

ROSEBURG GETS START BEFORE DOUGLAS COUNTY

Pioneer Recalls Early History

By MRS. GEORGE BACHER

Early history of Douglas County is recalled by R. J. Hendricks, pioneer Roseburg newspaperman, in an article appearing May 10, 1932. His account, dated at Roseburg, follows:

Lately I have been reading the March 1918 number of the Oregon Historical quarterly, containing historical sketches of Umpqua Academy at Wilbur, by Hon. R. A. Booth, J. H. Booth, Dr. George B. Kuykendall and Austin Mires. The stories these men told make up a good history of Southern Oregon. One gathers from the R. A. Booth article that the first Sunday school in Douglas County was opened by A. R. Flint in his own home on the site of Winchester, and the second about the same time (1851) at Bunton's Gap, where Wilbur was built, and that the same year "one of the first public schools was conducted under a temporary shed made by leaning long planks against a pole that rested on pins driven into oak trees, near where the Wilbur Methodist parsonage now stands."

Umpqua Academy was opened in a rude log house in 1854 and was chartered by the territorial legislature Jan. 15, 1857, and it was closed in October, 1900. Rev. James H. Wilbur, founder, for whom the town was named, was a pioneer state builder as well as an able teacher and an eloquent preacher. He was followed by men of that type, and the institution had nearly a half century of singular usefulness. The roll of students would make up a fair directory of outstanding pioneer families of that section.

Prominent Names

Matthew P. Deady was a leading member of the board. The student body was made up of such names as Booth, Dillon, Casebeer, Watson, Grubbe, Stearns, Kuykendall, Miller, Pinkston, Reed, Chapman, Slocum, Tipton, Wade, Fitzhugh, Byars, Mires, Hill, Clinkenbeard, Otey, Atkins, Royal — and a host of others. Old Umpqua was the only school of higher learning between Salem and Sacramento in the old days. The first graduating class was that of 1864; W. H. Byars, Anna Royal, Stanley O. Royal, and Miller G. Royal. They all did great work in the world. When Prof. F. G. Grubbe was the principal of the academy, in the late seventies, his wife was preceptor. She was the only daughter of Jason Lee, first Protestant Christian missionary west of the Rockies, empire builder, statesman, martyr.

To the speaker along the Pacific Highway, Wilbur means little now. But in the gold rush period it was at the junction of the old Scottsburg military road with the main state thoroughfare, that had been the "California trail," an extension of El Camino Real, The King's Highway, that led to and past the 21 colorful old missions of California of the Spanish and Mexican periods.

Scottsburg Metropolis

And Scottsburg was bigger than Portland in the early fifties. The military road was built under the direction of Col. Joe Hooker, later the great general, "Fighting Joe Hooker," of the Union forces in the war of the states. Scottsburg was the jobbing center of southern Oregon and northern California. At one period, 500 pack mules at a time, made a not unusual sight in her streets. Levi Scott laid out the town. Among the very first comers, he had settled in what was called for him Scotts Valley, and has been since better known as the Applegate section, first west of Shoestring, and east of Yoncalla. Scottsburg was the head of navigation. Ocean going schooners, some of them built on the river, brought freight from San Francisco. Addison C. Gibbs, afterwards governor of Oregon, owned the townsite of Gardiner, below old Scottsburg. M. P. Deady started his career as a lawyer at Scottsburg. S. F. Chadwick afterwards secretary of state and governor, commenced his upward climb at Gardiner too.

There is a hazy story that in 1732 a disabled Spanish vessel entered the Umpqua River and drifted to a point near the site of Scottsburg, that oak trees were cut and repairs were made, and it sailed away, leaving some of the crew. That would place Scottsburg's beginning prior to any settlement by whites on this coast. We know that the first whites to come north along the coast by the inland route were Jedediah Smith and his party in 1826, and that on July 14 of that year all the members were killed by the Umpqua Indians, at a point not far from Scottsburg — excepting Smith himself and two others, who escaped. That bloody event connects the Umpqua with epochal history, for it was Jedediah Smith who inspired the Macedonian call of the Indians west of the Rockies that brought the first missionaries, leading to settlement and American domination. Also, the Fort Umpqua of the Hudson's Bay Company, there, connected that section with the palmy days of the fur trade.

