

YOSEMITE

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Growing on a narrow ledge about a third of the way up the sheer face of El Capitan is this 80-foot pine tree, a source of wonder for visitors to Yosemite. Is it ponderosa or Jeffrey?

El Capitan Puzzle Pine - PONDEROSA or JEFFREY?

If you haven't already, you must find and see the pine tree growing on a tiny ledge on the sheer face of El Capitan about a third of the way up from the base. It's some 80 feet tall, but looks tiny from the floor of Yosemite Valley, of course.

Having found it, you may be satisfied to wonder at the tree's tenacity but if you are among the more curious, you may want to know what kind of pine tree it is. Yosemite has several: digger, knobcone, western white, whitebark, sugar, ponderosa and Jeffrey. The pine tree on El Capitan is certainly one of the last two named.

This poses a problem, for ponderosa and Jeffrey pine look so much alike that they were long considered varieties of the same species. Now they are known to be distinct, but the distinguishing characteristics are so subtle that observers on the ground are unable to tell which is on the ledge.

The few rock climbers who have been to the tree, when asked, either were not certain or had

not bothered to look. And so the mystery remains. The tree is well-known. Shouldn't we established what kind of pine it is? We have delved in our research library for the answer but to no solution.

This then seems to be a case requiring some scientific research, and we would be happy to learn from some ambitious soul what the tree really is. Perhaps a forester-climber already knows. But if a climb is to be undertaken to learn its identify, then every effort should be made first to become familiar with the characteristics used to identify the two species.

The best reference is Haller, J. R., "Factors Affecting the Distribution of Ponderosa and Jeffrey Pines in California," in the July 1959 issue of "Madrono", available in the Yosemite National Park Research Library and elsewhere. We'd like to record the answer to the puzzle in this bulletin.



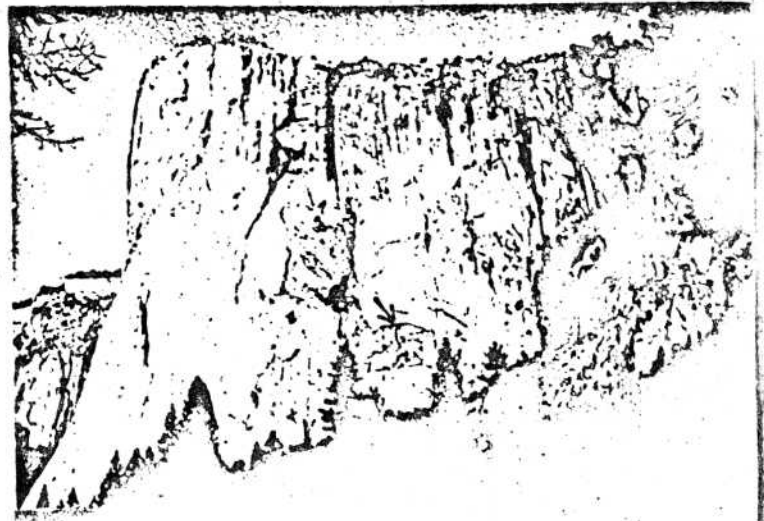
An arrow indicates the location of the puzzle pine on El Capitan.

THANK YOU

A few months back we decided to ask Yosemite's friends whether the park meant enough for them to help it. After years of being able to achieve little expansion of the interpretive program, this step seemed vital. Since then, more than 400 individuals have responded with membership applications, more than a dozen with lifetime checks of \$100. Many also sent in sustaining dues and 60 families signed up.

Disappointing was the response from students;

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by Curry Tresidder

Mary Curry Tresidder

A great loss was suffered by Yosemite National Park with the death of Mary Curry Tresidder on October 29, 1970. The beloved first lady of Yosemite was a lifetime member of the Yosemite Natural History Association and one of its most earnest supporters.

Mrs. Tresidder first came to Yosemite with her parents, David and Jenney Foster Curry, who in 1899 established Camp Curry in Yosemite Valley. Her life was intimately entwined with the park and its development and her love for Yosemite was manifested administratively and through the expression of her great understanding of the beauty of the mountains. Mrs. Tresidder's book, "Trees of Yosemite," is published by the YNHA as a Yosemite classic. In the Association's forthcoming annual magazine, there will be several reminiscence articles on Mary Curry Tresidder prepared by intimate friends.

YOSEMITE WINTER CLUB



After summer is over, Yosemite shifts into its white gear and the Yosemite Winter Club shifts into high gear. If you haven't heard about the Winter Club yet, it's time you did.

Winter in Yosemite is an absolutely delightful time of year, and its enthusiasts are willing to share their fun. The Club is organized mainly for that purpose—fun. They have parties, ski races, cross-country ski trips to places like Ostrander Lake, ice-skating, and a generally good time.

