

**HISTORICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL  
DEVELOPMENTS**  
During the Golden Age of Camping  
1890-1930

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***Even though the trappings of the modern age may make life easier, the eyes of this north country native tell us that these modern marvels come at a high price.***

## Changing Times

Even though the overall changes that took place during this era came in stride, when we look back, the contrasts between what was ending and what was beginning are startling. The frontier was closing, and technology was opening whole new worlds of opportunity. With recreation coming into its own, campers took their cues from two sources. The frontiersman and backwoodsman who lived the life were called upon to share their skills with their sports. Those who refused to assimilate into the modern ways became anachronisms or were crushed under the wheels of progress. The other source of style was evident in the influence of the Victorian age just ending. Overindulgence and the new conveniences that technology provided became part of the “camp” scene of the northeast. The gap between the woodsman and the gentrys coming to the woods in search of re-creation could have produced a clash just as it did between the plainsman and the settlers on the western frontier. Fortunately, there were forward thinking entrepreneurs who knew that their skills were sought after and worth charging for. The development of outfitter services, dude ranches and wild west extravaganzas have been responsible for capturing these valuable traditions and passing our heritage down through a lineage of dedicated guides.



- 1881 Kit Carson dies in Kansas City
- 1884 Roosevelt works as a cowboy in Dakota Territory
- 1886 Geronimo surrenders
- 1889 Belle Starr dies
- 1890 Sitting Bull killed
- 1899 Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid flee to SA
- 1900 US population 50 mil
- 1901 Henri Toulouse-Lautrec dies
- 1901 President McKinley assassinated
- 1901 Walt Disney is born
- 1903 Calamity Jane dies in Deadwood
- 1903 Fredrick Law Olmstead dies
- 1903 Tom Horn hung in Laramie
- 1904 Theodore Roosevelt elected President
- 1904 Helen Keller graduates from Radcliffe
- 1904 Woman arrested in New York for smoking in public
- 1904 Chief Joseph dies
- 1905 Jules Verne dies
- 1906 Upton Sinclair writes The Jungle
- 1906 San Francisco earthquake - 700 die
- 1907 Oklahoma becomes a state
- 1907 Mothers Day established
- 1908 William Howard Taft elected President
- 1909 Fredrick Remington dies
- 1909 Red Cloud, Oglala chief, dies
- 1910 Congress passes the Mann Act
- 1910 Mark Twain dies
- 1910 U.S. Postal Service established
- 1910 Fathers Day established
- 1910 Census reports 15% of 92 mil Americans foreign born
- 1912 Titanic sinks on maiden voyage
- 1912 Arizona and New Mexico become states
- 1912 Woodrow Wilson elected President
- 1912 Piltown Man discovered
- 1913 Federal income tax enacted
- 1911 Ishi emerges as the last stone age Indian
- 1915 Joe Hill executed in Utah
- 1917 William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody dies
- 1918 1st airmail deliveries begin
- 1918 U.S. population 103.5 million
- 1918 Spanish flu kills more than both World Wars
- 1919 Prohibition enacted
- 1920 Women win right to vote
- 1920 Warren G. Harding elected President
- 1920 U.S. Population 117.8 million
- 1921 Einstein wins Nobel Prize
- 1922 John Dewey writes Human Nature and Conduct
- 1922 Stock Market boom
- 1922 U.S. divorces reach 148,000
- 1923 Calvin Coolidge succeeds Harding
- 1924 Wyatt Earp dies
- 1924 Calvin Coolidge elected President
- 1924 Newton brothers pull largest train robbery in U.S. history
- 1924 Herbert Hoover appointed Director FBI
- 1924 Native Americans declared citizens of the U.S.
- 1925 WY-1st woman governor
- 1925 Great Gatsby published by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- 1925 The Making of Americans published by Gertrude Stein
- 1925 Hemmingway publishes 1st articles
- 1925 Scopes Trial in Tennessee
- 1926 A.A. Milne writes Winnie the Pooh
- 1926 Harry Houdini dies
- 1927 Charles Lindbergh flies NY to Paris
- 1928 Herbert Hoover elected President
- 1928 Georgia O’Keefe gains popularity
- 1929 St. Valentined Day Massacre
- 1929 Stock market crashes
- 1930 “Deadwood Dick” dies
- 1930 Great Depression begins



