

HEROES OF ROGUE RIVER WAR AND FIRST BATTLE WITH INDIANS

Recollections of a Pioneer of the Bloody Days of the Early Fifties—
Josephine, Jackson and Douglas Counties Scenes of First Encounters With Aborigines—Charles Johnson First Victim.

(By Francis M. Tibbets in the Oregonian.)

Charles Johnson was one of the first, if not the first, hero of the Rogue river war. He gave his life in saving three companions, and I was one of them; therefore I know what a hero Charles Johnson was. He held at bay 30 Indians while I and another were helping away a wounded companion. Johnson and I started in the war together and fought side by side until he fell, but many times later in other fights I wished I had had Johnson and his trusty gun with me.

It was in October, 1855, and I was a young man and ready for almost any adventure, when with Johnson and Frank Stone we left Oakland, Douglas county, for Jacksonville. The ox wagons had been loaded with supplies and provisions for the mines. It was a bright, crisp fall morning when we started out, and as we called the oxen to move on none of us dreamed we were to see the bloodshed that we did before our trip was finished.

News of Outbreak.

When we reached the south end of the big canyon (the old Dan Levens place) and pitched our camp we were told a call by the late Judge M. P. Dendy, who aroused us all and fired our adventurous spirit by telling us the Indians had come on the war-path. Judge Dendy told us what few details had reached him of the outbreak. Ribbes had come in with reports that the reds were massacring every one between the big canyon and Jacksonville and burning the names of the settlers. He urged us to return through the canyon, saying it was the only safe way for us to avoid the Indians.

The next morning, October 10, after a council, we decided to push on. We went three miles to Smith's place on Cow creek. Here we found a number of miners and settlers who had been driven out. Putting our cattle into pasture and our wagon into the corral, we continued to Redwood, about three miles above where the town of Ghendale stands. Here we formed a military company; in it were 28 men, who elected Major Jacob Rhinearson captain, and the next morning we started to battle.

The First Fight.

Ward had reached us by a miner who had escaped that two miners in Grave creek had been attacked. After a hard ride of 15 minutes we encountered a band of Chief Lampy's warriors and here occurred the first battle of the war. After a short fight, in which one of the Indians was killed and we had captured 10 axes, the reds withdrew and we returned to the mine.

Upon our arrival there we found the two men dead in their diggings, and buried them in the grave they had themselves prepared. While engaged in this sad duty, the Indians were harassing us and it was necessary to beat them back while part of the men performed the last rites for the dead.

Raid Upon Mines.

Our company returned to the meretricious place, on Grave creek. Where the settlers had congregated we fortified for protection. We replanted there two days, marching south to Widow Niday's place, near antecamp-off Joe creek, now Merlin. We were liged here that the Indians had made a raid on the mines at the mouth of Galice creek, this news being brought by a courier, who had tried to get through. A detail of factotum men was sent to their relief, stalled by Jump-off-Joe at 12 o'clock on the night of October 19. I was late, this detail.

Moore, to arrived at Galice creek at dusk for Mr. next day and found 30 men and woman (Mrs. Pickett) in a split of house, which they had enclosed by throwing up earthworks

on the inside and digging trenches to the outside for protection when firing. One man (Pickett) was dead and 12 others wounded. The Indians had withdrawn after riddling the house with bullets. The next morning Major Fitzgerald arrived with a company of regular troops and took the wounded to Jacksonville. Our detail returned to Jump-off-Joe. Johnson and I decided to go to Cow creek to see about our cattle and outfit.

Settlers Besieged.

Upon our arrival at Smith's place we found the settlers congregated there for protection, and went on to Dan Levens' farm, finding our cattle and wagons all right. Returning to Smith's, we found the place besieged and Johnson's horse was killed as we dismounted. That night Johnson, myself and another man crept through the lines, returning to Levens', reaching there without mishap. There was at this place 12 men and about the same number of women, among whom were J. W. Miller, now of Portland, and his wife.

The next morning, seeing smoke in the direction of Smith's place, four of us—Charles Johnson, Alexander Abbott, Stephen Minot and myself—started for the top of the intervening ridge, about half a mile distant, to reconnoiter. When we got within 40 yards of the top of the ridge, about 30 Indians jumped out from behind trees and fired on us at close range, wounding Minot in the body. We started back, Abbott and I, carrying Minot, and Johnson covered our retreat, and in doing this he sacrificed his life.

