

S.P. #37

CALAVERAS BIG TREES

(Summary by George Tays)

The Calaveras Grove of Big Trees is situated in Calaveras County, in a little valley at an elevation of 4,759 feet above sea level on a tributary of San Andres Creek near the divide of the Calaveras and Tuolumne water sheds, and sixteen miles from Murphy's Camp.

It is supposed to have been discovered by John Bidwell on about October 23, 1841, as he and his emigrant party were crossing the Sierras. He made no mention of it for years, so lost the credit for the discovery. The next man to see the grove was John Marshall Wooster, a prospector who took his partner Arthur Sanborn to see them. Wooster carved his name and date, June 2, 1850 on the trunk of the tree named "Hercules." He recorded the fact in his diary, but did not make it known.

Alexander T. Dowd, a hunter for the Union Water Company at Murphy's Camp discovered the Big Trees while pursuing a wounded bear in May 1852. He returned to camp and made his find known, only to be greeted by derisive laughter. The following Sunday he took the men from camp to the trees by a ruse. At once the news spread throughout the world.

Soon after, the English botanist John Lindley named the species Wellingtonia gigantea, while American botanists called it Washingtoniana gigantea. Then the Frenchman Joseph Decaisne named it correctly Sequoia

gigantea.

In the summer of 1852 the bark of the Dowd tree was removed to the height of 30 feet, to exhibit it in the East. During the year 1853 the great tree was felled by boring auger holes all around it, and the stump was converted into a dance floor.

George Gale in the summer of 1854, stripped the bark from one of the most beautiful Big Trees to a height of 116 feet. This bark was taken to London and exhibited at the Crystal Palace.

Later in 1854 James L. Sperry acquired the grove and stopped its destruction. He built a hotel at the grove and thereafter thousands of tourists visited these remarkable trees yearly. The grove contains 93 great trees from 10 to 30 feet in diameter and from 250 to 325 feet high.

Sperry owned the grove until 1900, when he sold it to Robert P. Whiteside for \$100,000. Whiteside intended to lumber the grove, so civic societies and individuals began to work to bring the trees under public ownership. Bills were introduced in Congress without results, until 1908 when a bill passed, creating the Calaveras National Forest. Then followed twenty years more of efforts to buy the grove. In 1928 California voted a bond issue of \$6,000,000 for acquiring state park sites, but private funds had to be raised to pay half the price of \$275,000 for the grove. Finally in 1931, the \$135,000 were raised and the grove became a State Park, dedicated on July 5, 1931, at 3 P.M. by Governor James Rolph Jr. Since then the facilities of the park have been improved in an effort to restore it to its former popularity as a scenic attraction.

SP #37

**CALAVERAS BIG TREES**

(Summary by George Toys)

Calaveras Big Tree Grove, Calaveras County, 4,759 feet elevation, supposedly discovered by John Bidwell, 1841. Rediscovered by John Wooster 1850, Alexander Dowd, 1852. Owned by James Sperry 1854-1900, sold to Robert Whiteside. Acquired as park by California after years of effort 1931, dedicated by Governor Rolph, July 5, 1931.



Saratoga Gap  
Entrance to Calif.  
Redwood Park.

**THE POST-ENQUIRER**

1751 FRANKLIN STREET  
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF EDITOR

A UN  
TO J. J. B. G. W. S.  
TO J. J. B. G. W. S.

April 30th, 1928.

*Received  
Newspaper*

Mr. William E. Colby, Chairman,  
State Park Commission,  
650 Mills Building,  
San Francisco, California.

Dear Mr. Colby:

Enclosed is an editorial published in the Oakland Post-Enquirer on April 18th. I am sending this on to you at the request of Mr. G. E. Reynolds, Managing Editor of the Stockton Record.

With cordial regards,

## BIG TREES OF CALAVERAS

### The State Should Own Them

**B**OTH houses of congress have passed the Calaveras grove bill making it possible for the state of California to acquire 1200 acres of national forest land between the north and south groves of Calaveras big trees.

That is fine, and the state will thank Congressman Harry Englebright and Senator Hiram Johnson for their sponsorship of this bill.

But it is important to remember that the state does not own as yet the Calaveras big tree groves THEMSELVES. These historic groves, one of the state's tourist attractions, are still in private hands.

Passage of the state park \$6,000,000 bond issue, which will be on the November ballot, will enable the state park commission to pay half the cost of acquiring these groves.

Under the terms of the bond issue the other half of the cost would have to be raised by public subscription or private donation.

The Calaveras big tree groves are state assets. The state should own and safeguard them. They can be acquired for a nominal price, and they would be a bargain that would grow in value with the years.

Very truly yours,

*Carl Hoffmann*

*Palomares  
grove*

**Neumiller & Ditz**

CHARLES L. NEUMILLER  
GEORGE A. DITZ  
IRVING L. NEUMILLER

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS  
BANK OF AMERICA BUILDING  
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

TELEPHONE 415  
P.O. BOX 415

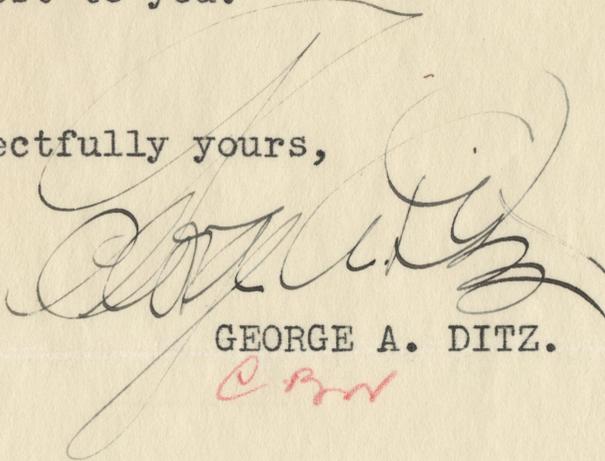
April 21, 1931.

COLONEL CHARLES B. WING,  
California State Park Commission,  
Mills Building,  
San Francisco, California.

Dear Colonel Wing:

I have chanced across the enclosed clipping  
from the Stockton Independent which I think may be  
of some historical interest to you.

Respectfully yours,



GEORGE A. DITZ.

*CAD*

GAD-S

*Calaveras  
Grove*

# —Down The Decades—

*From the Files of the Independent*

SEVENTY YEARS AGO TODAY

April 18, 1861

(San Andreas Independent.)