*Polar explorer Richard E. Byrd*

## Politics and Exploration

Traveling the world had its intoxication for both those wanting to explore to see what was beyond the next hill, as well as those wanting to know how they could make that hill their own. The expansion of the British Empire led explorers and military leaders, many times they were one in the same, to far off, exotic lands. Regardless of where they traveled, however, home was always with them in the form of both travel and permanent base camps.

The elegance of British colonial style is still the model for the safari camp, and for those of us who create semi-permanent canvas homes in the woods. They brought with them the elements and routine of everyday life no matter where they traveled. Fixtures and appointments were folding and compact or formal and permanent, depending on need and method of travel. They traveled with all the accoutrements of home, including victrola, formal bedding, tables and silver settings, parasols, serving staff, and camp guards. Common practices such as afternoon tea, dressing for dinner, and pastimes of the Victorian age - specimen collecting, shooting sports, as well as traditional leisure activities were all merged with the camping life.

When travel was done for pleasure rather than duty, which began as early as the 1830's, colonialists were usually in search of a change from the rigors of the farm, but were never out of reach of the life of simple luxury. The colors, materials and flavor of today's luxury camps are still imbued with the textures of military lifestyle -khaki and brass - as well as a blend of local handicrafts and traditions that lend a rustic/primitive flavor to the scene.

- 1863 John Hanning Speke discovers the headwaters of Nile
- 1867 John Wesley Powell explores the Colorado River
- 1871 Stanley and Livingston meet in Tanganyika
- 1889 Spanish American War
- 1898 Alaska Gold Rush
- 1900 The Boxers Rebellion begins against Europe in China
- 1900 Commonwealth of Australia created
- 1900 Hawaii becomes a U.S. Territory
- 1901 Victorian Age comes to a close
- 1900 1st flight of the Zeppelin
- 1900 World Exposition in Paris
- 1901 Edwardian Age begins to 1910
- 1901 Mombasa to Victoria railroad completed
- 1901 Marconi transmits 1st telegraphic message
- 1902 The Boer Wars end in South Africa
- 1903 Alaskan frontier settled
- 1905 Australia seizes rule of New Guinea from Germany.
- 1905 Alberta and Saskatchewan become provinces
- 1906 U.S. troops occupy Cuba
- 1906 Picasso enters Pink Period
- 1906 Roald Amundsen traverses Northwest Passage
- 1907 The Triple Entente established
- 1908 Persia and Tibet explored by Sven Hedin
- 1908 New York to Paris Automobile Race begins
- 1909 Robert E. Peary reaches the North Pole
- 1910 Mexican Revolution begins
- 1910 Halley's Comet observed
- 1911 Revolution in Central China
- 1911 Italians bomb Tripoli - 1st aircraft as offensive weapon
- 1911 Roald Amundsen reaches South Pole
- 1911 Robert Scott and team perish at the South Pole
- 1913 Albert Schweitzer opens hospital in Congo
- 1914 World War I begins
- 1914 Panama Canal opens
- 1914 E.H. Shackleton leads Antarctic Expedition
- 1914 Thor Heyerdahl born in Norway
- 1914 Roosevelt explores "River of Doubt" in Brazil
- 1916 T.E. Lawrence appointed to Faisal's army
- 1916 Pancho Villa invades New Mexico
- 1917 U.S. enters World War I
- 1917 Mata Hari executed for spying
- 1917 Trans-Siberian Railroad completed
- 1918 Stefansson returns from 5 yr arctic exploration
- 1919 Indian violence against British rule peaks
- 1919 Edmund Hillary born
- 1919 1st non-stop flight across Atlantic
- 1920 European rule firmly established throughout Africa
- 1920 Ghandi leader of the Indian National Congress
- 1921 Northern approach to Mt. Everest Explored
- 1922 Nanook of the North released on film
- 1923 USSR establishes 1st Polar station
- 1923 Pancho Villa dies - Gen Pershing never caught him
- 1924 Knud Rassussen longest sled dog journey
- 1924 Dinosaurs discovered in Gobi Desert
- 1924 George Mallory & Andrew Irvine disappear on Everest
- 1924 Louis Leakey begins fossil hunting trips in Africa
- 1925 Hitler organizes Nazi Part
- 1926 Admiral Byrd flies over the North Pole
- 1928 Amelia Earhart flies Atlantic
- 1928 Amundsen crashes in the Arctic and disappears
- 1930 Planet Pluto discovered

