improvement of the County Parks, marking a beginning of many other recreational facilities to be added as time and money permitted.

The honor to play the first foursome over the new course fell to men whose reputation, locally and nationally, has long connected them with many achievements in this royal and ancient game. The galaxy of glittering stars was composed of the following prominent golfers: Harmar D. Denny, Jr., President Western Pennsylvania Golf Association; George A. Ormiston, Secretary of Western Pennsylvania Golf Association and one-time champion; Ray Babcock, a former Western Pennsylvania Golf Association title holder; Greer McIlvain, State amateur champion; Watts Gun, West Penn amateur champion, former Walker Cup Team, and National Amateur finalist in 1925; Emil T. Loeffler, Oakmont's genial professional-greenkeeper; Joseph I. Crawford, Oakmont star; and Vincent Eldred, former West Penn open champion and Highland Pro,—the latter playing an exhibition match—with a large gallery of admirers in their wake. It is gratifying indeed to know that these men unqualifiedly endorsed the technique of fairway and green, pronounced it a tough course and one of the finest public courses anywhere. Mrs. J. G. Armstrong, Commissioner E. V. Babcock, Mrs. W. U. Christman and Director of Public Works, Edward G. Lang, followed these stars in a mixed foursome.

I, hereby, desire to thank, publicly and heartily, all of those who took part in the opening ceremony and whose kindly helpfulness played a very considerable part in making the occasion a memorable one and of greater significance.

The course was closed for the season, December 1st, after 53,519 people had played over it.

According to available records, greens fees paid at South Park amounted to $21,424.00, in addition to the annual permits good at either Park.

It may be noted at this time, that very few accidents of being hit by driven balls occurred on either course, amply demonstrating the wisdom of building the two courses, embodying not only visibility from tee to green, but, also, other features facilitating play that in no wise curtailed good sport.

At North Park, the Had McKinney Farm House was converted into a temporary clubhouse, providing 233 lockers for men and women, together with shower and comfort facilities near No. 1 Tee.

Since this course had to be built without the advantage of water for sprinkling purposes; the greens were entirely at the mercy of the elements and subject to the unprecedented drought of 1930. Hence it was deemed wise not to open the first nine holes until June 27th and the last nine in the early fall.

Notwithstanding the satisfaction expressed on every hand over the technique and sequence of holes at South Park, the golfer at once became enthusiastic over the layout in North Park, no doubt due to its easier slopes and perhaps a greater refinement and style of green architecture.

The same public course principles were built into both courses,



Commissioners Armstrong, Babcock and McGovern Opening the Golf Course at South Park for Public Play, May 15, 1931. Harmar D. Denny Teeing Off

both of them characterized by similar technique, both offering the same measure of enjoyment in the knowledge of perfect safety and sporty layout.

The intense use of the two courses, particularly that in South Park, during the early stages of grass development, so packed the clay soil as to prevent normal growth and matting of the grass. All thinly covered areas in South Park have been disked and covered with over one thousand yards of good topsoil; also reseeded, resulting in a much improved condition of the course.

The North Park Course was treated similarly. In addition, the weak areas have been given an application of stable manure after the playing season was over, which should promote the growth of grass materially the coming year.

With the removal of a farm building and a service road in South Park, it has been possible to lengthen out No. 7 from a 334 yard hole to that of a 431 yard hole. The re-location of the No. 7 Fairway at the same time permits of greater freedom from No. 3 Green and No. 6 Fairway, the tee of the latter to be re-located on the No. 7 Green, also. At the same time No. 6 Green will be enlarged. Theoretically, the players. heretofore waiting on the No. 8 Tee will be putting in their time playing, since the new No. 7 is a much longer hole, a bit tricky and a tough par four. Unquestionably, this change will make it possible to admit more players per day to the course, through uninterrupted play, and elimination of congestion at the water hole.

Here, also, No. 12 Tee was moved back 27 yards, to the foot of the embankment of No. 11 Green. This change enhances the strategy of the hole considerably, giving it a total length of 351 yards.

