

# An Account of the Loss and Search for Forester Louis Margolin on the Sierra National Forest 1914

These are the day-to-day news accounts of the disappearance and search within the Sierra National Forest for Louis Margolin, a forester of the Fifth District of the Forest Service, based in San Francisco (Region 5). Margolin disappeared in a storm in June 1914 and was presumed to have drowned in Dinkey Creek. His body was never recovered. A memorial to Margolin erected in 1914 still stands at Ross Crossing on Dinkey Creek.

**L**ouis Margolin, forestry expert, who was lost a week ago in the mountains of Kings river, and who, it is feared, may have perished.



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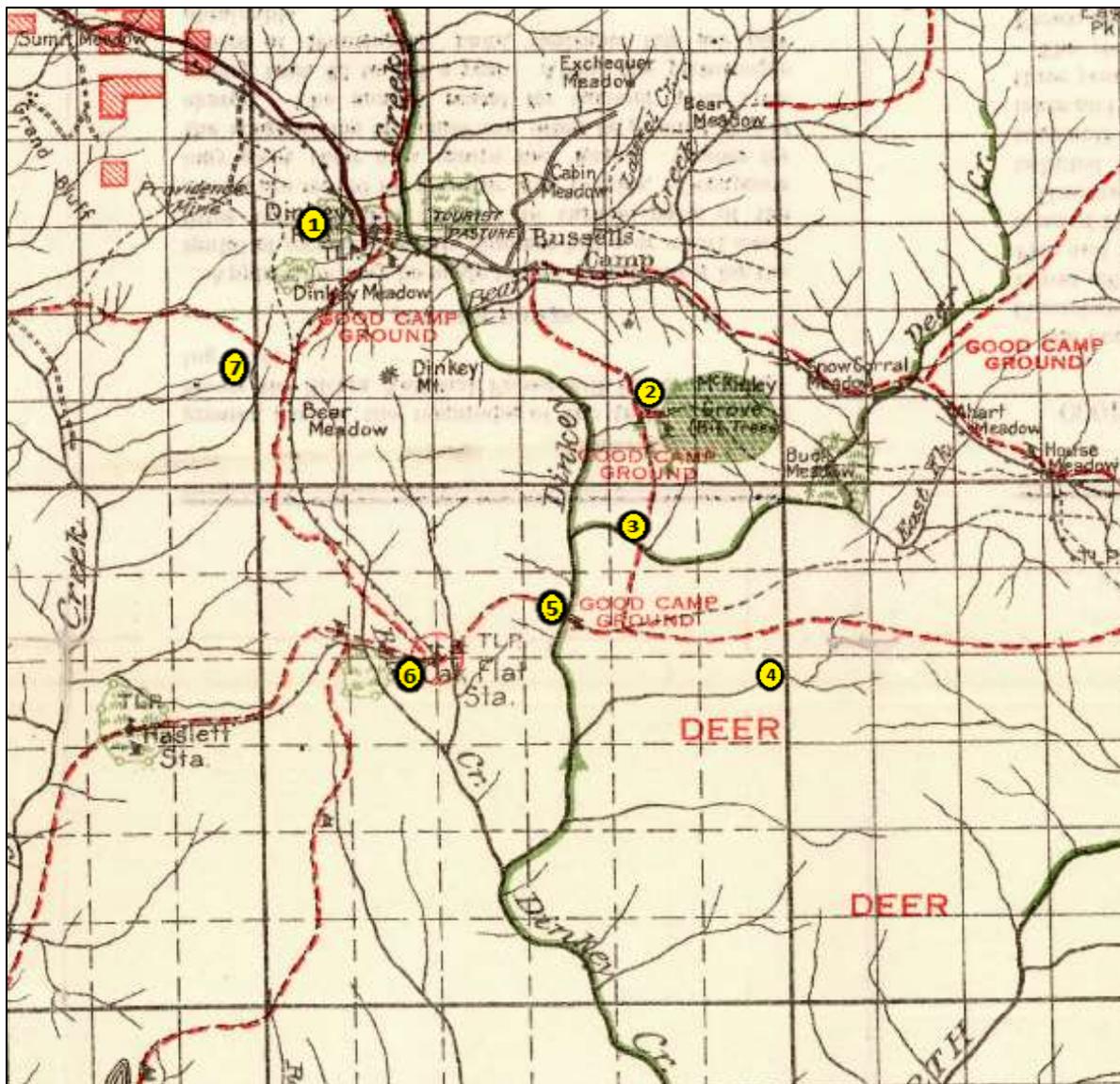
Obituaries

2014: 100 Years Later

Illustration: San Francisco Chronicle, Friday, June 26, 1914

## 1916 Sierra National Forest Map

### An Excerpt of the Country in Which the Search Took Place



- (1): Dinkey Ranger Station. Margolin left here on June 19, 1914 on foot for Ross Crossing (5) via McKinley Grove (2).
- (2): McKinley Grove of Big Trees, where tracks were found.
- (3): Deer Creek ford, where his tracks were found.
- (4): Log Cabin Meadow timber cruiser camp, Margolin's destination that was moved to Ross Crossing (5).
- (5): Ross Crossing on Dinkey Creek, the site of Black's camp and Margolin's monument.
- (6): Oak Flat Ranger Station, the nearest phone for the search party.
- (7): Lost Meadow, where searchers found tracks that turned out to be wrong.