Fine Hotel at Big Trees—Messrs. Sperry & Co., proprietors of the Big Tree Grove, are finishing up an elegant hotel, which contains 24 rooms, all neatly plastered. The house will be supplied with new and fashionable furniture and will be ready for the reception of guests in a fortnight.

Social Party—Mr. George Mitchler will give a Social Ball at his saloon, Main street, Murphys, this evening.

The Calaveras Grove of Big Trees

will be officially dedicated as a

State Park

by

Governor James Rolph, Jr.

Sunday, July 5th, 1931, at 3 p. m.

at the Grove

You, as a contributor to this great cause, are cordially invited to attend these dedication ceremonies, which will include, besides the official dedication by the Governor, other appropriate program.

May we take this opportunity of thanking you for your assistance in making possible the acquisition of this magnificent and historic grove of redwoods as a part of our State Park System.

Calaveras Grove Association

Mrs. Harriot West Jackson, President

*Calaveras  
Big  
Trees*

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Mrs. Harriot West Jackson, President

#  
Calaveras  
Big Trees

FRED G. STEVENOT  
DIRECTOR

R. R. SOBERANES  
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR



*Colouros*

DIVISION OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF MINES AND MINING  
DIVISION OF FORESTRY  
DIVISION OF PARKS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Natural Resources  
SACRAMENTO

*Colouros Big Trees State Park  
Big Trees, Colouros Co. Cal.  
March 12<sup>th</sup> 1932.*

*Colonel Charles B. Wing O.P.M.  
684 Mills Building  
San Francisco, California*

*Dear Colonel Wing: Referring to your letter of  
the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. in which you inquire as to when  
Mr. Dan Phillipson might be despatched with, in the  
past years he has always been kept on until April  
30<sup>th</sup>. I personally would appreciate it if the  
department can see their way clear to do the same  
with him this year.*

*Referring to your letter of March 7<sup>th</sup> regarding  
the men who were here measuring the old  
hotel building, I took from their conversation  
the department was going to call for bids on*

FRED G. STEVENOT  
DIRECTOR

R. R. SOBERANES  
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR



DIVISION OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF MINES AND MINING  
DIVISION OF FORESTRY  
DIVISION OF PARKS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Natural Resources  
SACRAMENTO

improvements to the building. Your letter clears that situation.

The last paragraph of your letter regarding the way the Colusa County Chamber of Commerce handled the winter sports activities. I honestly think they did the best they could with what they had to do with. From all newspaper reports some was handled by Angels Booster Club. Some of the fellows told me they had lost money <sup>during</sup> ~~losing~~ the winter season.

Under separate cover I am sending a picture taken a short time ago, though you could have some for your office. I am

Very sincerely  
Egan Whiteside

## NATIVE SONS WILL PAY VISIT TO BIG TREES

600 Expected in Party  
During Convention  
May 16 to 19

Arrangements were completed today for delegates to the Grand Parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden West, which will be held here May 16 to 19, to visit Calaveras Big Trees. More than 600 are expected to make the trip by motor caravan, May 17.

The plans were formulated by committees representing the Calaveras Chamber of Commerce and the Stockton parlor. Representing Calaveras county were D. Fricot, C. T. Mills, G. H. Treat, D. W. Brice and Harry Bardin. The parlor was represented by Ray Friedberger, general chairman of the convention committee; Ray Dorsey, George A. Ditz, Warren H. Atherton and H. R. McNoble.

Stops will be made at Double Springs, the first county seat of Calaveras county; San Andreas, the present county seat, and Angels Camp, the home of the jumping frog contest. Governor Rolph has been invited to be a guest of the grand parlor on that day. The caravan will be escorted by members of the State Highway Patrol.

Luncheon will be served at the Big Trees by members of the Angels Camp Boosters' Club.

*Ho. State Record*

*April 29 1932*

*copy*

**IRVING MARTIN**

*President*

**The S**

### *Prospects for Calaveras Grove*

**WHAT** the future holds for the Calaveras Big Trees State Park has been a matter of conjecture among the loyal men and women who helped to bring the famous sequoias under public ownership. For that reason, State policies affecting the administration of the park as revealed by Col. Charles B. Wing, State parks director, at the grove session Wednesday, are of much interest to the people of this section.

The aim to make the park, as well as all other State recreational areas, as nearly self supporting as possible, would be good business at any time. It is especially well advised now, in view of the slim prospects of getting State funds for development because of inevitable economies that loom.

The policy planned for the State reserves approximates that which prevails in the national parks, where hotel men and other concessionaires cater to the public and materially help to defray park upkeep costs. The visitors there cheerfully pay for the facilities and equipment they enjoy. In fact, the extraction is pleasantly painless.

It is to be hoped that a way may be found for extending leases within the park for a longer period than the five-year limit now imposed by the State law. If this is possible, capital may be encouraged to build a modern hotel at the Calaveras grove, which is its most pressing need.

George A. Ditz, one of the speakers at this week's meeting, envisioned the part that good accommodations would play in developing the Calveras park as a convention center. He pointed out that other scenic areas, such as Yosemite Valley, are popular gathering places for conventions that go to Santa Cruz. With a comfortable, reasonably priced hostelry at the Calaveras grove, the place would become a convention mecca as well as attracting regular tourists who now pass up the place for others whose accommodations are more widely heralded. Naturally, a new hotel would serve to boost the Big Trees park as a winter sports center.

Other good news from Wednesday's meeting was the information that a crew of 30 men from the Moccasin Creek unemployed camp, under the direction of State Fire Warden Barron, is at the grove to clean up and eliminate fire hazards. When the campaign to bring the North Grove under State ownership was under way, it was asserted the change would preserve the trees for all time. By taking proper precautions against fire, the officials are giving substance to the promise.

# NATIVE SONS' GROUP PLANS BIG TREES TRIP

Delegates to Grand Parlor to Be Entertained on Outing

## ITINERARY IS FIXED

Scenic Points of Mother Lode Territory to Be Visited

Plans to entertain 600 persons on trip to the Calaveras Big Trees State Park, May 17, the second day of the Native Sons of the Golden West grand parlor session here, were completed this morning by George A. Ditz, chairman; Warren Atherton and H. R. McNoble of the trip committee, who met with Ray Friedberger, chairman of the general grand convention committee, in McNoble's office.

The grand parlor will open here May 16 and will adjourn May 19.

