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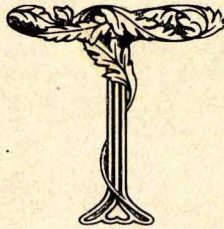
# IOWA PARKS

History .. Organization ..  
Accomplishments .. and a  
Look Into the Future

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By L. H. P A M M E L



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## IOWA PARKS: HISTORY, ORGANIZATION, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

An address delivered at Mallard, Iowa, before the County organization of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs, October 30, 1922. I take the liberty of adding to the address a few statistics on the attendance at our state parks and the use of our lakes.

By L. H. Pammel

I am pleased to give you an address bearing on the subject of Iowa Parks, especially so because we are indebted to the women of Iowa for the fine spirit they have shown in this park movement. We are naturally proud of Iowa not only because it is in many ways, agriculturally at least, supreme in the United States, but because of the intelligence of its people. The whole of Iowa once was a splendid park. Its valleys abounded in beautiful trees and flowers and was inhabited freely by birds. Its prairies, what shall we say of them?—beautiful in their carpet of tall blue stem, the lily, the goldenrod, the aster and gentian. They are almost forgotten, because the native prairie in Iowa is almost a thing of the past. It is not too late to save a few bits of prairie so that the future generations may get some idea of what the prairie was like.

Let us for a moment contemplate the pioneer in Iowa. Nature was at his very door. Everything was open and free, the brooks were his for enjoyment, the woods were his without restriction, they were free, but all of this has changed. The doors are locked by the private owner and the people of the great commonwealth are shut out. We cannot change this, nor do we want to because the wealth of the State is derived from its agricultural land, but we can ask the commonwealth to give to the public places for recreation.

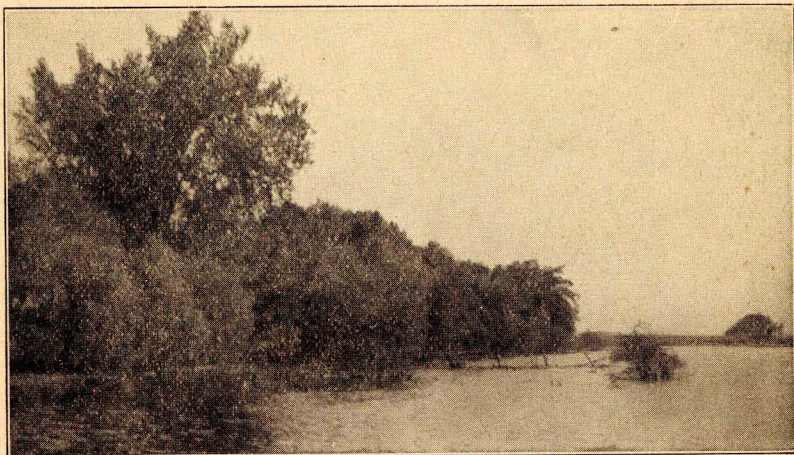
The lot of the pioneer, though a hard one, was enjoyable and I doubt whether a better class of men and women were ever reared than in these pioneer homes. The pioneer had to build a home, often hewed out of the woods. The child must be educated and therefore the public school was built and the public school is the great bulwark of our state and nation. The child must be brought up in the spirit of Christianity and so the church was added to the community, and now after the disappearance of the pioneer we are adding the park,—city, state and national—to round out the four fundamentals in our civilization, and as long as these public institutions endure our government will be safe for democracy.

### The Movement for Parks in Iowa

Dr. Thomas Macbride in an address before the Iowa Academy of Science in 1895 urged the creation of what he called county parks, what we should now term, using the name in a broader sense, state parks.

"County parks", he said, "would tend to preserve to those who come after us, something of the primitive beauty of this part of the world, as such beauty stood revealed in its original flora. I esteem this from the standpoint of science, and indeed, from the standpoint of intellectual progress, a matter of extreme importance. Who can estimate the intellectual stimulus the world receives by the efforts made to appreciate and understand the varied wealth of nature's living forms".

In 1901 there was organized at Ames an Iowa Park and Forestry Association "to encourage the establishment of parks, the creation of one or more state parks in the vicinity of our lakes and streams, to encourage state and national legislation for rational forest management, and the creation of



Pickerel Lake, Buena Vista County

more forest reserves". This association somewhat later became the Iowa Conservation Association, which association acting with the federated women's clubs has helped the cause of parks greatly.

### State Legislature

It was largely through the influence of the Honorable Cady Chase of Webster City that the legislature in 1915 passed a law directing the State Highway Commission to

make a survey of the lakes of Iowa and to recommend lakes which should be preserved, lakes which should be drained, the State keeping title to the same, and lakes which should be drained and the land sold. The Highway Commission made an extensive survey with some most constructive work. It recommended that land be purchased on the shores of lakes. This report had the commendation of all friends interested in parks. A committee of the Iowa Conservation Association, the Curator of the State Historical Department, Assistant State Geologist, the Highway Engineer and several prominent members of the House and Senate, among these Senator Newberry and Senator Horchem (succeeding session of legislature Senator Foskett and Speaker of the House McFarlane) met with the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Fish and Game, the Honorable Perry C. Holdoegel. He was selected

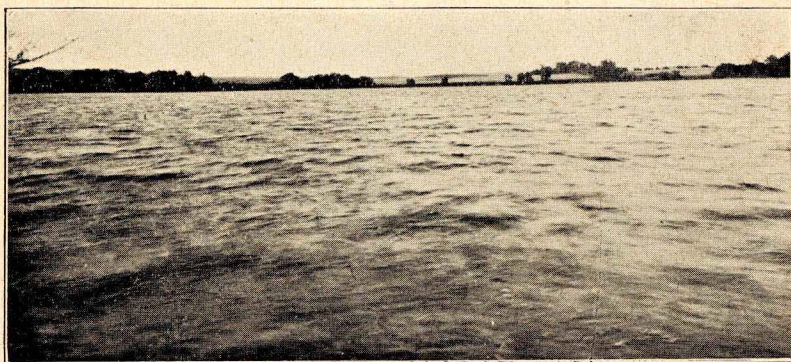


**North Twin Lake, Calhoun County**

This view shows that portion of the shore line of Twin Lakes which is wooded.

to draft a bill to be presented to the Senate and House creating a system of state parks. The bill was duly presented and the Thirty-seventh General Assembly passed a conservation law. This law gave to the State Board of Conservation, the Fish and Game Department and the Executive Council the right to create state parks from fees received by the Fish and

Game Department from the sale of hunters' licenses. The Thirty-eighth General Assembly amended this law by eliminating the support derived from the Fish and Game Department, making a direct appropriation of \$100,000.00 annually. The Executive Council at its discretion however was empowered to use funds for park purposes from the Fish and Game Protection fund. It also gave the Board of Conservation charge of the lakes. The Thirty-ninth General Assembly made the State Board of Conservation custodian for park purposes of all of the meandered streams and lakes of Iowa, making it further possible for counties and individuals to advance the payment for park purposes, provided said lands are properly approved by the Board and Executive Council. It also created the Gitchie-Manito Park in Lyon County. The law for the creation of state parks makes the creation a joint action of the State Board of Conservation and the Executive



**Welch Lake, Dickinson County**

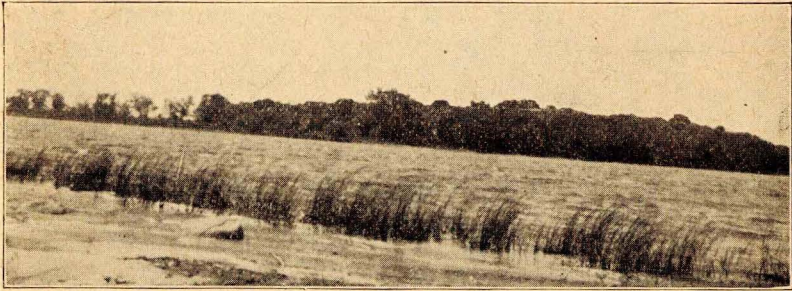
The shores of this little lake are wooded. A body of clear water covering about fifty-seven acres.