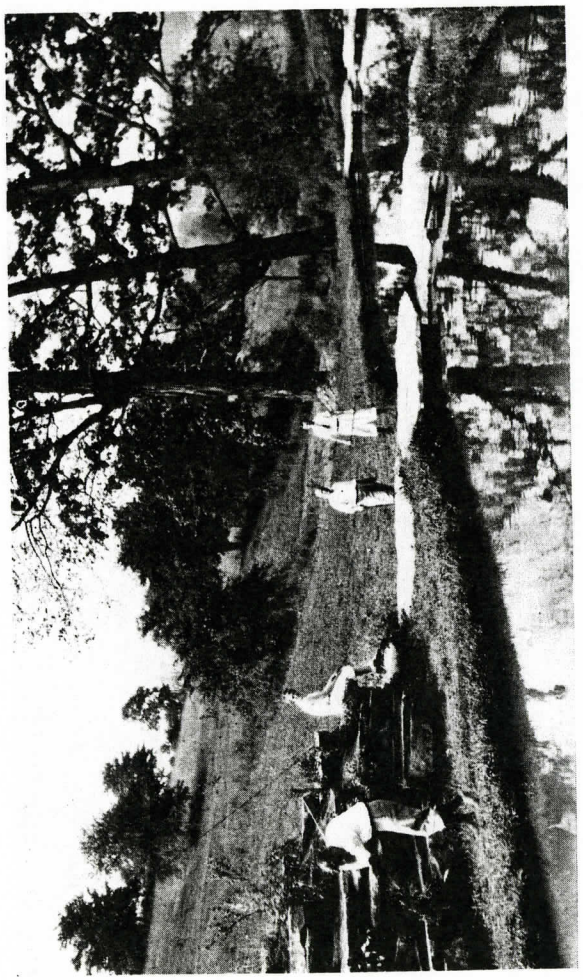
A starter and caddy house of log and siding has been built at South Park. Log posts cut from the tops of old telephone poles, locust log rafters, siding and battens from old farm buildings, and hand-split shingles were used in its composition. A temporary caddy house, similar in construction, was built close to No. 1 Tee.

At North Park, a starter and caddy house, also, a combined professional's quarters and refreshment stand, were built of log posts, old barn siding, pecky cypress, battens and hand-split shingles. The roofs are finished with log hips and ridges that give the buildings a decided tepee effect.

That players and caddies may be brought together in sympathetic understanding, a Player-Caddy Tournament was held in North Park and cups and suitable trophies awarded the winners.

Caddy tournaments, without greens fee, were staged in both Parks. The courtesy extended to the boys through this occasion reacted most favorably upon their consequent conduct around the starter house and links. Cups and other trophies were also awarded in this contest.

A "Helping Hand Tournament" was held in South Park. Old and castoff clothing was taken in lieu of a greens fee, for distribution among the five mining communities near the Park. This proved so successful that the distributing committee asked for another tournament, which, also, drew many entries. Cups and other suitable prizes to the winners stimulated much interest and encouraged entries.



A Spring, a Ravine, and a Few Trees Made Possible the Enticing Water Hazard at South Park

BRIDLE TRAILS

Two miles of trail have been added to the existing t[illegible]es in South Park, in anticipation of the growing popularity [illegible]is delightful pastime. These trails offer all the joy of cross-country riding, with change of scenery and terrain. They are but temporary, until such time when permanent drives have been located and built.

Unfortunately, a group of riding stables have sprung up on Library Road at the present entrance on Catfish Run Road, with the thought that this location might fit in with the future entrance to bridle trails, thereby creating a serious situation. This location is dangerous to equestrian, motorist and pedestrian alike, in that Catfish Run, at the present time,—the only entrance from Library Road—carries ninety per cent of the Park Traffic. It is impossible to reach the Park from these stables, except by crossing this traffic stream. The competition arising from the presence of too many stables has, also, caused a cut in prices, which invites irresponsible patrons of the sport—boys and girls who are heedless of danger to themselves or others, and have little respect for the rights of others or the property of the County. Additional police will have to be detailed to maintain a semblence of order, unless relief can be had by drastic measures.

