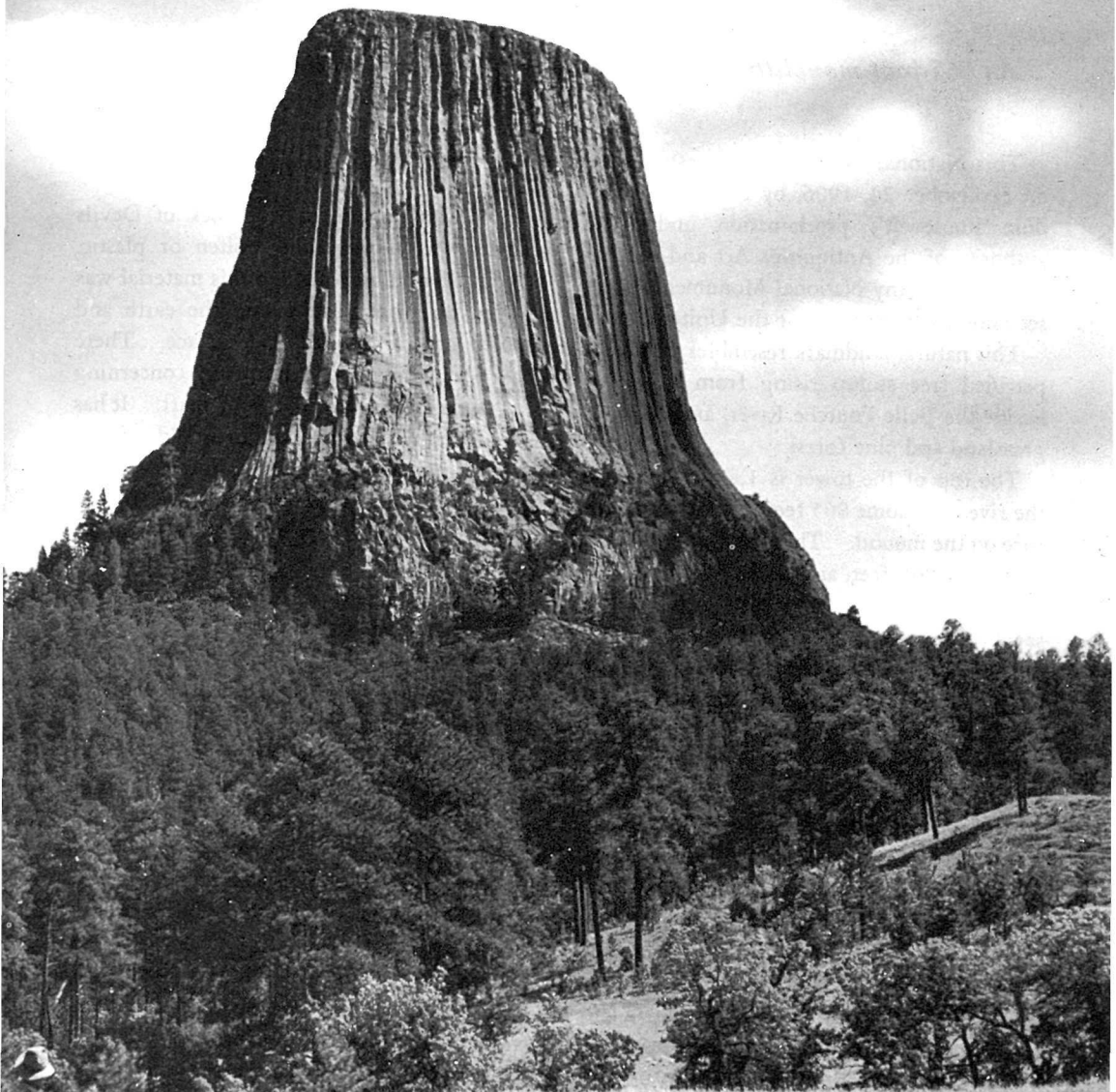


# DEVILS TOWER



WYOMING

THE FIRST NATIONAL MONUMENT

# DEVILS TOWER

## NATIONAL MONUMENT

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

This National Monument was established on September 24, 1906, by President Theodore Roosevelt's proclamation under the authority of the Antiquities Act and became the first of many National Monuments to be set aside for the people of the United States.