Make Oregon History

A good deal of Oregon history was made in Douglas County and her sturdy pioneers played a worthy part in laying the foundation of the state. Their children and children's children are carrying on worthily. Prominent among these have been the descendants of that loyal bearer of the Cross, Rev. Robert Booth, represented on the capital grounds at Salem by the bronze statue of "The Circuit Rider," gift of his son, Hon. R. A. Booth.

I congratulate Roseburg on the opening of a new day, that is destined to aid much in making that chief city of Southern Oregon. The home for the soldiers who have offered their lives in their country's wars will have a splendid setting, favored by the bounties of nature, in a climate, averaging, the years through, the balmiest and best in all the world.

No one should be surprised at the loyal persistence with which Congressman Hawley pursued the long fight for its (the soldiers' home) location there, close to the verdant banks of the South Umpqua. Some day, that river will be canalized, to its junction with its twin fork, and on to the sea — and there will be a possible wharf site at any point on either side, connecting the Umpqua Valley by water borne vessels with all the deep seaports of the world.

Finds Wife Here

There is another reason that makes Willis Hawley tend to old Douglas. He found his wife there. He was principal of Wilbur Academy from 1884 to 1886, and he was assisted by Miss Anna Giesendorfer, of Albany. Later they were married. And in the years of 1888 to 1891 Mr. Hawley was president of the Oregon State Normal School at Drain.

I close this with the concluding words of Hon. R. A. Booth in his 1918 article:

"The imagination of the reader will supply the picture of the beloved Umpqua country, once the 'Umpqua Mission', to which Father Wilbur went in 1853. The happenings since give ample justification to his vision. He labored in a fertile field. Upon it he left his impress. Without what he did and the opportunities he made, many a boy and girl never would have opened the heavy educational gateway that led into the big world and many a life big with results would have been barren of culture."

HARDWARE SINCE 1872

The Umpqua Valley Hardware Building, corner Oak and Jackson Sts., or that corner, at least, has been a hardware sales point since about 1872. First established by Sheridan Brothers Hardware Co.

C.D.S. Rose Valley Settler

Wagon Train Hit By Fever Going West

A wagon train of 40 vehicles was struck by an epidemic of Yellow fever when Commodore Stephen Decatur Rose journeyed to Oregon from Kentucky.

The Commodore, occasionally known as C.S.D. Rose, lost his wife and a daughter when the epidemic struck. They were buried along the way.

He was born Aug. 12, 1818 in Kentucky and married to Elizabeth Pecknapp in 1839. A son and three daughters were born, and shortly afterward the family started for Oregon by wagon train.

When the yellow fever tragedy struck he and the other children, Randolph Thomas, Sarah Jane and Mary Emeline continued the journey.

Barn Still Standing

They stopped at the Willamette Valley and later coming to the Umpqua Valley where he took up a donation land claim. Part of the log barn and some fruit trees that Commodore Rose placed in the area are still standing.

Commodore Rose, known to his family as "Grandpa," enjoyed talking about conditions of the past.

Once, during a trip to Coffee Creek in Jackson County, he was driving a group of some 30 hogs to market, a cougar jumped the group and landed on a horse's back behind the rider.

A man on a horse behind him used a blacksnake whip to slash at the cougar. The animal jumped off and scamped for the brush.

Another time, while he was away from home, a grizzly bear killed one of his large hogs near his house, eating part of it and disappearing.

Commodore Rose and a neighbor, Joe Thompson decided to wait and watch for the bear to get a shot at him. At night they dragged the carcass of the hog to the foot of a tall tree and then climbed up in the tree. They heard the bear, fired shots and then returned to the house, as there was no way of seeing which way the wounded animal went.

The next morning they found the animal about 100 yards from a fence he had broken through.

Commodore Rose also convinced an Indian he could shoot. While traveling between Canyonville and Cow Creek, an Indian overtook him and demanded that he give him the red handkerchief he had around his neck.

When the Commodore refused, the Indian motioned that he would shoot him with his bow and arrow.

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Randolph was Bell boy. He rode a horse with a bell on it, and the mules followed the sound. On one trip he almost froze to death and when they got to the end of the journey they had to take him off the horse and roll him in the snow to save his life.