## 1914: The Disappearance and Search

### June 1914.

Margolin left here [San Francisco] on June 8<sup>th</sup>, going first to the California National Forest in the Northern Coast range. It is not known just when he reached the Sierra National Forest, but he reported at the headquarters at Northfork and went from there to the Dinkey creek station, where he was last seen as he stepped out on the trail to the timber cruisers camp.

-- San Francisco Chronicle: Forest Expert is Lost in the Mountains. Friday, June 26, 1914.

### Thursday, June 18, 1914.

On Thursday, June 18, 1914, the Sierra National Forest reconnaissance crew being camped at Log Cabin Meadow on Patterson Mountain, in approximately the NE ¼ NE ¼ of Section 13, unsurveyed T. 11S., R.26E., M. D. M., the camp packer returned from a trip to Dinkey Ranger Station and said that a gentleman (whose name the packer could not remember) was coming to visit our camp; that [Ranger] Barker was going in to Ockenden that day to get him and that the visitor would be at Ross Crossing some time on Friday morning and desired to have some one come down to meet him. It was known that Mr. Margolin was coming to inspect the reconnaissance work sometime during the latter part of June and the crew consequently assumed that this visitor was he.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### Friday, June 19, 1914.

Friday morning the packer was sent down to Ross Crossing and remained there until after 1 o'clock, when a severe electrical storm was coming on. By this time a Mr. Black had arrived and pitched camp on the other side of the ford, so that Margolin would find food and shelter if he should arrive. The ford, already high and dangerous, would soon be impassable from the storm water. The packer therefore returned to the reconnaissance camp.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### Saturday, June 20, 1914.

The next day (Saturday, June 20) the reconnaissance camp was moved from Log Cabin Meadow to a point about one-fourth mile from Ross Crossing. Two trips were made, the packer and cook starting at 10:50 and arriving at 12:11, the packer then returning to the upper camp and he and the chief of the party starting down shortly after 5, arriving at 7 P.M. All afternoon the packer kept a smudge burning so that the crews, who were cruising on the southern end of Patterson Mountain, some three miles distant, could more easily find the new camp, as also Mr. Margolin if he should arrive. The ford, which lay between the camp and the nearest telephone at Oak Flat Ranger Station, two miles west, was still impassable from the storm. But no anxiety was felt for Mr. Margolin. On account of his carrying a bed, which would have to be packed down by horse, it was supposed that he would be accompanied by a ranger on the trip; but even should he come alone, the trail from Dinkey Ranger Station is a main Forest trail, well marked and much travelled, passing through Oak Flat Ranger Station on route, where several men were camped, and there was no more danger of a traveler losing his way or coming to harm on it than on a road. When Margolin did not appear, therefore, it was supposed that he had simply been delayed a day or so in reaching the Sierra Forest, as not infrequently happens to District Office inspectors.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

Interview with A. E. Wieslander:

Wieslander: "...Then I hiked out to the camp, which was way up in the high mountains."

Lage: "Doing timber cruising?"

Wieslander: "Yes. ...Louis Margolin, the one I got the job from, was supposed to come out and visit us. He had been told we were down at a place called Ross Crossing, on Dinkey Creek, at four thousand feet elevation, but we were up on Patterson Mountain at six thousand. Well, Cary Hill went to the ranger station and found out that Louis Margolin had gone to Ross Crossing, and they hadn't heard from him since. So we went to Ross Crossing and started a search. Apparently Margolin was seen by a fisherman. He got to the place where we were supposed to be camped, and we weren't there. We were supposed to have been there according to the plans that had been left in the supervisor's office."

--A.E. Wieslander, California Forester: Mapper of Wildland Vegetation and Soils. An Interview conducted by Ann Lage in 1985. The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

### **Sunday, June 21, 1914.**

On Sunday (June 21) the ford was still dangerously high and no one from the camp went to the telephone. In any case a trip would not probably have been made since, no knowing of anything otherwise urgent, it was desired most to reach the Supervisor's office, which was not open on Sunday.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### **Monday, June 22, 1914.**

On Monday morning, about 11:30, the chief of party crossed to the telephone and his first message was to Dinkey Station to find if they knew anything as to the cause of the delay in Margolin's visit, and when he would be in. He was told by Ranger Barker that Margolin had left Dinkey afoot for the reconnaissance camp at 8:30 Friday morning, by way of McKinley Grove of Big Trees and the Deer Creek ford, crossing Dinkey at the Station on the cable cage. He had intended to come by the Oak Flat trail to Ross Crossing, as the packer had been informed, but, hearing of the big tree grove, changed his route in order to see them and declined the offer of some one to accompany him, as also a lunch, saying he would be in the boy's camp for dinner. He was given a U.S.G.S. Kaiser quadrangle, which covers as far south as Deer Creek, and explicit directions as to the trails, with information that our camp would be near Ross Crossing, where the crew had intended to move on Friday and the packer had so told the rangers. The moving had actually been delayed one day by the finding of a previously-unknown basin of timber which had to be cruised from the upper camp. But Margolin was also told by the rangers that if the camp was not at Ross Crossing yet he would find it about three or four miles up the mountain, on the main trail, at Log Cabin Meadow. The Deer Creek trail, which branches off south of the big trees, is old and dim and difficult to follow, of which he was warned, but should he miss it there was only the one feasible ford over Deer Creek, about one mile from its mouth, which he could not well fail to find; so he decided to go that way.