### SCHEDULE SET

The caravan will leave Stockton at 8:30 a. m. Tuesday, May 17, accompanied by an escort from the State Motor Vehicle Department, and is scheduled to arrive at 12 o'clock noon at the Calaveras Big Trees. Luncheon will be served by the Calaveras county committee appointed from the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce and Angels Camp Boosters' Club and the San Andreas Progressive Club. Members of this committee, arranging to dispense the hospitable entertainment characteristic of Calaveras county, are D. Fricot, chairman; C. T. Mills, G. H. Treat, D. W. Bruce and Harry Bardin.

The local committee will make arrangement for transportation where required, Ditz announces.

### PROGRAM AT TREES

The program, beginning at 1 p. m., will feature many men notable in California. Music will be furnished by the San Andreas Band.

On the homeward trip the caravan will visit points of scenic and historic interest, including Mercers' Cave at Murphy and the Moaning Cave at Vallecito. Stops will be made at the Native Sons' marker at Double Springs, between Valley Springs and San Andreas, the site of the first courthouse in Calaveras county, when the county included territory now in Amador, Mono and Alpine counties; the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce markers at San Andreas, famous early-day mining camp, and at Angels Camp, marking the old Angels Hotel, claimed to be the site of the original jumping frog episode made famous by Mark Twain.

### RETURN IN EVENING

The caravan will return to Stockton in time to allow Native Sons and their guests to attend the annual banquet to be served at 9 p. m. in Civic Memorial Auditorium.

Ditz, McNoble and Atherton laid preliminary plans for this feature of convention entertainment March 28 at Fricot City where, with 27 leaders of Calaveras business and community life, they were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. D. Fricot. The committee will meet again April 27 with the Calaveras county committee.

Invitations to attend have been extended to the Calaveras Big Tree Park committee of the State Chamber of Commerce and to officials of the State Park Commission, including Col. Charles D. Wing, chief of division.

MILLER  
DITZ  
MILLER

RD SLEE

## Neumiller & Ditz

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS

BANK OF AMERICA BUILDING

STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

TELEPHONE 415

P. O. BOX 415

April 11, 1932.

STATE PARK COMMISSION,  
651 Mills Building,  
San Francisco, California.

Attention: Mrs. Laura E. Gregory,  
Secretary.

Gentlemen:

Supplementing our conversation on the telephone this morning, I am enclosing a clipping from this evening's Record upon the Native Sons' trip to the Calaveras Big Tree Park on May 17th.

You will note from the clipping that our Committee will meet with the Calaveras County Committee at the Park on April 27th, at which time it is hoped either Colonel Wing or someone representing him will be present.

We are planning to send out invitations to certain officials, both federal and state, and to that end have before us a list which you sent me at the time we held the dedication ceremony. We would indeed appreciate a list of the State Park Commission as presently constituted with respective addresses.

Respectfully,



GEORGE A. DITZ.

GAD-S

GEO. B. McDOUGALL  
STATE ARCHITECT  
CHIEF OF DIVISION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Public Works

*Cal  
Big  
Tree*

DIVISION OF ARCHITECTURE

SACRAMENTO

April 26th, 1932.

MEMORANDUM FOR MESSRS. POAGE AND ROCKINGHAM.

*Cover*

On April 22nd, 1932, Colonel Wing, Chief of the Division of Parks of the Department of Natural Resources, advised the State Architect over the telephone that later on he would be asking the Division for information with reference to the proposed rehabilitation of a building at the Calaveras Big Trees also with reference to a water supply for this project. Colonel Wing was advised that the Division would hold itself in readiness to provide such information as promptly as possible after receiving word from him.

GEO. B. McDOUGALL.

GBMcD:S

CC- Colonel Chas. B. Wing.

*Calaveras  
Grove*

May 7, 1932.

Hon. Joseph R. Knowland, Publisher,  
The Oakland Tribune,  
Oakland, California.

My dear Mr. Knowland:

In accordance with your request there is sent herewith a summary of the acquisition at the Calaveras North Grove of Big Trees. Enclosed is also a map of the property acquired, and copies of some of the old literature giving interesting features of the North Grove.

The Calaveras Grove Association of which Mrs. Harriet West Jackson of Stockton is President, and in which Mr. Desire Fricot has been prominent, led the movement for the preservation of this Grove. The Save-the-Redwoods League, largely through the interest of Mr. William H. Crocker and Mr. J. C. Sperry (whose father at one time owned the North and South Groves) was able to furnish a portion of the matching money. The late Elmer Reynolds, Editor of the Stockton Record, was one of those most active in the movement to preserve this Grove. The Native Sons and Native Daughters and the various communities in nearby counties also aided.

The grant of 1200 acres of National Forest land extending the Park to the Stanislaus River, approved by Act of Congress in 1928, was conditioned upon the acquisition by the State of either the North or the South Calaveras Grove. Application has been made for the transfer of these lands to the State in accordance with the act, but so far the Federal Government has not acted.

Please let us know in case you desire further information about the North or South Calaveras Groves. The cost of the North Grove was \$275,000. The estimated cost of the South Grove was in the neighborhood of \$450,000, but it may be obtainable under present conditions at a less price. The Commission has never seen its way clear to allocate funds for the acquisition of the South Grove, partly in view of the fact that there was no matching money in sight.

I am looking forward to the opportunity of going over some

Hon. Joseph R. Knowland

-2-

of the park projects with you whenever you have the time.

Very sincerely yours,

Newton B. Drury.

NBD/AG

*[Handwritten signature]*

MEMO: CALAVERAS STATE PARK:

@ PMW

Calaveras  
Grove

On May 16-17 I visited this Park. It was my first visit, and there were many things to be seen and matters to be thought of. On arrival I found a crew of twenty unemployed in charge of the Division of Forestry at work cleaning and clearing the floor of the Grove. A considerable area on the approach side of the Park had been well cleared, and will allow access in that locality and a good opportunity to fight off fire in case it approaches from that direction.

In the main Grove area everything had been put in good shape, all debris having been hauled away and burned. There is of course, in a sense, no end to that character of work in protection that could be done by the present crew, as there is still a great deal of litter and dead limbs and trees in the main Grove area beyond the areas now cleared. It was anticipated that perhaps funds available for this work this year would be sufficient to carry it on with the present crew for about another month.

It is undoubtedly nothing new when I comment on the lack of water for all needed purposes at Calaveras Park. It occurred that it might be well to attempt some exploration of the old well in the grove where the pumping outfit now stands. There is some water in the sump and it might pay to pump this out, clear it up, in the hope that it might give evidence of developing a permanent supply, even if small. At present there is a good, live stream running down the whole length of the Grove, but this originates above the regular spring and will dry up very shortly.

