



MOUNT OLYMPUS

Photo by Asahel Curtis

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OLYMPIC NATIONAL MONUMENT.

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HON. W. E. HUMPHREY.

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The story of the new "National Monument" set aside in the Olympic mountains, is a tale that will not take many words in the telling. Ever since I have been in Congress I have been working to have a bill passed that would make a national game preserve in these mountains. I desired this, not only to preserve the game, but as a step toward a national park. This bill was favored by President Roosevelt but met with much opposition in Congress. Once I did succeed in getting it through the House, but it died in the Senate. There was no possibility of getting it passed again before President Roosevelt went out of office. In my anxiety to do something toward preserving the Roosevelt elk of the Olympics, the largest and finest elk in the world, and to keep this region in shape where no one could claim that they held rights because of settlement, I thought of the statute that gives the President the power to set aside certain areas of land to preserve such features as were of a great scientific value. I decided to ask the President to do this with this region. I requested Mr. Pinchot, who was interested always in

game protection, to go with me to see the President for this purpose.

I shall not forget that visit. It was, as I recall, the second day of March, two days before the end of the Roosevelt administration and the beginning of the Taft administration. I was waiting in the Cabinet room when the President came in. He had that wearied and tired expression that comes from long continued exertion, when there is more work crowding upon you than you can possibly do. This was the first and only time that I ever saw him when he showed the effect of the almost unbelievable amount of work that he did in those closing strenuous days.

Without waiting for any formal greeting, as soon as he entered he called to me across the room, "Tell me what you want, Mr. Humphrey, and I will give it to you. Do not take time to give me the details, simply tell me what you wish me to do." I said, "Mr. President, I want you to set aside as a national monument, 750,000 acres in the heart of the Olympic mountains, the main purpose of this is to preserve the elk in the Olympics." He replied, "I will do it. Prepare your order and I will sign it." That was the whole of the transaction. I shook hands with him, wished him success in Africa and told him good-by. As I was going out, he said to me, "I will tell you all about my hunt when I return." That is the last time that I saw him.

Later I sent him at Oyster Bay a photograph showing a portion of the "monument," which had been sent to me by Mr. Curtis. He wrote me saying he was greatly pleased to get the picture and closed by saying that he would certainly tell me all about his African trip when he returned home.