Council. The Executive Council appoints the Board, except the Curator of the State Historical Department who is the ex-officio member. The first Board, appointed during Governor Harding's administration consisted of Joseph Kelso of Bellevue, J. F. Ford of Fort Dodge and L. H. Pammel of Ames. This Board was organized on December 27, 1918, by electing L. H. Pammel president, E. R. Harlan secretary. The present Executive Council with Governor Kendall appointed Hon. W. G. Haskell of Cedar Rapids and Mrs. C. H. McNider of Mason City to succeed Messrs. Kelso and Ford. The present Board elected the same officers as the previous Board. The Executive Council in Governor W. L. Harding's administration consisted of E. H. Hoyt, F. S. Shaw and W. C. Ramsey. The Executive Council during Governor Ken-

dall's administration consisted of W. J. Burbank, W. C. Ramsey and G. C. Haynes. This is a brief story of the law and how the Board and the Executive Council coöperate.

### Recreation and Play Grounds are Important

The Executive Council and the State Board of Conservation recognize the value and importance of recreation, and especially so in rural life. They also recognize that in Iowa our parks must be closely articulated with agriculture because every form of business in Iowa is closely identified with agriculture. All of the little cities in Iowa are in a true sense



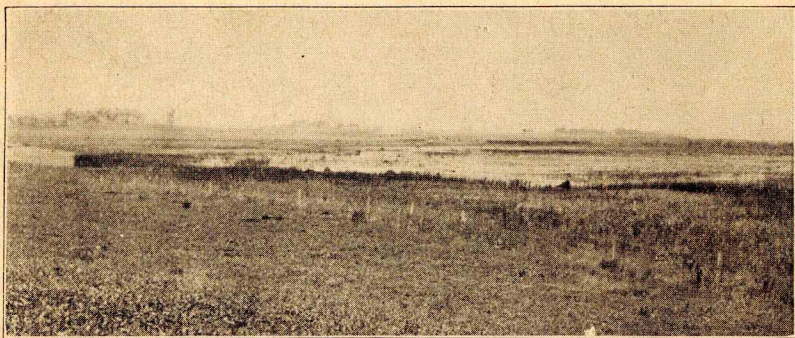
**West Swan Lake, Emmet County.**

East Swan Lake, immediately adjoining, has recently been drained.

rural cities, their business comes from the farms, and any parks connected with those cities are in a broader sense rural parks.

The national government has set aside, out of its public domain, large areas for recreational purposes. They are however remote from the densely populated sections of the country and are for the enjoyment of all, it is true, but a large percentage of our people either for want of money or on account of business cannot enjoy these advantages. I would not belittle our national parks as an asset because there is nothing just like the Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia, General Grant, Mt. Ranier, Grand Canyon of the Colorado and the Rocky Mountain parks. The creation of the national park system is less than a half century old. These play grounds became a necessity, just as a state or city park becomes a necessity. The whole park idea is a natural outgrowth of the human race in its craving for the out-of-doors. We need only recall how the people of Great Britain had since time immemorial made use of the "commons" implying of course, for the people in common, and we have in our own country the

Boston Commons. Kings and others of the privileged class in England made use of large areas for hunting. The common people simply took possession of these and so the royal



**Goose Lake, Greene County**

A shallow marsh covering about three-fourths of a section.

parks and gardens of Great Britain and other European countries were established by the various governments. That was the beginning of a wise public policy. No one questions the wisdom of the United States government to establish these national parks, and along with them the national forests, which combined make the finest play grounds in the world. They are marvelous, not only because of the giant forests, but the wonderful carving of the rocks and geological formations as well as its geysers and hot springs.



**The Southeast Shoreline of Little Wall Lake**

This could be greatly beautified by planting hard wood and coniferous trees.

The city park in the United States is an older institution than the national park, but city parks have not kept pace with the growth of population. New York, Chicago or Philadel-

phia with their wonderful parks do not supply the present-day needs of their population. It is certainly true that the cities of Iowa are lamentably weak in park development. We can all name the cities with five, ten, twenty or thirty thousand people where less than one hundred acres suffice for park purposes. The older cities have long since learned that a park is a wise investment of funds for the prevention of crime.

The state park is of much more recent date as notably New York which has within a short distance of the metropolis the Interstate Palisade Park of some 45,000 acres of land; Minnesota and Wisconsin both have considerable acres in state parks. There is also a healthy growing sentiment for parks in Indiana, Illinois and Michigan.

### Why Do We Create Parks?

With most people they are for amusement, some want a dance pavillion, a merry-go-round, etc. Parks are for recreation. If the ordinary form of amusement is desired the public state park is not the place to get it. It may be a necessity in the city, but certainly not in the country park. There is more than recreation in a park, and the Iowa law seems to have met this issue squarely when the words "scientific, historical and recreational" were used. The persons who framed the law had in mind the preservation of animals, rare plants, unique trees, some unique geological formations, the preservation of the Indian mounds, rare old buildings where Iowa history was made. These parks serve an important function for students in high schools and colleges who are invited to make use of the same and are especially valuable for boy



Rush Lake, Palo Alto County

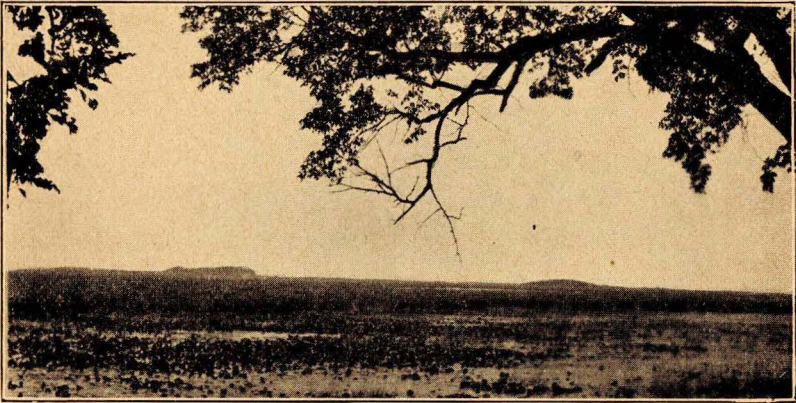
The bed of this lake sustains a prolific aquatic flora.



scouts and similar organizations. The framers of this law wished to show generations yet unborn what Iowa had in the way of prairie, valley, lake and river. It was felt that a part of this heritage left to us was not only for the present generations, but that its citizens of the future had a just claim on this heritage. God surely blessed Iowa with the most fertile soil on the face of the globe and He planted here the finest type of citizens who will leave their impression on the nation, so let us do our part to make them happy so long as they are a part of our State.

