

Who Established First Grist Mill—Where Was it Located—Can You Answer 'Em?

BY EMIL R. PETERSON, Coos-Curry County Historian

What do you know about grist mills in Coos and Curry counties? Where was the first one built? Who built it? By what power was it operated? If you can answer these questions you can be of help in preparing a good story on this subject for our new history of Coos and Curry. If you don't know about the first one, perhaps you may know about some later pioneer grist mills in this area. Our information of the subject is meager and fragmentary and we need your help.

Perhaps the first grist mill in Coos and Curry—we repeat, *perhaps*—was brought by members of Dr. Henry Hermann's party from Baltimore in 1859.

Dod's history, in speaking of the matter, says: "Among the goods . . . a 54-inch Page portable sawmill belonging to Henry Schroeder Sr., and an 8-h. p. boiler and engine and a pair of 24-inch mill burrs belonging to William Volkmar. These parties had, prior to leaving Baltimore, entered into a partnership. The mill was put up on the south fork of the Coquille River, on the Schroeder place, and was operated for several years, William Volkmar filling the position of engineer and Henry Schroeder that of sawyer and miller."

A miller, according to Webster, is one who keeps, operates, or tends a mill, especially a flour or grist mill. That mill, presumably, was built in the early '60s. In 1898, When Dodge's pioneer history was published it contained a poem which we quote one stanza:

We have a little mill hard by,
A little creek which doth supply
Us all with flour, as fine and good

As any needs for wholesome food.

Evidently operated by water power.

Other grist mills in Coos county reported to us include these:

The Brewer mill on Indian Creek opposite Sugar Loaf Mt.

The Reed mill near the same place.

The Radcliff mill further down the river.

Up the north fork of the Coquille was the Minard mill.

On Myrtle Creek near Bridge was the Fish mill.

In the north end of Coos County, John Monson recalls a grist mill owned and operated by Steve Johnson on his home place in what is known as the Templeton area. The Johnson place is now the home of Dan Walker and family.

Further north on Big Creek, Charles Siestrem is reported to have had a small outfit somewhat on the order of a large coffee grinder.

At the time of the First World War, Lawrence B. Jennings met

the scarcity of flour and mill feeds by growing wheat, oats, barley and corn on his farm at Remote on the middle fork of the Coquille. He obtained a small set of steel burrs, operated them with a gas engine, made flour for his home and feed for his livestock.

As far as we know, those mills were run by water power, except the Schroeder-Volkmar one, by steam, and the Jennings mill, by gas engine.

We have no report of any grist mill in Curry county. But there must have been some and we'll be very glad to hear from anyone who can supply us with such information. So far as possible give name of owner or operator, kind of power used, when and where located. Also whether 'toll' grinding was done. Information wanted for both Coos and Curry counties.

Report to your local newspaper or direct to Emil R. Peterson, R. 1, Box 528, North Bend, Ore.



WASHINGTON—The house of representatives is just about ready to adjourn for this session. Remaining legislation on which it has not acted consists mostly of very large and controversial bills such as the socialized medicine bill and the Brannan farm plan.

Such proposals will require weeks of hearings and long and

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complete debate on the floor of both houses of congress. There will be plenty of time for full and complete consideration of them next year. There'll always be pending bills before any session of congress many non-controversial and minor bills. This session is no different from any other in that respect, but the house majority leadership properly assumes the position that such legislation should be handled next year.

But the fact that the house has completed its work does not mean that congress can adjourn. The house must sit around and mark time until the senate is ready to stop talking and get its work done. Our solution to this problem will be to recess but continue in session technically until the senate is ready to adjourn this session.

The U. S. department of agriculture is apparently large enough for one of its bureaus to forget the existence of another. The forest service is charged with the task, among other things, of helping stabilize the lumber industry by stimulating new uses for wood products. The commodity credit corporation, in the same department, has charge of the grain storage and price support program.

Accordingly, the lumber industry in the Pacific northwest is still wondering why the CCC, in its first call for bids on storage bins for midwest corn, prepared specifications which require use of steel, thereby precluding the lumber and plywood makers from even a competitive chance at the business.

After strong protests from the congressmen and industry, the order was amended to include wooden bins but suppliers were given only ten days in which to prepare bids and get them to the nation's capital.

Incidentally, the CCC prepared its call for steel bins at a time when an industry-wide strike in the steel mills was expected; if that had happened, could the steel bins have been erected by harvest time?

LOCAL NEWS

George Hall is confined to the Gold Beach hospital with shingles. First it was thought to be a bad case of poison oak until it did not respond to treatment. He is reported better.

Mrs. Everett Jagers, her two young sons, and her mother, Mrs. Jessie Berg, are in Clovis, New Mexico, on a month's visit to their former home.

Miss Ina Payne, Sonny Chapman and Harry Payne spent the week-end at Cave Junction at the Harry Payne home. They attended the midget races at Grants Pass, Saturday evening.

Mrs. A. E. Sandbo returned to her home late last week from a visit with relatives at Phoenix, Arizona. She reports that the temperature ranged up to 108 degrees, and that on her return trip at Indio, they told bus passengers that it had been up to 120 there that day. She is glad to return to the local climate.

Pete Lesmeister made a business trip to Portland Tuesday. He attended Coos Bay Rotary Club luncheon enroute.

Rev. Nick Neufeld is at Lake of the Woods Camp, attending a boys camp this week as an advisor. He will return Saturday evening.

LOCAL NEWS

G. W. (Wally) Darling left Sunday night for Emmet, Calif., to be present at the funeral of his father, who passed away on Saturday. Wally will remain to aid in settling the estate.

The Floyd T. Boltons were pleasantly surprised by a visit from their son and daughter-in-law of Depoe Bay, where Mr. Bolton is employed.

Mrs. Herman Louis and Mrs.

Carl Mitcher and her son-in-law and daughter, of Dayton, stopped briefly here Monday enroute to San Francisco on a visit.

Mr. and Mrs. John Kinney returned from Portland late last week. They report they visited Miss Darlene Hogan at the Odd Fellows home, and that she is doing fine.

Joe Moore returned home Saturday from San Francisco where he had spent part of the summer visiting relatives.

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