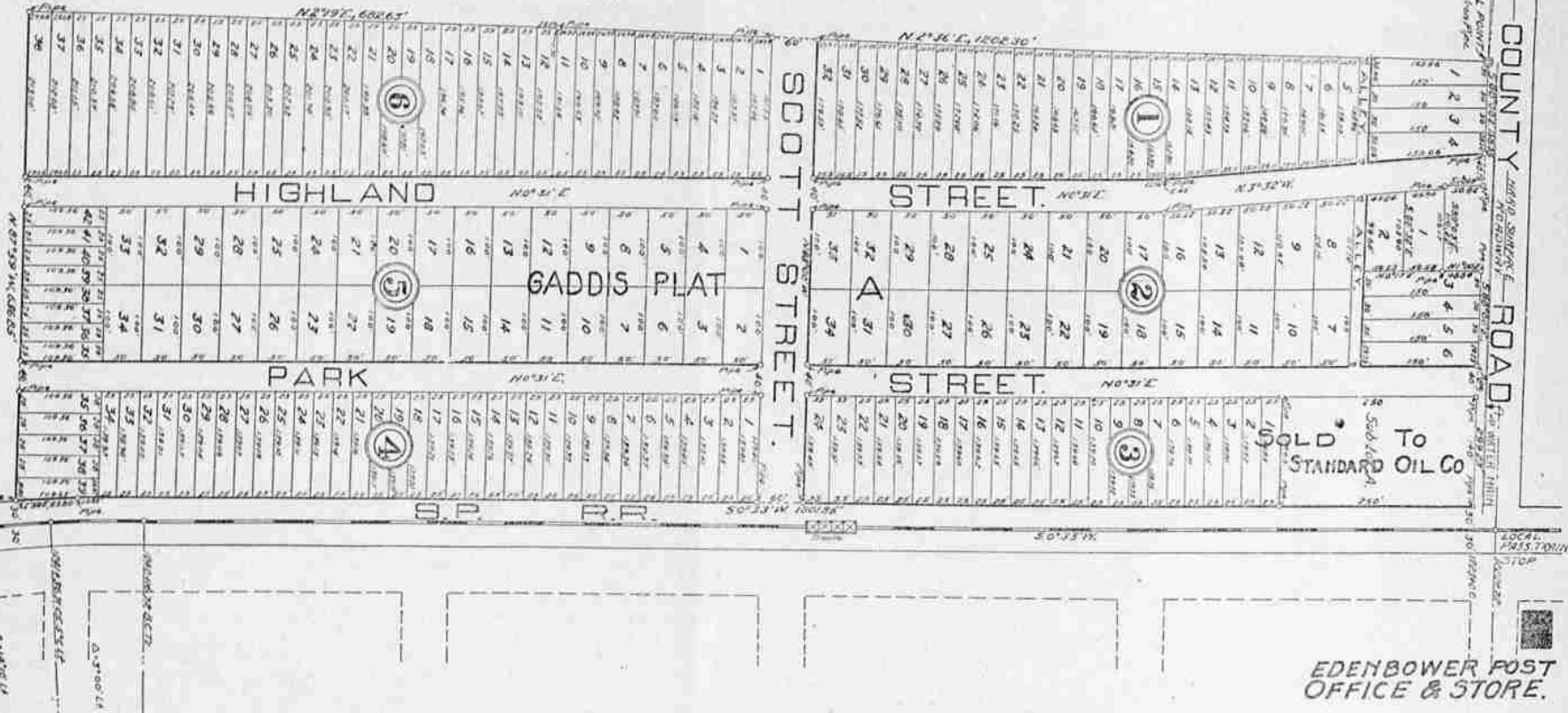
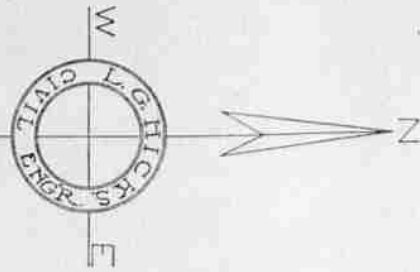


GADDIS PLAT "A"

SCALE: 1"=100 FT.



Almost Completed! Standard Information. See Winnie Gaddis THE PLUMBER

INCIDENT IN THE POSTAL SERVICE

By H. C. Stanton.

In October 1872 the Oregon and California railroad, as it was called at that time, reached Roseburg, and this was the terminus of the railroad from Portland south for ten years or perhaps a little longer. In those early times it was not an uncommon occurrence for gold dust from Eastern Oregon mines to pass through the mail to San Francisco. Mail pouches containing such shipments were tagged through and secured by brass locks, way offices having no keys to unlock such locks. When a brass lock came through on the mail car, the messenger always brought that pouch into the postoffice, where the other through mail sacks were put off in front of the postoffice and remained there until the stage came up to take the mail on south. When the stage came up to the postoffice we always carried the brass lock pouch out, and passed it up to the driver, calling his attention to it, and he always placed it in the bottom of the front boot of the stages. The driver understood and knew the contents of those brass lock pouches as we termed them.

In the course of time one of the stage drivers conceived the idea that he could get away with the treasure and make a clean escape with it, so he concluded to make the venture. At the first station south of Roseburg he secreted the pouch and matured his plans on a following trip. He cut the pouch and took out the gold dust (which in those days was

usually placed in yeast powder cans, several of them secured together) and threw the mail pouch into the river near by. Having commenced his scheme he had to work rapidly without delay. Consequently he soon left the stage line. The dust not reaching its destination was reported short. The case was put in Special Postal Agent Ben Underwood's hands for investigation. Of course the stage driver having left the service, suspicion rested on him at once, and Underwood took up his trail. He came to Roseburg and got Jim Wright, who was sheriff at the time and Asher Marks to accompany him. They went to Rocket Station prepared to drag the river. The third time they threw the grappling iron in, it caught the mail pouch, and with considerable effort, as the sand had settled on the pouch, pulled it out. The pouch was cut near the upper end, just enough to take out the cans of gold dust. A package of green books was overlooked and remained in the pouch. The greenbacks were not injured by being water soaked.

Underwood got ex-Sheriff John Fullerton, Hon. J. C. Fullerton's father, to accompany him. They went to the mint at Philadelphia, Pa., and learned that a certain lot of gold dust agreeing in quantity with that which had been stolen had been presented there and the party had obtained the coin for the same. The description tallied with the driver. The driver had set his pegs for

Texas, and Underwood and Fullerton took up the trail and were no long in overtaking the fugitive, he was brought back to Portland, and tried before Judge Deady, convicted and sent to the penitentiary for a term of years.

The judge in passing sentence emphasized the fact that the gold dust was in the driver's care for safe delivery, and consequently his action was a betrayal of trust, making it the more criminal.

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