

# Pioneer Thomas Shrum Family Settled What Is Now Glide

## Letters Of Drain Man Tell How Early Pioneer Traded Oxen And Wagon For Farm

By MRS. GEORGE BACHER

The following sketch of the life of John Mires, one of Douglas County's early pioneers, was extracted from a letter from his son, Benton Mires of Drain, in 1932.

On March 27, 1853, John Mires and his party started from his home 12 miles west of Burlington, Iowa, for the Oregon country. In his immediate family were himself and his wife and four children, and his own one-year-old son. Together with them were Joe Isham Sr. and a young man by the name of James McFarland. They had two covered wagons and three yoke of oxen to each wagon, besides father loaned one yoke of oxen to Uncle Joseph Deardorff, which he worked all the way across the plains. It will not be out of place to give the names of our oxen. They were Bob and Tom, Ned and Riley, Frank and Pierce, Spark and Golden, Ball and Nick, Tip and Tyler, and Bill and Jill.

### Also Work Cows

They also worked some cows at different times, and one mare, Joe Isham drove one team and father the other, while W. H. Byars, then a boy of 14, and James McFarland, near the same age, drove the loose cattle, about 20 head. In driving the team father walked just about all the way across the plains. The journey took just five months time and was beset with many hardships.

In our immediate train were the following families and people, besides our own family: William Deardorff and wife Georgiana; Rube Roberts, Joe Isham Jr. and Fleming Deardorff, son of Joseph Deardorff, of the age of about 14 years. One wagon, three yoke of oxen, about fifteen head of loose cattle, one mare and a riding mule. Rube Roberts also had a mare and a dog. Uncle Will Deardorff drove the team. He also loaned one yoke of oxen to Joseph M. Deardorff and wife Elizabeth, Mary Ann, Will and Peter Deardorff, their children; and one wagon, three yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows, Joseph driving the team; and David Workman and wife Martha, and Jackson Morton, who had one wagon, three yoke of oxen, two cows and a dog. Workman drove the team.

### Continue Journey

There were Christian Sears and wife Rebecca, their children, Emanuel, Susan and Sophrona. With them was a man named Levi Cline, and Dr. David Reams. Dr. Reams left Sears at Grand Round and traveled with us from there on. Sears had two wagons, one drawn by four yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows and the other by two mares.

About five days after starting the train was joined by Sanford Mires and wife Sophrona, and Newland, Josephine and Henry. With them were a man named Barker, and James Pearson, an old Mississippi river comrade of

John Mires. They had two wagons, six yoke of oxen and two cows. These composed our regular emigrant train. Others joined them from time to time, travelled along for a while, then dropped out. At Raft river, Sanford Mires and company left our train and took the road to California.

After reaching Oregon we lived the first winter in the little village of Milwaukie, a few miles below Oregon City, on the Willamette river. There father did all kinds of work. He chopped wood, cut saw logs, made rails, built fences, helped load lumber on coast vessels, dug potatoes and did many minor jobs. The stock was wintered by Dennis Hartly near Amity in Yamhill County.

### Move To Douglas County

In June, 1854, we moved south to Umpqua Valley, then Umpqua, now Douglas County, and bought the squatter's right to our old home place, near the foot of Tye Mountain and something over a mile from Calapooia Creek, from Bob Stewart, giving one wagon and two yoke of oxen for the purchase price. There the family resided in a little one room log cabin with dirt floor until they built a larger hewed log house during the fall of that year, after which they used the old cabin for a stable. Five more children were born.

Mother and father lived here until father died on April 3, 1888, at the age of 65 years.

The Mires men, as a rule, were tall, spare and athletic. Father was rather undersized - five feet 7 1/4 inches. But he stood and walked straight until he died. He was brave, industrious, venturesome and a generous man. He was an honest and sincere lover of home and country, and he held the confidence and respect of his neighbors. He would go to any lengths and dare any hazard for those in distress - especially for those he loved.

He received but meager education, but he had a phenomenal memory and he took a deep and active interest in the education of others. He did all he was able toward the education of his four step-children and his six children, and it cheered his heart to see them advance.

