

DAVISON PROPERTY

**History of the Davison Ranch
Evaluation of National Register Eligibility**

Susie Van Kirk
March 1992

Prepared under Purchase Order 848092141
Redwood National Park
1125 16th Street
Arcata, California

Introduction

In 1991, Redwood National Park acquired the Davison Ranch property, located three miles north of Orick, California, along the county road leading to Gold Bluffs Beach and Fern Canyon. To comply with the requirement that the Park evaluate its properties for National Register eligibility, a consultant was hired to 1) research the history of land ownership and use; 2) document the structures on the State of California Historic Resources Inventory form; 3) conduct interviews with members of the Davison family; and 4) report on the results of these tasks, including recommendations concerning National Register eligibility.

Archival and library research, field work and interviews were conducted during February and March of 1992. Information on land ownership was obtained through deed records in the Humboldt County Recorder's Office, Courthouse, Eureka, California. The buildings on the Davison property were inventoried, measured and photographed by Susie Van Kirk and Ann King Smith on 5 and 17 March 1992. Interviews were conducted with Marian Davison Ledgerwood, Eureka, on 24 February 1992; Alma Davison, Prairie Creek, on 5 and 17 March 1992; and Maurice Davison, San Jose, by phone on 12 March 1992. Vital statistics records in the Recorder's Office provided some information about members of the Davison family. Additional historical information about the family, dairy ranching and the area's environmental and social setting was researched by reading the Arcata Union newspaper from 1886 through 1925 and review of other newspaper and library references. A report prepared by Park Archaeologist Ann King Smith entitled, "A Cultural Resources Study of the Davison Property", was reviewed. Jan Wooley of the State Office of Historic Preservation made recommendations regarding preparation of the Historic Resources Inventory form, DPR 523 (Rev. 6/90).

A Brief History of the Davison Ranch

Euro-American settlement of the north coast of California began in the spring of 1850 in response to demands for coastal supply points for the interior gold mining districts on the Klamath, Trinity and Salmon rivers. Those first arrivals were miners, merchants and packers--men whose livelihoods revolved around gold; in time, however, the illusory wealth of gold was replaced by the far more tangible and lucrative timber industry, which drew hundreds of workers from the eastern states and the maritime provinces of Canada.

But there was another economy to be developed on this last frontier. Steeped in the agrarian tradition of 19th century America and Europe, men also sought land to plow and graze. Beginning in the 1880's and continuing to this day, dairy ranching on the coastal bottomlands around Humboldt Bay, the Eel River delta and Redwood Creek has contributed significantly to the local economy and to the social and cultural life of this region. Arthur Davison's arrival in California in 1882 marked the beginning of one family's venture into this life--a venture that sustained sons and grandsons and extended almost to the 21st century.

From a family of seafaring men and shipbuilders, Arthur Davison, born in Nova Scotia on 11 February 1856, served some apprenticeship time as a young man, learning the blacksmithing trade and other skills in his father's shipyard. Wanderlust, a desire for adventure, or maybe a dream of doing something different in life brought Arthur to Humboldt County in 1882 and eventually to Gold Bluffs, where he worked as a blacksmith at the upper bluffs mining operations. Five years of shoeing mules probably got him thinking about other kinds of work; when Orick valley settler Robert Swan gave Arthur the chance to learn the dairy business, he eagerly made the move. After two years of cows and buttermaking, Arthur returned to Nova Scotia, where he met Irene Dorman. She followed him back to the Pacific coast, where they were married in San Francisco on 25 June 1889.

Returning to Orick, Arthur acquired the south half of the northeast quarter and the west half of the southeast quarter of Section 22, T.11N R.1E from Edward Dickey in April 1890. This deed was never recorded, but it is in the possession of Alma Davison. The patent that Arthur received in 1898 was for these same parcels of land. In September 1900, Irene purchased the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 22 from Janet McDonald, whose brother David Dutch had acquired the land from the original patent holder, Mathias Palmgren, in 1894. Additional lands in the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 22 and the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 27 were acquired in 1917 from E.A. and Emma Leach, who purchased those lands from patent-holder Palmgren in 1912. These transactions completed the Davison's acquisition of land; but even before

this date, they had begun disposing of timber and timberlands that they felt were superfluous to their ranching operations.