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.

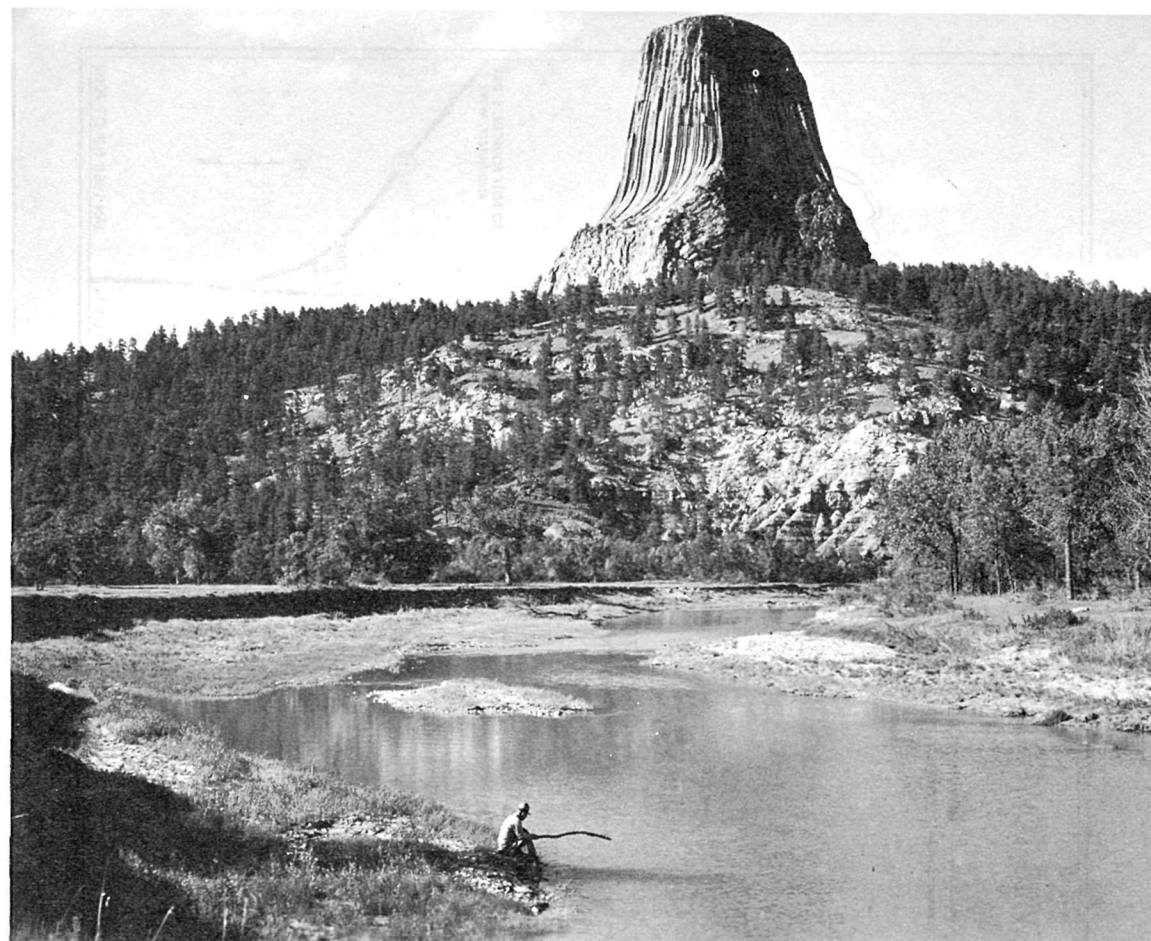
### *Geology*

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,

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.



