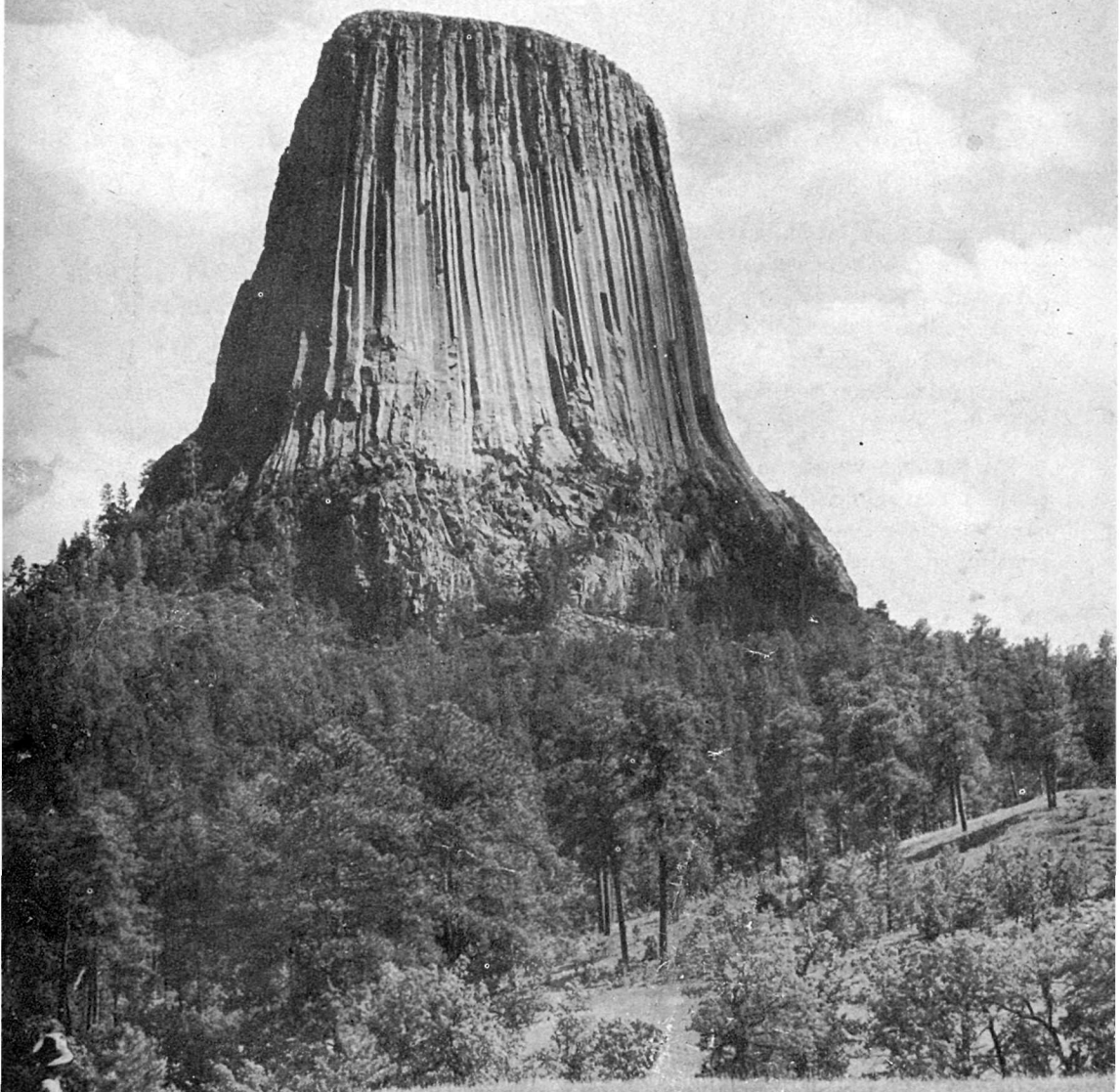


DEVILS TOWER



NATIONAL MONUMENT, WYOMING

1906—1956

DEVILS TOWER

NATIONAL MONUMENT

An 865-foot monolith, evidence of geologic activity millions of years ago

The year 1956 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of this national monument—the first of many to be set aside for the people of the United States. It was established on September 24, 1906, by Presidential proclamation under authority of the Antiquities Act.

