

# Historical Notes

By MAX BRAINARD

In this issue of the Pilot will begin the publication of a rare series concerning the early day Indian tribes of Curry County. It is probably the best account available and is a verbatim transcript, made by Mrs. Kathryn Harris, then county school superintendent, of a talk given by the late Fred Moore, of Gold Beach, in 1927. Unfortunately a map used by Mr. Moore, and to which he refers in his talk, has been lost, so far as is known, but the descriptive material sufficiently covers the matter so all the tribes and families can be located, even without the map.

Mr. Moore was said to have been the first white boy born in Curry County, on what is now known as the Charles Doyle place, in Wedderburn, on July 10, 1869, and during his entire life, was familiar with such natives as stayed on in the county, and their descendants, as well as the many who came back from elsewhere to visit their old haunts — and Fred Moore.

Into Mr. Moore's story, the compiler, M. S. Brainard, has inserted notes bringing certain points into a better focus made possible by further research.

Address given by Fred Silas Moore, at Gold Beach, March 28, 1927, concerning his boyhood recollections of the Indian families along the coast of Curry County. The map referred to has been lost.

The map on the preceding page shows the names of the principal tribes who owned the country at the time of the coming of the first white man. It also shows the approximate boundaries of their holdings, the location of the principal Indian villages and gives the Indian names of the important streams along the coast. As we know Curry County now, it is bounded on the east by Josephine county, the dividing line being an irregular line following ranges of mountains and streams. It is bounded on the north by Coos County and a cor-

ner of Douglas County, on the west by the Pacific Ocean, and on the south by the 42nd., parallel of latitude. You who have traveled south in to Del Norte County, California, along the old road, have noticed, about a quarter of a mile south of the Winchuck River, a monument about five feet high, standing west of the road. It has the word "Oregon", painted on the north side and "California" on the south side, with "State Line" on the east and west sides. That monument stands on the 42nd., parallel of latitude, which is the boundary between Oregon and California. In early time, a comfortable house stood east of the road, opposite this monument. The 42nd., parallel of latitude ran through the center of this house and it is said the family slept in the state of California and cooked and ate in the state of Oregon.

The language or dialect of the different tribes shown on the map differed considerably but it was similar enough for members of one tribe to converse with members of another tribe. Therefore, we might call it a language common to all the Coast Indians. You will notice that these Indian words are divided into syllables, with hyphens between. The Indian had a peculiar way of dividing words into syllables with an

abrupt and distinct pause in between them. The language was made up of a combination of guttural, grunting hissing, and clucking sounds. These sounds were such that very few other than their own people could imitate them. For that reason, early writers differed very much in the spelling of Indian words. In making the map, the spelling adopted was used by Hon. J. L. Parrish, an early Indian agent, in making his reports to the government. It may be that his spelling would no nearer represent the actual pronunciation of the words by the Indians than the writing or spelling of others, but it has the advantage of at least being official.

The first Indian tribe in the North, the QUA-TO-MAS, was large and powerful and owned considerable territory north of what is now Curry County. This extended from near the NES-ATIL-CO, or, to us, the Cocuille River, along the coast to a point south of Port Orford, known now as Humbug Mountain. Their eastern boundary extended to the summit of the Coast Range of mountains. The Indians placed very little value upon the interior of the country except as range for the thousands of deer and elk

which grazed in the valleys, prairies and hills.

(Note: There is definite proof that the Indians used the "back country." Numerous signal fires sites have been found on Mt. Emily, Snow Camp, at Game Lake and Iron and Salmon mountains. It is also known the Indians traversed the area, maintaining a trade of coastal products-shell, materials for fabrics, chittem,

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dried sea foods, at least, for pesles, obsidian, agate, etc. The coastal Indians of this locality did not make any cooking utensils other than reed baskets covered with clay, which was baked on to them.)

To Be Continued)

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