### Old Moore House Built Of Hand-Hewn Timbers

The E. M. Moore house in Roseburg was built in 1858 at the corner of Washington and Rose Sts. Its framework is constructed of hand-hewn timbers, its ceilings and walls are of paneled, hand-finished wood and it was furnished in the style of pioneer days. Mr. Moore's daughter, Lillie, was born there in 1862 and lived all of her 77 years in the old home. (She died in 1939.) The United States government is named as principal beneficiary in her will. The home has not been occupied since her death.



**RELATIVES AT PICNIC** — Relatives of Thomas Shrum from the Roseburg area recently gathered at a picnic at Wolf Creek Camp. Pictured above, they are, left to right: Front row — Kathy Melvin, Jean Melvin, Tonia Wright, Linda Neal, Allen Casebeer, Roger Andrus, Ida Neal, Ronnie Matthews, Richard Casebeer; second — Tom Shrum, Mrs. Lou Andrus, Mrs. Don Wright, Mrs. Woodrow Shrum, Mrs. Herbert Melvin, Mrs. Harry Rolfe; third — David Shrum,

Gene Shrum, Mrs. Carl Hill, Mrs. Robert Matthews, Mrs. George Casebeer, Mrs. Vern Shrum, Woodrow Shrum, LeNoir Shrum, James Shrum, Mrs. Lee Wallace; last row — Mrs. Gene Shrum, Roy Matthews, Don Wright, Vern Shrum, holding Terry Wright; Duane Shrum, Robert Matthews, Mrs. Ben Doss, George Casebeer, Mrs. LeNoir Shrum, Mrs. George Shrum, holding Linda; Charles Neal, and Mrs. Charles Neal. (Picture by Photo Lab).

## Donation Land Claim Results In '49 Murder

By MRS. GEORGE BACHER

Back in the days of the '40's, a "donation land claim" was spoken of almost as casually as one speaks of a "city lot" in these days, a century later. But there was a stipulation governing the size of that land claim. Married, a man was entitled to 640 acres. Single, he was entitled to only half as much. And that stipulation, made in good faith by the government, led from misunderstandings to devastation - and sometimes death!

There was, for example, the story of a man by the name of Wimpyler. This man was a "nodding acquaintance" of Hoy Flournoy, but in those days when the migration to Oregon had hardly begun, a man was considered trustworthy until he was proven otherwise.

Flournoy, together with the Applegate party, had passed through the Lookingglass country and on into the valley beyond which today bears his name. In order to accumulate means with which to exist on the claim he planned to stake there, Flournoy joined the gold-rush parties heading into California. Locating near a mine, he set up a large Dutch oven where he baked bread and sold it to the miners. Money flowed in and as he accumulated \$500 in gold dust and nuggets in exchange for his baked goods, it was tied up in a sack and carefully hidden under the "hearth rock." It was then that Wimpyler made his appearance, and almost simultaneously the gold-some \$8,000 worth-disappeared. Obviously Wimpyler had helped himself, but he denied Flournoy's accusation. A fist-fight followed, with Wimpyler getting the worst of the deal. But the money never showed up.

Having acquired the "easy pickings," Wimpyler turned north to Oregon, settling near Flournoy's coveted site. Greedy for land as well as for gold, he hurriedly sought out a wife - a 12-year-old child. Having achieved the status of a married man, he was entitled to the 640 acres. As soon as he secured the land, he murdered the girl, tossed her bludgeoned body in the basement, and set fire to the cabin.

His crime was discovered however, and he was brought to justice before the Court at Salem.

## Hardship Endured By Circuit Rider

By MRS. GEORGE BACHER

One, sitting today in one of Roseburg's many churches - or other equally impressive buildings throughout the county - would find it hard to imagine the days of the "circuit rider." But, a century ago, with only scattered homesteads here and there, formal services were unheard of. People of faith partook of the Lord's supper beneath the trees, and awaited the circuit rider's appearance for special revival meetings.