A house was apparently part of the 1890 transaction from Dickey to Arthur; Alma Davison recalled that the "Dickey" house was torn down and burned after construction of the new bungalow in 1926. Photographs of the Dickey house, the relocated McDonald house, and several barns have been obtained by the Park. The Dickey house was a two-story, end-gable building with board-and-batten siding, wood shake roof, and 6/6 windows. It was a rather crude structure with a design unlike any extant, settlement-period houses with which the author is familiar. A photograph, taken during big snow after 1915, shows a more prosperous situation with several large barns, upper and lower story porches on the house, and what appears to be an Indian dugout canoe in the front yard; the backdrop for this pastoral scene is a stand of snow-tipped old-growth redwoods. The little McDonald house, moved by Arthur from its original location on the parcel purchased by Irene in 1900, was situated at the east corner of the Dickey house. It was a front-facing gable house with wood shake roof, board-and-batten siding, and 2/2 windows. That house exists today with additions and was inventoried as D-3.

Arthur's homestead on Prairie Creek was not of the same quality as those in the Orick valley or at Elk Prairie. His land had to be cleared before it could be planted, grazed or cut for hay. Western Watchman editor William Ayres took a trip up the coast in the spring of 1897.

On both Redwood and Prairie creek, there are many hundreds of acres of the very best character of bottom land still in the brush, in fact, only a small proportion of the land on Redwood has been cleared and on Prairie creek, only a few patches of an acre or two each have been cleared...

The bottom land here is covered with maple principally, and, however valuable it may be for furniture wood, there is no way of saving it or getting it to market, but it must go into the clearing fire together with the brush...

Going up Prairie creek, we pass the places of Arthur Davidson(sic), D.J. Dutch, John McDonald, R. McIntosh, Win. Stehlow, all located in the woods and brush, and then comes the fine open prairie home of A.J. Harris. (Elk Prairie) This is really a fine place, at least 200 acres of clear land, 100 acres of crop, comfortable dwelling house and two large barns, quite an orchard, and the place is generally well stocked. (Western Watchman, 8 May 1897)

Clearing his land and keeping it clear was one of Arthur's lifelong pursuits. "Chopping willows" was something he did up until his death and the family had a little saying that "where there was smoke, there was Grandpa." Hiring local boys to cut 20 acres of brush at \$10 an acre was one way of hastening the clearing and expanding his operations. When the Arcata Union editor visited the Davison place in the spring of 1901, he found a small, but "thrifty" ranch.

One of the neatest ranches in the Prairie creek section is that of Arthur Davidson (sic), who has 90 acres of A. No. 1 bottom land, 35 acres of which are cleared. Eight cows are being milked at present and ready sale is found in Trinidad. The ranch is an ideal place for fruit and the trees were in a thrifty condition.

Tomatoes are grown here with great success and all fruit reaches the highest point of perfection. All the improvements on this ranch show a thrifty spirit, from the bridges to the buildings. (Arcata Union, 4 May 1901)

Arthur's initial association with the mining operations at Gold Bluffs continued in later years through his and Irene's friendship with the Munsons. The black sands mining at the Bluffs was still "paying" when Arthur worked there in the mid 1880's and was expanded to a dredging and milling operation in 1902 after the mine was purchased by Sturges Whitlock and H.D. Munson of Connecticut. Munson became the resident superintendent of the Gold Bluffs Mining and Land Company and he and Arthur became friends. Arthur accompanied him on trips to Arcata on occasion and voiced his support of the mining activity by stating that it had been "productive of much good to the farmers and dairymen living in that section." (Arcata Union, 23 Aug. 1902) A "communicated" note in the Arcata Union of 1 Aug. 1903 stated Mr. and Mrs. Munson were at the "pleasant home" of Arthur Davison.