Mr. Margolin was so experienced a woodsman and so hardy physically that it seemed impossible, in a country crossed frequently by trunk trails, that he could be lost for over three days without getting out to people somewhere where the news could have been heard of him, unless he had met with an accident. The lightning had been unusually severe in the storm of Friday afternoon, and it was felt that there was considerable chance that he had either been struck by lightning or by a falling tree. Ranger Barker immediately started, with a cattleman

whom he was able to reach, over the trail that Margolin took. The chief of party returned to camp with three men from Oak Flat Ranger Station. At Ross Crossing they stopped at Black's camp to get his help in the search, but he was away from camp that day--word was left with his wife. The three men, with one of the reconnaissance crew who was in camp mapping, were sent to scour Margolin's route from Ross Crossing and connect with Barker. The chief of party went up the mountain and intercepted the three other members of the crew, where were running base line, and with them went north to the main trail and began to systematically comb the area between that trail and Deer Creek, from where the Creek comes out of the practically impassable gorge, covering that night as far as the ford. Both parties found tracks, which members of the reconnaissance crew who knew Margolin were able to identify pretty certainly as his - 5 ½ shoes with hob nails in a diamond pattern in both heel and ball of foot, and the impression of the heel sharp, as of new shoes, which Ranger Barker said he wore when he left Dinkey Station.

One set of tracks was in wet sand close beside Deer Creek, on the north side below the ford. The tracks seemed to prove that Margolin had crossed Deer Creek, but as no tracks were found further south it did not seem certain that, being unable to find a main trail among the cow trails, he had not recrossed it. This belief was strengthened by the fact, learned Monday night, that he had been told by Ranger Barker that he would be safe to follow the burro tracks turning from the main trail to Dinkey Creek as the reconnaissance packer had come over the route two days before. The packer had intended to follow this trail when he left Dinkey, but not being certain where the Deer Creek trail branched from the main trail, he, in fact, continued around the latter, circling on to Patterson Mountain from the Northwest and so to the Log Cabin Meadow camp.  
-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

## **Tuesday, June 23, 1914.**

Tuesday (June 23) four men continued combing the territory between the main Patterson Mountain trail and the Deer Creek territory westward, four men went to the big trees to follow the burro tracks eastward. One man went over the mountain eastward to get the Sample Brothers, cattlemen, who were camped at Long Meadow, and have them ride around the southern end of Patterson Mountain and through the high country on this side to the main trail and the reconnaissance camp. No further clues were found, but the big tree party had been joined by Black, who said that he and his wife had both seen a man, whom they supposed to be one of our crew, on the bluff directly across from their camp on the bluff, at about 10:30 Saturday morning. Their description was detailed and agreed with what Ranger Barker said Margolin wore. This theory disposed of the theory of an accident in the storm and transferred the search to the region of the ford. But it appeared impossible that Margolin could have taken the main trail up the mountain in an effort to get to the upper camp without meeting the pack train, which was on that trail for six hours of Saturday, or the Log Cabin Meadow camp, which was directly beside the trail and was not deserted until 7 P.M. It appeared most probable either that, since the main trail goes northward from Ross Crossing nearly to Deer Creek before turning up the main part of the mountain, Margolin did not think that this trail, leading back in the directly from which he had just come, was the main trail; or, since this trail, after going northward again to make southward to Log Cabin Meadow, slightly south of due east from Ross Crossing, that being a self confident man, he thought to save time and distance, and on either supposition cut directly up the mountain.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### **Wednesday, June 24, 1914.**

Four men came to join the party Tuesday night. Wednesday (June 24) in accordance with the plans of Tuesday night, four men on horseback rode the high country adjacent to Log Cabin and Ross Meadows, down to the line of cliffs about halfway down the mountain, being met and joined by the cattlemen coming from the south. Two men, experienced hunters and trackers, went on foot along the top of the cliff line to pick up his track where he crossed that line in the bare granite sand, if he did get above the cliffs. Seven men on foot started to comb the country between the cliffs and creek, where tracking is made practically impossible by the bear clover, as well as the fact that it has all been tracked over by the burros. In their very firm line they picked up tracks twice, coming off the bluffs, southward, from where Black was said to have seen him, and once in a sandy gully, in a trail about a quarter mile south of the first ones. Tracing of these tracks farther was prevented, in first case by burro tracks, in the second by bear clover. The tracks, however, seemed to corroborate Blacks' statement and to strengthen the theory that Margolin had not supposed the trail north from Ross Crossing to be the main Patterson Mountain trail, in which case, finding a plain trail to turn eastward up the mountain. The trail which he was now on, however, was a private trail to the Sample cattle gathering pasture about a half mile south of Ross Crossing. A little below where the southernmost tracks were discovered, which was a short distance east of the pasture fence, the trail becomes lost in wandering cow trails. At this point, however, it would be apparent that the edge of the timber was near, giving way to unbroken brush further southward, along the creek and he would turn upward, as concluded on Tuesday, or at least to get a new sight for bearings. This would have brought him into, or to the edge of, a beautiful basin of timber which opens up to the east of that point, and the fact that no tracks were found returning northward, or on the ridges above and directly east of Ross Crossing and the camp seemed to indicate that he went upward into the southern timber basin. Against this conclusion was that fact that on Saturday afternoon two cruising crews of the reconnaissance party had been working on the southern side of the basin and, finishing about 5 o'clock, had come clear across the basin shouting and shooting six shooters to locate each other; this was continued all the way to camp and ought to have been heard at some time from anywhere in the basin. The balance of the day was therefore spent in a minute combing of this basin, southward for two miles, and from the lower timber line to the cliff line. Bu the day's work revealed no further results of any kind. Two additional men came into camp that night. It had seemed certain that the lost man, or further traces of him, would be found in the basin. Moreover, Margolin customarily carried pencil and notebook in his knapsack, which he had with him on leaving Dinkey Station, and the finding of a .38 caliber cartridge (but no gun) in his bed seemed to indicate that he had a gun and doubtless with him, which he was known customarily to carry a water-proof match safe. It seemed impossible that so experienced a woodsman as Margolin could find himself at the end of two days or more without locating someone, and without food, and not back-track to Dinkey Station before he should become too much weakened to do so, or to fire his gun, or at least leave notes on the trees to guide searchers for him, or, as a last resort, set fire to the woods to bring someone to him. It now seemed necessary, therefore, to turn to the possibilities of accident subsequent to the storm, or loss of mental balance.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### **Thursday, June 25, 1914.**