The old hotel, most interesting as one of the oldest hotels in California, is a first class firetrap. A summer fire, with any wind, might do much damage. The shingles are dry as tinder, and if afire, can be carried a long distance by the wind, and could easily set fire to the tops of the trees, and such a type of fire is almost impossible to control. Before any money is spent in restoration of all or any part of the present hotel buildings, or in fact on any development in the Grove, it would seem that the matter of adequate fire protection and water supply should first be considered and actually put in effect before anything is done. So with our thoughts that in the future Calaveras Park should be improved, our immediate concern is of a water supply, and how it can be obtained. I believe the whole situation as to any further development is entirely dependent on this. If the old hotel be re-roofed, possibly something other than wood shingles could be used, asbestos, perhaps, in the standard shingle type, and of a color to match as nearly as possible the natural wood shingles. These I believe can be had. I am frankly afraid of those old shingle roofs, as I have seen them afire.

As to the thought given in general to the preservation of

Calaveras Park - 2 - May 21-1932.

this old landmark, the hotel, I found several guesses as to possible cost had evidently been made, but no actual estimate, and I wonder if it would not be well to ask our Division of Architecture to make a complete survey of those premises, and as a suggestion, of course, on the basis of preserving only the original building, built in 1856, and discarding entirely the annex on one end, and the card and bar-room on the other, which last, being additions, were built, I am told, sometime in the 70's, and are therefore not as interesting. The old and interesting pictures of record show only the original building, and the restoration might be considered on that basis, or the annex could go and card room remain, or vice versa. These suggestions occurred as matters of cost. I do not believe it would be well to ever consider restoration of the hotel in way that it be used for lodging; dining room, perhaps, a museum and a few old bedrooms, as there are old beds, pitchers and bowls to be seen only, but all new lodging facilities to be added by the building of small cottages on the general plan as at California Park, though of course much better, <sup>as regards</sup> ~~that due~~ to location and accommodation. Also, all such improvements as might be considered to be planned along lines to take care of winter sports, which are becoming so popular now that the wonderfully good roads are kept open even during the heaviest snow storms.

The summer camping it would seem could be easily developed permanently along the lines we have used in California Park and in Humboldt County, and a unit of 50 such camps would undoubtedly be most acceptable when the public knew that they were there. There is a wonderful area for locating such camps skirting the big field below the Grove.

Am afraid that my thoughts are but mere repetition of those already given to this Park, but they occur to me in a general way and after a short and first visit only, so I respectfully submit them.

Respectfully submitted,

W. A. S. [Signature]  
Assistant Chief.



# CENTRAL VALLEY COUNCIL

OF THE  
CALIFORNIA STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING  
STOCKTON

*Representation*

- ALPINE
- AMADOR
- CALAVERAS
- SAN JOAQUIN
- STANISLAUS
- TUOLUMNE
- CONTRA COSTA  
(5TH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT)

June 8, 1932

Col. Chas. B. Wing  
Chief of Division  
State Park Commission  
650 Mills Building  
San Francisco, California

My dear Col. Wing:

I received your kind letter of June 1, and note that Mr. Poage has the matter in hand and is making an effort to have something ready to submit by June 15th.

Mrs. Roberts and I drove up to the Calaveras State Park yesterday to visit our old friend, Mrs. Whiteside, hoping to get some definite information from her, relative to the articles she will leave in the hotel building that might be used in a museum. Our conference was not very satisfactory and I doubt if she will donate anything while she is in her present state of mind.

I proposed that she assemble everything of this nature to be known as the "Whiteside Collection" and "loaned to the State Park by Mrs. Elizabeth Whiteside and sons, Edgar and Sidney". I told her that in this way, the collection would be preserved and the Whiteside name would receive honorable and lasting mention. What do you think of this? Would it be agreeable to you?

I inspected with Ray Simms, the work done by the Division of Forestry and find that they have made considerable progress. They are now working on the fire break west of the Park. They have the old well cleaned out and there is a fine flow of water from it. I believe that source has possibilities.

Can you tell us how soon the budget will have to be prepared in order to be presentable to the new Legislature in January?

Faithfully yours,

A. F. ROBERTS, Chairman  
Park Committee--Sub-Committee  
Conservation Committee

A.F.R.:HC

6-4-32

meat a vigorous taste of tragedy, the miners down from the "dig-  
homestick Stockton citizens  
of a recitation delivered in brilliant

HILLS OF CALAVERAS

By HARRY T. FEE

Oh, the hills of Calaveras,  
Their every shrub and tree  
Out there beside our county line  
Seem sort of neighborhood.  
Perhaps they're just like all the hills  
That glory the West,  
But the hills of Calaveras,  
Somehow I like the best.  
I like the Mariposa heights,  
The hills of Amador,  
The slopes where Old Tuolumne  
Untolds its magic lore,  
The beauties that unfold them  
From chaparral to pine,  
But the hills of Calaveras  
Are just old friends of mine.  
Back there in that dim childhood,  
Their flowing histories start,  
And the beauties of their wildwood  
Are graven on my heart.  
Of all the West they seem the best  
Wherever hill-sides roam—  
The hills of Calaveras  
Are the closest hills to home.

# Allen's Clipping Press Bureau

SAN FRANCISCO

LOS ANGELES

PORTLAND, ORE.  
CLIPPING FROM

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.  
WASP-NEWS-LETTER  
DECEMBER 17, 1932

## Dedication of Calaveras Big Tree Grove

### California's Priceless Heritage

By Juliette M. Hood

At that time, A. T. Dowd, a hunter, was employed by the Union Water Company of Murphy's to supply the workmen, engaged in the construction of their canal, with fresh meat from the abundance of wild game on the upper reaches of their works.

One day, while engaged in hunting, Dowd wounded a grizzly bear and while in pursuit of his quarry, he suddenly and accidentally beheld trees of gigantic proportions rising in silent majesty to the sky. Returning to Murphy's, he told of the wonders he had seen, but his story was received with derision, ridicule and disbelief. One Sunday, while the men were at leisure, he invited them to accompany him and bring to camp an immense grizzly that he had killed. The men eagerly went with him. They found no bear, but they saw trees of such grandeur and majesty that they were speechless with awe. Thus by this ruse, Dowd proved his story. He is honored as the true discoverer of the grove, though General John Biswell claimed to have discovered the grove in 1841.