If you want to get in on it, send \$3 for a membership to President Bob Barbee, Yosemite Winter Club, Yosemite National Park, California 95389. The time is now, while you can get the most for your money. Many of the YNHA members already belong to the Winter Club, and you can be sure the two groups get along fine.

Yosemite Doctor Retires

A distinguished career of 35 years as a doctor in Yosemite National Park was brought to a close with the retirement January 1, 1971 of Dr. Avery Sturm. During the last 25 years of his service, Dr. Sturm filled the post of Medical Director for the park.

About 300 friends and former patients attended a banquet of commemoration at The Ahwahnee Hotel Sunday, January 3. YNHA member and Yosemite author Shirley Sargent is preparing a nostalgic and humorous review of the doctor's life and accomplishments in the park which is to appear in the association's annual magazine, *Yosemite*.

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THANK YOU

with their bargain rate of dues at half price, still fewer than 20 have joined. We hope what this means is that we have failed somehow to get our message to them, not that they don't care.

The response to our challenge is generally adequate for our program to date, although it certainly is not sufficient yet to allow the expansion of purpose the association has in mind. Remember, our goal is 10,000 members for the kind of program Yosemite needs.

By now it is clear, too, that we will not be able to make this program connect without help—your help. How many people have you told about YNHA? Have you written in and told us yet what talents you have that might be available? Writers, lawyers, membership workers, accountants, typists, clerical workers are all needed in conducting the affairs of the association. Without volunteer help, we must pay for these services.

Have you given any gift memberships yet? What have you done to convince other groups of which you are a member to think of Yosemite at budget time? Have you offered to give a talk on Yosemite and the YNHA to them? We'll help you with the loan of slides. If you have a business, have you thought of supporting Yosemite with your advertising? (We are indeed grateful to our advertisers.) Remember that contributions to your association, which is non-profit, are tax deductible.

But while we ask for more help, please accept our sincere THANK YOU for your support so far. And perhaps you would like to know what else the Yosemite Natural History Association plans on doing to expand the interpretive services of the park? Here is a partial list:

- Publish various titles on Yosemite—out of print classics or new manuscripts. Memorial Editions are possible.
- Expand the curatorial-library functions of the Yosemite Museum and add traveling exhibits on the park.
- Develop a more effective distribution system for Association publications.
- Increase circulation of this bulletin so that a monthly or weekly periodical is justified.
- Continue supporting the Junior Ranger Program, run cooperatively with the National Park Service since 1930.
- Develop more effective "living interpretation" in the park, such as the Indian basket-weaving demonstration now provided.
- Provide Summer Seminars—college-level courses on aspects of the park.
- Support basic research on Yosemite.

What do you believe the Association should do? How can you help accomplish it.

WILLIAM R. JONES

Director and Staff Park Naturalist

Yosemite and National Park Idea Poster Contest

This is the age of poster art. We have posters reproducing fine photographs of the park by Ansel Adams, published by the National Park Service, but very little else. Certainly the park idea is relevant to today's concerns. Frederick Law Olmstead, father of American landscape architecture, thought it was when in 1864 he saw the Yosemite idea as an expression of the will of a nation tired with war.

Today the park again stands as a symbol for peace and tranquility, and reverence for nature in a culture that sometimes seems obsessed with destroying these fundamental values. Earth Day and the environmental movement it inspired during the past year is a sign of hope. We want to keep that idea alive and relate it to the Yosemite idea, too. So the Yosemite Natural History Association is sponsoring a poster art contest.

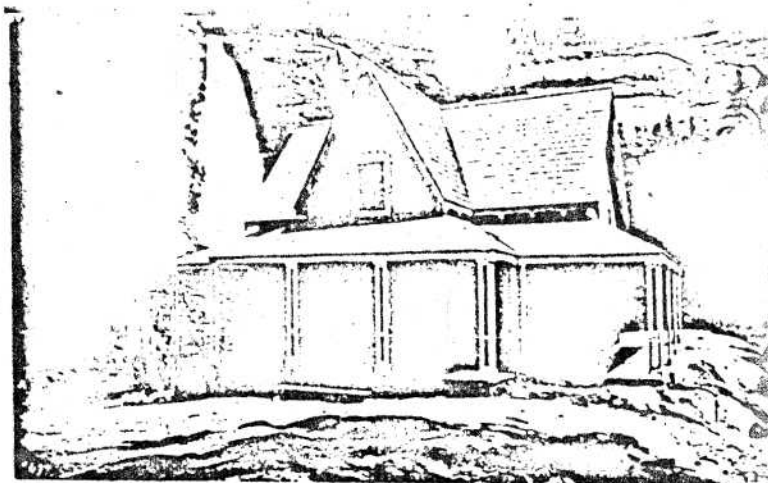
Entries will be in two major categories — one on the national park idea and another on the Yosemite theme. Bringing the YNHA into the Yosemite poster will be desirable though not essential. Even the name of the Association could be changed (subject to board approval) as the one we have had for our first half century seems a little cumbersome now.

