

The PILOT

BROOKINGS-HARBOR PILOT

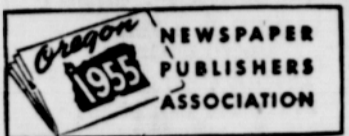
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Football Is Around The Corner . . .

All it takes is a spark set off by a couple of enthusiastic people, and a fire can get going under any project. The Quarterbacks are the latest evidence of this. For a long time a good percentage of people wanted football in Brookings, but nothing was ever done, because of the great expense involved in setting up a program of that type. It was assumed that there are more important facets of education, besides playing football. All those were needed first.

But, if this desire to see football here, was kindled and fanned into a flame, as it was during the past week, things have really started happening.

We start on the basis that people want football, and are willing to pay for the installation of a football program. Nobody would question the fact that such a program would be a good thing for the youngsters of the district. It would have the happy facility of cementing public interest in school and in the community.

There are a few problems that lay between the desire for football and the opening kick-off. All of these problems have been analysed by the Quarterbacks—and they think a solution can be worked out.

First, money must be raised—to suit up a team. That can be done—if everybody does their share. Secondly, a coach and schedule must be had. That is where the school board comes in—if they think the public—their constituents—want it.

The third and final problem is the binder. We need an adequate field. The school has an option on some land, which will probably be picked up this year. It is only logical to forget about any property other than school property, because it would be a waste of effort and money, in our opinion, to attempt to build a field in any other location.

Field lighting can wait a while. It is important first to get a team, a coach, a schedule, uniforms, and a field. Then we have football in the fall.

THE BIRTH OF CURRY COUNTY

December 18, 1855

— by M. S. BRAINARD

(Continued from page 1)

To enlighten us on these founding fathers, Fred Smith averred he came to Port Orford in July, of '51, under contract to William Tichenor and in a letter to the Oregon STATESMAN, Stephenson wrote that he and G. H. Abbott, on January 28, 1854, slaughtered fifteen Indians, including two squaws and a baby at Randolph.

Aaron Dyer conducted the Rough and Ready Hotel, at Port Orford in '53 and was a member of the Port Orford Minute Men in '56. His children were Emma K., who married Charles Hilborn; Myrtle May, whose name has for many years been bandied about with that of the poet, Jo-aquin Miller; Fannie M., who became Mrs. M. M. Bates, and James M., and Aaron Jr. The elder Aaron died in 1867.

Under the jurisdiction of Coose County Thomas R. Lawson acted as the Justice of Peace but when Curry was set off, his place was taken by Seth B. Blake who held office between July 24, 1855 and September 4, 1857. His wife was Eliza A. Little else has been turned up about him.

Peter Ruffner had a saloon in the early days of Port Orford, his license having been dated September 16, 1856 and he was also a corporal in the Port Orford Minute Men. He and his wife Ellen, were living in Wasco County, Oregon in '64.

Nelson Stephenson, also a Port Orford Minute Man, served the county as its clerk until '63, and nothing else has as yet been turned up about him.

W. H. Farrar is entirely absent from my records other than the notation he was attorney for the county.

R. H. Smith, if he had always signed his name in full, "Reginald H. Smith," his story would not have been all mixed up with two other co-existent "R. H. Smiths." It is assumed he was postmaster at Port Orford, in '55, as "R. H. Smith" is so recorded. But we do find that Reginald was appointed, "Clerk for the District Court, July 4, 1856, held in the village of Port Orford, O. T., "and as no seal was available the judge ordered Smith to get a circular piece of colored paper with the words, "Dist. Court, Curry County, O.T."

Micheal Riley came to Port Orford, September 1, 1853, as a young man, and during his many

years of residence was one of its most useful guiding lights. He lived most of his life in Gold Beach where he died, September 27, 1902, leaving a son, Walter, and a daughter, Ruby, who was the wife of Edward A. Bailey.

These were the men who started the infant Curry County on its way and here is what they did about the county's finances, that first meeting:

R. H. Smith, for his court functions, put in a bill totalling \$114.25, which was for books, stationary and freight, \$46.10; Court Seals, \$40; Service as the Clerk, \$13.90; Election Expense \$4, and as an auditor, \$43.25.

Aaron Dyer submitted a more simple statement \$48.86, which was not itemized and asked for \$11.99 for running the County treasury.

Seth Blake handed in an unexplained bill for \$26.00 and Peter Ruffner for \$15.00.

Mr. Stephenson billed the county for \$25 for assessing plus \$15 for taking the census—or \$40 total.

Mr. Farrar nicked the county for \$50 attorney fees and no explanations.

Mike Riley probably earned the \$292.26 he billed Curry for his services which he totalled as follows: \$4.50 for maintenance of a prisoner; fees, \$44.11; cleaning muskets, \$15; expenses executing warrants on Enos Thomas, \$228.75 (this could have been the renegade half-breed who stirred the Indians to murder and pillage the white people.)

The only other item on the budget was the county's territorial tax (comparable to our present state tax) of the frightenful sum of \$43.66!

Thus, the court voted, that first meeting the grand total of \$642.02—NOT MONEY but warrants, mind you, payable on the renowned "When and If" basis.