Presumably on one of the trips he met Miss Rachel Beaver who later became his wife. She had crossed westward with her uncle, James Hodson.

Annual Reunions

Each year the Commodore Rose descendants gather at the Roberts Creek school grounds near his donation land claim for a reunion. The reunions began Aug. 14, 1928 and have continued ever since. The last was last Aug. 10.

Nowhere in the United States did any country flourish as well and as long as Coos County. It was called the "Hermit County," isolated because of the dangers and hazards involved in reaching it over the treacherous roads. Numerous and thrilling are the tales of hardship and excitement told by the visitors to that section, in "staging" it to reach there, while many said they marveled that they came back alive.

Wind, rain, fog and dust are mere details scarcely mentioned, but the jostling of the anatomy from the boulders, the skidding in the dirty grades, and the jerky twists and turnings of the early cumbersome vehicles will never be forgotten. Altogether, however, these experiences are treasured, and today a fracture or a scar obtained on the way becomes a mark of distinction.

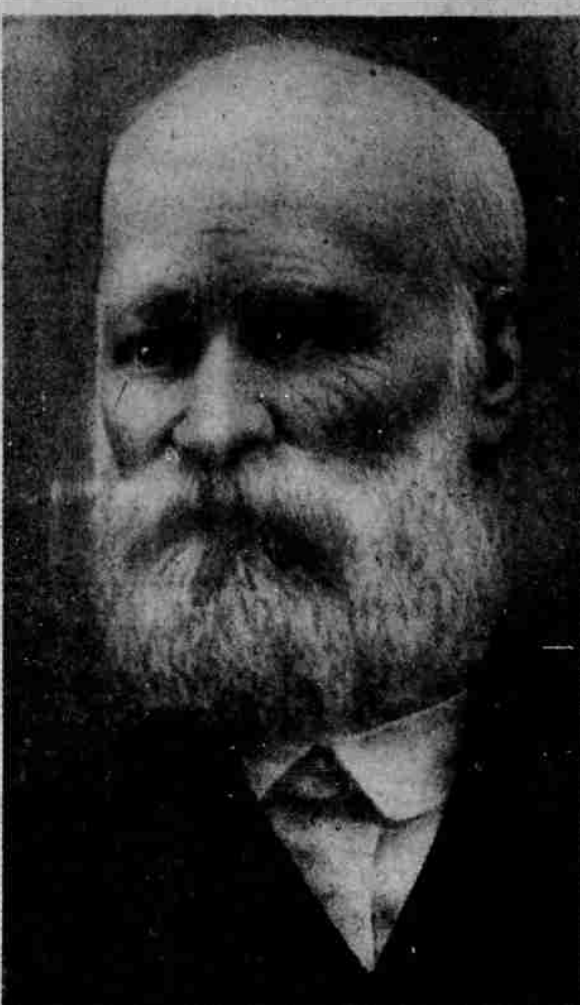
Auto Replaces Wagon

It was not always the wagon, however. The stage lost most of its perils and thrills as early as 1911, when Charles Barnard, now of Eugene, put the first automobile on the route and made daily trips in the summer time. This was on the Myrtle Point line, which was built some time after the Coos Bay wagon road. Although the mail was discontinued on the old road for short periods, it was handled there almost steadily until a couple of years ago, when all mail was routed over the Myrtle Point road. Today the mail was sent via Eugene over the Willamette-Pacific Railroad.

According to H. C. Stanton, who was one of the early pioneers and former postmaster of this city, the mail route and stage line to Coos Bay was established in 1868, one year after he received his commission as postmaster. Mr. Stanton served as postmaster for 18 years, and during his term all stages operating out of this city were put on. The others operated to Coles Valley and up the North Umpqua River.

Mr. Stanton, 77, is still hale and hearty. He says he has waited for 50 years in expectation of witnessing rail connections between Western Oregon and the Coast.

rector: Carl Jones and Will Benjamin; back row, Lee Bell, Roscoe Oakes, George Langenberg, Grant Parrott, Louis Bell, Schiller Hermann, Leon Jones and Albert Bitzer. (Picture property of Mrs. Dexter Rice)



C. D. S. ROSE

row. Commodore Rose had his six shooter with him and pointed to a knot on a tree some distance ahead.