### What Has Been Accomplished?

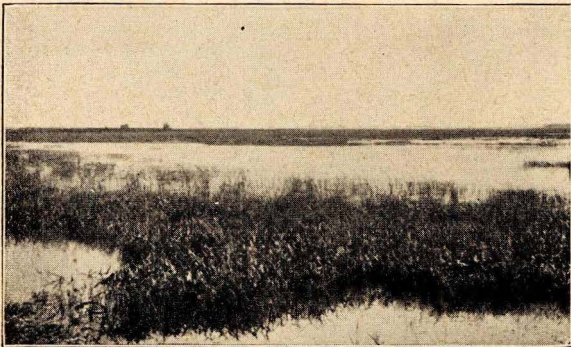
The story of the achievements of the State Board of Conservation and Executive Council is, I believe, praiseworthy in every respect. The most pleasant feature of it is the fine response from the citizens of Iowa. Everywhere communities



Wall Lake in Wright County, covering an area of about one and a half square miles

have been willing to cooperate to make the enterprise a success. We have heard a few discordant notes, but the response in general has been genuine and whole hearted. It may take time, much time, but it is the kind of service the givers have been glad to give to their State because of the value to the commonwealth. I need only remind you that Mr. and Mrs. McCornack of Sioux City gave the Theodore F. Clark Park in Tama County to commemorate an honored pioneer citizen of Tama County, and that Mr. Ellet Lepley and his brother gave the Lepley Park to commemorate their father and the pioneer citizens of Hardin and Marshall counties. Mr. C. M. Mather of Greene will give the State some twenty acres near

Greene when we do our share towards the purchase of some thirty acres more. The Brandt sisters of Davenport will give the State some fifty acres when we add to it the remainder of the interesting and unique tract in Muscatine County known as "Wild Cat Den", one of the most interesting places in Iowa. The citizens of the little town of Beaman will purchase some twenty acres and give it to the State when there is added to it a tract of land making a park of about fifty acres. The people of Anamosa gave us the Jones County Park, rugged and picturesque. The little community of Peterson will give us a substantial acreage on the Little Sioux when we take over this park. The City of Estherville will give us a substantial area to preserve some of the fine trees and the fine glacial valley in that vicinity. Mount Vernon, Cedar Rapids and other cities will pay half the initial cost of a track known as the "Palisades". Boone gave the State some \$16,000.00 toward the purchase of the Ledges State Park, a

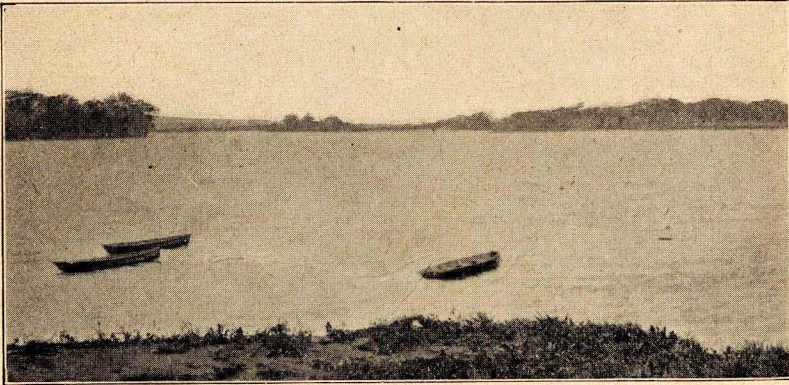


**Eagle Lake, Hancock County.**

Over fifty species of birds' nests in the vicinity of this lake, making it an important center of study for the student of bird life.

tract known to everyone in central Iowa. Fort Dodge gave us some money for the purchase of Dolliver Memorial Park, preferring to use the money collected for the Dolliver memorial into this park rather than some other kind of memorial. The Keosauqua citizens gave the State a quarter of a section of land. It was the starting of the local gift plan. The little City of Farmington gave us about 100 acres of land. The town of Fort Atkinson gave us more than half of the purchase price of the Fort Atkinson State Park. Eldora citizens gave us nearly forty acres of land and a very substantial sum of money. Mr. Merrick gave us the Merrick State Park. Lake Mills will give to the State a considerable sum of money when

Rice Lake is set aside as a park. • Forest City gave something like \$9,000 toward the creation of the Pilot Knob State Park. I mention these only to show that the response from the citizens of Iowa is splendid. Those who are in charge of this state park work feel that patience is needed, and the problem of other parks will be met as soon as funds will permit and the communities are willing to cooperate by selling the park



**Brown's Lake, Woodbury County.**

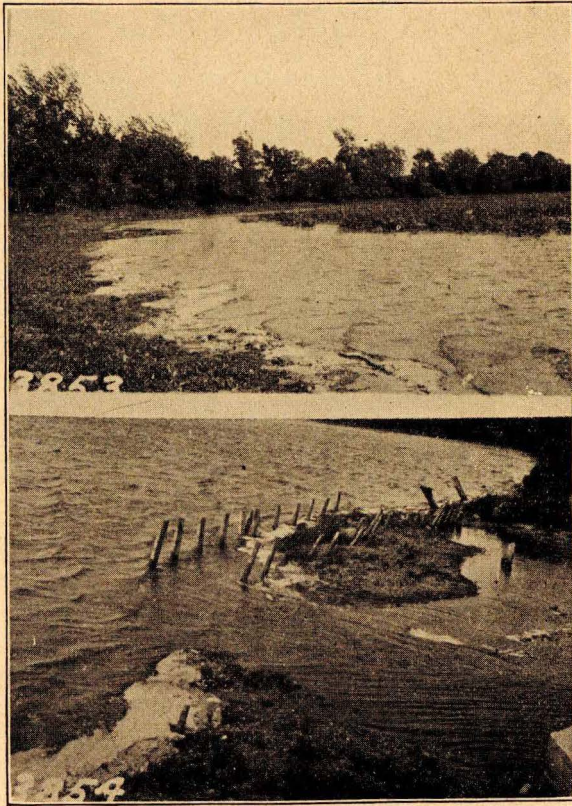
A popular resort for people in the vicinity of Sioux City.

land at a reasonable figure. The law of course provides that condemnation proceedings can be started, but these proceedings are not only expensive but there are many disagreeable features connected therewith. I hope that communities where parks are to be created will show a public spirit.

### Investigation and Survey

There have been more than one hundred and fifty applications for state parks, coming from every part of the State, from villages like Beamen and Peterson, towns like Waverly and Oakland and cities like Cedar Rapids, Sioux City and Dubuque. Manifestly all of these places cannot be taken care of at once. Frequently the local communities ask that some representative of the Board make an address to the citizens of that community. Then an investigation is made from various aspects such as scientific, recreational and historical. The Board has on file a report on every area that has come before the Board. The scientific botanical side of the areas have been made by the Botanical Department of Iowa State College and the State University of Iowa. This has involved a very large amount of gratuitous work on the part of the individual who has made the survey. The geological side has

been furnished the Board by the State Geological Survey, the forestry survey by the Department of Forestry at Ames. The historical data has been furnished by the State Historical Department. Zoological features have been furnished by the State College and the State University, although this work is quite insufficient. The landscape work has been furnished by the Landscape Architectural Department of Iowa State College. Some assistance has also been rendered by the State