Perhaps one of the best known of these righteous men was A. L. Todd, affectionately called "Brother Todd" by all who knew him. Brother Todd lived in Lookingglass, but he served as far away as Coos county and in the Willamette valley. His means of commuting was limited solely to horse-back, and it has been estimated that he traveled some 68,000 miles, through mud and dust, to serve his people.

The weather meant little to the devout man. If there was an appointment he kept it. The story has been told again and again of the severe ducking he took once after holding a service in Coos county.

It was a dark winter night. Rain had been falling steadily for days



**DIRECT DESCENDANTS POSE** — Sitting for a separate picture at the Wolf Creek picnic were these direct descendants of Thomas Shrum. From left to right are: Front — Gene Shrum, Ellen Andrus, Betty Rolfe, Woodrow Shrum, Mabel Doss and Dorene Neal; back—Vern and LeNoir Shrum. (Picture by Photo Lab).



**ORIGINAL SHRUM FAMILY** — The above picture, taken many years back, shows the original Shrum settlers. The two girls are both present Roseburg residents. Gertrude Matthews (seated on her mother's lap) is known today as Mrs. H. F. Hatfield, 302 E. 1st Ave. N.; seated on the extreme right is Leone Matthews, now Mrs. C. C. Hill, wife of the county judge. Seated, from left to right, are Ellen Shrum Matthews, (Mrs. L. L. Matthews), Gertrude Matthews (Mrs. H. F. Hatfield), Thomas Shrum, Mrs. Thomas (Cassandra) Shrum, Leone Matthews (Mrs. C. C. Hill); standing, Elizabeth Shrum (Mrs. Forrest Blakely), Effie Chapman Shrum (Mrs. Steven Shrum), Steven Shrum, George W. Shrum and Mary R. Shrum (Mrs. William Ingram).

and the upper Coquille river was high. Brother Todd recognized the danger, but confident of his speed and eager to get home, he set in to ford the stream. The horse was sure-footed and a good swimmer, but the odds were against the pair in so swift a current. Mid-stream, the horses feet were swept from under him, and horse and master were floundering in the icy water. But Brother Todd was a man of initiative, so sliding backwards he grabbed the horse by the tail.

Down the river they went, their heads sometimes above the surface-sometimes below. The horse finally reached the opposite bank and climbed out exhausted with her human burden still hanging on for dear life.

Then, wet and cold, the two set out for the nearest homestead-fifteen miles away.

## Author Lives In One Of Old Rental Cabins

A certain little cabin among the rental cabins at the corner of Lane and Sheridan Sts. is quite old. It has been remodeled into apartments, I believe. It had a wide

fireplace and at one time was the home of Henry H. Woodward who wrote "The Lyrics of the Umpqua." 1889. The book is sought by collectors. Mr. Woodward sailed from England in 1843 and spent five years at sea, learning to be a sailor. Finally he came to Oregon and then to Roseburg where he lived for years. He rode a white horse

and sold books all around the County. He died in Roseburg in 1915, age 88.

## HEAVY STEEL DOORS

The Star Theatre is in an old building - the Marks Brothers' Building. It was built in 1878. It had large heavy steel doors at the lower floor entrance and these doors were closed tight at night and locked with massive steel keys. The business carried on was general merchandising. They had buying and selling in all lines - calico, harness, groceries and wool.

Oregon people voted three times against a convention before a constitutional convention was approved in 1857. The state was admitted to the Union two years later.

## Douglas County New Paradise To Early Day Residents Who Headed West From Illinois

"A new paradise. It beats 'em all." That's what pioneer Thomas Shrum said when he first got a look at Douglas County back in the early 1860s.

The cry, "Dar's gold in dem dar hills," took Thomas and his brother, Nicholas, from their peaceful farm on Howell Prairie, now Salem, to Eldorado, Calif. This was during the "gold days" of 1848.

In 1852 they came back to Oregon, weren't satisfied with Howell Prairie and moved to a 160-acre land grant in Douglas County. That's the area we call Glide these days.