Before hotels and resorts were constructed to serve the traveling public in rural areas of the County, food and lodging were obtained at private residences along the way. Arthur's place on Prairie Creek was known as a

"stopping place" for people traveling up and down the northern Humboldt coast. The capacity of the Dickey house to serve travelers was expanded when Arthur moved the little McDonald house nearby and joined them by a screened-in area. A note in the Arcata Union said that "no better stopping place in the State can be found than at Mr. Arthur Davidson's (sic) with no raise in board." (Arcata Union, 1 Aug. 1903) Lunch and a short visit at the Davisons were a must for folks traveling from the Humboldt Bay area to Klamath and Crescent City.

Improvements in transportation came slowly to the north coast. The wagon road from Trinidad to Crescent City, first talked about in the 1880's, didn't become a reality until 1894. Prior to that time, freighting wagons and single riders traveled along the beach route. The horse-drawn stage was replaced with an auto stage, conducted by the McConnaha Bros. of Trinidad and Reed & Reed of Arcata, in the spring of 1910. So "immensely popular" was Bert Reed's big Speedwell that it was often "insufficient to carry all the passengers who wish(ed) to travel. (Arcata Union, 16 July 1910) In the summer of 1914, Arthur's son, John W. Davison, began running a Ford car, "in the rent service" between Arcata and Orick. (Arcata Union, 16 July 1914) Four years later he was "piloting" one of McDonnaha's auto stages, which included delivering shipments of cream to the United Creameries plant. John's brother, Robert, bought his second Oakland car in 1918 and according to Alma Davison, a farm truck was purchased in 1920.

The Davisons granted a 100-foot right-of-way to the State for Highway 101 in 1925 and through the years for other rights-of-way for logging access and telephone and electrical transmission lines.

Like many property owners along the coast, the Davisons granted a 100-foot strip of land to Southern Pacific in 1909. Surveyors for the railroad had been working for years laying out a route along the coast, their progress enthusiastically followed in the Arcata Union, which noted in December 1905 that they were just five miles north of Orick and "coming down the coast." (Arcata Union, 23 Dec. 1905) Apparently, the San Francisco fire following the earthquake in April 1906 resulted in the loss of survey notes and that fall the news was that Southern Pacific's surveyors were "rerunning the line." (Arcata Union, 11 Aug. 1906) During the summer of 1909, a number of deeds were filed in the Courthouse, granting Southern Pacific 100-foot strips of lands, but no railroad was ever built north of Trinidad and the Davison Ranch was spared the intrusion of tracks and trains.

Arthur's dairy operations continued to grow and by 1917 he was using a B.L.K. milking machine. The Davisons always had Jerseys, which, according to Alma, were chosen by Arthur because they were small and didn't eat too much, but gave very rich milk. The Davisons' 7%-butterfat cows produced such heavy cream that on one occasion it was thought that the milk had soured because it was too thick to pour from the bottle!

Arthur was a buttermaker, a skill he learned when he worked for Robert Swan in the late 1880's. Transportation difficulties, distances, and lack of refrigeration meant that fresh milk was not a viable product; as a result, dairymen made butter. Arthur's son, Robert, was also a buttermaker, but with the opening of the cheese factory in Orick in 1917 and the purchase of a farm truck in 1920, the Davisons began to dispose of their milk at the factory. In 1932, they built a dairy house alongside the small creek that runs off the hill. Diverting the water through a trough in which the milk cans were set, the Davisons were able to maintain the milk at a cold enough temperature to go into the business of bottling whole milk for local customers. During the 1940's, Robert's teenage sons delivered the milk to local customers, taking the excess to the cheese factory before school each morning. As Alma said, their four sons never knew anything but work.