And on that day of meeting their first act toward obtaining an income was to grant a liquor license to John W. Sutton, at Port Orford, at \$50 for the ensuing year. Whether they collected in "script," in "kind" or in cash, doesn't appear in the records.

Records available have been very scant, but, to get an idea of what constituted the county seat, one hundred years ago, we can look at the field notes on one of the earlier surveys. This was made in '57 by Daniel and M. O'C. Murphy and they re-

cord Port Orford as then having "28 houses and a population of 18. There the 4 drygoods stores, 1 drugstore, 1 hotel, 1 billiard saloon, 1 postoffice and a dram shop. The town has 'very little trade dependent upon the gold mines 27 miles Northeast. The mail steamer calls semi-monthly, weather permitting."

This official description of Port Orford is at great variance from one privately issued on July 2, of the same year which makes Port Orford definitely more flourishing.

Some of those who were in Curry County at the time it was established left records by which we can form some idea of the citizenry. Among them must have been a man of some education and about which little has been turned up by this writer. His name was Ebenezer Burgess Ball, a relative by marriage to George Washington. He is said to have come to the area in 1850, to have been a storekeeper and school teacher, and left for his old home in Virginia in the early 1860's.

Very brief excerpts from records would lead us to believe these men were not unfamiliar with the new county at the time of its birth. There undoubtedly were many more but they were rather reticent when it came to appearing in the archives.

Very little has been turned up about Seth Blake only that his wife's name appears as Eliza J.

Edward and Martha Burrough lived in the extreme north end of Curry County, where he had some 300 acres of land a little west of where Langlois is now, he was a member of the Port Orford Minute Men, died July 17, 1870, and is buried at Gold Beach, and William Langlois bought his place.

Anson Dart, an early day superintendent of Indian affairs, had a son, George, who was born in Pennsylvania in 1820 and came to Curry in '54. His wife, Anna C., was a daughter of William S. Tichenor. He was a cabinet maker by trade and was, for a time, postmaster, at Port Orford. He died in 1907, in Portland, in his will he left nothing to his three children.

Aaron Dyer, in '57, had his home just about on the line between Secs. 18 and 19, at the mouth of Elk River, and in that year he and G. M. Dyer sold their Elk Ferry to Robert Nelson.

George M. Dyer was also in the county, having left Iowa when he was 18, in 1853, and was in the Indian wars. George's wife was the former Fannie Bouker, of Pennsylvania, they had four children. In 1880, he and W. H. Averill formed a company to develop Bandon but this only lasted a couple of years. George had several years in county offices.

Avery J. Edson, whose name survives in the "Edson place" just south of the Geisel monument had a liquor license in Port Orford in '56. He married as his second wife, Christina, the widow and mother bereaved in the murder of the Geisels. His first wife was Harriet Coleman, by whom he had a son, Thomas, who didn't stay in the county. Mr. Edson, Sr., also held county office on several occasions.

Maverick B. Gregory, who was hit in the back by a spent ball at Miner's Fort, Gold Beach, during the Indian troubles of '56. "M. B." must have been another of those forever "land hunting" as he shows up as a resident now and then, all over Curry County. He was county judge in '61, and was paid a salary of \$200. After he died, his widow, Rachel, in '81 sold their ranch, just above the North Fork of the Chetco, to Johnson Gardner, and now in ownership of Mrs. Carl White.

The first marriage of record in Curry was when John Ham-block and Jane N. Long were wedded, April 15, 1856. S. B. Blake tied the knot, as J. P., and H. B. Tichenor and Jackson Letts signed as witnesses. Jane, being underage, had to have her mother's consent, and the couple lived to enjoy their Golden Wedding Anniversary, which took place in the Lower Coquille Valley. It seems John worked for William Tichenor for several years.

William V. Langlois, a native of Guernsey, came to Northern Curry in '54, and settled on Floras Creek, after having lived in California. William's wife was Mary A. King, and they must have been married before coming to Curry. The couple had seven children.

David Libby was born in Maine, took part in the Indian wars of '55 and '56 and proved

up on a claim where a creek bearing his name enters Rogue River a few miles up from the mouth. There is no record of a Mrs. Libby mentioned anywhere. David was drowned, July 15, 1886, in Rogue River, and his badly decomposed body was found on the lower end of Can-field Rifle.

Christopher Long, Sr. brought his sons, Christopher, Jr., and Sylvester, and daughter, Jane, (who married John Hamblock) across the plains in '53, bringing cattle with them all the way, via Yreka, to Curry, arriving in '54. The father died soon after getting to Port Orford. The son, Sylvester, was drowned while attempting to get food from the beach to Miner's Fort, Gold Beach, during the siege. Christopher, Jr. and his wife, Alice, had three daughters and a son.

George Lounts came to Port Orford in July 1851, under contract to William Tichenor, and later took up land between Port Orford and Elk River. In '73, he was living in Arizona.

Seth D. Lounts had a place out about where Cape Blanco Road takes off Highway 101. He carried William Tichenor's little girl, Elief, in to the fort, at Port Orford, when the Indians went on the rampage. It was she for whom "Ellensburg" was named.