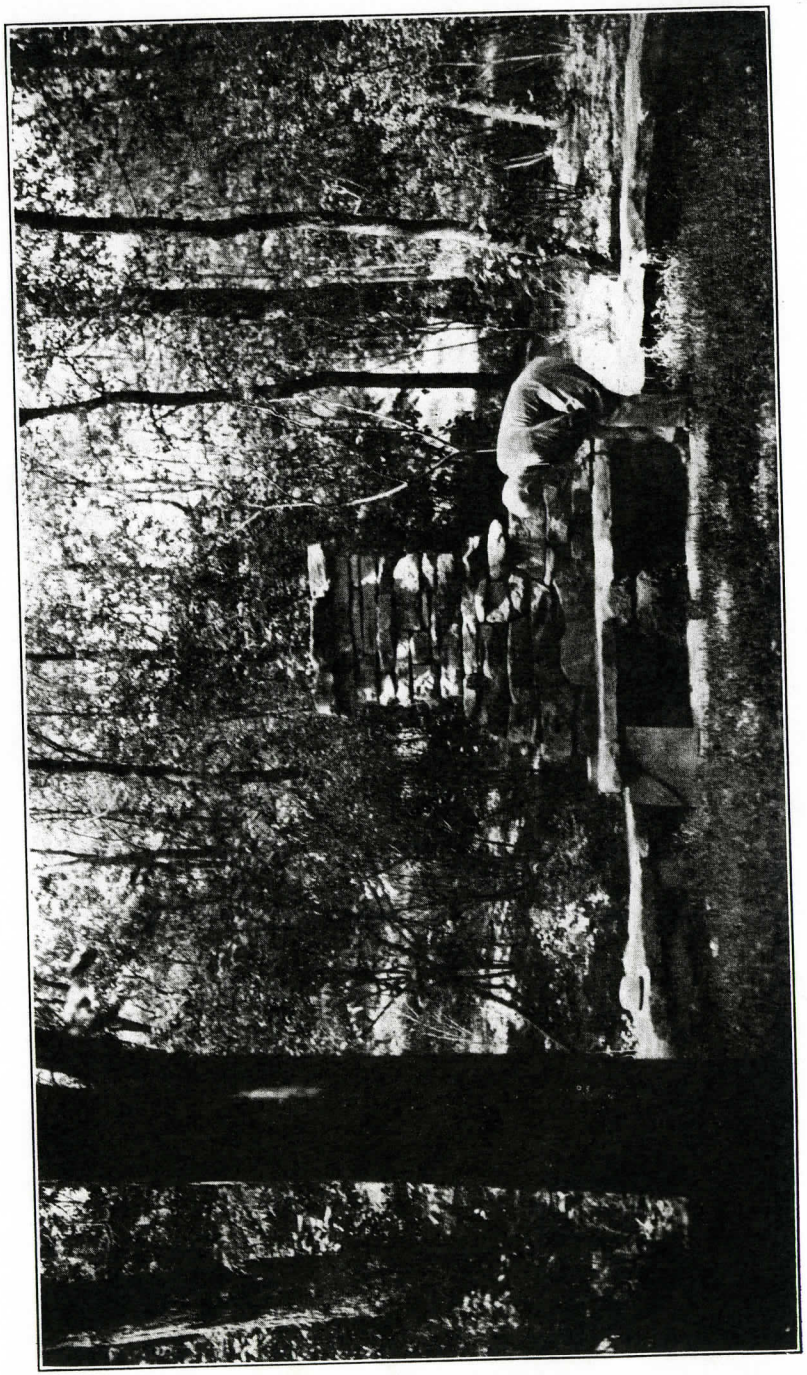
At North Park a similar situation exists, in that riding stables have been built near an area that cannot lend itself for purposes of this kind, nor can be developed and made adaptable thereto. Equestrians, here, too, must cross the heavier traffic streams to reach the trails.

It would seem a step in the right direction, and necessary, both from the standpoint of offering the equestrian better facilities and greater safety, and to safeguard the public, if the Commissioners took steps to not only regulate the location of riding stables in respect to the use of the County Parks' Bridle Trails, but, also, in regards to licensing the owners and drawing up definite rules for complete control of the riders within the Parks at all times.

It is possible, at this time, to point out locations where permanent stables can be erected that will at once broaden the scope of equestrianism and its utter enjoyment thereof. Such a course would so segregate this delightful sport that it may be indulged in without interference with other recreational activities. Splendid and extended terrain is found in other portions of the Park, offering ideal territory, without conflicting traffic lines, that can be developed for the specific use of equestrians.

CAMP OVENS AND OVEN SHELTERS

In close conformity with successful experience, pointing unmistakably to the camp oven and oven shelter as an important dominating feature of the picnic groves, a number of ovens and oven shelters have been built in various groves, especially those of North Park. These ovens are primarily intended to make possible light cooking, having in some instances been elaborated to present a modified shelter for smaller groups and, to a certain extent, have functioned as headquarters for particular groves. Their presence has added a distinctive fea-



Cottonwoods Oven

ture to each unit and assisted the picnickers greatly in finding an assigned area. Many of the groves have grown more popular and have become favorites on that account.