About 1948, the bottling and delivery route were discontinued and the milk was sold to various creameries, whose trucks made daily milk pickups at the ranch. During the early 1950's, Robert's sons Dick and Maurice, ran the ranch, milking 50 to 60 cows. Dick later expanded the operation to 100 cows and continued to operate the business until 1992, when the Park took over management of the property.

Since 1937, a non-denominational church convention has been held on the Davison Ranch each summer for four days in mid-August. This fundamentalist congregation has members in every state and worldwide and between 800 and 900 people attend the convention at the Davison's. Facilities for the convention are housed in a complex of buildings, located between Prairie Creek and the hillside, just northeast of the ranch buildings. Alma Davison, who married into the family in 1923, was introduced to the church as a child living in the central valley. Her parents became members and when Alma married Robert Davison, she got her in-laws involved. The congregation is a

close-knit, supportive fellowship, whose members gather for Sunday meetings in people's homes; in the Orick area, the Davisons have provided the meeting place since the 1920's.

The Davison Ranch has seen the births and deaths of five generations of family. When Irene came out from Nova Scotia to marry Arthur, she did not forsake her family. Her parents, William and Olivia Dorman, and a sister Lottie, followed her. William Dorman died at age 71 in 1909; Olivia at age 86 in 1926. Lottie married Ira Hannah and they lived on the Mad River near Arcata. Arthur's brother, Aubrey Vernon (Verne) Davison, a ship's carpenter in Nova Scotia, came to Prairie Creek upon his retirement in 1932 and died at 78 years of age in 1950. His carpentry skills were used in the construction and alteration of ranch buildings.

Arthur was born in Nova Scotia in 1856 and died two months before his 98th birthday in 1953. Irene was also born in Nova Scotia, in 1867, and died in 1945. She was an amateur photographer and the historic photographs of ranch buildings were taken and developed by her. She taught her daughter-in-law, Marian, about photography, who, in turn, taught her daughter Marian Ledgerwood, the art of photography. Marian Ledgerwood has Irene's photographs of her Indian neighbors.

Arthur and Irene had three children: John William, Robert Swan, and Gladys. John was born in 1891, married Marian Kring in 1916, and died in 1957. Their daughter, Marian Ledgerwood of Eureka, provided information and photographs for this report. John was involved in a variety of occupations, driving the auto stage between Eureka and Crescent City, working on the ranch during the 1920's, and working for Hammond Lumber Company and later for P.G.&E.

Robert Swan was born in 1893, married Alma Leen in 1923, and died in 1982. He lived and worked on the Davison Ranch his entire life. He and Alma lived first in the McDonald house, but when Irene suffered a stroke in 1943, they moved into the bungalow to care for her. Alma still lives here as she nears 90 years of age. Robert and Alma had five children: Lowell, Richard, Melvin, Maurice and Clarice. Richard continued the ranching operations until 1992. He and his wife, Winnie, had five children, but none has made ranching a life's work.

Gladys married Sidney Foster in 1919 and died as a young woman of tuberculosis in 1923.

The Davison property has been associated with one family and one use for more than a century. Acquisition by the Park terminates the family's ownership and the dairy ranching operations that have had significant impacts on the land and ecological processes. However, returning the land to functions that serve natural values does not mean that an appreciation of historic use and protection of some cultural values cannot be part of the Park's management objectives.

Recommendations

All of the buildings on the Davison property were recorded on the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation, Historic Resources Inventory form as two districts, the Davison Ranch District and the Convention Complex District. Each building and the districts were evaluated for National Register eligibility. None of the buildings, either individually or collectively as districts, was determined eligible under Criterion C.

With the exception of the bungalow, the buildings associated with the Davison Ranch District are not architecturally significant, possessing no notable style or artistic value. Although the bungalow is a good, but somewhat altered, example of Craftsman- period architecture, it is typical of bungalow housing, built in this part of California during the 1920's, and does not "possess significance when evaluated in relationship to other properties." As a district, the Davison Ranch buildings are not considered significant when compared to other dairy ranches in Humboldt County.