This natural landmark resembles a colossal petrified tree stump rising from a mound beside the Belle Fourche River, amid rolling grassland and pine forest.

The top of the tower is 1,280 feet above the river and some 865 feet from its apparent base on the mound. The diameter at its base is about 1,000 feet, and at the top about 275 feet. Mosses, ferns, grasses, shrubs, and sagebrush grow on the top surface, which covers about an acre and a half. Mice, pack rats, and chipmunks have been seen there, and falcons and hawks make it their home. As viewed from various angles, the tower has many shapes and colors.

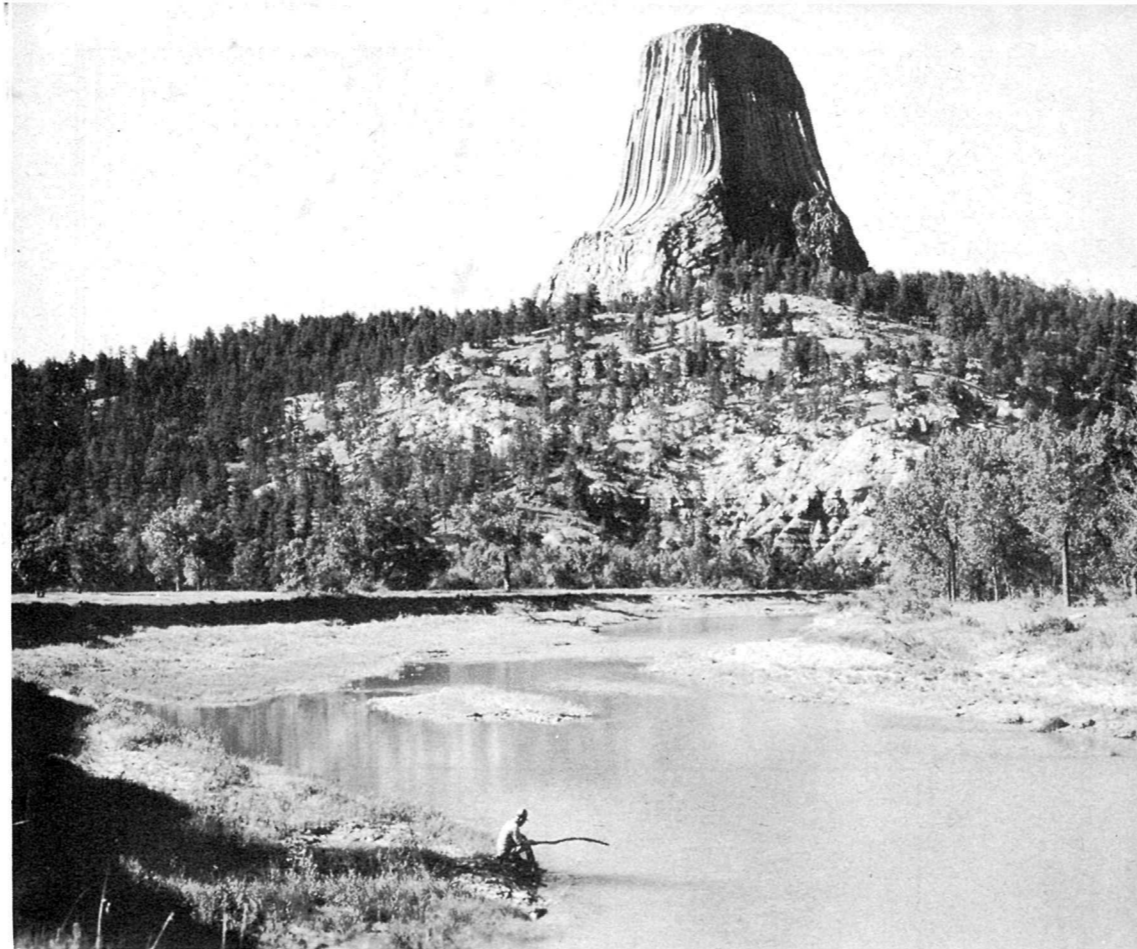
Rock surfaces not covered with lichens are dark gray. After long weathering, they bleach to a light gray tinged with buff, the predominant color of the tower. Lichens of various hues growing on the tower contribute to its changing appearance during the day under different conditions of atmosphere and sunlight. On occasion, a red sunset may give the tower a reddish glow, fading to purple.