The first newspaper to give an account of these forest giants was the Sonora Herald, published in Sonora, Tuolumne County, and the first newspaper to be published in the Southern Mines. The article was republished in the Echo du Pacific of San Francisco, California. Whitney records that this account, reappearing later in a London newspaper, was the first account of the big trees to be published in Europe.

Dr. Lindley, an eminent English botanist, named the trees Wellingtonia gigantea, in honor of the famous Duke of Wellington. Many Americans disapproved and a controversy commenced. A French botanist, J. Descaisne, explained that the big tree and the Redwood belonged to the same genus, *Se-*

quoia, and called the big trees Sequoia gigantea, the Redwoods being called Sequoia sempervirens. His viewpoint was accepted and Sequoia was adopted as the proper name.

Stephen Endlicher, the Austrian botanist who gave the Redwoods, in 1847, the name Sequoia sempervirens, was no doubt familiar with the life story of Sequoyah, the Cherokee Cadmus, who though illiterate, began at the age of forty-nine, his great work of giving to the people of his tribe an alphabet of 85 characters, each representing a syllable, for the purpose of supplying them with the white man's power of expressing thought in writing. At least twelve years were spent by this notable chief in perfecting his alphabet. As he and the giants of the Sierras were the greatest of the race to which each belonged, Endlicher undoubtedly thought it appropriate to bestow the name Sequoia upon the living symbols of greatness, permanence and endurance of the ages.

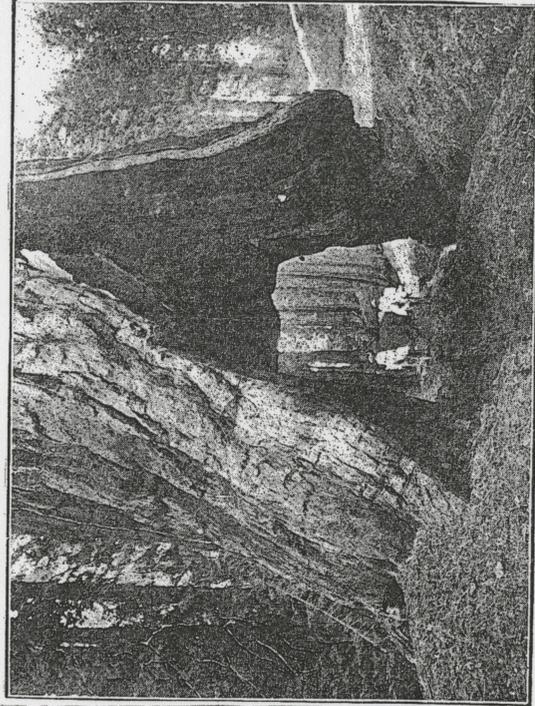
Sad it is to record that there are people who fail to realize that "Only God can make a tree." Among the early pioneers were those also who failed to recognize the wondrous glory of the big trees—who were unable to feel the reverence inspired by a majestic Sequoia.

One of the most magnificent in the grove—the first discovered by Mr. Dowd—was bored down with augurs by five men in twenty-two days, and the surface of the stump was used on week days for dancing and theatrical performances and on Sundays for worship. On July 4, 1854, forty-nine persons occupied the stump at the same time, thirty-two dancing a cotillon, and seventeen on-lookers. In 1858, the Big Tree Bulletin was printed and published in a pavilion erected on the stump—yet this tree perchance was reaching skyward when Joshua commanded the sun to move not to-

ward Gabalon nor the moon to shine in the valley of Aialon.

Down through the cycles of centuries, while empires, kingdoms and nations reached their zenith and then passed into oblivion; while Pericles, Herodotus, Buddha and Confucius gave the world culture, history and guidance for spiritual and moral conduct, these noble trees were slowly and steadfastly seeking their place in the sun. They were in their prime when the Star of Bethlehem heralded the first Christmas and the drama of the Christ began. As a poetess of California said:

"Their age is unknown; into what depths of time  
Might Fancy wander sportively and deem  
Some Monarch—father of this Grove  
set forth  
His tiny shoot, when the primeval  
flood  
Receded from the old and changed  
world."



One of California's Big Redwoods

# Allen's Clipping Press Bureau

SAN FRANCISCO  
LOS ANGELES  
PORTLAND, ORE.  
CLIPPING FROM

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.  
WASP NEWS-LETTER  
DECEMBER 17, 1932

**W**ITH the inclusion of the Calaveras Big Tree Grove in the State park system, the people of California received a priceless heritage.

On July 5, 1931, appropriate dedication ceremonies were held in the famous grove. Honorable James Rolph Jr., Governor of the State of California, gave the dedicatory address, which was enthusiastically received by the large number of people gathered from all parts of the State for the occasion.

Mr. D. Fricot, president of the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce and the leader in the movement to save the noble trees for posterity, was also one of the speakers.