The buildings within the Convention Complex are utilitarian structures, built and altered over the past fifty years to provide housing and eating facilities for Convention participants. They represent no particular architecture or period or method of construction and possess no artistic value. Collectively, they do not possess significance when compared to similar group facilities in the area. Furthermore, the religious group which the buildings are associated with does not appear to be significant when compared to other religious groups.

Associated with the Davison property are several easements for rights-of-way and actual fee-title transfers for such use. As examples: in 1909 the Davisons sold a 100-foot strip of land to Southern Pacific Co; in 1917 they granted E.A. Leach timber and access rights to seven acres; in 1983/84, the Davisons entered into agreements with Redwood Community Action Agency for stream restoration work and a 20-year maintenance program. It is recommended that these transactions be reviewed to determine if any apply to the acquired property and, if so, whether the Park should remove them.

Excerpts from the
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
of the
DAVISON RANCH

Evaluated by Susie Van Kirk, March 17, 1992

DESCRIPTION

The 100-acre Davison Ranch, acquired by Redwood National Park in 1991, lies in the lower Prairie Creek valley about two miles inland from the coast in northern Humboldt County. This rich bottomland nourishes pasture grasses, seasonal wetlands, and a riparian community of willow and alder. On the north and west, rising abruptly to 600 feet above the creek's floodplain, is a narrow coastal ridge that once supported centuries-old redwoods, but today is covered with second growth and alder.

Prairie Creek dominates the valley's character, shaping its topography and supporting a diversity of resources of both economic and ecological value. Salmon and steelhead use the creek, although not in the numbers they once did; a variety of wildlife species, including elk, utilize the area; and its bottomlands have sustained ranching since the 1890's.

Prior to settlement, the valley grew scattered Sitka spruce and lots of willows and it was a slow and labor intensive undertaking to clear the land for pasture. An 1897 description of the bottomland noted that it was of the "very best character [but] still in the brush." Contemporary sources recalled that "chopping willows" was a lifetime vocation of the valley's early settler.

The county road from U.S. Highway 101 to Gold Bluffs Beach bisects the ranch, crossing Prairie Creek near the ranch's buildings. The Davison Ranch District, excluding another complex of buildings which will be listed as a separate district, is comprised of six buildings with their ancillary structures, all of which are clustered between the creek and the forested hillside. Other features associated with the district include fencing, the barn yard, old orchard trees, a small tributary creek which figured prominently in the dairy operations, and yard plantings. Large redwood stumps and logs at the base of the hillside attest to earlier logging activity and ranch use of the timber.

Construction dates for the various buildings range from the 1890's to 1965. There are three houses, ancillary buildings, a milking barn, hay barn, and an equipment shed. With the exception of a portion of one house, all the buildings are in their original location and most appear to be structurally sound. Architecturally, they are vernacular and utilitarian; the one exception is the 1926 bungalow, which exhibits typical Craftsman-period features with limited alterations.

IMPORTANCE

Settlement of Humboldt County began in 1850 when coastal access was needed to supply interior gold mining districts on the Klamath, Trinity, and Salmon rivers. The initial rush was sparked by tales of rich gold diggings and, indeed, the Gold Bluffs beach mining operation. Just over the ridge from the Davison Ranch was one of the more prominent ventures. However, the region's growth and economy developed not from this illusory wealth, but from timber and farming. The Orick valley along the lower reaches of Redwood Creek and the nearby areas on Prairie Creek, the Eel River valley, and the Arcata Bottom were recognized as Humboldt County's "garden spots" as the County, at the turn-of-the-century, developed a reputation as one of the leading dairy regions in the State.