These buildings are always the outgrowth of very carefull study on the ground, giving due consideration to physical surroundings, etc. The architecture of the ovens is a result of these studies, their materials related to the region, and tastefully blended. Thus, they fit into the setting and never fail to impart a sincere woodland character and spirit of the outdoor, a breath of nature, a delightful harmony of the artificial with nature's own handiwork. This procedure permits the use of boulders or stratified rock, as the case may be, according to the indigenous, geological formations, and in consequence offers a wide range of interesting structures.

Camp ovens a designed in keeping with the needs of each grove from the simpler rms to those serving in a broader way and to larger groups. R ing water is always supplied close by and ample firewood is kept s ed conveniently.

Camp ovens a oven shelters attractively designed and properly located are suggestive year-round invitations and not only add more distinctive beauty, individuality and convenience of the Park, but also increase the service thereof beyond that of the accepted open season.

A more elaborate example of the oven shelter is that found at Edgebrook in South Park in which the stone lean-to Oven Shelter forms the central figure, approached over a newly constructed stone bridge. One hundred feet from each side of this shelter are small ovens, representing stratified outcropping with seats and shelves worked into the stone, and its fissures planted with creepers, making it an integral part of the landscape. Stone tables and seats complete the appointments. The creek has been elaborated by the use of stratified stone and the water impounded by a low dam, to form a wading basin, its shores softened, affording easier approach for the enjoyment of the children, who in this sylvan temple find the utmost safety and enjoyment.

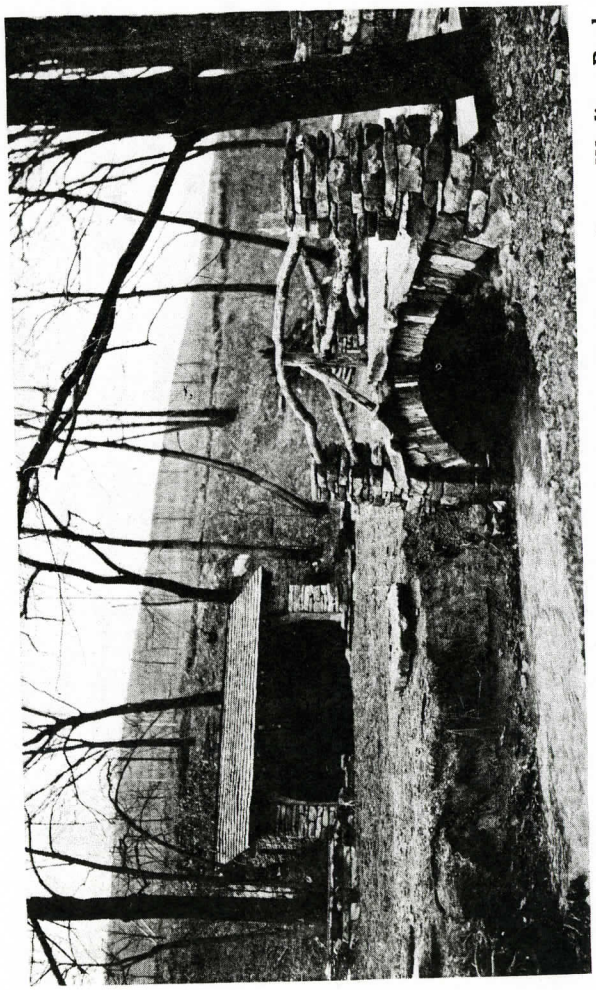
Another oven shelter, the open type, was built at Silent Brook, South Park, as more fitting to the surroundings and purpose of this grove.

At the Cottonwoods in North Park a modified council ring has been built in which the oven becomes the central feature.