Thursday (June 25). Two good trackers went afoot to follow the brush line from Dinkey Creek southward and eastward, on the theory that a lost man, when his reason fails, will usually take the path of least resistance, down hill. Two men went down the creek to search for evidence of

a possible fall into it, one man horseback across Dinkey and by trail to a mining camp some three miles down the creek to put them on the lookout for anything which might float down, while four men on foot traversed the edge of Dinkey Creek, two on either side, northward to Deer Creek, and up the latter to the ford. Two men on foot traversed the base of the cliff line, the whole length of the mountain, on the possibility that the lost man might have tried to scale them, fallen, or have otherwise failed. Two men on horseback went across Dinkey creek ford to search the big trees, and also the steep slopes between them and Deer and Dinkey Creeks, for back tracks. Two men went to follow more carefully the trail of the packer on the high land route around Deer Creek, especially for evidence, still wanting, of a camp fire during Friday night, following the storm. Two men on horseback went up to the steep sand ridges below Patterson bluffs at the southern end of the mountains, over which he must have crossed, if, on a long chance, he had tried to get out to the San Joaquin Valley, which is visible some 25 miles distant, from the upper slopes of Patterson. The only results of the day's work were a few tracks in the big trees, but coming toward Deer Creek, and two tracks, doubtfully Margolin's ascending a ridge just south of the main trail and below the cliff line. During the day Supervisor Redington and three other men came in; but several cattlemen and other volunteer helpers were obliged to leave. That night word came that small tracks, as of a man staggering, had been seen that day near Lost Meadow, 3 ½ miles southwest of Dinkey Station, on the watershed between Dinkey and Blue Canyon. If Margolin had found the foot log across Dinkey, a short distance above Ross Crossing, he would have been likely to try to return to Dinkey on the west side of the creek, and if he had missed the main trail, which turns south for some distance from Ross Crossing, and had attempted to make it across Dinkey Mountain, he could very easily have landed in the Lost Meadow region, and by the time he reached there he would probably be weakened so as to stagger. This clue was therefore looked upon with great hope. Supervisor Redington and four men rode that night to Oak Flat to make the earliest possible morning start for Lost Meadow.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

**Forester Lost in Wilds.** Fresno, Cal, June 25. Louis Margolin, chief inspector of timber estimation, has been lost in the wilderness of the Sierra national forest and the belief was expressed today that he may have perished in the heavy electrical storm in the mountains several days ago. He was last seen Friday morning when he set out on foot from the Dinkey creek ranger station. He was expected back the same day.

--San Diego Union, San Diego, CA. Friday, June 26, 1914.

### Friday, June 26, 1914.

Friday (June 26). With the remaining men at camp, work was planned and executed as it would have been regardless of the outside clue, upon which none of them could lend assistance, at least until receiving a report from the Supervisor's party. Two men went to identify and follow out the doubtful tracks discovered on the previous day. Two men went to look again for tracks at both ends of the foot log across Dinkey Creek. Four men on horseback went to ride the main trail on the mountain summit, and Deer Creek, and four on foot to the area between the same boundaries from the cliff line to the summit. There did not seem to be much probability of the lost man getting into this area because he knew that he could not cross Deer Creek Canyon at any point in it; but it was about the only remaining possible area which had not been carefully searched. Meantime the cattlemen were still riding the east, or North Fork, of King's River side of the mountain. Nothing resulted from the day's work. Supervisor Redington and party returned with report that the Lost Meadow tracks were not Margolin's, but were made by a foot much too large for his, and that, on investigation, the whole story had broken down.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

Fresno, Cal., June 26. Word was received today from Forest Supervisor Paul G. Redington at North Fork, Madera county, that no trace had been found of Louis Margolin, missing forest official, and that there was little or any hope that he would be found alive. A posse of thirty forest rangers, cattlemen and mountaineers is searching the rugged country seventy-five miles from here where Margolin disappeared a week ago. It is thought he perished in the storm last Friday night.

--San Diego Union, San Diego, CA. Saturday, June 27, 1914.

**Timber Man Missing.** San Francisco, June 26. The government forestry bureau here was still without news today concerning Louis Margolin, its timber estimator in the Sierra forest reserve, missing just a week today from the North Fork station, in Madera county. He left North Fork to visit a camp 12 miles distant, was caught in a storm and has not been seen since. It was considered practically certain that he perished. Big parties of forest rangers and volunteer searchers were looking for him.

--Riverside Daily Press, Riverside, CA. Friday, June 26, 1914.