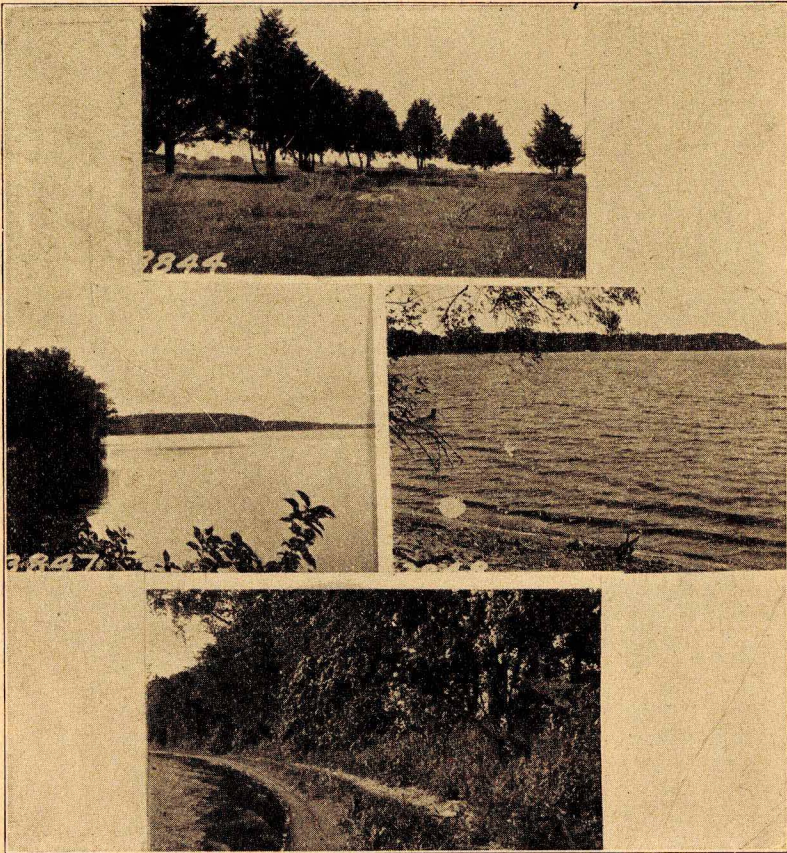
**West Swan Lake, Emmet County.**

Lower picture shows stream at outlet; upper shows a bay covered with reddish algae sphaerella.

Highway Commission. We have on file a thorough survey of the lakes of Iowa, the basis of the work being the report on Iowa Lakes made by the Highway Commission and the Fish and Game Department. Subsequently the Board and the Fish and Game Department made an extensive study of many of

the lakes for recreational purposes, giving facts with reference to present life and recreational facilities.

The Executive Council and different members of the Board determined the value of the land for park purposes. Then there are extended reports on highways, location of trails, buildings and other facts in connection with park development.



The well-wooded shores of Iowa Lake, Emmet County. The red cedars were planted by birds.

The State Board of Conservation sponsored the movement of a National Association of State Parks which had its first meeting in Des Moines in 1920, and the second at the Interstate Palisade Park New York, at Bear Mountain, in

1922, the Secretary of the State Board of Conservation, Mr. Harlan, acting as secretary.

The state park system consists of all of the meandered streams and lakes of the State and certain tracts purchased or donated. The following parks have been created: The



**Dr. L. H. Pammel at Pine Creek Hollow, Dubuque County.**

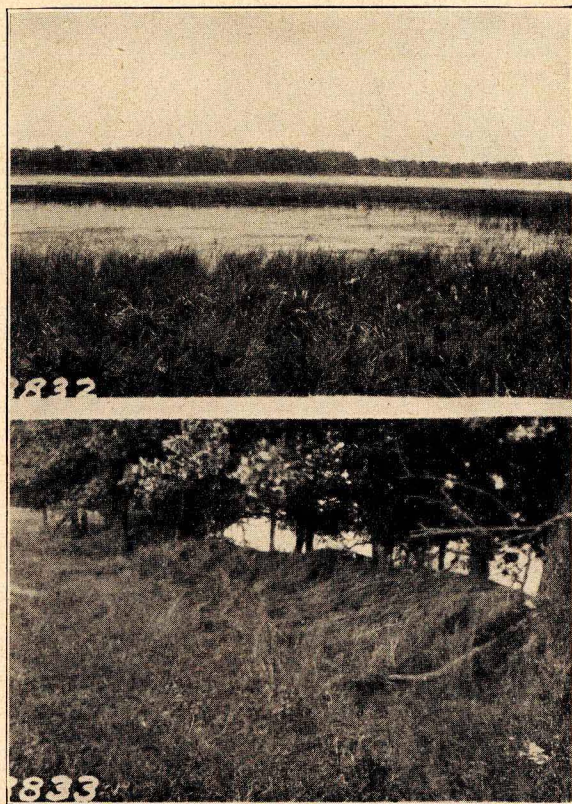
The largest continuous tract of white pine in the State occurs along this creek.

Backbone, Farmington, Lacey-Keosauqua, Dolliver Memorial, Ledges, Lepley, Theodore F. Clark, Eldora Pine Creek, Jones County, Gitchie Manito, Morehead Cave, Pilot Knob, Oakland Mills, Fort Atkinson State Park, Merrick, Wall Lake and Lost Island Lake State Parks.

#### **The Lakes of Iowa**

There are something like seventy meandered lakes in Iowa, most of which (with the exception of Silver Lake in Delaware County which is in the Iowan drift sheet and the lakes of the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers, old channels or sloughs of these streams), are in the Wisconsin drift sheet. The Wisconsin ice sheet not only gave us the fertile Iowa prairie soil of northern Iowa, but it gave us some wonderfully fine lakes. There is no more beautiful lake in the

northern Mississippi Valley than Lake Okoboji and its sister, Spirit Lake. To the east this area contains Clear Lake, a most beautiful sheet of water, and to the southwest Storm Lake, another beautiful sheet of water. There are many smaller lakes which have become of considerable importance from the standpoint of recreation. These lakes are somewhat nearer the centers of population. I refer to Twin Lakes in Calhoun County, which are only a little more than an hour's ride from Fort Dodge and which are visited more than any other lakes in the State, except the larger lakes. Then there is Lizard Lake, only a short distance from Fort Dodge, Medium Lake at Emmetsburg, a beautiful sheet of water, the pride of the citizens of that town. I need not tell you much about the other lakes. Palo Alto County has some fine lakes like



**Silver Lake, Worth County.**

Note in the lower picture the ice-formed bank on the south shore.

Iowa and Tuttle lakes, with beautiful shores; Clay and Dickinson counties surpass the other counties in their lakes, and I am sure there is not a person here to-day but would like to see all of these lakes preserved. I might run down the list of lakes, all of which should be preserved and park places reserved on the shores. Some of these lakes are of historical interest, like Blue Lake in Monona County, once the channel of the Missouri river where Lewis and Clark landed. The lakes of the Mississippi and Missouri are of interest because of the growth of the American lotus, the most beautiful plant of the water lily family. The State owns more than 500 acres of these beautiful lotus beds. One of these lakes of American lotus was given to the State by the generous citizens of Farmington.

