



STAR STAFF PHOTO /FRED CAVINDER

Called the largest broadleaf in the nation, an Indiana sycamore tree finally was blown down in a 1920 wind storm. A limb from the tree that grew in White River bottoms, about 1½ miles east of Worthington, was preserved and placed in the Worthington city park in 1925.

"The smaller of two limbs found by the tree is in the park. The other one was probably too decayed to be preserved," said Mary Ropp of Worthington. She remembers the tree growing on her grandfather's farm.

In 1915, the age of the tree was estimated to be 500 years, the height 150 feet, the spread 100 feet. The circumference at 1 foot above the ground was 45 feet, 3 inches; it reached 42 feet, 3 inches, at 5 feet above ground. The limb measures more than 23 feet.

The largest tree in the eastern United States, the sycamore began to decay and rot with age, which made it easy prey for the wind storm.

"Where the trunk was rotten, you could walk through the tree by scrunching down just a little. Unfortunately there was no way to preserve the whole tree," Ropp said.