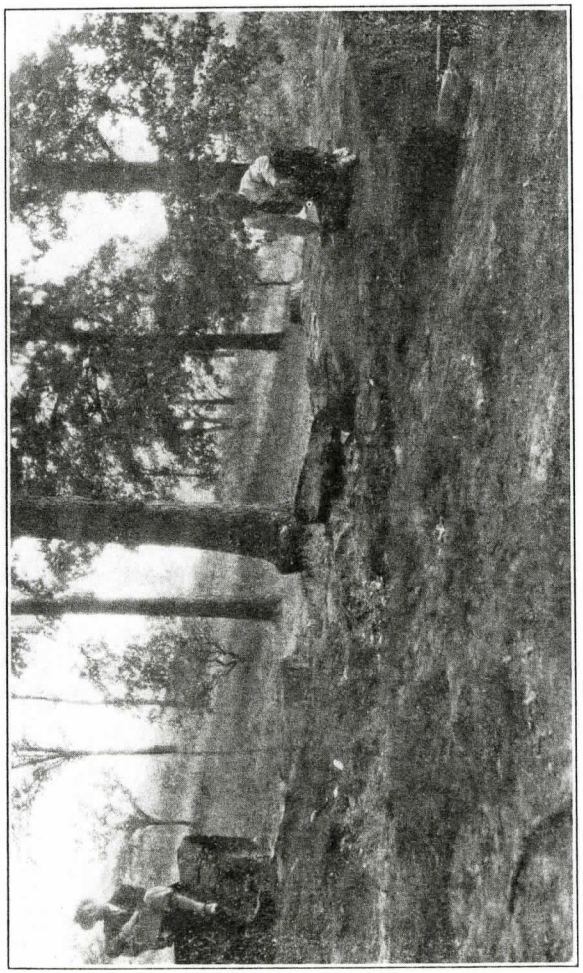
A similar but larger oven was constructed at the Hickories, North Park, with stone seats and tables, which adds considerable interest to this popular picnic area.

An open oven was built at Ledgewood at North Park. The procedure here was different in that native boulders, present on the site were re-arranged and supplemented until on completion each served in its capacity as a seat, table, or part of the oven; the entire treatment fitting into the landscape as naturally as did the stones before the new positions were assigned them.

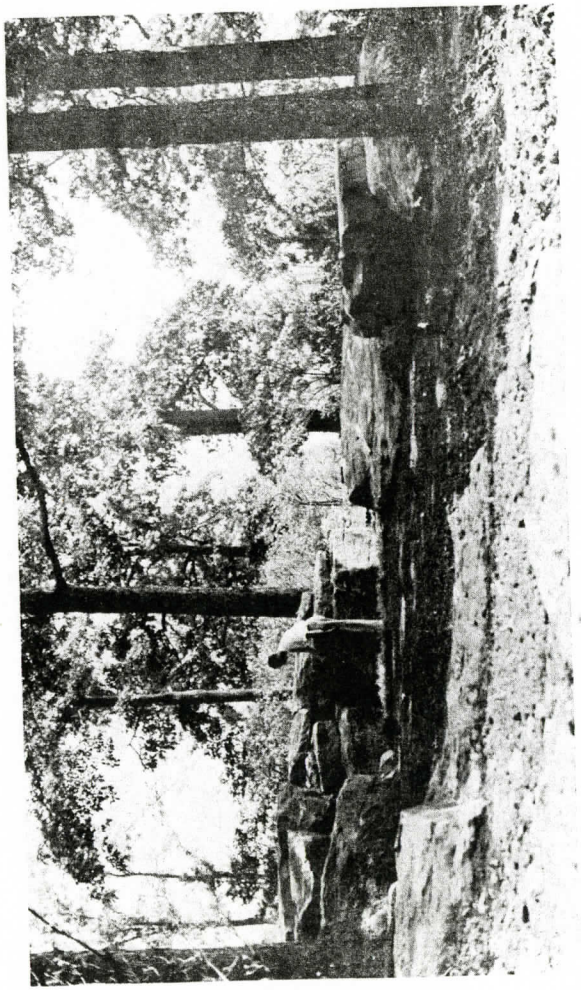
An oven shelter was constructed at Oakdene, also in North Park, on the site of an old quarry. This oven shelter, with its fireplace, stone seat and crane, forms the central feature and is flanked by stone tables and pergolas on either side. Its seclusion, in a less accessible part, has added greatly to the desirability of this splendid forested area and overcame many objections that were had on that account.