**Forest Expert is Lost in the Mountains. Louis Margolin Missing for a Week in Wild Region on Kings River. Friends Think Him Dead. Rangers and Trackers Have Searched the Hills and Creeks Without Result.** Louis Margolin, chief inspector of timber estimation for the Fifth district of the Forest Service, has been lost for a week in the wild mountainous region between the north and middle forks of Kings river in the Sierra National Forest in Fresno county, and is believed to have perished. Scores of rangers and mountaineers have been searching the forest since last Friday but have been unable to find a trace of him. Margolin's friends in this city have nearly given up hope that he will be found alive. As he was an experienced woodsman it is not thought likely that he could remain lost so long if no accident had happened to him. His friends in the service fear that he was struck by lightning in the great electrical storm of last Friday or that he was drowned in one of the creeks.

**Missing Since Friday.** Margolin left the Dinkey creek ranger station last Friday morning to go on foot to a reconnaissance camp twelve miles southeast. Since then he has not been traced, although expert trackers have been put on the trail and the district has been thoroughly searched. He was expected at the camp Friday and when he did not appear, C. L. Hill, the forest examiner in charge, took the trail out to the nearest telephone to ask if plans had been changed. He was told by the ranger at Dinkey creek that Margolin should be at the camp. Hill at once informed Supervisor Redington at Northfork that Margolin was missing and, dropping his work, sent every man in his camp out to search. The heavy storm of Friday had washed out all tracks and the only clew found was a report from campers that on Saturday morning they had seen a man appear on the bluff above Lost Crossing and then go back.

**May Have Been Injured.** The theory was that Margolin had been dazed by lightning in the storms and was wandering aimlessly in the forest. Later, in view of his belief that Margolin was seen by the campers on Saturday, Forest Supervisor Redington gave up the lightning theory and now believes the missing man was injured while trying to find the trail. On Monday every available man in the vicinity was searching the mountainsides and the creek beds. The mountain cattlemen were pressed into service with the rangers, and on Wednesday, several expert trackers were sent out. The San Francisco office of the service wired Redington on Tuesday offering to transfer rangers from other California forests to aid in the search, and instructed him to spare no expense in finding the lost man.

**Many Men Searching.** Redington replied Wednesday that he had all the men he could use and was covering the country with a fine-tooth comb. Supervisor Redington and Forest Assistant E. G. Dudley have gone to Dinkey Creek to take charge of the organized hunt. The region is one of heavily forested mountains, with deep and rugged canyons, requiring a systematic search of every bit of ground in the effort to find the lost inspector. While at last accounts Redington adhered to his theory that Margolin had been injured in some manner, his friends in this city fear that he has been drowned in one of the streams which are high at this time of the year. It is pointed out that the three principal dangers in the mountains of California are storms with lightning and falling timber, the treacherous streams and rock slides. Margolin is not likely to have encountered the last.

--San Francisco Chronicle. Friday, June 26, 1914.

### **Saturday, June 27, 1914.**

Saturday (June 27). The only remaining possibility seemed to be that in some way Margolin had fallen into Dinkey Creek, on Saturday, soon after he was seen by Black. He could not have wandered in the woods without leaving some tracks which would have been picked up by the thorough search, and no tracks or any other trace or clue had been found except in the direct line of his travel from the big trees to the pasture just south of Ross Crossing. The main body of the party, consisting of ten men, therefore turned again to the Creek, going five on either side and working with ropes so that every hole and crevice would be worked and searched thoroughly. Two men on horseback were sent to the mouth of Dinkey creek, by way of the mining camp, from where, on the west side it is possible to make a way down the creek through the chaparral, which is impossible of passage on the east side. From Oak Flat telephone connection was had with storekeeper Maxon at Trimmer on the Kings River, and arrangements made to hire a man to watch the river at that point. Both the supervisor's office at Northfork and the District Forester at San Francisco communicated with the Hume Bennett Lumber Company, who have a flume running down the Kings River, and who courteously agreed to have their flume walkers watch the river closely over the entire distance paralleled by their flume. To settle, if possible, the still unanswered question of where Margolin spent the night of Friday following the storm, four men were sent again to scour the route to the Deer Creek ford, and from there to comb the very steep slopes between Dinkey and Deer Creek and the big trees.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

**Louis Margolin Has Not Yet Been Found. Lost Forester Is Now Believed to Have Perished in Great Storm of Week Ago.** Louis Margolin, the forestry expert who was lost on June 19<sup>th</sup> in the mountains, on Kings river, in the Sierra national forest, has not yet been found. Supervisor Paul G. Redington wired yesterday to the headquarters of the forest service in this city that no trace has yet been found. The search parties of rangers and mountaineers are still combing the district on Dinkey Creek, where Margolin disappeared. Expert trackers are out, but they have been baffled by the fact that the heavy storm of the day when Margolin left the ranger station wiped out all tracks. Redington said that there is little or no hope that the missing official can now be found alive. It is believed that he was drowned or killed by lightning or falling timber in the storm.

--San Francisco Chronicle. Saturday, June 27, 1914.