1849 Safety Pin invented by Rowley and Hunt  
 1855 1st safety matches manufactured  
 1857 Toilet paper available in the U.S.  
 1860 Industrial Revolution hits America  
 1869 Union Pacific and Central Pacific joined  
 1870 Industry outpaces agriculture  
 1871 Edison invents anti-gravity underwear  
 1872 Levis patented by Levis Strauss and Jacob Davis  
 1872 Barbed wire invented  
 1875 1st electric street lights  
 1876 Remington Fire Arms introduces the typewriter  
 1875 Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone  
 1876 Edison patents the phonograph  
 1878 1st bicycles made in U.S.  
 1879 Edison invents light bulb  
 1880 1st electric plant goes on line in NY  
 1886 1<sup>st</sup> automatic dishwasher  
 1889 Safety bike invented  
 1895 Wireless telegraph invented  
 1896 Ice cream cone debuts in U.S.  
 1900 1st FAX machine tested  
 1900 George Eastman invents the "Brownie" box camera  
 1901 The Century of Electricity begins  
 1901 1<sup>st</sup> electric washing machine  
 1901 Oil discovered in Spindletop, Texas  
 1901 King Gillette invents the disposable razor blade  
 1903 Orville and Wilbur Wright fly at Kitty Hawk  
 1905 1st neon lights appear  
 1906 1st radio program of voice and music  
 1908 Fountain pens popularized  
 1908 The vacuum cleaner invented - Hoover buys patent  
 1909 Model T begins production - goes to 1927  
 1910 Bakelite manufactured-beginning of Plastic Age  
 1912 1st successful parachute jump  
 1912 Cellophane invented  
 1912 F.W. Woolworth's founded  
 1913 Henry Ford perfects the use of the assembly line  
 1913 Zippers become popular  
 1914 Robert Goddard conducts 1st rocket experiments  
 1914 Wright Brothers win patent suit on airplanes  
 1914 1st electric traffic light  
 1915 1st transcontinental telephone call from NY to SF  
 1917 Black and Decker invent electric hand drill  
 1919 RCA founded Radio Corporation of America  
 1919 Golden Age of Flight begins  
 1920 Tommy gun patented  
 1923 Electric razor patented  
 1924 1st insecticides used  
 1924 Disposable tissues invented  
 1925 1st TV transmissions  
 1928 1st scheduled TV broadcasts  
 1929 Aluminum furniture manufactured  
 1929 Empire State building opens  
 1929 Yo-Yo introduced in the U.S.  
 1930 Flashbulb created  
 1931 Television invented in U.S.  
 1931 1<sup>st</sup> Radio Telescope in U.S.  
 1935 Electric guitar invented  
 1936 1st Volkswagan hits the road

## Technology In America

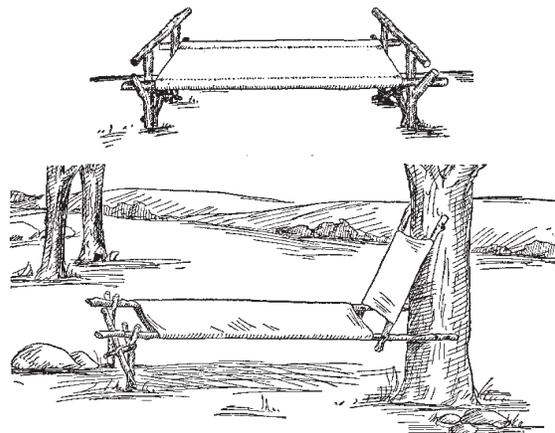
In 1890 the Commissioner of Patents declared everything worthwhile had already been invented. By 1930 Technocracy, the absolute domination of technology, had become the major challenge of the era. As a reaction to this oppression from the intended salvation of technological advancements, common people sought the freedom of the hills.

