

in 1873, and bids fair to become a shipping point of great importance. There is a post office and express office, a good hotel, a feed store, several blacksmith shops and a saloon, and also a church. The surroundings are quite pretty, and the land, which is principally owned by Messrs. Fulton, is very productive.

We now follow the line of the railroad for about a mile and pass Mark West station, having a general merchandise store, and then, turning a little to the right through a rich farming district, reach Windsor (four miles from Mark West), a small village, with a population of 137; 59 males and 78 females. Windsor was formerly called "Poor Man's Flat," which name, being rather personal—nobody, however poor, wishes to be so called—was discarded. Windsor boasts of a good hotel; there are also several stores, a blacksmith shop and several saloons.

From here we proceed in a southerly direction for a distance of about three miles over low hills and through a deep canyon until we reach an altitude of 400 feet above Santa Rosa Valley, and arrive at Mark West Springs. The water of one spring is warm and highly charged with sulphur; that of the other is cold and holds only iron in solution, making it very valuable for recuperating weak constitutions. The hotel here is large and very well kept; the accommodations are complete and all that one can wish for. There is a commodious bath house and also two rows of cottages belonging to the hotel. From the front of the building the scenery is romantic; toward the West is a mountain ridge, thickly timbered; on the other sides the mountains are not so high, but are all covered with forests.

Game is very abundant in the neighborhood, and the hunter can within a very short distance find deer, hare, rabbit, quail and bear. The angler can be equally well supplied, for the creek close by abounds with trout.

Mark West Springs are well patronized. We were highly pleased with our visit.

We will now proceed in an easterly direction, over a good road, along Mark West Creek, through a thickly wooded district, toward the petrified forests, one of the greatest curiosities of the world. Our readers will recollect that while at Calistoga we paid this locality a hasty visit, but shall now give a full description of the place.

The Petrified Forest, covering an area of about twenty acres, is located on the North fork of Mark West creek, four miles East of Mark West Springs, and five miles West of Calistoga, on the stage road from Calistoga to Santa Rosa.

It is the property of Charles Evans, who has a house on the premises, where beautiful specimens of petrified wood and other natural curiosities are exhibited. Some of these specimens are very valuable, \$500 each having been refused for several among the collection.

The locality is daily thronged with visitors from all parts of the world. A register kept for the purpose contains the names of many distinguished people.

The altitude of the forest is 655 feet above Calistoga. It contains about 100 trees, some sixty feet long, others shorter, all lying on the ground and pointing toward the north. We also saw five logs which had all the appearance of charcoal; on inspection we found that they had first been charred and afterward petrified. One of the trunks, but lately unearthed, is sixty-eight feet in length, having a diameter at the roots of fifteen feet, and eight and a half feet in the middle. Near the roots there still remains some bark in its natural state, petrification not yet having taken place.

It is supposed that these former giants of the forest, now transformed to stone, are of the common red-wood species. How they became petrified, and by what action, is a mystery for science to solve.

From this point a very extended view of the surrounding country may be obtained. To the east stands Mount St. Helena; to the north Geyser Peak, Hog's Back and Pine Flat Mountains; to the west we see the Coast Range at the north of the Russian River. The surroundings are particularly rugged; chasms, precipices and defiles with deep gorges and mountain peaks on all sides. While here we were told that at a very short distance there is a little valley called Franz Valley, which can only be reached by trail, so we will allow our horses a little longer rest and make the excursion on foot. Always desirous of seeing all we can, and obtaining valuable information, we frequently climb over dangerous precipices, sometimes to the detriment of our clothing, but as we believe always for the benefit of our health. After considerable climbing and a long walk, we reach this famous Franz Valley, covering an area of about 20 acres and inhabited by three persons—two women, mother and daughter, living in one house and one man who lives in another house at a respectable distance. These persons very seldom leave the valley and have little to say to each other for a very good and sufficient reason. The women are deaf and the man is nearly dumb. We understand that the man, some years ago, desirous of rendering his home more comfortable, made proposals to the younger of the ladies, but was indignantly refused. Since that time he is heart-broken and has made a solemn vow never to speak to the gentler sex again. This no doubt accounts for the difficulty in his speech.

Returning to the Petrified Forest, we proceed in an easterly direction for a distance of four miles and reach Knightville, (named after Thomas Knight, the first settler), in Knight Valley, where we shall be obliged to stop over night.