In Indian jargon, he asked, "Do you see that knot in that tree?"

He hit the knot with a bullet from his six shooter and the knot broke into pieces.

The Indian fled.

Works At Seven

Commodore Rose's son, Randolph, was born in Illinois and was the oldest of the four children. When only seven he was called upon to assist with the work.

He drove one of the ox teams a large part of the way out West. With his father he went to work in the mines, but they quit \$10 a day to run a mule train from Scottsburg to Crescent City, Calif.

At the time food was very high with flour selling at a dollar a

small communities on the route, and may be discontinued shortly because of lack of profits. So large was the business while it enjoyed the trade alone that competition among the contractors was keen, and many have been the private stages that operated and thrived independently.

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John Dillard Buys Valley For \$800 Sum

By ROSA HEINBACH

The one-time purchase of the entire Dillard Valley for \$800.00 by one man makes an interesting story as retold by George Baker Laurence, longtime resident of this community.

The man, John Dillard, living then in Riddle, was walking over the hills when he stopped to gaze across the valley and called it the land of his desire. The valley was then covered with driftwood because of spring flooding on the Umpqua river. Dillard went to the only cabin seen in the distance and found the old prospector busy skinning a bear. He offered to buy the whole area from him. The owner, living in the cabin said he would sell \$800.00 for it. So the man from Riddle went back over the hills and returned some days later with his bag of gold dust and purchased 640 acres of the rich farming land for \$800.00 in gold.

The story was related to Mr. Laurence by Finis Dillard many years ago. Many acres of this rich valley have since become the property of G. B. Laurence and his descendants.

Take Train For Oregon

George Baker Laurence started for Oregon with his family in March 1903 from North Carolina. He and his wife and nine children, all under the age of 14, had much to do to prepare for the wearisome two-week train trip. The neighbors brought in food contributions to tide them over. One kind old lady called "Toothy" baked her first light bread, since all they knew how to cook was sour-dough biscuits and corn bread, for her donation. The mother stored all these provisions in suit cases and they started out on the 60-mile trip to the nearest railroad stop, by wagon, driven by one of the neighbors. Finally they reached the train and thought all was well, but soon they became sick on the mouldy bread so carefully stored away. The ham became green and all had to be thrown away.

Many humorous happenings on the trip are recalled by the Laurences, including the time Ray, then four and a half, decided he wanted to go back home. He left the train at one of the stops, but the older boys found him and brought him back in time. Then there was friendly little Lena (now Mrs. Fred Burks), at that time three years old, who entertained herself on the train by turning on all of the water faucets. She had been used to spring water at home and didn't like the water on the train. At one point the conductor told her father that if he couldn't stop her the family would be put off the train. Another time Lena walked into the dining room of a hotel, settled down and was ordering a big meal when she was discovered by the anxious family. Jesse (now Mrs. Roy Rice), quite a young lady, spoiled her new blue velvet hat by packing it away in a freshly emptied flour sack.

Escorted To Hotel

Arriving in Dillard, they were escorted to the only hotel, then operated by Mr. and Mrs. Mark Howard. The hotel is still a landmark, now known as the Davidson home.

Soon after the arrival of the Laurences, they bought 22 acres of the Sam Miller estate, now known as the Lawrence Hercher place. The population of Dillard was then 100 people.

Laurence recalls how his children's dress and manner of speech was different from the others when they first started to school. This led to trouble in the one-room school house, and fueds were fought with the Gages, Howards, Millers and Pickens. The father and the teacher then agreed to let the children "fight it out." When the heated battle was over, they all became friends.

Laurence was among the first gardeners in this area and raised choice strawberries. He prided himself on getting the first flats of the season to Portland markets, often receiving \$25.00 for each. Tomatoes and the famous Dillard melons were his specialty.

Each year on the birthday of Mr. Laurence, now 85 years old, the big family gathering, which arrives to celebrate, includes eleven sons and daughters, twenty-five grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren. They now own land at Melrose, Garden Valley, Dixonville, Olalla, Roberts Creek, Curry estate, Round Prairie as well as in the Dillard Valley.