### **Sunday, June 28, 1914.**

Sunday (June 28). Watch was kept of the creek. The rest of the party, 18 men, spent the day combing the area between the cliff line and Dinkey Creek, north and from the Sample pasture to Deer Creek, a small part of which area had not been searched, consequent upon finding of Margolin's southernmost discovered tracks, by the pasture fence. This party made the find of a once water-soaked Southern Pacific time table, which no one who had since been in the country could in any probability have had, except Margolin. It was found in the same cow trail on this side of Deer Creek and a few rods south of his tracks which had been discovered on the first day of the search. This trail had been traversed many times by searchers, who would have hardly missed the time table if it had been there all during the search. Apparently, when Margolin discarded it, it had lain more or less concealed in the undergrowth or debris beside the trail, and was later kicked out into the trail by cattle, of which a large number had recently passed through the area. The discovery, however, was in the line of travel already very definitely established, and added nothing to the knowledge of Margolin's movements. This was the only result of the day's work. Every possibility which could be thought of by anyone had now been tried out to no result, and the search seemed to be up against a stone wall. But it did not seem wise to abandon it, until it was certain that nothing else in any human probability could arise.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### **Monday, June 29, 1914.**

Monday (June 29). Two men were left to travel and watch the creek. Four men on horseback went to ride again over the high country on the crest of the mountain, against the remote possibility of something having arisen in that area. The rest of the crew, under the leadership of Supervisor Redington, went to search again the big tree grove, for evidence of Margolin's movements while there. Nothing was found in the grove. But on the way there the party spread out to cover the steep ridges leading up to it, and found Margolin's tracks in a place not previously reported. The tracks led in the same direction as the others, and completed the only missing link in his exact route of travel over that area. It was felt that this day ended the need for so large a crew, and several men left next morning.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

### **Tuesday, June 30, 1914.**

Tuesday (June 30). The creek as once again searched and watched, but with no result. The horsemen returned from the high country, but had found nothing.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

**\$1000 Reward for Lost Louis Margolin.** Special Dispatch to the "Chronicle". New York, June 30. To bring about nation-wide interest in the search for Louis Margolin, chief inspector of forests in the Sierra forest reserve, California, a brother of the missing man today offered \$1000 reward. The brother, who has the same first name, is Louis N. Margolin, of the firm Mirken and Margolin, hat manufacturers. Margolin, who was stationed in the Sierra forest reserve, disappeared on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.

-- San Francisco Chronicle. Wednesday, July 1, 1914.

**No Trace is Found of Forestry Expert.** San Francisco, June 30. A reward of \$200 has been offered for the recovery of the body of Louis Margolin. Although rangers and trackers have been gridironing the region for ten days, nothing has been found of this forestry expert, who

disappeared on June 19 in the mountains of the Sierra national forest, between the North and Middle forks of Kings river.

--San Jose Evening News, San Jose, CA. Tuesday, June 30, 1914.

### **Wednesday, July 1, 1914.**

**Brother Offers Reward for Missing Man.** San Francisco, July 1. To enlist nation-wide interest in the search for Louis Margolin, the United States forest service official who disappeared in the Sierra national forest on June 19, a reward of \$1000 for information concerning his fate has been offered by L. N. Margolin, a brother of the missing man. L. N. Margolin is a New York hat manufacturer. This makes a total of \$1200 offered for the discovery of the lost man. The United States forest service officials have posted notices throughout the Kings' river country, offering \$200 for recovery of his body.

--Evening News, San Jose, CA. Wednesday, July 1, 1914.

**Reward of \$1000 is Offered for Discovery of Missing Forester.** New York, July 1. To bring about nation-wide interest in the search for Louis Margolin, chief inspector for forests in the Sierra forest reserve, California, a brother of the missing man offered \$1000 reward. The brother, who has the same first name, is Louis N. Margolin, a New York hat manufacturer.

-- Riverside Daily Press, Riverside, CA. Wednesday, July 1, 1914.

### **Thursday, July 2, 1914**

**Forest Official Could Not Have Escaped.** Fresno, July 2. No word has been received from the mountains for several days regarding the search for Louis Margolin, and it is believed here that the quest for the body has been impossible that the forest official could have escaped alive from the storm of a week ago last Friday.

-- San Jose Evening News, San Jose, CA. Thursday, July 2, 1914.

**Margolin's Body Is Believed to Be in Creek. Hope of Finding Remains of Lost Forest Official Abandoned Until the Water Recedes.** Fresno, July 2. Forest officials have given up all hope of finding the body of Louis Margolis until the water in Dinkey creek, in the high Sierra, goes down, a matter of about six weeks. Search of the forest district into which he could possibly have wandered has been thorough, without results, and they are now sure that Margolin fell into the stream during the storm of two weeks ago. The bank of Dinkey creek is being patrolled.

--San Francisco Chronicle. Friday, July 3, 1914.

### **Thursday, July 9, 1914.**

**Find Trace of Ranger. Hat of Man Lost in Sierras Located Near Stream.** Fresno, Cal., July 9. Searchers for the body of Louis Margolin, chief forest inspector of the Sierras, lost in a storm three weeks ago, today found a hat on the banks of Dinkey Creek, which has been identified as that of Margolin. It was near a falls and strengthens the theory that Margolin lost his life in trying to cross the stream. Margolin's brother, Louis N. Margolin, a New York merchant, has offered a reward of \$1,000 for recovery of the body.

--Denver Rocky Mountain News, Denver, CO. Friday, July 10, 1914.

**Margolin's Hat Is Found on the Bank. This Strengthens the Belief That the Missing Forester Met Death in Dinkey Creek.** Special Dispatch to the Chronicle. Fresno, July 9. Word reached Fresno today from one of the Government forest stations in the mountains, 100 miles

from here, that the hat of Louis Margolin, the missing forester, had been found on the bank of Dinkey creek. This strengthens the theory that Margolin was drowned in the creek. Search is being continued for his body.

