



Monroe Robinson's love of craft is eclipsed only by his love of nature. He earned a degree in fisheries from Colorado State University before moving to Alaska. Turning down an offer with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, he built his home, much of the furniture and later worked with master log builder, Lee Cole, in 1977. Building a trussed-log bridge over the following two summers led to his meeting Dick Proenneke – their mutual passion for craft and wild-life kindled a friendship until Dick's death in 2003.

A graduate of The Krenov School of Fine Woodworking, Monroe has taught woodworking courses around the country and has written articles for *Fine Woodworking* magazine. As a log restoration specialist he and his wife, K. Schubeck, served as caretakers for Dick Proenneke's cabin in Twin Lakes, Alaska, for 19 summers. Today, Monroe and K. live in Mendocino County, California. Monroe sells old-growth redwood lumber/slabs salvaged from logs left behind when the ancient forest was destroyed, works in his garden and orchard, and is remodeling his home to showcase local woods of the Mendocino coast.



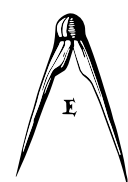
Illustration: Elan Robinson
Cover & front flap photos: Dick Proenneke, courtesy of the National Park Service



*“It is interesting to think and plan what one can do
with nothing but a few tools.”*
— Richard Proenneke

The Handcrafted Life of Dick Proenneke

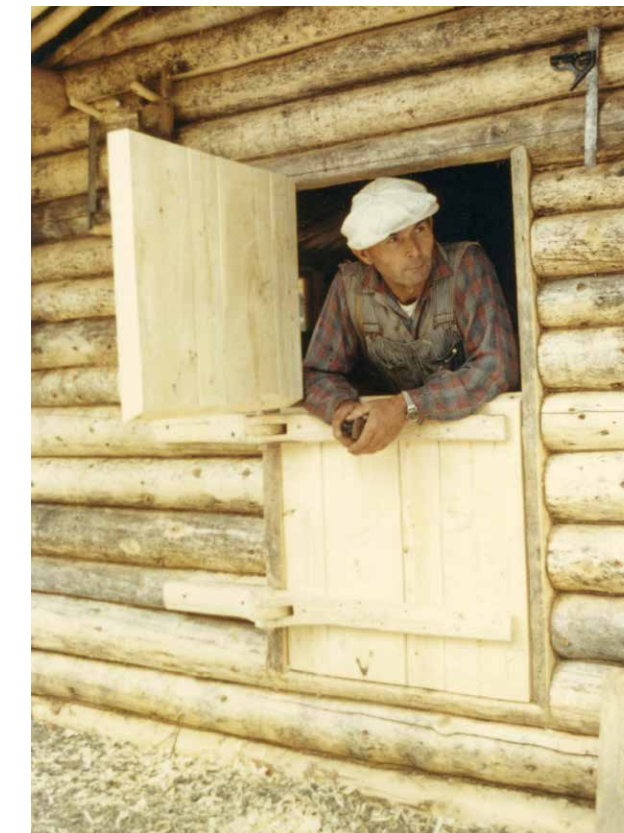
Robinson



The Handcrafted Life of Dick Proenneke



by Monroe Robinson



At 51, Dick Proenneke scouted a site for a log cabin on Twin Lakes, Alaska. The next year he returned and built his cabin, by himself, using only hand tools. Dick lived in his cabin for nearly 31 years, crafting by hand almost everything he needed with materials found locally, including a cache to store his food, all his own furniture and many of his tools. Dick kept detailed journals and documented his life on film. In 1999, after departing Twin Lakes at the age of 82, Dick donated his cabin to the National Park Service. He died in 2003.

In 2000, the National Park Service contacted Monroe Robinson, a woodworker and log restoration specialist, to help maintain and restore Dick's cabin, cache, woodshed, furniture and tools. For 19 summers, Monroe and his wife, K. Schubeck, served as caretakers for Dick's cabin, all the while honoring his motto of “keeping it true.”

No one holds a more intimate knowledge of Dick's handcrafted life than Monroe, and just as Dick shared his life through letters and film, Monroe knew he had a responsibility to share all that he had learned. This book, which includes excerpts from more than 7,000 pages of Dick's transcribed journals along with hundreds of photos, dozens of illustrations, and Monroe's thoughtful and detailed commentary, is the result. It's nonfiction, how-to, adventure and memoir, but at its heart, it's a guidebook on how to live a life that's “true,” with materials found and a few simple tools.