Lake—	County.	Area.
Big and Haines.....	Allamakee .....	200
Big Lake near Lacy.....	Allamakee .....	674
Mud Hen .....	Allamakee .....	164
Storm Lake .....	Buena Vista .....	3,060
Pickerel Lake .....	Buena Vista .....	171
Tow Head Lake .....	Calhoun .....	151½
North Twin Lake.....	Calhoun .....	509
South Twin Lake.....	Calhoun .....	600
Clear Lake .....	Cerro Gordo .....	3,643
Mukbull .....	Clay .....	1,190
Round Lake .....	Clay .....	450
Dan Green's Slough .....	Clay .....	285
Elk Lake .....	Clay .....	261
Silver Lake .....	Delaware .....	32
Spirit Lake .....	Dickinson .....	5,660
East Okoboji .....	Dickinson .....	1,875
West Okoboji .....	Dickinson .....	3,788
Center Lake .....	Dickinson .....	264
Silver Lake .....	Dickinson .....	1,096
Diamond Lake .....	Dickinson .....	111
Welch Lake .....	Dickinson .....	57
Marble Lake .....	Dickinson .....	175
Hottes Lake .....	Dickinson .....	312
Little Spirit .....	Dickinson .....	724
Swan Lake .....	Dickinson .....	298
Prairie Lake .....	Dickinson .....	105
Pleasant Lake .....	Dickinson .....	82
Jefferson Slough .....	Dickinson .....	80
Four Mile Lake.....	Dickinson .....	185
Green Lake .....	Emmet .....	152
Birge Lake .....	Emmet .....	140
Tuttle Lake .....	Emmet .....	2,816



Iowa Lake .....	Emmet .....	832
West Swan Lake .....	Emmet .....	1,038
Mud Lake .....	Emmet .....	363
High Lake .....	Emmet .....	451
Twelve Mile Lake .....	Emmet .....	211
Goose Lake .....	Greene .....	411
Little Wall Lake .....	Hamilton .....	230
Eagle Lake .....	Hancock .....	837
Crystal .....	Hancock .....	274
East Twin Lake .....	Hancock .....	184
West Twin Lake .....	Hancock .....	109
Nobles Lake .....	Harrison .....	160
Wood Lake .....	Hancock .....	42
Round Lake .....	Harrison .....	327
Swan Lake .....	Johnson .....	37
Babcock Lake .....	Johnson .....	58
Goose Lake .....	Kossuth .....	103
Swag Lake .....	Kossuth .....	120
Green Bay Lake .....	Lee .....	71
Blue Lake .....	Monona .....	918
Rush Lake .....	Osceola .....	317
Iowa Lake .....	Osceola .....	241
Medium Lake .....	Palo Alto .....	991
Silver Lake .....	Palo Alto .....	667
Rush Lake .....	Palo Alto .....	460
Lost Island Lake .....	Palo Alto .....	1,076
Virgin Lake .....	Palo Alto .....	192
Clear Lake .....	Pocahontas .....	165
Lizard Lake .....	Pocahontas .....	251
Wall Lake .....	Sac .....	923
Duck Lake .....	Winnebago .....	77
Silver Lake .....	Worth .....	310
Cornelia Lake .....	Wright .....	262
Elm Lake .....	Wright .....	429
Wall Lake .....	Wright .....	935
Twin Sisters Lake .....	Wright .....	100

It is well known that the state-owned lakes are meandered and that there are nearly 4,000 acres of land within the meander line. The lake area of the State amounts to more than 43,500 acres, a pretty respectable park area. In many cases the public does not have access to these lakes unless going over private property. This should not be the case. The people must have access, and means must be found to obtain this. It will be expensive in some cases. There was a time when this could have been done cheaply, but the State was not ready at that time to go into the enterprise of state

parks on its lakes. The longer we wait the more expensive the proposition will become.

We cannot measure the wealth of the water areas of the State in dollars and cents when we consider the recreational value. It is, however, interesting to note that more than a million persons this year went to the lakes for some recreation. More than 500,000 persons enjoyed the beauty of Twin Lakes in Calhoun County, Storm Lake in Buena Vista County, Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo County, Medium Lake in Palo



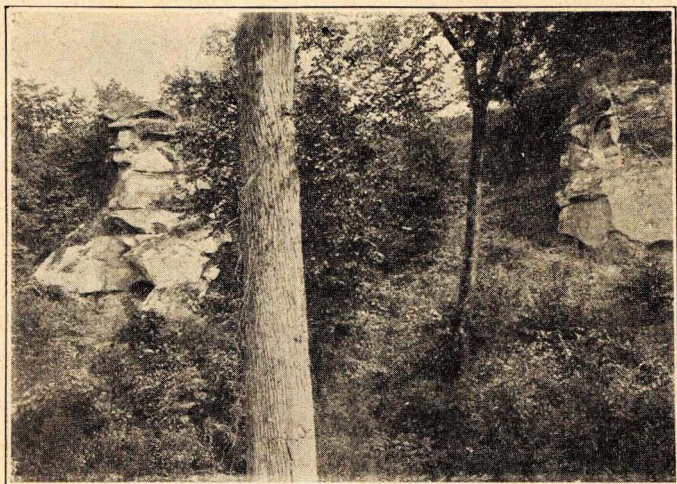
Quartzite Rock on Jasper Pool in Lyon County,  
Gitche Manito State Park

Alto County and more than 500,000 at Spirit and Lake Okoboji lakes. I believe the figures I present are too conservative, and possibly the figures should be more than twice the amount I have given here.

#### The Value of Aquatic Life

A few figures may be of interest in this connection. I am told that 4,000 muskrat skins were taken in one year from Blue Lake in Monona County. I am also told that in one year 5,000 muskrats were taken from Skunk Grove Lake. This is not a state lake, but I am in hopes it will be restored as a lake to preserve the muskrats. Figures from the two

lakes show that 9,000 skins were taken in one year. The price of these skins fluctuates, but its value cannot be far from \$10,000 in a single year from an area of 1,100 acres. Nothing has been said here of the value of the fish in such lakes. There are figures of actual sales made of carp and a few other fish, such figures do not however give us the true value of the products from these waters. The increase in value from fish in experiments conducted at Fairport indicate about \$7.00 per



Ledges<sup>S</sup> State Park, Boone, Iowa.

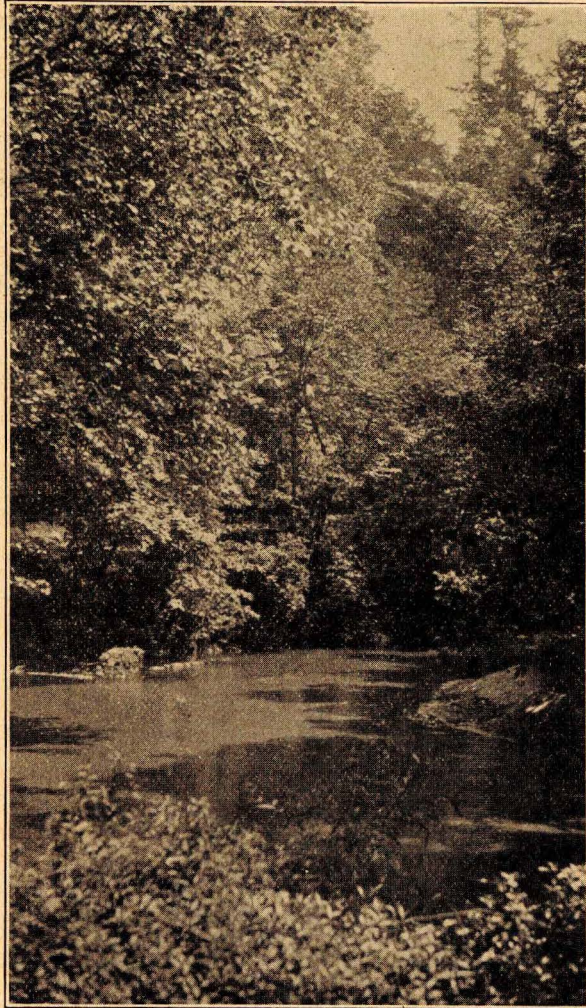
The characteristic sandstone formations are well illustrated here.

acre. The water fowl and other products are not taken into consideration. There would be an income of \$17,000 from 1,000 acres of land, certainly a pretty good income and it is worth while to preserve these bodies of water.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the aquatic life like fish is an important one, over \$300,000 a year, and that this revenue from these lakes is worth while, to say nothing of the enjoyment for those who like to fish.

