

DOUGLAS COUNTY HISTORY

Epitomized Review Of Its Origin And Progress Answers Many Requests

Editor's note: The following is a review of Douglas county history prepared by City Manager M. W. Slankard, who recently wrote a series of articles on Roseburg's past for The News-Review.

By M. W. SLANKARD
Roseburg City Manager

Considerable interest has been shown in the recent past history of Roseburg. Numerous requests have been received regarding the past history of Douglas county. Few people who now reside here have any idea of what transpired when the county was first formed.

Before the organizing of Douglas county many hardships had to be overcome. There were many Indian wars through the years preceding 1850. The Indians themselves being warlike, had many large-scale battles between themselves. Before the coming of the "white people," the Indians of the Rogue river and the Umpqua were finally overcome by a large tribe known as the Klickitat warriors, from beyond the Columbia river.

There were many tribes in Southern Oregon, which now embraces the five counties of Douglas, Coos, Jackson, Josephine and Curry. This area was one of the most thickly populated by hostile reds before the "whites" came and it was the hardest to clean

up by the U.S. Army battalions. The main reason for so many Indian settlements was the fact there was plentiful game and many rivers in the area. It seems, from reading history prior to 1884, that the main reason for so many Indians was that surrounding areas were settled and the Indians were pushed towards the southern Oregon area.

Salmon migrated up the rivers of the Umpqua basin. The Rogue river provided many good fishing spots. With the coming of white settlers, the Indians were pushed into tight bands and were hard to break up. They were extremely hard to fight, due to the rugged country.

Fur Trappers Come First
The first whites in Douglas county (or of the area which was later to become Douglas county) were fur trappers of the Hudson's Bay company. Fort Umpqua in Yoncalla valley was erected in 1837, as headquarters providing provisions for immigrants driving between the Willamette valley and California.

Douglas is the largest county in southern Oregon, lying in what is known as the Umpqua valley, which is not a valley at all but a depression or basin—like a drainage area. The area comprises a very rugged terrain along the North and South Umpqua rivers. The area across the county is 121 miles from east to west. There are 4,950 square miles in the county, about one-twentieth of the entire area of the State of Oregon.

Few people realize that this is the most enjoyable vacation area of the United States. The beaches and bay area between the Umpqua and Siuslaw rivers are very interesting. The area up the Ump-



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

qua is beyond description. Few people have completed the trip from the coast to the headwaters of either the North Umpqua or South Umpqua rivers. Source of the North Umpqua is Diamond lake, which, no one can deny, is as pretty a place as any other in the United States.

Recorded history of Southern Oregon goes back to 1732, when a Spanish vessel needing repairs entered the mouth of the Umpqua river to make them.

The first white settlers to settle in Douglas county were in Scott's valley near the Hudson's Bay company's fort. Later two others settled in Yoncalla valley. Later that year, 1847, others settled in the area that is now Drain.

There were still a lot of Indians around these areas. They were becoming more friendly, but were still watched.

Government Instituted
In April 1851, the governor issued a proclamation designating three polling places for an election to select officers for the formation of a county government. The total vote was 78. The first meeting of the board of commissioners was held at Winchester, April 4, 1852.

On the following day the county was divided into seven precincts known as Calapooya, Winchester, Deer Creek, Lookingglass, Myrtle Creek, Canyonville and Roseburg.

Though Winchester was designated the county seat and was the largest settlement within the limits of the county, it had from the start a strong rival. Aaron Rose had laid out the town of Roseburg, and being a wide-awake, energetic man, he began at once to secure for his city honors and advantages which accrue to a town possessing the distinction of being a county seat. Roseburg Wins Election

Aided by the influx of people

to Roseburg and areas to the south, Rose succeeded finally in securing the passage of an act providing for the submission of the question of a permanent location of the county seat.

When the day of the election arrived, Rose invited the settlers of Lookingglass valley, who also aspired to have the county seat, to accept his hospitality. Rose's generosity so worked upon the feelings of his guests that they went in a body to the polls and voted in favor of Roseburg. Later, the signing of a peace treaty was "moved bodily" to Roseburg.

The growth of Douglas County has been steady. The valuation in 1855 was \$908,456; the population 587. In 1883 the valuation was \$3,087,564.

Indians Driven Out
In 1852, the areas of Lookingglass, Olalla, Tenmile and Camas suffered considerably in Indian wars. A body of Umpqua Indians living on Lookingglass creek numbered 64.

Citizens of the area struck the first blow, killed eight and drove the remainder out of the area. The Indians returned later and stole stock and burned buildings. This was perhaps the last instance where a real outbreak took place, where considerable blood was spilled.