Forrester's Building Used By Masonic Lodge

The building now occupied by the Forrester's Outdoor Store at the corner of Washington and Jackson Sts., was erected by the Caro Brothers, Simon and Isadore, sometime in the '80s. The second story was fitted up originally for the Masonic Lodge and was used by the Masons until they built their present temple — at the corner of Cass and Jackson. It is said that Dan Daniels was the contractor on the Caro Building. At least he had charge of the brick laying.

For many years the lower floor was occupied by the Douglas Abstract Co. and the U. S. Land Office took over the top floor after it was vacated by the Masonic Lodge.

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1st Cabin Built On Site In 1851

Roseburg's beginning goes back even farther than the date we're celebrating this year — the 1852 founding of Douglas County.

It was the year before, 1851, that Aaron Rose built the first cabin on the site which is now called Roseburg in his honor.

Coming south through the Siskiyou and Cow Creek Canyon trails, after a trip across the plains from Michigan, Rose saw the small river plain here and decided to stay. He settled down to farming and stock raising, filing for his Government donation land claim. Not satisfied with just running his farm, he opened a small mercantile business.

With the arrival of new families to the area, Rose began thinking in terms of a real town. He worked hard to achieve this dream, telling Roseburg's virtues to all.

Sold Several Lots

Soon he managed to sell a number of lots and Roseburg's beginning as a town was sure.

It wasn't until Jan. 7, 1852, that the Territorial Legislature sliced into Lane County and created Douglas County.

Lane County had formerly included all of Southern Oregon, with the exception of Umpqua County. The latter followed the southern line of Benton County and the summit of the Calapoosia mountains to the headwaters of Calapoosia Creek, along the Creek to its confluence with the Umpqua River, and along the river to the Pacific Ocean.

By 1852 many settlers had moved into the Umpqua and Rogue valleys and began demanding their own local government. Hence, the creation of Douglas County on Jan. 7, and Jackson County on Jan. 12, just five days later.

Douglas Absorbs Umpqua

Eventually, in 1862, Douglas absorbed Umpqua County. Umpqua with Scottsburg as the Southern Oregon point of entry for ships from San Francisco, was a busy, thriving area at the time of its establishment in 1851. But the opening of new transportation routes into Southern Oregon mines caused a decline in business and the cost of maintaining a county government finally became too much for residents.

But in 1868, when settlers began to pour into the northern part of Douglas County, especially near Oakland, the residents tried to reorganize. The measure failed in a special election.

The old Umpqua County extended to the present site of Roseburg. The first county to be officially organized south of the Calapoosia Mountains, it was approximately 5,000 square miles in area.

Indian War Helps

The Indian War of 1855 played a part in Roseburg's growth. The town became the central point for the Northern Battalion, which formed and purchased supplies here. This brought prosperity to the area.

And it wasn't until this same time that the town took the name of Roseburg. Previously, it had been called Deer Creek, after the stream which still runs through the town.

The ego of Roseburg citizens nearly bankrupted the town in 1857. At that time the most imposing building in the County was the U. S. Land Office at Winchester. Jealous Roseburg people wanted to have the largest structure in their town, so they built a three-story school on property where the Junior High School now stands.

County Seat Won

Roseburg didn't win its county seat title without some effort, either. Winchester and Lookingglass both wanted the title. Rose had a vision. In 1853 Rose secured an act authorizing an election to determine the location of the county seat from the legislature. Since Roseburg was in the center of the rival communities, it was chosen as the election site.

Roseburg won the election. But there's an interesting legend still being told about the election. It seems that Lookingglass residents arrived here early in the morning of the election day — in March 1854.

Rose took the Lookingglass voters into his home where he furnished them with food and other liquid refreshments. By election time they had decided Roseburg was the ideal county seat location. Back in 1851 Aaron Rose had a vision. In 1853, a thriving town here. He was proven right.

Dillard Community Owes Name To Roof Blown Off Mo. House

The community of Dillard owes its name indirectly to a roof blowing off a house in Missouri.

It happened this way:

The Rev. John Dillard, a farmer, mechanic and Presbyterian minister lived near Springfield, Missouri.

He had often thought of coming to Oregon before 1850. And then it happened.

He had been out on a preaching trip. When he returned he found the roof had been blown off his house by a Northerner. His wife insisted they get out of such a country. John Dillard made the three wagons in which he and his family crossed the plains in 1850.

