

In the succeeding chapters I will attempt to describe our living conditions in those early days, the camp life, and in a non-technical language some of the survey problems encountered. In addition I will recount in considerable detail some of the more dangerous encounters with wild animals and also some of the more hazardous climbs in projecting the lines over perpendicular cliffs and across chasms.

On the later work, particularly on the survey of the boundaries of Yellowstone Park, and the line between the states of Wyoming and Montana in the Cooke City area, Alpine climbing equipment was carried.

At the time I entered this service in 1905 the method of surveying the public lands was in the process of being revised. The old policy of having surveys made by private contractors, with little or no field inspections made, had proven unsatisfactory.

A few unscrupulous contractors had done some very poor work, and in some instances had fraudulently reported and platted large areas surveyed that had not actually been surveyed at all. Another defect was the use of destructible material for corner monuments, such as small wooden stakes or just mounds of earth, which soon disappeared. Because the land was not settled for many years after such surveys were accepted and paid for, the errors were not discovered until too late to correct them. This was because a few tracts of land had been disposed of based on the official survey, after which the corners could not be moved, because property rights had been based upon them.

As a result the Federal Government at about this time launched an extensive program of resurveys.

Prospective settlers were unable to find section corners by which to identify their land, consequently it became necessary to go over the old surveys and remonument them. The worst situations in this