Although timber historically dominated the economy and the seats of power in the County, the dairy industry has played and continues to play a substantial role not only economically, but also socially and culturally. Beginning in the 1880's and continuing for more than a century, dairy ranching has provided a livelihood and a way of life for many Humboldt County families. From the 1890's through the 1940's, it figured more prominently than

timber in area newspapers with "Farm and Home" supplements and regular features on dairy management and butterfat testing. It wasn't until the end of the Second World War that trees upstaged cows in the local media.

Arthur Davison settled at Prairie Creek in 1890 and began the task of clearing the brush to make way for a dairy operation that grew slowly, reaching eight cows in 1901 and peaking at 100 cows sixty or seventy years later. Arthur was a buttermaker, as were most dairy ranchers of that period. Distances, lack of refrigeration, and the difficulty of transportation precluded the sale of fresh milk. Arthur's son, Robert, continued the buttermaking enterprise, but after the opening of the cheese factory in Orick in 1917 and the purchase of a ranch truck, the Davisons were able to dispose of their milk at the factory. By this time, they were using machines to milk their herd of Jerseys.

In 1932, they built a dairy house near the little creek that runs off the side of the hill. Diverting the water through a trough in which the milk cans were set, the Davisons were able to maintain the milk at a cold enough temperature to go into the business of bottling whole, raw milk for local customers. During the 1940's Robert's high-school-age sons delivered the bottled milk, taking the excess to the cheese factory on their way to school. The delivery route was discontinued about 1948 and from that time on, the milk was sold to various area creameries whose trucks made daily pickups at the ranch.

Dairy ranching has been the dominant land-use on the Davison property for the past century. It has supported several generations of Davisons and contributed to a regionally important industry. Buildings considered as contributing to the Davison Ranch District are the bungalow, the original portion of the McDonald house, the milking barn, hay barn and equipment shed. These buildings are either integral to the dairy ranching context or are of historic or architectural interest. None of these buildings, either individually or collectively, are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

SOURCES

Arcata Union, various issues, 1886-1925. Arcata, CA.

Humboldt Times, 11 Oct. 1926; 14 Nov. 1948; 7 Jan. 1951; 8 Dec. 1953; 7 Sept. 1957. Eureka, CA.

Western Watchman, 8 May 1897. Eureka, CA.

Deed and Vital Statistics Records, Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, CA.

Interviews:

Marian Ledgerwood, Eureka, 24 Feb. 1992

Alma Davison, Prairie Creek, 5 March 1992; 17 March 1992

Maurice Davison, San Jose by phone, 12 March 1992.

Notes from Interview with Alma Davison at her Prairie Creek home, 17 March 1992

Ann King Smith participated in the interview.

Alma talked about the Convention, which is held for four days in mid-August on a Thursday through Sunday. She said that a meeting the previous day with Superintendent Bill Ehorn had assured the Davisons that the Convention would occur, as scheduled, this summer. Orick people like the Convention and have apparently expressed concerns to Bill Ehorn that the Convention be allowed to continue using the facilities on the Davison Ranch. Between 800 and 900 people attend; they spend money in Orick for food, motels, and gasoline.

The first Convention at the Davisons was in 1937, so this summer will mark its 55th year. Alma always attends. This Convention is the farthest one north in California. They are held elsewhere in the State; there are so many people that this facility could not accommodate all of them. The church has members in every state and is worldwide. There is no name associated with the church; it is a Bible-oriented fellowship. Meetings are held on Sundays in people's homes.

The ministers go out in twos. Usually a younger man is paired with an older, experienced minister. They give up everything when they decide to go out to preach. They go door-to-door; sometimes they put ads in the newspaper and have cards printed. Church people invite their friends and the meetings expand through these contacts. They are a close-knit, supportive fellowship. The Davisons name is on the Convention list, so people just stop by when passing through the area. Ralph McDonald is the minister in charge here. He was at the meeting yesterday and invited Bill Ehorn to come for the preparation time prior to the Convention. The other local minister is Donald Fisher of Arcata.