Any number of entries may be submitted and there is no entry fee. Original art may be prepared in any medium for a format proportioned to about 20" x 50". Art in full color or black and white, or photography may be submitted. All entries will be displayed in the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center for a period after the entry closing date of April 15, 1971.

Prize winners in both series will become the property of the Yosemite Natural History Association with all rights to publication. Winning posters judged suitable for publication will be awarded a cash prize of \$100 or a royalty of five percent of the gross retail sales, whichever the artist prefers. If none of the entries is deemed suitable for publication, the winner in each category will receive a cash award of \$40. Runners-up will be given \$20.

Quotations from John Muir, Olmsted or other conservationists may be used as inspiration and theme. Style is optional, from traditional to mod art. Impact and significance as well as artistic merit will govern the choices.

Remember, closing date for submission of entries is April 15, 1971. All art should be sent, well-packed, to Poster Contest, Yosemite Natural History Association, P. O. Box 545, Yosemite National Park, California 93389. If your talents are not in this field, tell your friends. No age limit.



La Casa Nevada,
Albert Snow's
hotel at the base
of Nevada Fall.
From a photograph
by George Fiske.

The Other Side Of Yesterday

SHIRLEY SARGENT

In 1870, Yosemite had 1,735 visitors, all of whom traveled by foot or on horseback. Of this assemblage of people, from all over the world, were two notable Americans. Prof. Joseph LeConte, professor of sciences at the Infant University of California, and Phineas Taylor Barnum, the showman.

At 47, LeConte led a group of college students into Yosemite Valley and later, accompanied by John Muir, on to Tuolumne Meadows which delighted the professor as "a beautiful grassy plain . . . thickly enameled with wild flowers, and surrounded with magnificent scenery."

LeConte was so thrilled with the entire excursion that he kept a journal, later published as *Ramblings Through the High Sierra*. In it he stated of the five week trip:

I never enjoyed anything else so much in my life — perfect health, the merry party of young men, the glorious scenery, and above all, the magnificent opportunity for studying mountain origin and structure. Observations made on this trip and later trips formed the basis for ten or eleven papers on this most fundamental and fascinating subject . . .

If the Yosemite trip was "an era" in LeConte's life, it was only an episode in P. T. Barnum's career. Since there were no human curiosities, like Tom Thumb or the Siamese twins, to acquire in Yosemite and Half Dome was a bit large to transport, he contented himself with several days of sightseeing. He did purchase a 30-inch thick section of sequoia bark to exhibit in his New York museum. A reporter recorded Barnum's comment on the giant sequoias, "They were so large I told our guide that I could not stand to look at a bigger one without taking chloroform!"

1870 was also the year that Vermonter Albert Snow built a hotel on the flat at the base of Nevada Fall. His La Casa Nevada opened for

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Yosemite Author

Shirley Sargent's love affair with Yosemite dates from early childhood. Many summers at Tuolumne, Smoky Jack, Yosemite Valley and Foresta developed her passion for natural history and aroused an interest in human history which led to her eventual total absorption with historical research and writing.

More than 100 of Miss Sargent's articles and stories and nine books have been published to date. She is co-owner of the Flying Spur Press, a name derived from her home on the site of the Flying Spur homestead in Foresta where Shirley has resided for the last ten years.

Miss Sargent, already a YNHA authoress, will be a regular contributor to Yosemite in a column entitled *A Century Ago*.



P. T. Barnum
from an old
engraving.



Joseph LeConte
from a sketch by
F. Soule Campbell.

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The Other Side Of Yesterday

guests on April 28, 1870. A number of distinguished people, such as Susan B. Anthony, John Muir, Galen Clark and James Hutchings, signed the massive guest register that year. None penned a comment more sensitive or memorable than the brash, brazen Barnum. He, who was noted for saying things like, "Every crowd has a silver lining" was so awed by surrounding grandeur that he wrote that Yosemite was "Unsurpassed and unsurpassable.— look around with pleasure and upward with gratitude."

Realize Ecology



We have been informed that Mr. Henry Berrey, long-time resident of Yosemite National Park and friend of YNHA, has been retained as Executive Director of the new non-profit organization Realize Ecology.

Distributing graphic materials in the form of posters, bumper stickers, lapel pins, etc., to promote environmental awareness is the group's goal. We hope to have some of the items on sale at the YNHA office in Yosemite Valley. Their principal address is One Jackson Place, San Francisco, California 94111.

SACKCLOTH & ASHES

In this corner, the editor of Yosemite does penance for an error most atrocious which occurred in the last issue of the bulletin. The caption describing a photograph on page three, of notables at road-closing ceremonies, failed to identify Ansel Adams among the group.

Standing third from the left, the noted photographer and conservationist is in himself a newsworthy subject. Adams' presence at the event added special significance.



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Dan Anderson