*Devils Tower and the Belle Fourche River*

there is no record of columns falling in historic times. This columnar structure is not 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.

### *ABOUT YOUR VISIT*

From the east entrance of the monument 3 miles of oil-surfaced road leads to the visitor center and the Tower Trail parking area.

### *Interpretive Services*

The visitor center is close to the tower. 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 stay so much more, they deserve a

visit before you walk along the Tower Trail.

Ranger-naturalists conduct campfire programs at night during the summer.

### *The Tower Trail*

This trail is gently graded as it encircles the tower. Along it 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.

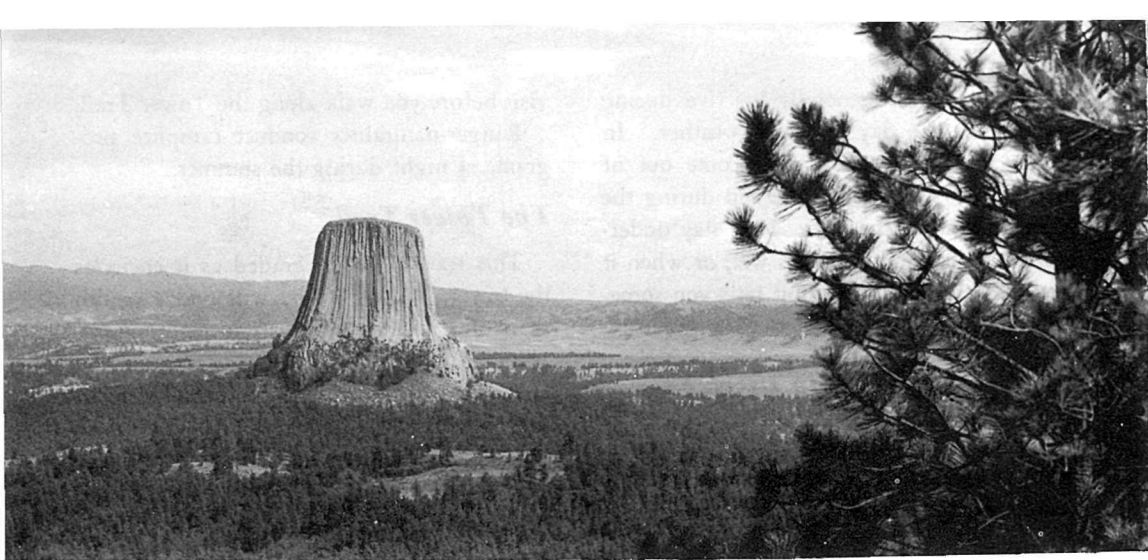
### *Facilities and Accommodations*

Free camping and picnicking facilities include suitable tent or trailer space with table, fireplace, water, and comfort stations.

Motels and other accommodations are available in nearby towns.



PRAIRIE DOG.  
*Fish & Wildlife  
Service Photo.*



Distant view of Devils Tower

### 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.

### Location of the Monument

Devils Tower National Monument is in the northeast corner of Wyoming. The monument entrance, on State Route 111, is 7 miles north of U. S. 14 and 29 miles northwest of Sundance, 33 miles northeast of Moorcroft, and 52 miles southwest of Belle Fourche, S. Dak.

### Visitor Use Fees

Automobile, house trailer, and motorcycle permit fees are collected at the entrance station. When vehicles enter at times when the entrance station is unattended, it is necessary that the permit be obtained before leaving the monument and be shown upon reentry.

The fees applicable to the monument are not listed herein because they are subject to change, but they may be obtained in advance of a visit by addressing a request to the superintendent.