Geology

Geologists agree that the rock of Devils Tower was at one time molten or plastic. About 50 million years ago this material was forced up from deep within the earth and cooled not far beneath the surface. There has been controversy, however, concerning the mode of origin of the great shaft. It has been interpreted as the neck of an old volcano or the remnant of a larger, intrusive rock mass. Recent studies indicate that it was formed from a molten rock intrusion of the general size and shape you see today.

Hundreds of feet of rock have been eroded from around the tower, exposing it to view. The erosion occurred perhaps only 1 or 2 million years ago, and the process continues today.

The conspicuous columnar structure was produced long ago in the buried, newly hardened rock. It was caused by a pattern of prismatic cracks that developed at right angles to the rapidly cooling surface of the rock. These cracks, radiating from points of tension, form columns of 3 to 8 sides. Viewed from a short distance the columns give Devils Tower a fluted effect. Many broke away and crashed to the foot of the shaft, building up the heaps of rubble you see there. However, there is no record of columns falling in historic times. This columnar structure is not



Devils Tower and the Belle Fourche River

well developed at the base of the shaft, possibly because the rock there was more deeply buried and therefore cooled more slowly.

The Natural Community

The location of the monument between the mountains and plains, and the varied soil types and weather conditions, produce an interesting community of plants and animals.

You may see mule or whitetail deer occasionally, as well as cottontails, chipmunks, and other small animals.

About a half mile from the monument

entrance is a thriving prairie dog "town." This colony of prairie dogs will give you a glimpse of the Old West, when these "towns" were as typical of the plains as the great buffalo herds. The presence of numerous colonies of prairie dogs, sometimes covering several square miles, was deemed incompatible with farming and cattle raising on the plains. Consequently, they have been almost exterminated from most of their former range. However, these little animals are protected in the monument as are all forms of animal and plant life.

The "town" is generally inactive during the heat of the day in warm weather. In winter, the prairie dogs will come out of their burrows to bask in the sun during the warmest time of the day. They stay underground when the weather is wet, or when it is cold. A roadside exhibit tells you something of their way of life.

Location of the Monument

Devils Tower National Monument is in Crook County, in the northeast corner of Wyoming. The monument entrance is 7 miles north of U. S. 14, 29 miles northwest of Sundance, and 33 miles northeast of Moorcroft.

Weather

The monument is open all year. During the summer, the days are generally sunny, though it is sometimes quite cool in the evening. Rainy days are few and the rains of short duration. Winter days are cold with occasional snowfalls. As much as 12 inches

of snow sometimes covers the ground, but the road to the monument is regularly cleared of snow.

The Monument Museum

The museum is located near the parking area. It contains pictures, diagrams, artifacts, and specimens to explain the geology, history, and environment of the tower. Because these exhibits will help you understand and enjoy your visit so much more, they deserve a visit before you walk along the Tower Trail.