-- San Francisco Chronicle. Friday, July 10, 1914.

## **Tuesday, July 14, 1914.**

**Margolin's Shirt and Dairy Found in Creek. Possessions of Lost Forester Are Discovered in Stream at Log Crossing.** Special Dispatch to the Chronicle. Fresno, July 14. A shirt containing insurance papers, a diary and knife belonging to Louis Margolin, the forester, lost in the Sierra in June, were found today in a pool of water in Dinkey Creek just below Ross Crossing. Buttons were torn from the shirt and show that Margolin fell into the water while crossing the foot log. A fierce storm was raging at the time Margolin was lost. The diary is complete to June 16<sup>th</sup>. Leaves from then on are missing. Foresters think Margolin used the leaves to start a fire. The hunt is being continued for his body.

--San Francisco Chronicle. Wednesday, July 15, 1914.

### **Find a Clue to Missing Man. Woolen Shirt Found in Creek and Search Made for Body.**

Fresno, Cal. A heavy brown woolen shirt, water soaked, mud-stained and in many places torn to shreds, was dragged from the depths of Dinkey creek, near North Fork, 60 miles northeast of Fresno, at noon Tuesday. The shirt is the one worn by Louis Margolin, government lumber inspector, when he disappeared while making a trip across the Sierras June 19. Tuesday night forest rangers are dynamiting the creek in an attempt to raise the body.

--Idaho Statesman, Boise, ID. Wednesday, July 15, 1914.

## **Wednesday, July 15, 1914.**

**Fear Forester Was Drowned. Shirt of Louis Margolin Found in Creek, Near North Fork, Cal.** Fresno, Cal., July 15. A heavy brown woolen shirt, water soaked, mud-stained and torn to shreds, was dragged from the depths of Dinkey creek, near North Fork, sixty miles northeast of Fresno yesterday. The shirt is the one worn by Louis Margolin, chief forest inspector of the Sierras, when he disappeared while making a trip across the Sierras June 19. Last night forest rangers dynamited the creek in an attempt to raise the body. Insurance papers, card case, knife and a diary were found in the pockets of the shirt. The diary was written up to June 16, the remaining leaves being torn out, leading to the belief that Margolin had attempted to light a fire. The two top buttons of the shirt were unbuttoned while the rest were torn from the shirt, giving rise to the theory that Margolin fell from a foot log just over the hole from which the shirt was recovered, struck on a rock and plunged unconscious into the creek. His brother in New York has offered \$1,000 reward for his body.

--The Evening Post, New York. Wednesday July 15, 1914.

### Interview with A. E. Wieslander:

Wieslander: "Then Paul Redington, the forest supervisor, came out, and all the rangers, and we started combing the country hunting for him. Finally they found a shirt and hat of his down along Dinkey Creek, a tributary of the north fork of the King's River. They never did find him."

Lage: "Louis Margolin never was found?"

Wieslander: "Never was found. They placed a monument there at Ross Crossing in his honor."

--A.E. Wieslander, California Forester: Mapper of Wildland Vegetation and Soils. An Interview conducted by Ann Lage in 1985. The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

## August, 1914.

In August a memorial to Louis Margolin, in the shape of a bronze tablet, was placed on a cliff of rock near the Ross Crossing of Dinkey Creek. The tablet reads: To Remember Louis Margolin, who lost his life near this spot, June 20, 1914, in the line of duty (By his friends in the service). -- The Sierra Ranger, Vol. IV, No. 3. November 1, 1914.



This bronze tablet, in memory of Louis Margolin, was placed on a large rock on the bank of Dinkey Creek near Ross Crossing in the Sierra National Forest by his associates in the Forest Service. Mr. Margolin was a forester of marked ability, and at the time of his death had charge of timber reconnaissance in the National Forests of California. It is probable that he drowned in trying to cross Dinkey Creek during a violent storm.

--Sierra Club Bulletin, Vol. IX. 1915.

## Sunday, October 11, 1914.

**Bronze Tablet Marks Spot Where Margolin Was Lost.** A bronze tablet at the crossing of Dinkey Creek into the Sierra national forest now marks the place where Inspector Louis Margolin of the United States forestry service lost his life, June 20, while attempting to cross the treacherous stream. Margolin's body has never been recovered, but the monument stands where it is believed he drowned. The tablet bears the inscription in the form of a circle: "To remember Louis Margolin, who lost his life June 20, 1914, near this spot in the line of duty. By his friends in the service." A granite boulder supports the bronze tablet, which bears a facsimile of the forest service badge.

--Fresno Morning Republican, Fresno, CA. Sunday, October 11, 1914.

## 1915: Hopes Raised and Dashed

### Friday, July 16, 1915.

**Body of Ranger is Found in Mountains.** By the Associated Press. Fresno, Cal. July 16.—The body of Louis Margolin, a United States forest ranger, who disappeared from the government camp in the mountains of Fresno county June 19, 1914, was found today by an Indian, according to a report received here late this afternoon. The body was discovered on the banks of Dinkey Creek, near Sycamore Springs. Margolin lost his way in a snowstorm and it is believed that he fell into a deep hole in Dinkey Creek. He had been measuring timber for the government. A posse searched for the body for two months and a large reward was offered for its recovery. His brother lives in San Francisco.

-- San Jose Mercury News, San Jose, CA. Friday, July 16, 1915.