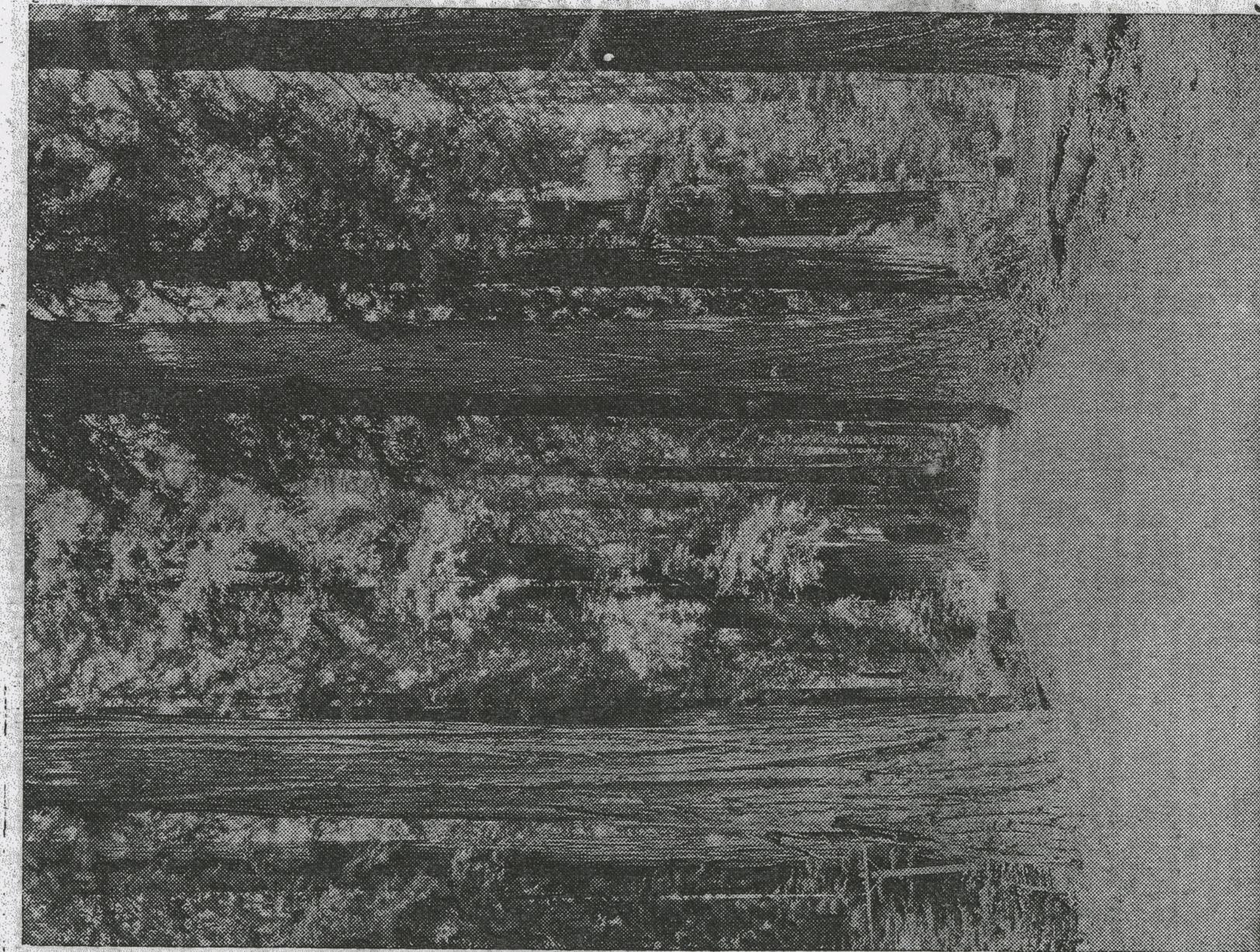
This dedication was the successful culmination of a campaign started more than thirty years ago, to have either the State or the Federal government take under its protection the Big Tree Grove. During the administration of President Roosevelt, the matter was brought to his attention and he officially called the attention of Congress to the fact that these trees should be saved from destruction.

The matter drifted along till 1928, when the people of California approved a six-million-dollar bond issue for the purpose of acquiring tracts of land for the State park system. This action gave a new impetus to the movement to save the Calaveras Big Tree Grove, and under the direction of D. Fricot a campaign was launched to raise the required half of the purchase price to be paid by the people of California. The purchase price was finally reduced to \$275,000, to which the State contributed \$137,000. Mr. Fricot's enthusiasm and perseverance stimulated sufficient interest in the campaign to cause the organization of the Calaveras Big Tree Association. This association took charge of the campaign to raise the necessary \$137,000, to be contributed by the people. \$68,750 of this sum was contributed by the Rockefeller interests through the "Save-the-Redwoods League" and the remainder was raised by subscription in Central California. Over \$8000 was raised in Calaveras county, which amounted to over one dollar per capita.

The grove was purchased from Robert B. Whiteside of Duluth, Minnesota. The trees have been under the direction of Mrs. Job Whiteside and sons for several years and Mr. Edgar Whiteside has been officially appointed as guardian of the grove by the State Division of Parks, and will have complete charge of the trees.

This celebrated grove of big trees, the oldest of living things on earth, is situated in Calaveras County, California, in a small valley near the headwaters of San Antonio creek, about sixteen miles northeast of the picturesque old mining town of Murphy's.

In 1852, when there was a surging activity in the mother lode counties, owing to the thousands of miners from all quarters of the globe seeking a harvest of gold, Murphy's Camp was in its zenith.



San Dieguito Citizen

### Enlargement of Calaveras State Park Needed

The destruction for war purposes of California's wonderful primeval forests makes the preservation of some of the finest examples an urgent problem for the State Park Commission.

The most magnificent forest area left unprotected in California, or for that matter anywhere in the United States, is adjacent to the Calaveras State Park, northeast of Stockton, which contains the small but famous and beautiful North Calaveras Big Tree Grove. But the limits of the present park fail to include the South Calaveras Grove—the largest of the Big Tree groves still left unprotected, containing nearly 1,000 sequoia trees. No less than 263 of these trees range from 250 to almost 300 feet tall, and seven of them from 300 to 320 feet tall, including many of nearly maximum diameter.

Between these two Big Tree groves lies the deep and impressive gorge of the Stanislaus River, on whose east slopes and near-by ridges stand examples of the most magnificent sugar pines and yellow pines still in existence, trees no less beautiful, and in many instances not much less in size, than the sequoias.

The opportunity to save this area

### BING'S BOMBER BUILDERS TO ATTEND BOSS BING'S NEW MOVIE

On Monday evening the 11th the 300 employees of Bing Crosby's Del Mar Turf Club are attending the Fox Theatre en masse to view their boss' picture "Going My Way" as guests of Bing's Del Mar general manager, Fred Poggi. It is expected that Bing's dad and mother will join the local group for the party, together with Bing's brother Larry. Dinner at the club house will precede the theatre party. The event is in celebration of the completion by the Aircraft Division of the Del Mar Turf Club the thousandth pair of wings for the famous Flying Fortresses. Del Mar is unique among the world's race tracks being the only Turf Club devoted to war production at its own plant

### New Manager at Hotel

Hotel Del Mar's new manager is Gerard Villa, formerly with the Town House in Los Angeles, and the Miramar, at Santa Monica. The reputation of these two pretentious and well known institutions should cast a definite standard as to what we may expect from his management of Hotel Del Mar.

In these times you have to move pretty fast to keep up with running

### IN THE SERVICE

Bill Lane Withrow, Baker, first class, aboard ship for the past three years was able to visit his brother Pvt. Jack Withrow, who has just arrived from New Guinea where he has been ill in a hospital for the past four months.

Bill phoned his mother, Mrs. E. L. Peacock, about their reunion. He said Jack will soon be well enough to come home and will receive an honorable discharge from the Army.