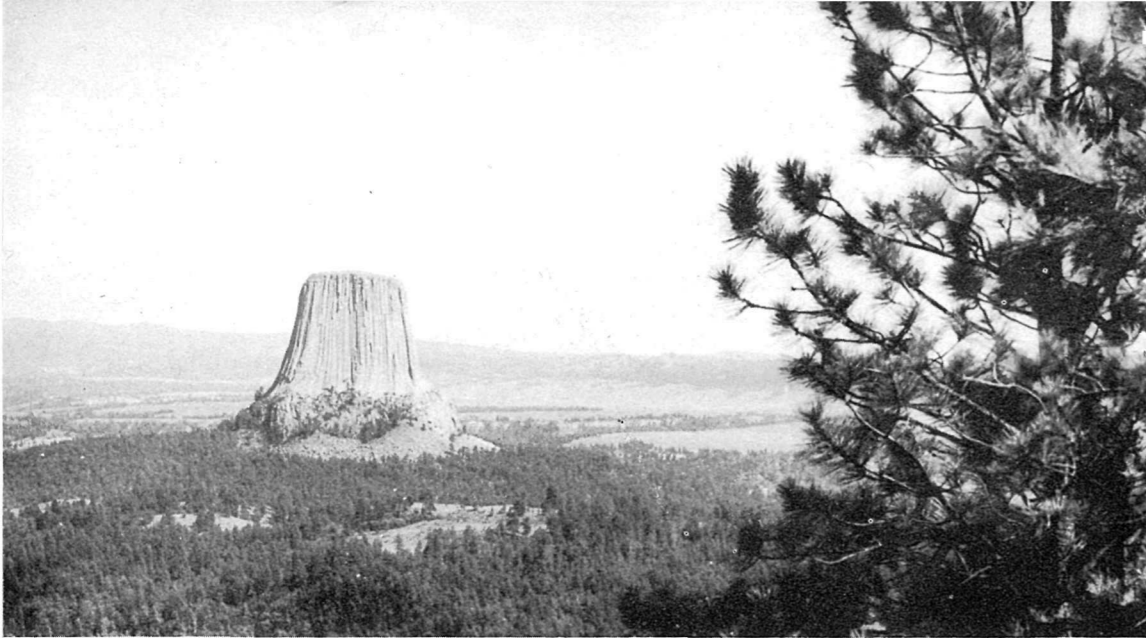
The Tower Trail

If you follow the gently graded trail which encircles the tower, you will find a wealth of natural history information in the plants, animals, and rocks.

Indian relics have been found at a point just off of the Tower Trail. This site (marked by a sign) was an Indian workplace and lookout point. You will want to stop here for the superb view up the Belle Fourche Valley.

Fragments of fallen columns at the base of Devils Tower





Distant view of Devils Tower

About Your Visit

From the east entrance of the monument, 3 miles of oil-surfaced roads lead to the museum, Tower Trail, campground, and picnic and parking areas.

In a beautiful setting close to the tower and flowing almost from its base, is a spring of pure, cold water. The Indian and the pioneer who braved the rugged trail to the great monolith found this a choice camping site. The spring is now part of the monument water supply.

This is your park. Please leave the rocks, plants, animals, and birds undisturbed for others to enjoy. Help us keep the grounds clean and uncluttered. Please camp, picnic, and park only in designated areas.

Tourist courts and other accommodations are available in nearby towns.

Visitor Use Fees

The annual permit fee is \$1 and the 15-day fee 50 cents for each automobile, house-trailer, and motorcycle. Permits must be shown to reenter the monument. During the valid period of all 15-day permits, the cost thereof may be applied toward the purchase of a similar annual permit. All fees are deposited in the United States Treasury and offset, in part, appropriations made for operating the monument.

Administration

Devils Tower National Monument, containing 1,266 acres of Federal lands, is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Devils Tower, Wyo., is in immediate charge.