Hillside Oven Shelter That Influenced Development of Bridge, Dam, Wading Pool, Sand Beach, and a More Intimate Picnic Area



"Before"—Ledgewood, North Park—A Boulder-Strewn Grove Suggests Natural Treatment



"After" Ledgewood, North Park—The Shifting of a Few Boulders Resulted in This Naturalistic Oven



Trail Shelter at Tupelo Clearing

NATURE TRAILS

Two miles of nature trail have been added in North Park. Entering from the Hemlocks, this trail winds southwest above high bluffs through the hemlock stands, through flower-covered open glades and woodlands, climbing steadily upward till it reaches the other trail at Dripping Springs.

This addition makes it possible to enter the trail at Forest Glen, its westerly entrance, or at the Hemlocks. One may traverse the entire distance, or terminate the walk over the loop leading from Dripping Springs to the Wet Meadows. There is varied interest along the entire trail of three and one-half miles, depicting in changing forms typical flora, trees, and bird life of Western Pennsylvania, a field laboratory for nature students.

WILD LIFE

With a better supply of water, the buffalo herd of twelve head in North Park, is holding its own and doing well, while the South Park herd numbers 25 buffalo.

Some loss was experienced in South Park where the herd had increased to 29 head. No doubt this loss was occasioned principally through the presence of one or more vicious bulls, which not only endangered the lives of horses and buffalo, but humans as well. To overcome this the services of a veterinarian were engaged and all male bison unsexed, with the exception of one each of the best old, medium and young bulls, respectively, for each herd. The bachelors now have taken to themselves and, hence, the herd life is much more peaceful, and, we hope less turbulent.

In order that the public may at all times have opportunity to view the buffalo while visiting in either Park, segregation enclosures were completed in which the bachelors will be confined another year, and perhaps together with some of the younger stock.

The deer in the two Parks have increased until there are 50 deer in North Park and 75 in South Park. The time is not far distant when surplus will have to be disposed of since there is but limited browsing in each of the two preserves.

Natural water conditions have materially improved in the Irwin Valley in North Park where the beaver have been confined. Hence, these furry engineers have been able to raise a family of three kids and build an elaborate dam, flooding an area of land nearly one acre in extent. This pond not only offers opportunities for still greater possibilities, but it has been found interesting in the landscape aside from attracting thereto aquatic migrants.

About seventy-five ring-necked pheasants, reared at the South Park Hatchery, have been liberated in South Park and a similar amount in North Park, to add a touch of wild life of interest to Park patrons.

It is not unusual for pheasants in larger preserves to become so accustomed to the presence of the picnicker that these birds systematically make a round of the picnic grounds and tables for their share of surplus food and crumbs.



The Beavers at North Park Seem to Have Taken Their Newly Assigned Duties Seriously



AN ALBINISTIC FAWN AT NORTH PARK

Game Keeper William Bender, Versatile and Competent, Patiently Administering to the Needs of His Little Charges

In keeping with the usual practice, several acre patches of buckwheat have been planted in both Parks and left to stand for winter feeding of upland game birds. In addition to that, feeding of game and insectiverous birds is systematically done by the gamekeepers.

Two hundred rabbits, causing much damage to young plantings and nursery stock, have been trapped and turned over to the District Game Protector, for planting in other parts of the county.

We regret exceedingly to report the untimely death of William Bender, gamekeeper in North Park, a conscientious, loyal worker, who was electrocuted by a broken, high tension wire coming in contact with a cable guard rail on June 20, 1931, during a violent storm.

Mr. Bender, a born lover of the outdoors, a skillful taxidermist, who combined sentiment with sound animal husbandry, proved an ideal gamekeeper who it will be hard to replace.

FORESTRY

The Nurseries in South Park were moved from the Koffler Farm to the new Service Group area, where 15 acres of better sheltered and more suitable land was made available through the purchase and possession of the Swiantek Farm.

All stock suitable for permanent planting out was set in place in the Park. Thus the moving operation entailed little extra work since all seedlings, ready for lining out, were planted directly in the new nursery rows.

