters -- United States -- Biography
Forestry schools and education -- North Carolina
Forests and forestry -- United States -- History
Schenck, Carl Alwin, 1868-1955
Vanderbilt, George Washington, 1862-1914

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

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Encoded by Amanda Ross, January 2009

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Detailed Description of the Collection

1. Images Supplementing the Schenck Manuscript, 1892-1913.

These photographs are available through the online image gallery for the "Dawn of Private Forestry" Manuscript Image Collection.