Elisha H. Meservey, a man from Maine, was elected Captain of militia and served with distinction during the Indian troubles. He and Jane Tautilaugus, according to records of the time, agreed to live together as man and wife, July 22, 1859, and we find he patented land on what is now Port Orford Heads, in '66. He later had a claim about at the mouth of Lobster Creek. He had two children, George W., and Elisha. When he died he was buried at what is now known as Lowery's Resort.

John Moore and his son, David Layton, must have been in the county at that time. David L., known as "Late," is recorded as having settled, in '55, at the mouth of Euchre Creek. John was the patriarch of an extensive family. It is not now known who his wife was but we know his children were Asher, David, Rachel, Mary and Melissa Ann. David was only 6 years old when the family came to Oregon in 1850, first living on the banks of the Rogue.

James and Joseph McVay, brothers, were working on the trail westward from Jacksonville, in '53, and they too, joined on in the Indian troop. They were the first of the family to come west from Kentucky and the McVay descendants are widely known in both Curry and Del Norte counties today.

Micheal Riley has been previously mentioned in this story.

William Augustus Root is credited with having come to Curry in 1849, at which time he must have been 19 years old, and appears to have been 86 when he passed on, to be buried at Gold Beach, An Ohioian, he and an Indian lady, both according to court records and to tradition, must have furnished a great deal of entertainment about the courts with their marital (?) affairs, and the good lady seems to have left quite a coterie of heirs of sorts.

Robert C. H. Smith, a native of Germany, and his wife Jane, had a great deal of grief most of their family having passed on in their youth. Robert came to Gold Beach in January of '53, the old home place being where the sawmills now sit, on lower Hunters Creek. The old family cemetery is located there.

W.D.L.F. (Alphabetical) Smith said he came to Curry in September of '53 and worked for some years in Tichenor's sawmill. He, too, served in the Indian Wars. His wife was Mary

R. Luse, and they had five children.

"Jake" (Ralph E.?) Summers, or Somers, was one of the original nine men who landed in Battle Rock, or Port Orford, in 1851. He must have been born about 1815. He was married June 14, 1856 to Betsy "an Indian," by justice S. B. Blake, with Jim Hunt and John Creighton as witnesses. They appear to have been the parents of three daughters and a son, and in the survey of '57, was living near where the Cape Blanco Road takes off 101. In '85 he made a gold strike at the head of Sixes which seems to have attracted every family within "rumor" range. "Jake" has become almost legendary in the northern part of the county.

The Tichenors around Curry at the time of its start appear to have been William, Randolph and Neefus. At the time, William represented Coos and Curry in the state legislature. Randolph married Clementine, an Indian woman, October 24, 1857. He averred he came to Curry in '51, living at times, at Big Bend, Gold Beach and Port Orford. Neefus claimed to have shipped out the first load of lumber from his sawmill, in '54, bound for San Francisco, and went back East in '57. Jacob Tichenor may or may not have been around Curry at that time. He is supposed to have come with the family in '51, but spent considerable time schooling in the Willamette Valley.

Alexander Thrift was about 15 when he came from his native Ohio to Coos County, and there to settle near Floras Creek. He claims to have picked up a small fortune, being one of the first to mine at Rancho. He married Mary Jane Goodman, in '67, at Mrs. Geisel's house, and they had 8 children. Alexander layed out the town of Dairyville, in '89.

Fred Uican, from Maryland, where he was born in Baltimore, in 1830, came to Port Orford in July, of '52, also under contract with William Tichenor. He must have separated from William as we find he obtained a license to sell liquor and groceries, at Elk River in October of 1856. When the huge forest fire swept almost the entire coast, Fred Uican's house was the only building unburned between Elk river and Port Orford. Seeing the fire coming he dug a hole in the ground for his family and self. He married Bridget Mokley in '57 and they had two children, John and Kate.

There were, of course, many, many others who could well have been in Curry County, that week before Christmas of 1855. There are records of them but those included in this are the ones who for the most part, stayed, married and raised families in the County of Curry. Many other names have been included in the files and now and then something turns up to be added. Unfortunately, we have not yet come up with pictures of how the people of those days lived but we can be sure they would be greatly different from what we find to day—so different we could not understand how they existed.

In the past hundred years, Curry County has made untellable advances. It would be foolish to in any way prophesy as to what the area and its people will be like, a hundred years hence.

NOTICE

The S. A. Agnew timber interests in Curry County have been subjected to a series of trespasses, some of which appear to have been deliberate. An honest check of property lines would have eliminated this problem. The purchase of logs from a trespass area subjects the buyer to paying twice for the same logs.

These practices will not be tolerated. S. A. Agnew will use every remedy available, both civil and criminal, to stop this practice.

Brookings Plywood Corporation has been appointed by S. A. Agnew to safe-guard and patrol his Curry County properties and to assist in any necessary prosecutions.

S. A. AGNEW

BROOKINGS PLYWOOD CORPORATION

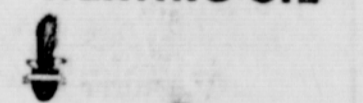
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