Then there is the question of breeding of wild fowl, ducks and geese. We are almost entirely dependent upon the fowl which are bred in Minnesota and Canada. I think perhaps a

few acres should be preserved as game preserves, and we have a number of lakes admirably well suited for this purpose, one of which is Rice Lake in Winnebago and Worth counties. When I first knew it, the lake was a fine sheet of water, but an order from the Executive Council was made allowing it to



**Back Bone Park, Delaware County.**

Note the two white pines in the upper right corner.

be drained. It has been a failure as a farm project. This lake should be restored and made a game preserve. Can we not do this for the ducks and geese? Let us give them a chance somewhere in this great State of Iowa.

### Meandered Streams

There are not many of these streams, and practically all of them have their source in the lake region of Iowa. The State made it a part of the duty of the State Board of Conservation and Executive Council to look after these as well as the lakes. I have no means of knowing what the area of State-owned land on these river is, but it is probably equal to that on the lakes, and if so, we might put the figure at 40,000 acres. Surely it is worth while to consider the value of this area for producing power, sand and gravel, coal, fish, game, muskrats and mussels, to say nothing of the value of the timber on these tracts. All of this is potential wealth. The recreational features however are of prime importance for the citizens of Iowa. How much does the State own of the river? It is the line of apparent vegetation, which is determined by the character of the plants like the sand bar willow. The State also owns all islands formed in the beginning as sandbars, later becoming populated with the sand bar willow, birch, cottonwood and soft maple. These areas are covered with water at the ordinary high water. Within this area are many small islands and sloughs that come within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Conservation and Executive Council. It was the intent of the law that the public should have free access to such bodies of water and that there should be no obstruction to the flow of water. The public domain is for the use of the public. The State I am sure is not only interested in the development of every industry along its streams, but it is equally interested in the public at large and its interests should be guarded.

The matter of straightening streams has gone far enough in the State of Iowa. None of the larger streams should be straightened because of disastrous floods caused in the regions farther down the streams. I am, therefore, opposed to the further straightening of streams, except the smaller streams at their source in various parts of the State of Iowa. I believe that under the law, the State Board of Conservation and the Executive Council should have jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the straightening of streams.

### Public State Parks

I have given a list of these on a previous page, and now how can we measure the value of these as places for recrea-

tion. We can only do so by taking a census. In our larger parks we have kept a census of people going to the park, and what has been found? At the Dolliver Memorial Park there were 44,000 visitors during the season; at the Ledges State Park, 36,000; at the Backbone State Park, 30,000; Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, 20,000; Oakland Mills, 4,000; Jones County State Park, 30,000; Pilot Knob State Park, 12,000; Eldora Pine Creek, 5,000; Morehead Cave, 45,000; Fort Atkinson State Park, 3,000, and all other State parks outside of the lake parks, 8,000; making a total of 232,000 persons. The average time spent in the park is about three hours, or 696,000 recreational hours, which if we figure at 25c per recreational hour, and it is surely worth that, we have the value of this form of recreation at \$174,000. If we add to this 1,000,000 people who use the lakes with an average time of four hours spent, we have 4,000,000 recreational hours at the same rate of 25c per hour we have a total of \$1,000,000. In other words, the State of Iowa has furnished its citizens \$1,174,000 worth of recreation.

There is another interesting phase of the recreational value of the park. In every one of these state parks visitors were not confined to those who live in the vicinity. Their use is state wide. For instance Mr. Carl Fritz Henning furnished me with the following interesting data relative to the visitors at the Ledges State Park. In May there were 2,250 visitors; June, 5,150; July, 6,850; August, 10,750; September, 4,500; October, 6,500, the following counties contributing to this attendance: Polk, Story, Carroll, Warren, Greene, Dallas, Kossuth, Ida, Humboldt, Marshall, Wayne, Boone, Hamilton, Jasper, Marion, Floyd, Webster, Scott, Guthrie, Mahaska, Mitchell, Calhoun, Henry, Franklin, Wapello, Iowa and Monroe. When the roads were good and the entrance to the park made possible there were cars from Colorado, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Illinois, New York, Connecticut, Missouri, Nebraska. The greatest number of Iowa cars came from the following counties, as per the following order: Polk, Story, Boone and Dallas.

There can be but one answer to the question, is the public park worth while, and that is Yes.

Let me describe briefly the parks for you.

#### **Backbone Park in Delaware County**

This park is situated in northeastern Delaware County. The Maquoketa river flows through the park which comprises an area of something over 1,200 acres. Spring branch of this river heads only a few miles south of Strawberry Point. This stream contains a fine lot of white pine, some of these trees

now being more than 200 years old. A narrow ridge of limestone causes the Maquoketa river to form a bed. This ridge is covered with fine old white pine, also chestnut, white, black and red oaks, quaking aspen, large toothed aspen, hickories, sycamore, American, corky bark and slippery elm, sugar maple, basswood, red cedar and Canadian yew.

#### Lacey-Keosauqua Park, Van Buren County

This is situated in southeastern Iowa on the Des Moines river in the region known as the great bend near the city of Keosauqua. The rolling hills and narrow valleys are covered with a variety of trees like the chestnut, swamp, shingle, red, white, quercitron and post oaks, black walnut, cottonwood, black willow, coffee bean, basswood, quaking aspen, slippery and red elms, bladder nut, hop tree, hard and soft maple, white and green ash, and an abundance of flowers like golden rod, aster, spring flowers like the mandrake and cohosh. The beautiful oaks, some of which are large, make an impressive sight, especially when the foliage is turning in the fall. Of the animals mention may be made of the fox, raccoon, badger, squirrel, opossum, grouse, quail, and all other birds of Iowa. One hundred and sixty acres of this park area was given to



The Lotus Pond in the State Park at Farmington.

the State by the citizens of Keosauqua and it is the largest park in the State, about 1,400 acres.

#### **Farmington State Park, Van Buren County**

This park is situated near the town of Farmington, a gift to the State by the citizens of Farmington. It contains 100 acres, a little lake of some 35 acres being the most interesting part of the park, because it contains the American lotus, one of the most beautiful of our American lilies. The higher sandy grounds contain the trees mentioned for the Lacey-Keosauqua Park. There are lobelias, asters, goldenrods, mandrake, cohosh and violets in season. Of wild life the raccoon, fox and squirrel might be mentioned, and of birds the quail besides many songsters.

#### **Oakland Mills in Henry County**

This park is not far from Mount Pleasant and in proximity to the town of Oakland Mills on the Skunk river. It contains some of the finest hard maples in southern Iowa and is characterized by the outcrop of limestone and a few small narrow gorges in which may be found a variety of spring flowers like the blue and yellow violet, the wind flower, trillium, mandrake, cohosh, aster and flowers like the New England and blue aster, golden rod, etc., also fine white and green ash, sycamore, black walnut, bass wood, red and American elm.