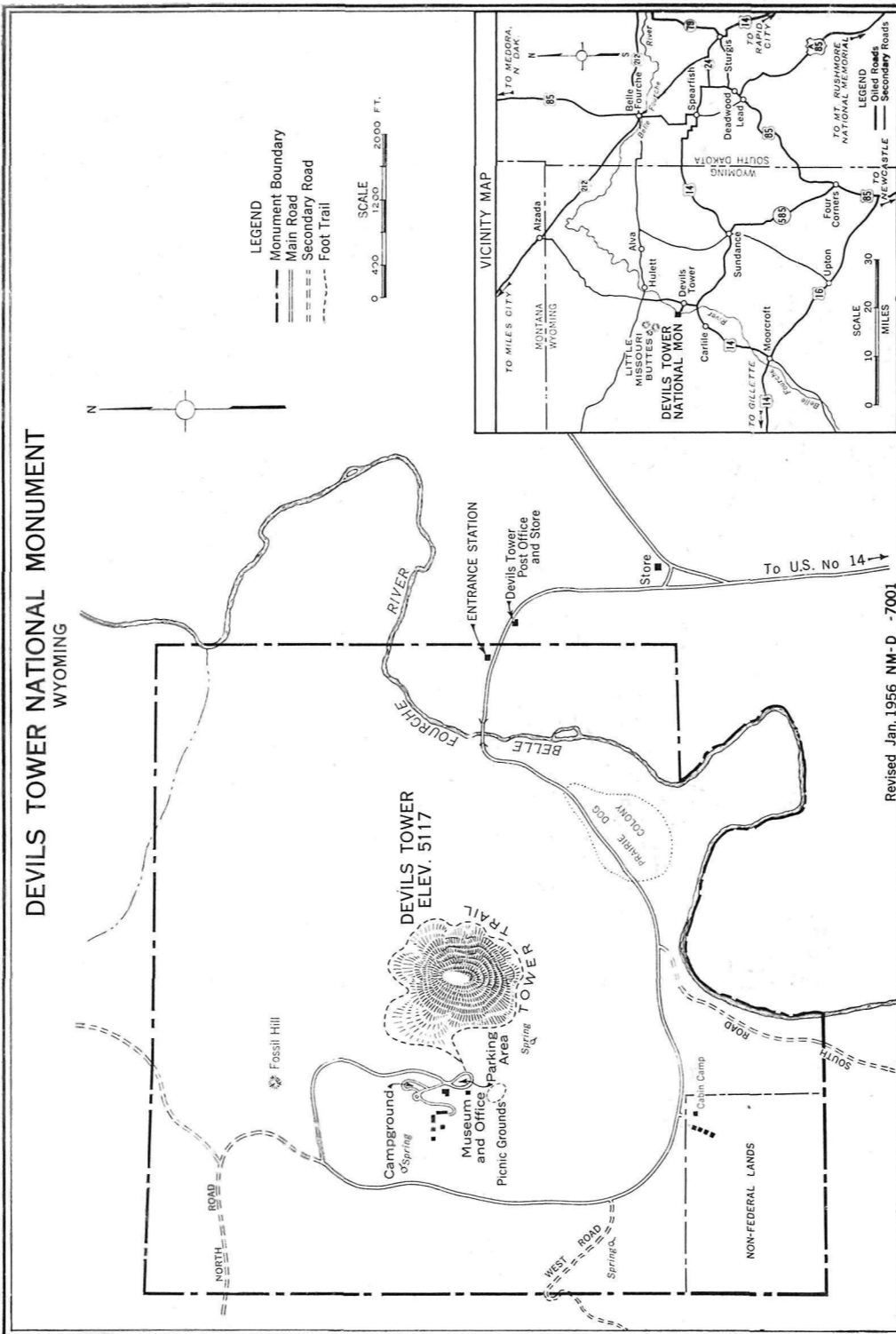


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fred A. Seaton, Secretary

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