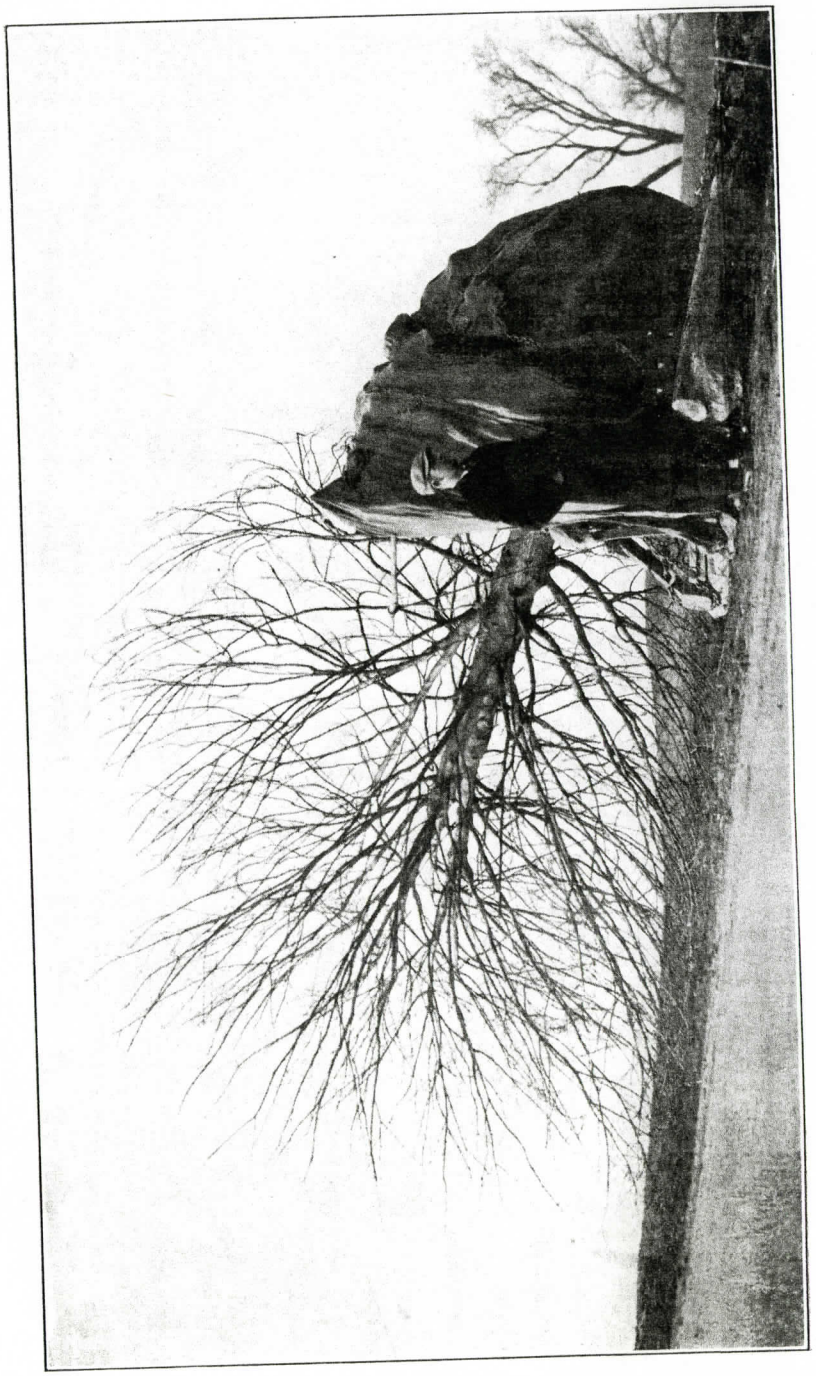
Seeding, propagation, and lining out operations at once got under way, that resulted in a large assortment of thrifty stock of many lines at the end of the growing season.

That the County Parks in time may again reveal themselves in their former glory, native plant materials are used almost exclusively. Such plants, shrubs and trees are a product of the region; the culmination of ceaseless labor by nature over a period of countless centuries; a process that eliminated all unsuited to local soils, rainfall, and climatic conditions.

Hence, native plants, shrubs and trees bear a decided relationship; they have grown up in perfect harmony and accord, and usually complement each other. Their seasons, too, are coincident and reciprocal with texture of foliage and bloom, a symphony of modulation.

Introduced plants, on the other hand, unrelated to themselves, usually destroy all harmony from the outset, are unsuited to the soil, purpose, location or climate, and in consequence are short-lived, must be frequently replaced and are not only a constant care, but an endless expense.

To reduce the cost of reforestation in both labor and cost of planting materials, much planting is done by the method of spot seeding, a procedure which is closely akin to nature's way, with the exception that specific rather than haphazard species are planted,



Moving Large Trees