#### **Dolliver Memorial Park in Webster County**

This park is situated on the Des Moines river, south of Fort Dodge, with an area of some 400 acres without the meander of the river. It is interesting because of the lower coal measure sandstone. In the narrow valley of the creek there is a fine stream fed by springs from the prairies back. The more important trees are black walnut, hard maple, white, black and bur oaks, cottonwood, quaking aspen and large toothed aspen. On the sandstone rocks may be found a few species of interesting ferns like the cystopteris, pellaea and maiden hair fern, shrubs like the dogwood and gooseberry. In the woods there may be found, in the spring, yellow, blue and dogtoothed violets, hepatica, mandrake, cohosh and in the fall boneset, joe pye weed, lobelia, aster and golden rods.

#### **Ledges State Park, Boone County**

This park is situated about five miles from Boone, and the Des Moines river flows through the park. There are some 640 acres in the park, without counting the land in the meandered stream. The floor of the little valley of the Pease creek



is the point most people are familiar with. This has been used for picnic purposes for more than fifty years. On either side of Pease creek may be seen sandstone walls, in some places more than 100 feet high. The sandstone is of the coal measure type. Of trees the white, green and black ash, hard and soft maple, hickory, basswood, hackberry, black cherry, iron wood, blue beech, red, white, chestnut and bur oaks, slippery and American elm, may be mentioned. One of the largest American elms in the State occurs in this park. There are also interesting shrubs like the nine bark, moose wood, pin cherry, dogwood and buck thorn. The ferns are also interesting and consist of the maiden hair, cystopteris, walking leaf and woodsia.

#### **Lepley Park in Hardin County**

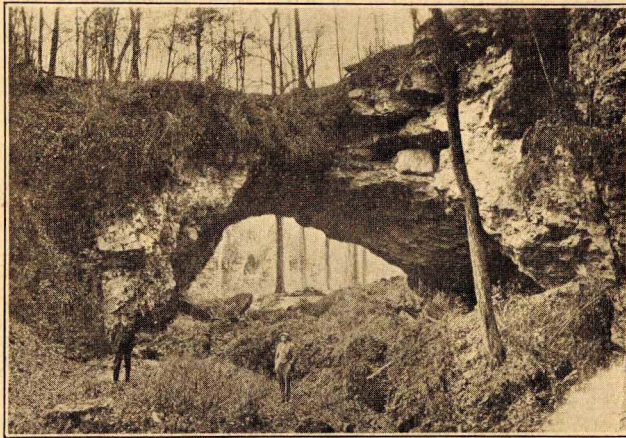
This park is situated south of Union and covers approximately nine acres, a gift of Ellet Lepley and his brother to commemorate the pioneer citizens of Marshall and Hardin counties. The park is near the Iowa river and contains fine white, red and bur oaks, hickories, hard maple, bass wood and elm, some flowers like violet, mandrake, bloodroot, dutchman's breeches, wild ginger and fall flowers like asters and golden rods.

#### **Eldora and Pine Creek in Hardin County**

This park is located near the town of Eldora on the Iowa river and Pine creek, and covers an area of about 200 acres, a substantial gift from Eldora in the way of land and cash. The sandstone cliffs that mark this park belong to the coal measure sandstone. It is so unique that David Dale Owens in his survey of the region a little before the middle of last century made some interesting remarks on the sandstone and the white pine. A perennial stream, Pine creek, flows through the greater part of the tract. There are also some interesting Indian mounds. The white pine, paper, and cherry or gray birch are unique as the most southwesterly distribution of these in the United States. There are also some interesting ferns like the marginal, sensitive and phegopteris beside the brake and Clayton fern. Some of the white pines are probably more than 250 years old. An old stump in the area was four feet in diameter. There are also some interesting shrubs like the round leaved dogwood, red berried elder, moose wood, currants and gooseberries. Of the interesting flowers the large pink lady slipper, yellow lady slipper, blue and yellow violet, wild ginger, golden rod and aster are mentioned.

### Jones County Park

This park is located near the City of Anamosa on the Wapsipinnicon river, about 200 acres in the tract, largely a gift from the citizens of Anamosa. It is a rough rolling tract with limestone ledges facing the Wapsie river. It contains an old Indian cave in which the bones of animals which once abounded in the region were found. There is an excellent highway through this park, and there is a fine wooded tract of ground at the farther end of the park. The more important



Natural Bridge near Morehead Caves, Maquoketa, Iowa.

trees are red, white, black and bur oaks, black birch, quaking aspen and large toothed aspen, basswood, hickory, slippery and American elm, hackberry, sugar maple, black and green ash, iron wood, hop horn bean and shrubs like the dogwood, choke cherry, gooseberry, black currant; such spring flowers as hepatica, wind flower, mandrake, cohosh, geranium, meadow rue, false Solomon's seal, Solomon's seal, goldenrod, sun flower and asters.

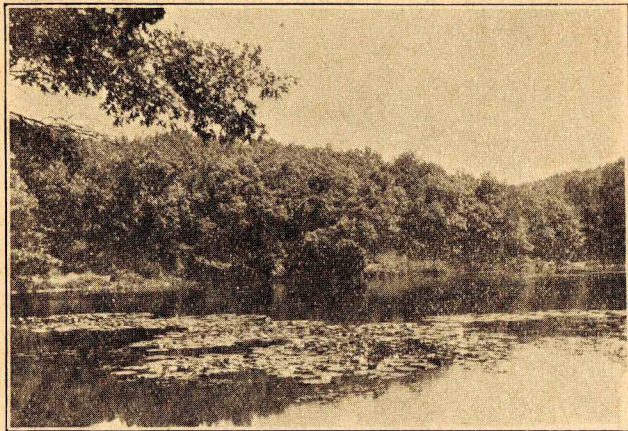
### Morehead Caves in Jackson County

This park is situated on a creek flowing into the Maquoketa river, and has an area of 16 acres. An ancient stream of considerable size once made its way under what is now a natural bridge, which bridge is covered with a growth of hardwood trees. This cave was carved out of limestone rock. While not as wonderful as the Natural Bridge of Virginia, it is truly wonderful for a prairie state like ours. It is interesting also for its plants, like *Sullivantia*, cliff brake, maiden hair

fern, common brake and such trees as white, red and bur oak, bass wood, slippery and American elm, fine trees of hard maple, and its interesting vernal plants like blood root, Jack-in-the-pulpit, water leaf, hepatica, mandrake, and of the fall flowering plants mention may be made of the asters, golden rods, bonesets, sunflowers, horsemint and lobelias.

#### **Pilot Knob State Park in Hancock County**

This interesting park of about 200 acres is situated a few miles from Forest City and north of Garner. It is a part of the Altamont Moraine and the highest point is nearly 1,500 feet above sea level. A half mile from the entrance is an interesting lake known as Dead Man's Lake, much of which is now a floating bog. From the highest point one gets a su-



**Dead Man's Lake, Pilot Knob State Park, Hancock County.**

perb view of a country which is intensely glaciated with its rolling prairies and timber-covered hills and narrow valleys. The lake contains the spatter dock and white water lily, and is said at one time to have contained the *Brasenia*, a rare water lily; numerous grasses, reed grass, bog five finger (*Comarum*), bladder campion, blue lobelia, Joe pye weed and boneset. The trees consist of black walnut, quaking aspen, large toothed aspen, barren oak, butter nut, hackberry, red oak, bur oak and near the park a few white oak, hazel, dogwood; such plants as white boneset, golden rod and aster are common.