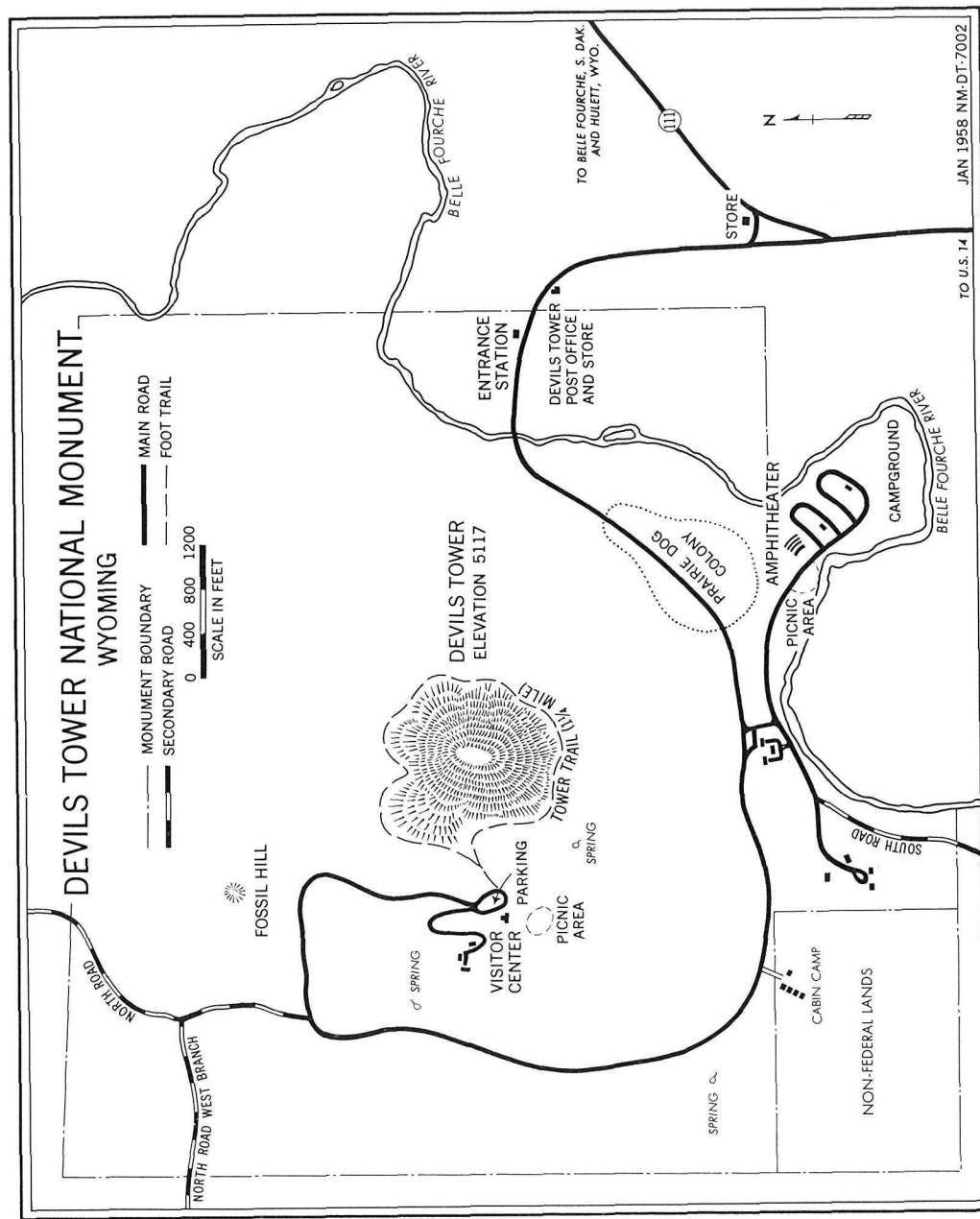
All fees are deposited as revenue in the U. S. Treasury; they offset, in part, appropriations made for operating and maintaining the National Park System.