Managers and company bosses discovered that unless they allowed time off for employees to regenerate themselves, production would eventually decline. By 1910, the week-end was created for people to have time off, a concept that until then, had never been considered before. In 1916, the Union Pacific instituted the 8 hour work day to allow workers the time they needed for home tasks.

In an agrarian setting, people lived and worked at home with the family. Their sustenance was derived directly from their work, and cash was generated from the excess. What goods they could not produce at home were generally specialized items or raw materials that could be used to create items that were needed for daily life. Luxuries were exactly that, and their consumption was carefully considered - the outlay must more than offset the investment.

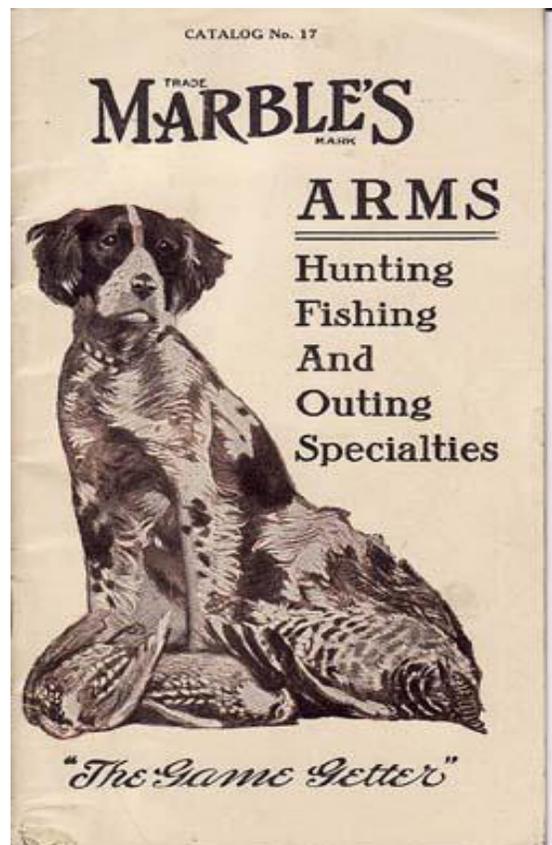
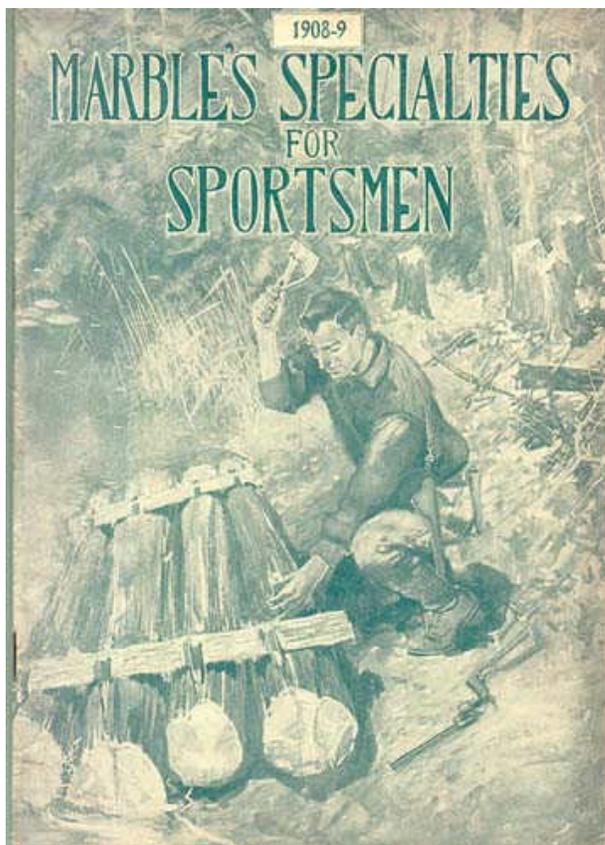
Slowly luxury turned to necessity, and time intended to be spent in leisure was now used to acquire more necessity. When open credit came into fashion, this time was not only spent to pay for what was wanted, but to pay for items we already had and needed to pay off as well.