Shrum had done a lot of traveling before he went searching for gold. Thomas, his parents, three sisters and five brothers started west by ox team from St. Joseph, Mo., in April, 1846. Thomas, born on Dec. 8, 1827, in Lincoln, was 18 years old when he left Missouri.

On her worn calendar, Thomas' mother kept track of the days. It took six months to make the trip to Howell Prairie.

When the gold fever attacked them, Thomas and his brother, went with one of the first teams to cross the Siskiyou Mountains to Eldorado, located in Northern California.

### Head Back to Oregon

The water at Eldorado became contaminated in 1852 and the brothers left. They sold their ox team and wagon for \$1,600 and started back for the northwest by schooner from San Francisco.

Here came trouble. Boats being what they were a century ago, a heavy storm hit them just outside the Golden Gate and blew the ship south (they were headed north) for 16 days. The trip to the mouth of the Columbia River took 51 days.

Thomas got a look at Douglas County shortly after returning home, and was never again content at Howell Prairie.

Filled with enthusiasm for the "paradise," he secured a 160-acre donation land claim from the Government, at the spot where Glide is located today.

Still not satisfied, in 1864 he procured 180 acres one mile from what is today the old Shrum homestead on the North Umpqua near Little River.

### Marries Nurse

On Oct. 29, 1859, he took red-haired Cassandra Kerns as his bride. Miss Kerns came to Marion County as a nurse from her home in Indiana.

He had warned her of the pioneer life - no white neighbors and no shopping facilities. The latter involved a trip to Astoria or Portland, where they would trade hams, bacon and grain for other foods. There was no town of Roseburg then.

Cassandra proved a real pioneer, though she was at first rather shocked to see the Indian "sweat pits." Here, Indians would sit and sweat for hours, then jump into an icy-cold stream. This was supposed to cure all sorts of illness.

She was also amazed at the sacred Indian burial grounds near Glide, where the Indians kept tryst with the "Great White Spirit."

During his busy pioneer life, Thomas was said to have fought in the Indian Wars and participated in local government.

### Seven Children Born

Thomas and Cassandra had seven children - Della J., Stephen J., Avilla W., Sarah E., Mary



THOMAS SHRUM



CASSANDRA SHRUM

R., Euphemia E. and George W. After the death of Thomas' wife, his son, George, cared for him. Then one day Thomas went quietly to sleep by the fire place. He never awoke. He and his wife both are buried in the Wimberly Cemetery.

George inherited the old homestead after his father's death. Many of his descendants still live in this area. Others are scattered throughout Oregon and California. The descendants of Mrs. L. L. Matthews are also members of the Shrum family.

The birth of Linda Shrum in May of this year, to Mr. and Mrs. George Shrum, adds the fourth generation to the colorful history of Douglas County's Shrum family.

### ONE OF OLDEST

The building across the street east of the Caro Building is one of the oldest buildings in Roseburg. It is occupied at present by the Sprous Rietz, formerly Goettel Variety Store. The Josephsons kept store in it for years and years. It was established about 1868.

## John Hedden Gets Snake; Puts Easterner "In Place"

By MRS. GEORGE BACHER

Many interesting stories have evolved from Scottsburg, once the roaring metropolis of Southern Oregon. And always synonymous with those stories is the name, John Hedden. For John Hedden is the son of the heroic Cyrus Hedden, who, defying death, dragged L. L. Williams' arrow-torn boy to safety in the lower Umpqua country. Those are the "headline stories." But there were other stories too.

Do you know how to dispense with a blow-snake? John Hedden found out.

The story, originating back in the '60s, goes like this: John Hedden and Horace Grubbe, students of the old Umpqua Academy, were out for a morning hike. They encountered a blow-snake. Now Horace had read that tobacco juice would kill such a reptile, so, together, the pair decided to do a bit of research.

John used the weed that would supply the juice, and the rest was easy. Horace, after placing a stick on the snake's head, proceeded to open its mouth with two sticks. Kneeling near, John spat the juice, and with many writhings and convulsions the snake expired. But the story didn't end there. John, having inhaled the virus breath, soon stretched out along beside the snake. No, John didn't die, but he lost a late breakfast.

