



Adventures in the wilderness, or, Camp-life in the Adirondacks (1869)

William Henry Harrison Murray

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William Henry Harrison Murray (1840–1904), also known as Adirondack Murray, was a clergyman and author of an influential series of articles and books which popularized the Adirondacks; he became known as the father of the Outdoor Movement.

Born in Guilford, Connecticut, he graduated from Yale in 1862 and then served as a minister in Greenwich, Connecticut and Meriden, Connecticut. He also served as pastor of Park Street Church in Boston from 1868 to 1874. He also delivered Sunday evening lectures about the Adirondacks in a Boston music-hall that proved highly popular, and he published a series of articles based on the lectures in a Meriden newspaper. In 1869, they were published as a book, *Adventures in the Wilderness; or, Camp-Life in the Adirondacks*.

The literary tone of the book made it extremely successful; it went through eight printings in its first year. Murray promoted New York's north woods as health-giving and spirit-enhancing, claiming that the rustic nobility typical of Adirondack woodsmen came from their intimacy with wilderness.

Although the book was to become one of the most influential books in the conservation movement of the 19th century, paradoxically, within five years it led to the building of over 200 "Great Camps" in the Adirondacks; "Murray's Fools" poured into the wilderness each weekend, packing specially scheduled railroad trains. The book is cited as changing common parlance to use "vacation" instead of the British "holiday" for people vacating their city homes.

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