**Ranger's Body Recovered.** Fresno, July 16. The spot where the body of Louis Margolin, a United States forest ranger who disappeared in June, 1914, was found, is so far back in the mountains of the Kings river canyon, that the coroner will not be able to return to Fresno with the body until tomorrow night. When Margolin disappeared rewards aggregating \$1200 were offered for his body. His father is L. N. Margolin of New York. The body was found by an Indian.

--Riverside Daily Press, Riverside, CA. Friday, July 16, 1915.

### Saturday, July 17, 1915.

**Skeleton Not That of Missing Forester. The Coroner Finds Hobnail Shoes, Louis Margolin Did Not Wear.** Special Dispatch to the Chronicle. Fresno, July 17. That the skeleton found in the high Sierra Thursday by Indians is not that of Louis Margolin, the missing United States forestry official who was drowned in Dinkey Creek a year ago, was the statement made today by Coroner Bean. Hobnailed shoes were found and it is certain that Margolin was not wearing those kind of shoes when he started his trip across the mountains.

--San Francisco Chronicle. Sunday, July 18, 1915.

### Sunday, July 18, 1915.

**Body Not Margolin's.** Fresno, July 18. The body found in the high Sierras several days ago by Indians was not that of Louis Margolin, forest service official who was lost a year ago, is the determination of Coroner W. A. Bean. Though little of the skeleton remained, from bits of clothing it appeared that the remains were those of some wandering lumberjack.

--San Diego Union, San Diego, CA. Monday, July 19, 1915.

### August, 1915.

False hopes have already twice been raised that the remains of Louis Margolin's body had been found in Dinkey Creek. The first proved to be the bones of an animal, and the last, according to a report in the Fresno Republican has been identified as a man named Mark S. Nye, a traveling salesman of Fresno. The place where the skeleton was found is one of the most inaccessible in the mountains, and a person in distress in that vicinity certainly stands little chance of getting any assistance.

--The Sierra Ranger, Vol. V, No. 2. August 1915.

## Louis Margolin Obituaries

**Louis Margolin.** It is our sad duty to record in this issue of the Ranger the loss of Louis Margolin, Forest Examiner in charge of the timber reconnaissance of this District. Elsewhere is given a detailed account of the circumstances. Margolin was one of the ablest officers in the Service, an expert in his line of work, and was universally respected. He will be greatly missed and his place will be hard to fill. The Sierra force joins with all those who knew him in extending sympathy to the members of his family.

-- The Sierra Ranger. Vol. IV., No. 2. August 1, 1914.

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**Louis Margolin.** The death of Louis Margolin removes an able and promising forester from the ranks of the Society. Mr. Margolin had charge of timber reconnaissance on the National Forests of California and was inspecting one of the projects in the Sierras between the North and Middle Forks of Kings River. It is probable that on June 20 he slipped from a foot long in crossing Dinkey Creek, which was swollen by a heavy storm, and was drowned.

Margolin was born in Russia in 1880. His earlier education was obtained in the public schools of New York City and at Cooper's Institute. He received his technical training in forestry at Cornell University; and also spent one year at the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University. He entered the Forest Service in 1905 and served until his death, with the exception of about one and a half years spent in cruising British Columbia timber in the employ of a Canadian forest engineering firm.

Margolin was a forester of unusual mental keenness. He was exceptionally well grounded in silvics and mensuration, and did much original thinking in these subjects. His professional work was largely on the investigative side of forestry, including timber estimates and forest mensuration. He has contributed in no small degree to the permanent upbuilding of these phases in American forestry. Probably his most important and distinctive work was the study of eucalyptus culture in Hawaii and of the yield from eucalyptus in California. Bulletins embodying the results of these studies were published by the Hawaiian Board of Agriculture and the California State Board of Forestry.

At a special executive meeting held on July 29 the Society of American Foresters adopted the following resolution in reference to Margolin's death:

The Society of American Foresters expresses its profound regret over the death of Louis Margolin, for eight years one of its active members. His loss removes an American forester of high attainments, who has contributed in no small degree by sound research and vigorous thought to both permanent development of the science of forestry. As a worker of exceptional mental power, high ideals, and untiring industry, he made his years of professional service exceptionally fruitful, and has left a permanent imprint upon scientific methods in the special phases of forestry to which his efforts were devoted. As a member of the public service, he discharged efficiently and faithfully the responsibilities entrusted to him without regard to personal sacrifices or danger. In his death, the Society of American Foresters loses a loyal member of promise in his profession and of proven capacity for effective service.

--Proceedings of the Society of American Foresters, Vol. IX, No. 3. July 1914.

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**Louis Margolin.** We record with great regret the loss of Mr. Louis Margolin in the wilds of the Sierra of California in June. He started out from the Dinkey Ranger Station in the Sierra National Forest to get to a camp some 12 miles away, but did not make his appearance. Some weeks later his torn shirt with card case, diary, and other papers in the pocket was found in Dinkey Creek, an affluent of Kings River, along and across which his trail led, leaving no doubt as to his unfortunate fate. A thorough search along both rivers has failed to bring his body to light.

Mr. Margolin held the degree of F. E. from Cornell University, 1904, having completed his course at Harvard University. Since 1905 he was, with the exception of about a year and a half in private employ, a member of the U. S. Forest Service. At the time of his death he was in charge of the reconnaissance work and working plan activities of the Service in the National Forests of California. --Forestry Quarterly, Vol. XII. 1914.

**2014: 100 Years Later**



The brass plaque placed in August 1914 by the Forest Service (with bullet damage on the USFS shield)



The boulder at Ross Crossing with the plaque honoring Louis Margolin