### Mission 66

Mission 66 is a program designed to be completed by 1966 which will assure the maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System in such ways and by such means as will make them available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

### Administration

Devils Tower National Monument covers more than 2 square miles and is administered by the National Park Service of the U. S. 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

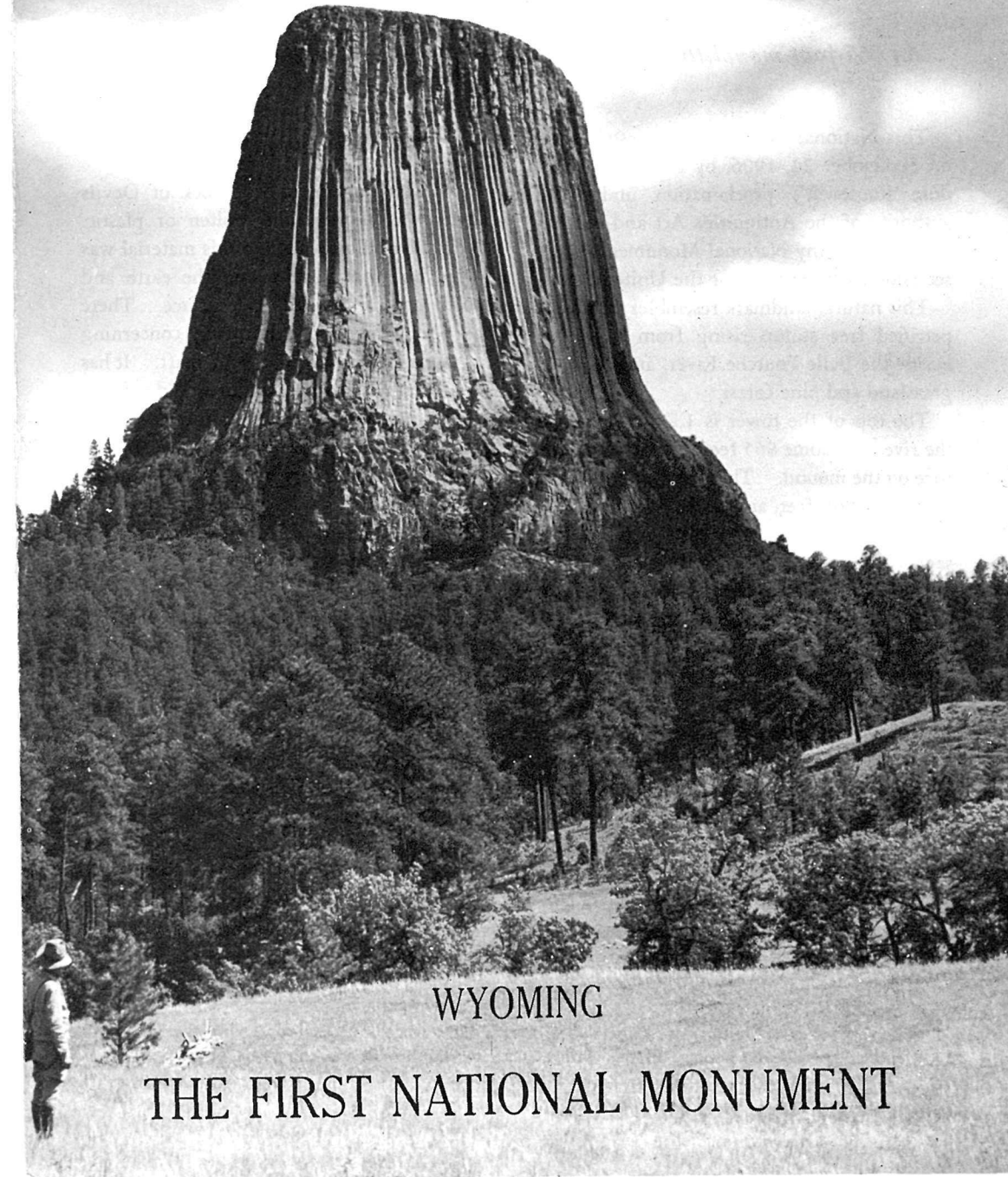
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, Conrad L. Wirth, Director



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