



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn W. Watkins
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Many Common Trees Are Important Parts of History

There are many of the tall, woody plants we call trees that play an important part in American history; common trees they are but some give interesting facts pertaining to the settlement of our land and its people. There are many that are truly famous and some little known except in the immediate vicinity in which they had their roots.

History records some startling facts about trees. It was under an elm tree that William Penn signed a treaty with the Indians. Nothing too important about that except that it was a treaty that was never sworn to, and stranger still, a treaty that was never broken.

Reportedly it was a treaty we could well adopt for our use today and every day that was made under what later became the William Penn elm: "We meet today on the broad pathway of good faith and good will. No advantage shall be taken on either side, but all shall be openness and love." The William Penn elm was blown down about 150 years ago; it had lived for well over two centuries.

A Washington Tree

Another elm tree holds a cherished place in American history, the Washington Elm, where in July of 1775 George Washington took command of his army. This tree died, supposedly of old age, or human abuse, at the age of 200.

General Washington's name is associated with another famous tree, the Washington Oak, where, tradition records, he mounted and dismounted from his horse when visiting his troops, stationed across the river from his headquarters. This tree, a chestnut oak, has survived for several hundred years.

It was an elm tree, too, that later became known as the "liberty tree." People were accustomed to gather under the wide branches and offer thanks and supplications for the success of the patriot armies before and during the war of the revolution. Planting "liberty trees" became a custom; one of these liberty trees stood for years. When at last it was blown down, the bells in the church steeples tolled, and a city and a state were saddened. The "liberty trees" were living monuments of the dedicated patriotism of liberty loving peoples.

Best known, probably, of all historical trees, familiar to every schoolboy and adults that once went to school, is the "Charter Oak," a rugged plant-character in early American history that held, in its rotting heartwood, a charter that guaranteed the liberties of one of our colonial states about 275 years ago. The Charter Oak bowed to the force of the wind in the year 1856; in American history it will hold, for a very long time, a revered place.

There are many more famous, and near-famous, trees that have held an important place in our history; they all played a part in the story of America. Many have fallen, some have been destroyed by disease, some have died from old age. Some have been removed from the earthly scene for no other reason except that they were in the way, but their place in history seems secure.

Some unknown author very aptly said: "Great trees, like great men, must live on in service after death—some to sweeten the memory with flowers and fruits that vanished with our better years, others to know more serious duties in the march of human life."

Forest Shutdown Expansion Visioned

Salem - UPB - Expanded use of forestry shutdown authority was predicted for this summer by State Forester Dwight L. Phipps at a State Forestry Board meeting Wednesday.

Phipps warned of the extreme fire hazards resulting from timber blown down in the Oct. 12, 1962, storm.

When fire conditions become critical, Phipps has authority to suspend all lumbering operations in Oregon forests.

The board approved continuation of the Salem aerial retardant base, and signed a \$7,000 contract with Kreitzberg Aviation, Salem, to handle aerial bombing of forest fires.

The board also authorized sale of \$650,000 in general obligation bonds to finance rehabilitation of forest lands in the Tillamook Burn, and other denuded forest lands.

Sale of the bonds is scheduled for September.



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