They had three sons, William Martin, James McCord and Finis Winfield.

Most Cattle Die

It was late in the fall when the wagon train came to the mountains and the snow had begun. Crossing the Blue Mountains into Eastern Oregon, all the cattle but one died from eating poison Laurel Rhododendron.

Two surviving animals were used to carry Mrs. Dillard's father back down to Warm Springs, and on in to French Prairie four miles from the present site of Salem.

The Dillard family lived near Salem from 1850 to 1852. Jane Gray Dillard was a tailor and sought a job in a local store as a seamstress.

The manager stated that if she could make men's clothing out of buckskin he might give her some land. She assured him she could, and he agreed to furnish all the material and to pay her 10 dollars a pair for making men's pants.

Collects \$10

He gave her some material and the next day she was back with the trousers finished and collected her \$10 dollars.

She worked at that type of work for two years while her husband and J. D. Burnett were at Gold Mines in California. Passing through what is now called Dillard, the Rev. Mr. Dillard remarked to Mr. Burnett, that "if this place is all right when we return from California, I'm going to buy it."

He did.

On the return trip he found smoke rising from a cabin and made the purchase for \$800 in gold dust. The next day the seller took his few belongings and left.

Mr. Dillard continued to Salem and returned with his family. Improvements immediately began with buildings, a home, blacksmith shop and planting of fruit trees. In 1854 the Rev. Mr. Dillard organized the First Presbyterian Church in Douglas County.

Finis Dillard, a son, grew up on his father's farm and attended the Umpqua Academy for a while. Two of his teachers were Fletcher Royal and Ebenezer Arnold.

Helps Make Salt

One of Finis' many chores was helping his father make salt from the Salt Spring on the Dillard

farm. The salty water ran from a spring, covering about an acre and a half and in summer it dried leaving a salty crust.

Finis remembers that deer, elk — and Indians too — came to the salted area to lick the salt. As many as 100 deer were seen there at one time.

His father boiled the salt water down to leave only the salt. Finis helped put it into the sacks. At one time the salt sold for a dollar a pound, but soon after the Dillard refinery was established it came down to 25 cents.

James McCord Dillard, another son, married Mary Ellen Cox, daughter of James and Sarah Cox, in the early 1860s. They had two sons and two daughters, Sarah Jane, Candace Amanda, Forrest Lane, and Sterling Lee.

J. M. Dillard in the early 80s purchased a farm across the river from the old Dillard farm and with his family lived there several years. He was a farmer, just as of the peace and post master for the Civil Bend district. He later disposed of his farm and moved back to Dillard, where he and the older son, S. L. Dillard operated a general merchandise store and post office.

Builds Railroad

In 1882 the Southern Pacific Co. built the railroad from Roseburg to Ashland and right of way was purchased through the John Dillard land. He accepted their terms, and they in turn named the place Dillard. They established a railroad station and depot and Dillard became known as a shipping point for the county.

Finis Winfield Dillard was married to Amanda Frances Cox, a sister of Mary Ellen Cox Dillard. In the early 1870s a son and two daughters were born, the son passing away in infancy.

They lived on the Dillard farm several years, later buying a 220-acre tract of land just across the west side of the river.

In 1883, the Rev. Mr. Dillard raised 16,000 bushels of grain on his farm. The F. M. Sebring family moved to Dillard in 1883 from Rice Creek. The Dillard place was then laid out in lots and acreage was sold. The first store was built across from the depot and operated by J. M. Dillard. Later it was moved back near the river and his older son, S. L. Dillard, helped operate the store.

In 1897 the first school house was remodeled from a hop dryer. The same building was used for a community church. In 1898 the suspension bridge was built across the South Umpqua River at Dillard. F. M. Sebring was construction foreman.

The first hotel and rooming house was operated by Mr. Pittman and family. The first telegraph operator was Mr. Hudson and later a Mr. Griddley and W. H. Blair were operators.



ROSEBURG'S FIRST BAND — Believed to be Roseburg's first municipal band, organized sometime in the 1870's is the group pictured above. They are identified as, front row, left to right, Claude Cannon, Van Langenberg, Mark Jones, di-