The great thing about traditional camping was its ability to help consumers select items that were time and field tested. The heritage of camping was founded in the ability to be self-reliant and to live with the wild outdoors on its terms. Equipment was simple, could be made at home, and was not based upon highly sophisticated technology. Today, equipment is manufactured with its intended life to be short spanned - what is called planned obsolescence. Traditional equipment is a lifelong investment, that can be repaired at home or in the field, takes minimal maintenance, but if cared for and properly used, can be passed down for generations of continued use - a true





*The modern luxury camp, complete with furnishings are comfortable and relaxing without the hardship of the trail life.*



- 1851 YMCA founded
- 1854 Henry David Thoreau writes Walden
- 1857 British Alpine Club founded
- 1858 The 1st great American park - Central Park
- 1861 Frederick William Gunn, Father of Organized Camping establishes The Gunnery School for Boys
- 1864 Yosemite National Park established
- 1865 Stetson Hat Company established
- 1869 British canoe craze reaches the U.S.
- 1872 Yellowstone National Park established
- 1873 Forest and Stream Magazine established ran until 1930
- 1876 Appalachian Mountain Club founded
- 1876 North Mountain School of Physical Culture - the first private camp
- 1880 The Goodwill Farm for Boys - the first church camp
- 1880 The divided skirt - first bifurcated garments for women
- 1881 Howard Eaton, 1st dude ranch in No. Dakota. Moves to Wyo in 1901
- 1885 Adirondack State Park set aside
- 1885 YMCA conducts the first institutional camp
- 1888 National Geographic Society founded
- 1889 E.M. White begins to build wood and canvas canoes
- 1892 Sierra Club founded by John Muir
- 1894 Congress funds inventory of the "state of outdoor recreation"
- 1896 Franklin Hamilton Cushing works among the Zuni
- 1897 Clinton C. Filson establishes Filson's Pioneer Alaska Clothing and Blanket Manufacturers
- 1897 Main Guides license established
- 1898 Old Town Canoe founded
- 1898 Gustav Stickley Co. founded
- 1898 Wild Animals I Have Known published by E.T. Seton
- 1899 Recreation recognized as a legitimate pastime

*It is because we have forgotten this art of living, its relation to Nature, its simple outlines, that we are in the midst of the terrific conditions that exist all over the world. If each man regarded his life as the development of an art, if he insisted upon getting from the soil what is essential for his own livelihood and happiness, we would have widespread contentment... ..I believe that this early association with Nature, this learning the art of living, is bound to develop in young people sincerity and a profound recognition of the fact that only absolute truth is worth taking into consideration in life. **Gustav Stickley, 1915***

## Back To Nature

The era was punctuated by a recognition that we were losing touch with the values of earlier times, and the vehicle for this loss was the mass produced nature of modern technology. People began projects to stimulate interest in handmade objects, improve craftsmanship and teach that the art of living and association with nature were especially important to the development of childhood.

The efforts of the Craftsman movement were to bring nature into the home by developing homes that were cheerful, durable, and appropriate for life. It taught that the beauty of the building was not merely a matter of decoration, but was inherent in the lines and mass of the structure itself, being made from local materials the structure became an organic result of its surroundings.

Individuals like Dan Beard used the metaphor of the pioneer, while Seton drew from the values of the Native American, and Baden Powell imported the discipline of the British military regime to create a training program for boys and girls. Each of these men recognized the debilitating nature of industrialization and urban life, and sought to bring youth into the outdoors and use the icons of frontier life to enchant youth and capture their attention toward healthier pastimes.

