

History of Butte Falls (Continued)

By Ernest Smith

For those early settlers all phases of living were rather rugged or primitive by modern standards. Transportation was afoot or by horses, horseback, cart, buckboard, buggy, light wagon or lumber wagon. Communication was the same. Mail was when you went to the Post Office for it, 5 to 20 miles away or when a neighbor came by and brought it.

Most early settlers made their living by hunting, trapping, making shakes or posts to sell in the valley and raising a few cattle. Most of them hauled in their winter supplies of flour, sugar, coffee, potatoes, bacon, beans and other necessary items in the early fall before the roads got too bad, and avoided having to go to Medford or other valley towns much in the winter except in emergencies.

There used to generally be a Fourth of July picnic at some convenient place where most neighbors for miles around gathered and visited, played games, and had a potluck dinner. Then at various holidays in the fall and winter they gathered at some farm home for dances and generally danced till daylight.

My grandfather Parker was an old time country doctor and was called for miles around to deliver a baby, or for a case of measles, diphtheria, or other ailments.

There were numerous schools in the area at different times. One of the first was about two miles below Butte Falls at School House Flat which served people near here and people working at a saw mill on Big Butte Creek about a mile below the Cobleigh Bridge, owned by Wilcox and Severance in the 1870's. Mr. and Mrs. B.F.C. Edmondson were the parents of Lee, Charley and Ben Edmondson and Mrs. Lottie Allen, Mrs. Maggie Patton, and Mrs. Ora Gordon. Mrs. Patton was born there. Mr. and Mrs. Hale also lived and worked there and were the parents of Kizzie Edmondson.

Another early school was the Higinbotham School, but I don't remember just where it was. A school used to be on the present Prospect road by the old Medco log pond in the early 1890's. Later it was changed to a place east of the north part of the present Thompson Ranch, and about 1904 to just north of the old Parker place. My father taught there at that time. About the same time there was a school on the old Goss Road about 8 miles above Butte Falls. Another early school was the Mr. Pitt School on the Fish Lake Road where George Rowden lives. Another old school was near the Leatherman place on the Obenchain Road which was later changed to a place near where the