

MORE ABOUT GRIST-MILLS

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With the splendid co-operation of our local press and radio, I am being sprinkled with showers of information about pioneer grist-mills. Steve Reed, 80 years young, Myrtle Point, is showing real active interest in the matter. He writes: "I think I can give you quite a history of my father's mill. I remember very well when he built it . . . My grandfather, Chris Lehnerr, built three mills that I remember."

When I called on Mr. Reed the other day he told and showed me a great deal about his father's old mill. But I'm reserving that for a future story. Steve is going to introduce me to his neighbor and friend, Cal Gant, a youngster of 95 years, who knows plenty about grist-mills. I'm going to step out with these two gents at the first opportunity. More about that later.

Kate L. Bailey writes from Gold Beach, telling that her grandfather, Chris Lehnerr, had a mill in or near Myrtle Point. She says that Gus Bender has a picture of Myrtle Point in which the old mill can be seen. Mrs. Bailey says that she is writing to a cousin for particulars. She adds that there was a mill on Rogue River where her husband's family got their corn ground. She thinks it was near Agness.

A note from the Sentinel says that Mrs. Charley Wilson of Powers reports that he father operated a grist-mill at Gold Beach. He father's name is not given. No details. Perhaps Mrs. Wilson will tell more. I'll call on her when I go to Powers.

J. Albert Matson reports that a Mr. Campbell built a grist-mill on the east side of the channel opposite Marshfield. (Presumably that was Capt. A. J. N. Campbell). Albert says the mill was run by windpower. He says the wind was all right but that the supply of wheat was not sufficient to make the project pay.

Incidentally, aside from his grist-mill venture, Capt. Campbell is well remembered by many present-day residents of Coos county. He was an active builder and operator of steamboats on Coos bay. Among those built by him are listed the Comet, Juno, Coos, Wasp and Fawn. In the operation of the Fawn during the '90s, the old man acted as captain, his son, Clifford, was the engineer and his grandson, Alec, was deck-hand.

Charles G. Geitner, out Fairview way, east of Coquille, writes about a grist-mill on Mill Creek, half a mile south of Powers. He says a fall in the creek about 20 feet high, provided power. When Mr. Geitner lived on the creek some of the timbers of the old mill were still there. One of the mill stones had disappeared. He didn't know what had become of it, but he has the other one. Many thanks for the information, Charles, but I suggest that you guard that mill burr. If you are not watching it when I come to call on you, I might carry it off to the museum at Coquille. I carried a 200-

pound quarter of beef up a steep sand-hill once—just once.

Editor Hall of the Herald says that Mrs. A. T. Train reports a mill on Mill creek near Powers. No doubt the same one referred to by Mr. Geitner. She refers to Cal Gant, the Wesleys and the Wagners for information. Thank you, Mrs. Train. Another one is mentioned above Broadbent on the Dement place. Wallace Dement is named as a possible information source. I'll be calling on Wallace.

Previous mention has been made of the Schroeder-Volkmer mill, perhaps the first in Coos county. I have not heard of any earlier. Also we have previously referred to the Fish mill near Bridge, the Siestrem and Johnson mills in the Ten-mile country; and the Rackliff and Minard mills. Curtis Sanford has a faint recollection of two grist-mills on the river front at Coquille. Oscar Ohman recalls one at Norway operated by a Mr. Hoover, and someone else.

The Breuer mill on Indian creek has already been mentioned. The stone burrs in that mill had previously been used in the Reed mill, across the river. Steve Reed tells me that when his father ceased to operate his mill, he disposed of the burrs to Mike Breuer. He understands that Mr. Breuer still has them. When I go down the river again, I'll plan to see this old Sage of Bandon. He's past 90 but still pegs away at his daily task, repairing shoes for his old customers. Perhaps he would like to show his good-will toward the Pioneer

Association by placing those stones in the museum at Coquille as a reminder of the service rendered by the old millers in helping to feed the early-day trail-blazers.

Curry County information on his subject is very meagre. Surely there must have been some grist-mills in the neighborhood of Agness or Illahe, and perhaps up in the Mule Creek country.

Perhaps the Meserveys can tell us. And then down along the Chetco river. The Paynes and the VanPelts should be able to give us a good grist-mill story. If no one else down Brookings or Harbor way, I may have to call on Bill Wridge or Dave Gilmore. I'm sure they'll know.

Now, folks, to finish this off I want at least one good grist-mill story. I believe that Steve Reed and Cal Gant will supply it. But let me hear from you also. What purpose did the grist-mills served in the early days? How were they built? Where, when and by whom? Did they serve the community or were they operated only for the mill-

er's family? How was the miller paid? How continuous was the operation of the mill? When and where did the last one operate? Let us preserve this tradition and make it a real living part of our community history.

August Fatalities Highest Month, '49

SALEM—August traffic deaths in Oregon reached the highest monthly toll recorded so far this year with 39 fatalities reported late last week, Secretary of State Earl T. Newbry, announced the first of the week.

Thirty lives were lost in rural area mishaps and nine in accidents occurring on city streets. August fatalities bring the toll

for the first eight months of 1949 to 188, a saving of 84 lives from the 272 deaths recorded during the same period last year.

Loss of control was most frequent factor showing up on last month's fatal accident reports, Newbry stated, resulting in vehicles running off the roadway. Two such accidents claide three lives each. Four other multiple-fatal crashes took eight lives.

The rural-area traffic hazard will continue to be acute through September, Newbry warned. Last year, September had 52 deaths, most of them taking place on inter-city highways.

PORTLAND—In a step to give more boys and girls 18 years of age or younger a chance to see the complete Pacific International

Livestock Exposition, Oct. 7-15, including horse show and rodeo, price for these youths at three matinees will be cut in half this year.

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