Unfortunately, many of today's youth and camping organizations have abandoned these values and curriculums, labeling them inappropriate for modern times. Looking from the outside, it seems that what is more appropriate for our times is to steadfastly adhere to those values and activities and continue to use them to guide us as we voyage into the future.



**Horace Kephart, "Dean of American Camping".  
Courtesy of The Mountain Heritage Center, Cullowhee, NC. Circa, 1915.**

- 1900 The Craftsman Movement in America begins
- 1900 Edward S. Curtis begins The North American Indian
- 1902 Camp Kehonka, first camp for girls
- 1902 Ernest Thompson Seton forms the Woodcraft Indians
- 1903 E.T. Seton publishes Two Little Savages
- 1903 Seton labeled the "Nature Faker"
- 1903 The Craftsman begins publication to 1916
- 1904 National Ski Association founded
- 1905 Audobon Society formed
- 1905 U.S. Forest Service founded under Gifford Pinchot
- 1905 Daniel Carter Beard organizes the Boy Pioneers, Sons of Daniel Boone
- 1906 Baden Powell adapts Scouting For Boys from Seton
- 1907 National League of Handicrafters formed
- 1907 Grey Owl (Archibald Stansfield Belaney) moves to Ontario wilderness to live
- 1908 Baden Powell founds Boy Scout movement-the boy-man
- 1908 Rudyard Kipling authors The Scout's Patrol Song
- 1909 Frank Lloyd Wright creates Robie House, Chicago
- 1909 Girl Guides established in Britain by Baden Powell
- 1909 The 1st girls camps in the U.S. open in CT
- 1910 Boy Scouts of America is founded by William Boyce, Seton 1st Chief Scout
- 1910 Camp Fire Girls formed
- 1910 Daniel Carter Beard appointed National Scout Commissioner until his death in 1910
- 1910 American Camping Association established
- 1911 1st permanent Boy Scout Handbook. Lasted until 1927
- 1911 Duluth Pack patented
- 1911 BSA combine Birch-Bark Rolls and Scouting For Boys (Baden Powell)
- 1913 Joseph Knowles publishes Alone in the Wilderness
- 1913 L.L. Bean Founded -Leon Leonard Bean
- 1914 Filson's patents their popular Cruiser Jacket
- 1914 Coleman Company develops the Arc Lantern
- 1915 Woodcraft League of America formed for children 4-94
- 1915 Idea of "wilderness" first implemented in parks
- 1915 The Order of Woodcraft Chivalry and The Forest Camps
- 1915 Girl Scouts of America incorporated
- 1916 All Seton sections of BSA Handbook rewritten
- 1916 The International Woodcraft Movement founded by Seton and Ernest Westlake
- 1916 Olive and Walter Estes spend 2 months living off the land
- 1916 National Park Service established
- 1917 Horace Kephart releases Camping and Woodcraft
- 1919 John Hargrave founds Kibbo Kift (British Woodcraft), Lonecraft, 1912
- 1920 Dan Beard publishes The Book of Camp-Lore and Woodcraft
- 1920 Eddie Bauer originated quilted gear
- 1920 1st Scout World Jamboree
- 1920 Motor Campers and Tourist magazine published
- 1921 Quetico-Superior canoe area first recognized as roadless
- 1921 Seton establishes The Brownies for girls 6-11
- 1921 The Book of Woodcraft published by Seton
- 1922 Appalachian Trail started in NY (finished in 1937)
- 1923 Peterboroug & Chestnut Canoe Companys merge
- 1923 Coleman Company introduces its first camp stove
- 1924 The Woodcraft Folk founded by Leslie Paul in Canada
- 1924 Paul Petzoldt scales the Grand Teton at age 16
- 1924 First National Conference on outdoor recreation held
- 1926 Daniel Carter Beard writes Wisdom of the Woods
- 1930 Seton Castle built in Santa Fe
- 1930 E.S. Curtis completes 20 volumes of The North American Indian
- 1931 Grey Owl writes Men of the Last Frontier
- 1931 Horace Kephart, Dean of American Camping, dies
- 1932 American Youth Hostels established
- 1935 The Wilderness Society founded
- 1936 1st Woodbagg course held in America