The land on which now stands Myrtle Creek was purchased in 1851 for one yoke of oxen. In 1862 the site was surveyed and divided into lots. The town was started soon after, by the erection of a store. A sawmill using water power was erected in 1872. The saws cut 5,000 feet of lumber daily.

A little stream known as Council creek near Riddle was the scene of signing of a peace treaty with Indians of the area. Riddle was referred to at times as Riddleburg. However, Riddle was the official name. In 1882, the Oregon and California R. R. terminated in that "lively" town.

Towns Spring Up
Canyonville was a most important town, as it was a terminating point on the old stage route between Oregon and California. In 1852 it had a log house and blacksmith shop. The town was made into a townsite in 1858. Later a grist mill was installed, with a daily capacity of 24 barrels of flour a day.

Oakland in the early 50s was the most progressive city. There were two townsites one known as "Old Town" and the present town being the original town center. Oakland, too, was a donation claim. In 1881 the two distinct towns consolidated and went on to become the fine city it is today.

Drain was a major trading center of the area. There was a stage junction from the coast and north and south. About 1861 the first school district was formed and a log school house was constructed.

Winchester was the first town and was a fur trading center. Douglas county was considered

a very rugged county and one rich in fur as well as timber. The county never came to its full growth until after the recent war. The population in 1940 was 25,000. Today the population has increased to an estimated 55,000. The timber has brought in new people and has provided new industry and work for these families. There has been a 430 percent increase in recent years of manufacturing plants within the county.

The bonded indebtedness and tax structure is very good. True, taxes in the county have gone up but they are not for county purposes. In figuring the county tax, many people do not stop to consider that the taxes paid to the assessor's office are for other purposes than just the county tax.

The Douglas county taxes are 8.5 mills or \$8.50 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. School district No. 4, the school district around Roseburg, has a levy of 40.9 mills or \$40.90 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. The total assessed valuation of Douglas county is \$56,405,365.

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Receipt Near Safe May Clear Up 18 Burglaries

SEATTLE, Nov. 22. — (AP)—A crumpled service station receipt, found nearly two months ago near a burglarized safe in near-by Maple valley, led to the roundup of five persons suspected of 18 burglaries throughout Western Washington.

The last two of the five suspects were arrested Sunday in Salt Lake City where Chief of King county detectives Adam Lykoski and Seattle Detective Kenneth W. Thomas had watched for five days to grab the pair when they showed for an appointment rendezvous with the other trio.

Arrested Sunday were Melvin James Taylor and Frank Hughey. Both have waived extradition and will be brought to Seattle.

Held in the county jail here were Bob Cameron, an escapee from the state penitentiary at Walla Walla; Willard L. McIlrath and a 17-year-old youth. No formal charge has been filed against Cameron, who fled the penitentiary in January.

Taylor, Hughey and McIlrath are parole convicts police said. They and the 17-year-old boy have been charged with second degree burglary in connection with burglarizing the Blading and James company premises here Sept. 21.

The crumpled service station receipt was found near an abandoned and burglarized safe by County Detective Johnny Augustavo. It bore an automobile license which Lykoski and Thomas traced to a "Gordon Marshall." It turned out to be Cameron.

Last GAR Commander United With Children

PORTLAND — (AP)—Theodore A. Penland, last commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, had his daughter and three sons with him today—the first reunion in 41 years.

Penland, 100, was brought here Friday from his home at Vancouver, Wash., across the Columbia river, on a pretext and was surprised by his children.

The eldest is Wilton, 78, of Wheatland, Calif. The youngest is Noel, 42, of Davis Dam, Nev. The others are Mrs. Claudine Parks, 62, of Sacramento, and Floyd, 61, of Scottsville, Va.

They are the survivors of 10—five sons and five daughters. "And I have 19 great-great-grandchildren," said Penland.

The "fingers" at the end of an elephant's trunk can handle objects as small as a penny.

Irishman Hints At Force Probability To Get Ulster

PITTSBURGH — (AP)—General Thomas Barry, hero of the rebellion that preceded Ireland's independence, says his countrymen are willing to fight to regain the six British-controlled counties of Northern Ireland.

The six counties have remained under British supervision since Ireland declared her independence 20 years ago and the country was partitioned by England.

Speaking here at an anti-partition rally of the United Irish societies of western Pennsylvania, General Barry said: "We had to take the 26 counties of southern Ireland by force."

We will probably have to use the same methods in Ulster (northern Ireland)."

General Barry, who is on a month-long tour of the U.S., said the Irish government has set aside \$100,000,000 to buy guns, adding:

"We have all the money we need. Our air force is weak and our navy has only a few sloops but we have the manpower where it counts."

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