And then there's the story of how John "put that Eastern bird in his place." This was years later, of course, when John, following in his father's footsteps, was operating Hedden's Store, which also housed the Scottsburg Post Office. These were historical days of Scottsburg's boomdays when gold dust served as the medium of exchange.

Much of this gold passed through the city, enroute to San Francisco.

One day a fellow whose appearance marked him as "an Eastern man," strolled into the store, identified himself as an inspector, and asked to examine the records of the post-office.

John Hedden, who always spoke briefly when an opinion was called for, wasted no words on the occasion. "Get to work," was the laconic reply.

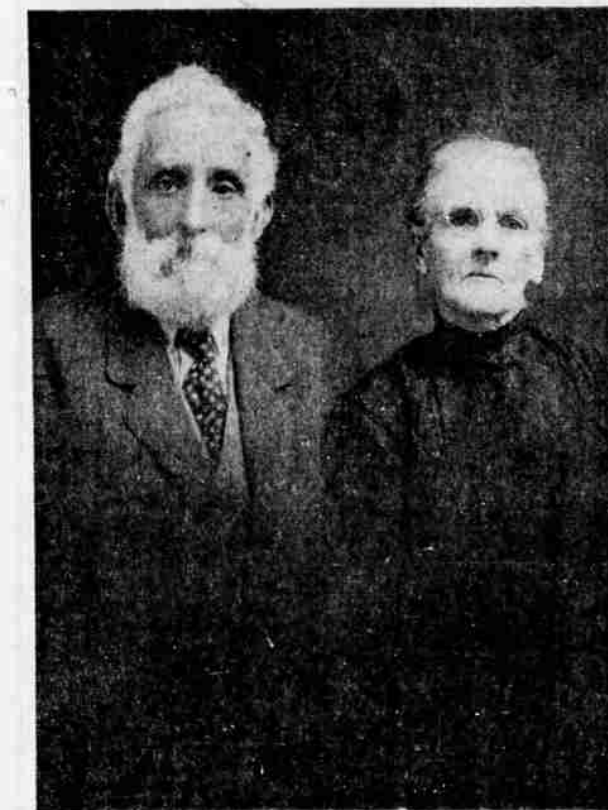
The inspector got busy, delved into all the affairs of the office, counted the stamps and the cash, and after laborious effort came out to the place where John was weighing out merchandise to miners. There was a deficit, the inspector said, and it would have to be made good.

John reached in behind some goods and pulled out a tobacco box filled with dust, picked up a handful and asked, "How much?"

Somewhat bewildered, the official muttered something about the shortage being in the neighborhood of a "shilling." A shilling indeed! John Hedden scratched his head. And then he ventured, "You mean two bits?"

"Well, 23c is the exact amount," the man replied.

Shoving the box of dust toward the federal agent, Hedden said, "There is about \$6,000 worth of gold in there. Take out enough to make up the shortage, because I don't want Uncle Sam going broke on my account. And say, mister, if you don't like the way I run this post-office, just fetch in somebody you think can do it to suit ye. So long as nobody in these diggin's about 'kick, what's all this here fuss about'?"



**EARLY SETTLERS** in the Roseburg Area were Mr. and Mrs. Plinn Cooper, above. Born in Essex County, New York, in 1836, Cooper came to Oregon when 19 by the Isthmus of Panama. Landing at San Francisco, he came north to Crescent City, Calif., then to Josephine County, where he mined and prospected for a year. Coming to Douglas County, he took up a preemption claim about 12 miles southeast of Roseburg, and rented a nearby farm. In 1860 he was married to Hannah E. Kelley. Ten children were born—Elnore, Mary, Lucinda, Edgar, William, Philmore, Minor, Ada, Lillie and Hattie. Cooper was largely instrumental in establishing the first rural free mail route in Douglas County. He represented this county in the state legislature in 1893 and fathered the Wagon Road bill. Interested in education and the welfare of his fellow men, he organized the Green Sunday School in the old Green School House near Kelleys Korner in 1907. He was active until failing health caused him to retire in 1912.