Indians Scalp Johnson.

We had gone in this way about 200 yards when we saw a party had started from the house with a horse for the wounded man. The Indians were following continuously. Just at this time Jackson fell, shot through the head, and killed instantly. We got Minot in and he eventually recovered. The Indians scalped and mutilated Johnson's body. The siege of the Lewis house (then Minot's) began and continued for three days. We fought them off until the balance of Rhinearson's company came from Widow Niday's place to our relief. During this time it was fighting all the time and eternal vigilance to prevent the Indians from firing the house with flaming arrows, which they shot from under the creek bank. We never could tell how many Indians were killed, as they always carried away the dead and wounded. The late Hardy Eloff and Rev. J. W. Miller conducted this defense, and by their heroic conduct and example were largely responsible for its successful issue.

(To be concluded.)

Medford Time Table

| SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILWAY. | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------|
| Northbound. | | |
| No. 16 Oregon Express | 5:24 p. m. | |
| No. 14 Portland Express | 9:40 a. m. | |
| Southbound. | | |
| No. 15 California Exp. | 10:35 a. m. | |
| No. 13 San Francisco Ex. | 3:20 p. m. | |
| No. 225 From Grants Pass | 9:15 p. m. | |
| No. 225 For Ashland | 10:15 p. m. | |
| ROGUE RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY | | |
| No. 2 Leaves Medford | 10:45 a. m. | |
| No. 4 Leaves Medford | 5:35 p. m. | |
| Motor Leaves Medford | 2:00 p. m. | |
| Motor Leaves Medford | 9:00 p. m. | |
| No. 1 Leave Jacksonville | 9:00 a. m. | |
| No. 3 Leave Jacksonville | 3:30 p. m. | |
| Motor Leave Jacksonville | 1:30 p. m. | |
| Motor Leave Jacksonville | 7:30 p. m. | |
| MAIL CLOSURES | | |
| | A. M. | P. M. |
| Northbound | 9:19 | 4:54 |
| Southbound | 10:05 | 2:50 |
| Engle Point | 7:20 | 2:40 |
| Jacksonville | 10:20 | 5:20 |

CITY NOTICES.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a four-inch water main on Rose Avenue between and west of Fourth street and to assess the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

The foregoing resolution was passed on the 4th day of June, 1909, by city council of the City of Medford by the following vote: Merrick aye, Welch aye, Wortman aye, Eifert aye, Demmer aye, Emerick aye. Approved June 5th, 1909.

W. H. CANON, Mayor.

Attest: BENJAMIN M. COLLINS, Recorder.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a water main on North Peach street between West Main street and West Fourth street, and to assess the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

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W. H. CANON, Mayor.

Attest: BENJAMIN M. COLLINS, Recorder.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a six-inch water main on Central Avenue from end of present main to South corporation boundary line, and to assess the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

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W. H. CANON, Mayor.

Attest: BENJAMIN M. COLLINS, Recorder.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a six-inch water main on street running from intersection of Clark street west and corporation boundary south to Jackson street throughout its length, and to assess the cost thereon on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

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W. H. CANON, Mayor.

Attest: BENJAMIN M. COLLINS, Recorder.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a four-inch water main on Fir street South from Twelfth street to South boundary and to assess the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

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Ross Court between West Main street and West Fourth street, and to assess the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

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W. H. CANON, Mayor.

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RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a four-inch water main on Olson street between West Fourth street and West Second street and to assess the cost thereon on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

The City Council will meet at the council chamber in the city hall in said city on June 22, 1909, at 7:30 p. m., at which time all protests against the laying of said water main and the assessment of the cost thereof on the property fronting on said portion of said street will be heard.

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W. H. CANON, Mayor.

Attest: BENJAMIN M. COLLINS, Recorder.

RESOLUTION
Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Medford, Oregon, that it is the intention of the city council to lay a six-inch water main on street running from intersection of Clark street west and corporation boundary south to Jackson street throughout its length, and to assess the cost thereon on the property fronting on said portion of said street in proportion to the frontage of said property.

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