Twice the boys almost met in New Guinea but both times Bill's ship sailed a few hours before Jack could reach the meeting place.

You may be sure their reunion was a happy one.

### STEALING GAS DOESN'T PAY

Stealing gas from autos does not set well with local Judge Thos. F. McLoughlin, as was demonstrated in his court recently when a man caught redhanded by the local deputy sheriff and brot before the Judge, pleaded guilty and received a \$50 fine and 15 days in the County jail. The defendant was informed by the Judge that in his opinion his act was as bad as stealing bread from a hungry child as people can not get sufficient gas for their cars to go to work in many cases.

**ENLARGEMENT OF  
PARK NEEDED**

(Continued from page 1)  
may soon be gone. The property is in private ownership, and though the owners would like to have its wonderful trees and beautiful scenery preserved, they cannot afford the taxes and other costs of holding it. Lumbering operations are already approaching the sequoia grove, and a logging railroad through the region, which would wreck it forever, is now within a mile of the great trees.

We beg all those who value the beauty of the primeval forest to speak personally or write to the members of the California State Park Commission, to members of the legislature, and to the Governor, urging the enlargement of the Calaveras Big Tree State Park. This is a public service, not only for the benefit of Californians, but for nature lovers throughout the world. And we need not fear to urge the financial benefit that would follow for the counties, through the increased tourist trade that would come with the restoration of peace. — Emergency Conservation Committee, Mrs. C. N. Edge, Chair-  
man

Calaveras Grove

# SUGAR PINES ARE TRUE RIVALS OF THE BIG SEQUOIAS

## Improvements Being Made at North Grove Now in State Hands

By SHELDEN DAVIS

Disappointment may be one's first reaction to the South Grove of the Calaveras Big Trees. The mammoth sequoias, 1380 in all, are scattered over an area three miles long and a mile wide. Towering sugar pines and white firs minimize the size of the larger trees and a jungle-like thicket prevents the visitor from seeing more than a few of the giants at one time. Then, too, a sequoia grove has a definite personality and, as with human friends, we can appreciate it more if we are familiar with it. Through long association we know the historic North Grove which recently became a State Park. Because of the relative inaccessibility but few of us are intimately acquainted with the South Grove.

After spending a few hours among the huge sequoias south of the Stanislaus river their grandeur becomes apparent. The sugar pines and rival trees are recognized as an integral part of the happy botanical family which dwells along Beaver Creek in Tuolumne. The traveler who wends his way along the trails, who sees such big tree specimens as Trapper Smith's Cabin, Palace Hotel, Agassiz, the ballen bulk of Old Goliath, New York, Massachusetts, Grover Cleveland and other named trees realizes that ultimately the South Grove must be added to the State Park. As it is now, the reserve which embraces the historic North Grove has an arm of forest land reaching down significantly to the privately-held big trees south of the Stanislaus.

The splendor of the South Grove and its importance as an integral part of the Calaveras Big Trees State Park were manifested when a party composed of L. V. Peterson of the Record, Edgar Whiteside, custodian of the new park, and the writer, made the trip to the larger stand of sequoias a week ago today. Horses were ridden from the North Grove.

### FIRE SAFEGUARDS

The Pickering Lumber Company, which owns the South Grove, has done good work to safeguard the giant trees. Fire trails have been

built around and through the grove. Dead logs and dry brush have been removed from the borders of these trails. At a time of fire a force of men with rakes and fire fighting equipment could be sent in to give effective service in making ribbons of safety to prevent the spread of flames.

Since the lumber company has owned the grove Dan Phillipson has been stationed there as caretaker. His cabin, with telephone connections with the outside world, occupies a clearing in the heart of the area.

Although it may be a matter of years before the Pickering interests will want to cut the great sugar pines and firs, if not the sequoias, in the South Grove territory, that action is planned eventually. The company's railroad line now ends about 12 miles on an air line from the grove and a survey made calls for tracks to cut through the tall timber about a quarter of a mile above the caretaker's cabin.

### WHERE TREES LUXURIATE

Life seems easier for the sequoias in the South Grove. Although there are eloquent signs of past storm damage the trees on the whole appear to have escaped the battle with the elements and the lightning bolts that have twisted and shattered the crowns of the giants over in Calaveras. The South Grove sequoias grow straighter and with more symmetry. Edgar Whiteside admits that there are seven or eight of them that outclass those in the grove where he is in charge. Reproduction also is more successful in the southern area. In addition to the 1380 giants and the lesser ones not classed as Big Trees, there are countless infant sequoias only a couple of feet high and upwards. Tall sequoia saplings that thrust themselves upward with the slenderness of firs are to be seen in great numbers.

### SPLENDOR OF OTHER TREES

Perhaps at no other place along the Sierra are found such magnificent specimens of sugar pines as those in the South Grove. One of these back of Phillipson's cabin is 284 feet high and as royal a fellow as his sequoia neighbors. The upper limbs of the sugar pines with their long cones dangling at the end like the ornaments of a Christmas tree have a tremendous spread which is always a matter of wonder to Edgar Whiteside. A wit has explained that perhaps the sugar pines hold their cones out so far in order to spare their toes when they fall to the ground.

Even the alders in the grove appear to have been spurred by their evergreen neighbors to stretch themselves and some of these attain a height close to 100 feet. The beautiful dogwood, faithful companion of the sequoia, grows with tropical luxuriance here and the azalea bushes flanking the line of South Grove creek are as rank as the ceanothus in other parts of the mountains.

### HOSPITABLE TREES

The big trees with fire-hollowed bases always hold interest for the

visitor, and the South Grove has a number of these. Cyclops, with a huge cavity, is said actually to have held 24 horses at once. Then there is the Palace Hotel, near Phillipson's cabin and named for Ralston's famous hostelry. This tree has crude mangers in it and is used for quartering horses to this day. Of historic interest is the so-called Trapper Smith Cabin, where an old time woodsman lived in the sheltering base of a sequoia for two years. While there he experienced the fierce gale which caused the fall of Old Goliath. Limbs and trees came crashing down throughout the grove, and Smith compared the fatal plunge of Old Goliath to an earthquake.

Well-beaten tracks lead to Goliath, whose prostrate bulk is a focal point for grove visitors. This fallen titan is 260 feet long and 45 feet in circumference where it is broken off at the top. While parading along its upturned flank one may imagine that he is on a road with sloping shoulders. Although the great tree is dead, its bark has been appropriated by living seeds and infant sequoias. A dogwood and wild current bushes are growing from its side.