### Fort Atkinson State Park in Winneshiek County

This park is located near the town of Fort Atkinson and the Turkey river. It is an old government fort built at the time Prairie du Chien was an important trading post and when we had troops stationed at Fort Crawford. The buildings were erected in 1840 when Jefferson Davis was stationed at Fort Crawford. The park is situated on a beautiful eminence overlooking several little valleys covered with trees. The present buildings number four and are in good state of preservation, having been built of the native limestone, quarried on the grounds. Connected with it is the old dug well which has been fixed up. The houses have, in part, been cleansed and white washed. Connected with the pioneer history of the place is an old Congregational church and a Lutheran church. The latter will be restored by the Lutherans and given to the State. The old Congregational church, too, should be the property of the State. More than fifty percent of the cost price of the area was given to the State by the generous citizens of Fort Atkinson.

### Gitchie Manito Park in Lyon County

This park is located in the northwestern quarter section of Iowa, on the Big Sioux river where this state joins South Dakota. It comprises only about 27 acres of land. The three states—Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa—meet some ten miles east of an interstate highway. The park consists of a pile of rock known as the Sioux quartzite and this is exposed only at a few other points in Iowa, though the Big Sioux has cut its way through this same rock further to the west. It is an old rock and is a mere remnant of a fairly high chain of mountains which spread over this country when the region to the east was once a part of the Gulf of Mexico. The glaciers and other erosive forces have worn this rock away until the park is like the surrounding country. In this park is an interesting pool of clear water from 25 to 30 feet deep. Here the Indian and buffalo were once supreme, and although Longfellow never saw the country, this is where the story of the "Song of Hiawatha" was laid. It was an ideal sight for the Indian camp on the way to the country where the peace pipe (catlinite) is found and where now exists the town of Pipestone. This region from the standpoint of plants is equally interesting. We can imagine a little of what South Dakota plants are like from this region. Here are the typical western prairie plain plants, the prairie cone flower, the blazing star, mesquite grass, buffalo grass, sand grass, cactus, prairie clover, the wooly thistle and the Iowa thistle; the

trees are scanty and there are a few bur oaks, as well as a few basswood and green ash.

### Wall Lake State Park in Wright County

This is on the shore of Wall Lake, established chiefly for the hunters. In this lake occur the usual rushes, water lilies, arrow heads, wild rice, manna grass, and in the park bass wood, slippery elm, green ash, black willow, almond leaved willow and cottonwood.

### The Distribution of Parks

A glance at a map of Iowa will show that we have not been able to establish any parks in southwestern or western Iowa. There should be parks in that section of the State. The region is an interesting one. The Missouri loess along the Missouri river gives tone and character to the whole region. It has been said that the very best soil in Nebraska has been carried to Iowa, and it has left the curiously sculptured hills with a vegetation showing that it is Nebraska; the large beard tongue, yucca, snow-on-the-mountain are characteristic types. There are no trees except on the north and east slopes of the hills and here we find the red oak, bur oak, basswood, slippery elm and the papaw. Such an area is worthy of a state park if for nothing else than the interesting plant life. The Board and Executive Council hope soon to be able to establish one or more parks in southwestern Iowa.

There are other areas in Iowa worthy of preservation. The Palisades of the Cedar, not very far from Cedar Rapids and Mount Vernon, contains not only the yew but large virgin white oak trees.

There is a bit of territory in northeastern Dubuque County far removed from trunk highways and twenty miles from a trunk railroad, a bit of northern Wisconsin transplanted in Iowa. Large white pine trees are found here by the hundred. The cold north icy banks contain great masses of the Canadian yew and the buckthorn.

There is another bit of boreal land in Allamakee County on the Yellow river where one great spring produces enough water to make a good sized stream, on the icy north slope of which occurs the yew, aconite, paper birch, and balsam fir. The balsam fir occurs at only one other point in Iowa, in Winneshiek County.

There is an interesting track of land for park purposes in southeastern Iowa. This is interesting from the standpoint of early settlement and the fine geological horizon and assemblage of plants. This region is known as "The Red Rock

Region" and extends in broken detachments from Mahaska to Marion counties.

Also there are interesting places in southwestern Iowa, one of which is known as "Dexfield Park" and lies on the Coon river between Dexter and Redfield. This tract is especially interesting because of its fine plants and two magnificent artesian wells which furnish an abundance of medicinal water.

Another one of these areas is in Page County near Clarinda where a fine artificial lake has been made. This tract contains a timber belt on a straightened stream.



Pictured Rocks, near McGregor, Iowa.

Mention may also be made of a fine offered park site at Cherokee in the valley of the Sioux, interesting because of the gravel which was left by the recession of the glaciers. Many unique pre-historic mammals are found at the bottom of the gravel pits. Farther up this same stream is an interesting region near Peterson with steep bluffs covered with a superb growth of hard wood trees and fine vernal plants.

Near Rockford on a barren hill occurs the horizontal juniper, the only place in Iowa. It is far removed from its kind, the nearest point being about 300 miles away on Lake Michigan. On this bleak hill is a wonderful collection of fossil shells. It is surely worth while to preserve these spots.

I have given you somewhat in detail the accomplishments of the State Board of Conservation and the Executive Council. I have a feeling that some localities and some persons are impatient about the progress of our work. If the communities which have grown impatient with us will bear with us a little while longer we will take care of your needs, but the money allotted to us cannot possibly take care of all of the park propositions in every county in the State at one time.

I believe public state parks should be made accessible to all, and that the solution will be many small parks, when the communities bear their responsibilities in maintaining these.

A park must be taken care of, and so the authorities must provide for a caretaker or custodian, and we have placed one in each of the larger parks in the State. There must also be adequate toilet facilities and shelter places. This cannot all be done at once. These parks must be laid out so that we may work to a purpose. Reforestation must be done because in everyone of the tracts we were compelled to take over some cleared land.

A word of praise is due the servants who look after the welfare of the thousands who come to our parks. To the custodian, the protector of animal and plant life, the future will owe much, because they protect these denizens of the wood and prairie that future generations may enjoy the same privileges we are enjoying.

### Custodians of State Parks

You may be interested to know who the park custodians are. The men who look after the parks at the present time are as follows:

L. Y. Trower, LaMont, Iowa, Backbone Park.

H. Rees, Keosauqua, Iowa, Farmington State Park.

H. Rees, Keosauqua, Iowa, Lacey-Keosauqua State Park.

Karl F. Henning, Boone, Iowa, Ledges State Park.

C. N. Douglas, Lehigh, Iowa, Dolliver Memorial State Park.

H. L. Taylor, Forest City, Iowa, Pilot Knob State Park.

Jay Newcomer, Eldora, Iowa, Honorary Custodian, Eldora Pine Creek State Park.

Ellet Lepley, Conrad, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Lepley Park.

Clifford Niles, Anamosa, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Jones County Park.

James Falk, Onawa, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Louis & Clark Park,

W. H. Morehead, Maquoketa, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Morehead Caves.

W. G. McCornack, Traer, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Theodore F. Clark Park.

George Bieber, Fort Atkinson, Iowa, Honorary Custodian Fort Atkinson State Park.

Dr. E. J. Anthony, Strawberry Point, Iowa, Honorary Custodian of upper part of Backbone State Park, that portion of the park near the Strawberry Point entrance.

Finally it is a real pleasure for me to tell you the response on the part of citizens has been most generous, and your public servants who are doing this park work gratuitously are glad to contribute their services for the benefit of the State. It is a kind of service, however, which will count most after we have long since ceased to do our work. There are many yet unborn who will give praise to our generation for having started this work. We are proud of Iowa and its people, and the State Board of Conservation and Executive Council hope to establish in rural Iowa a park system of which we, as citizens of Iowa, may well be proud.



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