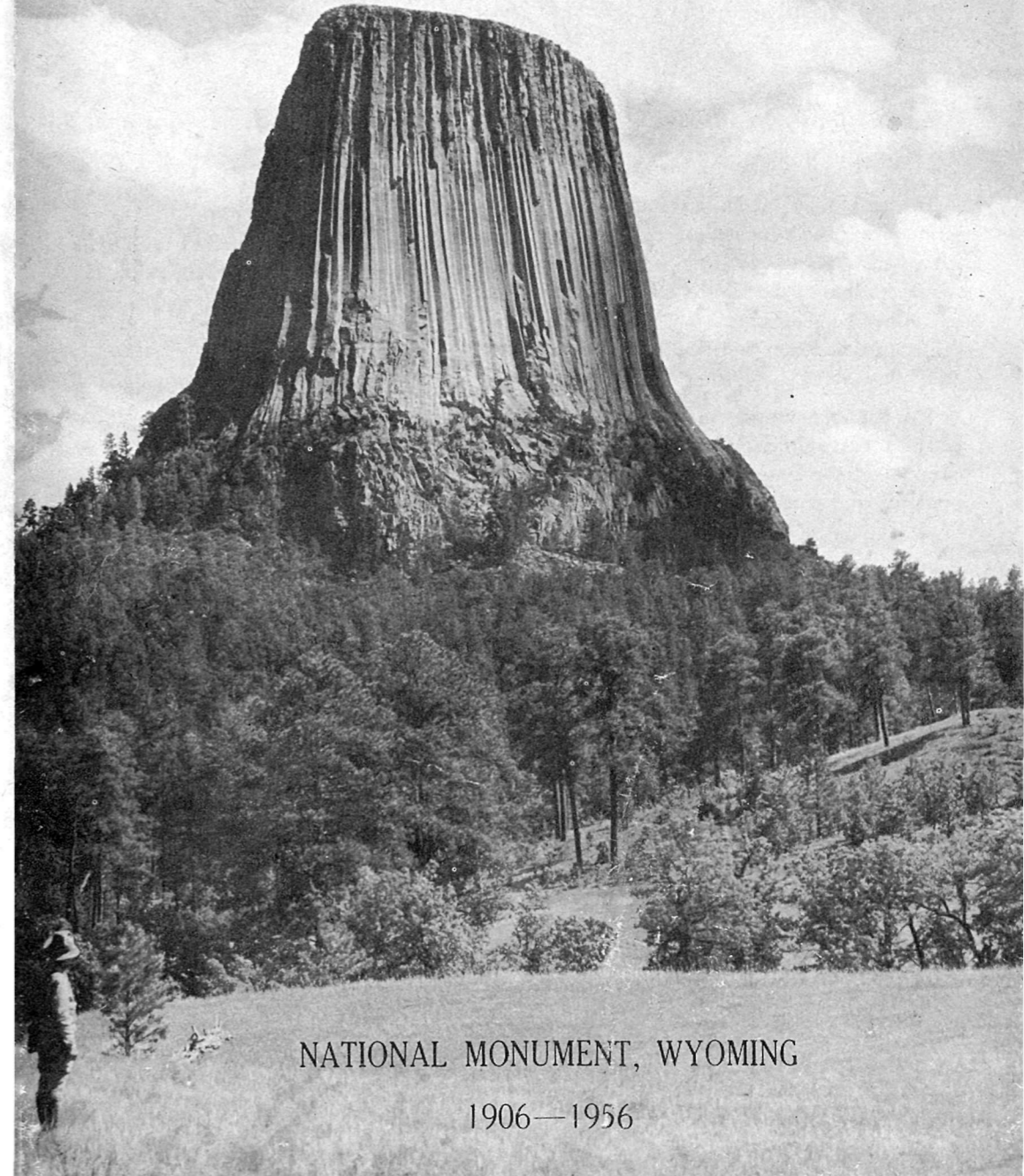
Conrad L. Wirth, Director



Revised 1956

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1956-O-379914

DEVILS TOWER



NATIONAL MONUMENT, WYOMING

1906—1956