### FORMER OWNERS

The land in the South Grove, like that of the North Grove, originally was homesteaded. J. M. Hutchings, sometimes known as the "Father of Yosemite," was the first possessor of the South Grove. Then James L. Sperry got hold of most of it. J. Sloan held 800 acres in the tract which he consistently refused to sell to Sperry. Then after Robert Whiteside bought out the Sperry interests, Sloan sold his South Grove holdings to Whiteside. The latter subsequently sold out to the Pickering interests. Let it be hoped that the next transfer

will be to the State of California.

The horseback trip from the Big Trees Hotel (it also can be made from Dornington) is a worth while one, although the Whitesides report that fewer persons, instead of more, make the effort each year. People, it seems, will not go places unless they can motor all the way.

### AT THE NORTH GROVE

Although the State Park Commission is handicapped by lack of funds, there is plenty of evidence of the change of ownership at the North Grove. First of all, the old sign at the entrance to the Sequoia reserve has been replaced by another. The entrance fee, of course, has been abolished.

There are improvements at the camping grounds down by the meadow. Flush toilets have been installed. Others are planned. With an increased water supply in the offing, Edgar Whiteside plans to keep the grass in the camps green all season. New camps are to be put in on the far side of the meadow along side of the old road which came down from the ridge. There will be 50 camps in all. These will be numbered and a prospective sojourner can be assigned to a camping place just as the visitors to the Yosemite camps are given their cabins.

## The Calaveras Big Trees

(Editor's note. The following article appeared shortly after the beginning of the century in a leaflet published by Paul Elder of San Francisco. Happily, with the passing of the "most noble piece of woodland on the face of the earth" into State ownership, the danger of destruction which Dr. Jordan feared has passed. Likewise notable work has been done by the Save-the-Redwoods League to preserve stands of coast redwoods. Since the time that Dr. Jordan's article was written, botanists and scientists have reduced the estimates of the age of the sequoia giants. It is believed that they have lived from 4000 to 5000 years, although Col. John R. White, Sequoia National Park superintendent, has written "It is not improbable that they will live for over 10,000 years, almost forever, if protected in parks.")

By DAVID STAER JORDAN

Oldest, mightiest and noblest of trees is the Sequoia gigantea of the slopes of the Sierra. Many of the trees of this species have reached an age safely estimated at 8000 years, while the smaller ones were stout saplings of four to six feet in diameter at the time of the fall of Rome or the birth of the Christian era.

The genus sequoia was once widely distributed over the earth as the pine or fir is today, or as the Araucaria is over South America. But outside of California it passed out of existence in an earlier geological period. Here it is represented by two species, the redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) of the Coast Range, and the big tree (Sequoia gigantea) of the Sierra. The redwood is much smaller than the big tree, though at its best far overtopping the noblest cedars, firs or pines. It is being rapidly destroyed, but it has one advantage. It cannot beasily extirpated. From every stump springs a growth of new trees, and only the most thorough-going slaughter with fire and ax can break up a redwood forest.

With the big tree this is not the case. No young trees rise from the stump, and except in extreme cases no small trees spring from the seed. The cause of this is found in depth of accumulated leaves in the big tree forests. Clear away the leaves and the seeds germinate. Where a stream flows through the grove the little trees arise along the brook, for there the leaves are washed away.

The big trees are found only in a few groves or patches half way up the Sierra on the level of the great forests of the two noblest of all pines—the sugar pine and the California yellow pine. Of these groves

## The Calaveras

### Big Trees

(Continued from Page 1, Auto Sec.)

the Mariposa grove and two or three groves in Tulare have been reserved as government parks. The Fresno grove and the grove in the Converse Basin in Tulare have been condemned to death and slaughtered as lumber. The Placer grove on the American river, lately discovered by William W. Price, contains but six or eight trees. The remaining forest, the Calaveras grove, has been long maintained as a private park by the devotion of Mr. James Sperry, its owner. He has now been forced to part with it, and three alternatives are left to the forest. It must be condemned and bought for park purposes by the United States or by California, or else it must be destroyed by the lumberman. This would be an eternal disgrace to California.

#### MOST INTERESTING GROVE

This grove in Calaveras county is the first one known. It is the one for which the species was named. It has furnished the seeds for all the Sequoia parks of Europe. It is not second to the Mariposa grove in the size of its trees, while the whole forest, rich as it is in noble trees of other sorts and rare Alpine vegetation, far surpasses any other grove in interest.

It is today the most noble piece of woodland on the face of the earth. Shall we consent to its destruction for the hundred thousand dollars' worth of lumber its trunks contain? To this there should be but one answer. Let us hear it!

One more word. "It will be asked," says John Muir, "Why are Sequoias always found in greatest abundance in well-watered places where streams are exceptionally

abundant?" Simply because a growth of Sequoias creates those streams. The thirsty mountaineer knows well that in every Sequoia grove he will find running water, but it is a very complete mistake to suppose that the water is the cause of the grove being there; for, on the contrary, the grove is the entire cause of the water being there; drain off the water and the trees will remain, but cut off the trees and the streams will vanish.

"The roots of this immense tree fill the ground, forming a thick sponge that absorbs and holds back the rains and melting snows, only allowing them to ooze and flow gently. Indeed, every fallen leaf and rootlet, as well as long clasping root and prostrate trunk, may be regarded as dams, hoarding the bounty of storm-clouds and dispensing it as blessings all through the summer, instead of allowing it to go headlong in short-lived floods. Evaporation is also checked by the dense foliage to a greater extent than by any other Sierra tree, and the air is entangled in masses and broad sheets that are quickly saturated; while thirsty winds are not allowed to go sponging and licking along the ground."

*Chas. Sperry*

#### ADDED WATER SUPPLY

A 45,000-gallon reservoir back of the hotel will be cemented and water supplied from new wells or brought from a spring north of the hostelry.

Some fire-fighting equipment has been provided. McCloud tools and five-gallon Armstrong knapsacks, which throw a stream 15 or 20 feet and are effective when a blaze is in its incipient stages, are on the grounds. Only week before last Whiteside had a chance to try out one of the knapsacks when someone came running from the grove to report that a fire had started. It had burned an area of seven or eight square feet when the custodian put it out.

Funds are too scarce at the present time to discuss new hotel accommodations, but it is understood that whatever future provision is made, the historic Sperry hotel is likely to be retained, for museum purposes if not for the shelter of guests.