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*In October 1908, the largest wildfire in modern Michigan history swept through the northeast part of the state, obliterating the thriving town of Metz and consuming more than 900 homes and two million acres of virgin forest. Despite the valiant efforts of the farmers, lumbermen, and shopkeepers who had hacked their fortunes from these woods, only the shores of Lake Huron could quench the sulfurous flames. With no fire watch towers, spotting aircraft, telephones, or organized firefighting organizations and with only limited telegraph service, warnings were too few and too late. In its wake, the conflagration left 43 dead and 4,600 homeless as the relentless winter loomed.*

Based on contemporary reports and recorded oral histories, ***Devil in the North Woods*** accurately depicts the fire's genesis, growth, and aftermath. The story's real-life protagonist, 10-year-old Henry Hardies, survived the fire but his mother and three younger sisters did not. Henry left behind a wealth of personal stories preserved by his offspring.

Through vivid storytelling, realistic dialogue, and a faithful recreation of the time and place, Walt Shiel brings Henry's ordeal to life as no mere retelling of the historical record could.

***Devil in the North Woods*** contrasts the terror of nature's destructive power with a chronicle of love, sorrow, family, and recovery from loss. The story leaves the reader buoyed by faith in the resilience of the human spirit and belief in love's ability to germinate in the ashes of ruin.

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Well-known wildfire expert Chuck Bushey (President of Montana Prescribed Fire Services, Inc.) thoroughly reviewed the manuscript to ensure the accuracy and verisimilitude of the fire's description, progress, and effects on people, structures, and the environment. Bushey's final comment: "The story is quite believable."

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Walt Shiel has authored dozens of articles published in magazines in the US, the UK, and Australia and a monthly column in a national aviation magazine. He is also the author of the popular history book *Cessna Warbirds*.