Alma's folks became involved with the church when Alma was about 10 years old [1911]. The family came to Humboldt County in 1916. Meetings were held in the school in Orick and there have been meetings in people's homes in the Orick area ever since. Alma introduced the Davisons to the church. Since the 1920's, there have been meetings at the Davisons on Sundays. If there is no minister present, an elder takes charge. Money is not solicited, only free-will offerings are made.

Alma responded to questions regarding the buildings and property. The dike along Prairie Creek was built in the early 1950's. Prairie Creek used to come "clear up to the house" and they kept a boat ready during those times so they could get to the barn. The Milking Barn was built in 1939; prior to that time, the cows were milked in the big barn. The Dairy House, built prior to the Milking Barn, sat right on the creek just east of the Milking Barn. The Dairy House was moved to the Convention Complex, probably when they stopped bottling milk. (Maurice indicated that this was about 1948.) She thinks the connection with the woodshed was made in the 1950's. The wheelchair ramp was built for her husband, Robert. about 1979.

Alma said they never made butter after she moved there in 1923. They started bottling milk when Mel was about 6 years old and he was born in 1929. (This would make it 1935, but the Dairy House was built in 1932, so perhaps that was the year they started bottling milk.) Lowell was born in 1924 and when he was 14 (1938), he got a drivers license to drive the truck they used to deliver the bottled milk. They didn't standardize their milk and it had a butterfat content of 7%. The boys had the milk route while they were in high school, delivering before school and taking the excess to cheese factory across from the school.

Alma is the oldest of eight children; seven are still living. She will be 90 in November. She had five children, four of whom are living; Lowell died a few years ago. Her daughter, Clarice, was born in January 1936 and lives in McKinleyville. Dick and Winnie have five children, four boys and a girl.

HISTORIC NEWS CLIPPINGS relevant to the Davison Ranch

Western Watchman (8 May 1897) Up the Coast, trip by Editor William Ayres.

This morning (April 27th), I visited a number of places down the creek then took my way up Prairie creek. On both Redwood and Prairie creek, there are many hundreds of acres of the very best character of bottom land still in the brush, in fact, only a small proportion of the land on Redwood has been cleared and on Prairie creek, only a few patches of an acre or two each have been cleared.

It is true that the blight of the Scotch syndicate is on a great part of this country, yet there are quite a number of reliable holdings along the creek that have but a small beginning. The bottom land here is covered with maple principally, and, however valuable it may be for furniture wood, there is no way of saving it or getting it to market but it must go into the clearing fire together with the brush....

Going up Prairie creek, we pass the places of Arthur Davidson (sic), D.J. Dutch, John McDonald. R. McIntosh, Win. Stehlow, all located in the woods and brush, and then comes the fine open prairie home of A.J. Harris (Elk Prairie). This is really a fine place, at least 200 acres of clear land, 100 acres in crop, comfortable dwelling house and two large barns, quite an orchard and the place is generally well stocked.

Arcata Union (3 March 1900) Orick

G. Tomlinson has broken up a new piece of land on the side hill which he has sowed to oats for hay and grain... The bridge built by Arthur Davidson (sic) last fall, which is 60 feet in length and 10 wide, did not stand the test so well as Arthur expected. The last raise in the creek washed out one bent, but did no further damage.

Arcata Union (4 May 1901) Orick Visited. Items Gathered on a Recent Trip to that Thriving Locality

One of the neatest ranches in the Prairie creek section is that of Arthur Davidson (sic), who has 90 acres of A. No. 1 bottom land, 35 acres of which are cleared. Eight cows are being milked at present and ready sale is found in Trinidad. The ranch is an ideal place for fruit and the trees were in a thrifty condition.

Tomatoes are grown here with great success and all fruit reaches the highest point of perfection. All the improvements on this ranch show a thrifty spirit, from the bridges to the buildings.