

Brown house which you already will know. There are other houses of simple, classic design, like the Ainsworth place at Mount Pleasant, with its fluted pillars supporting a pediment that in its shape is reminiscent of a Greek or Roman temple. How easily you may find the house is hard to say, but it is well worth the pleasure of the hunt, for in that area, near Oregon City, are a number of Oregon's first great country houses, where the wealthy entertained important and influential visitors.

There are still standing other homes older than that of Sam Brown, but many are not positively dated or identified. Our first settlers were French Canadian hunters and trappers, employees of the Hudson's Bay Company who retired to what is known as French Prairie in the 1830's. It was here that the first American mission was established, and near these French speaking folk settled many of the pioneers of the Oregon trail in the 1840's and 1850's. Generally speaking, French Prairie stretched on the east side of the Willamette river from Champoeg to just north of Salem, the heart of Marion County. It included settlements such as St. Paul and St. Louis, and the Pacific Highway south of Aurora on the Pudding river skirts its edge.

The houses that these Frenchmen built, often for Indian or half-breed wives, naturally reflect their Canadian background. Many of the houses which they knew in Canada were of the so-called "salt box" design, with a porch across the front, from which the roof rises steeply to a ridge. The walls were built solid of logs fitted in grooves between posts, while the floors were of puncheons, or half-split logs, and the roofs and outer walls were protected with shakes. It is safe to suppose that some of the first houses built on French Prairie were of this style, but none are positively identified. Yet if you drive from Newberg to Salem, through St. Paul, you will see a number of houses that answer the specifications, easily spotted with the steep ridge in front and the long sloping roofs behind covering a number of rooms and additions.

The first American homes in Oregon were log cabins. It was natural that the pioneers of the Oregon trail adopted the style of the frontier through which they had come before their trip across the plains. Many of these cabins have survived, incorporated in larger houses, but no unmodified examples of cabins of the 1840's and 1850's are known to exist in Oregon. If the cabins were but single rooms, they often became the kitchen, which appears now to be an inferior addition to a frame house.

On the other hand, the cabin may have been of "saddle-bag" design, two single rooms joined by an open porch, variously called a "dog run" or "dog trot." Original examples of such cabins survived into this century in Missouri, southern Illinois, and Kentucky. They were designed for two family occupancy, and their occurrence in Oregon is not surprising when one considers that many of the people who came to Oregon migrated as part of family groups. The saddle bag cabin was an answer to multiple family housing problems during the first years of settlement. These cabins produced a style of architecture which is quite distinct, illustrated by the James Watson house at Hoskins, the John Johnson house at Pedee, and the T. G. Richmond house near Dallas. There are center porches set into the house, both front and back, and the ridge of the steep roof runs the breadth or length of the house, forming a half story. The Jacob Conser house, now the city hall and library at Jefferson, may represent another adaptation of the saddle bag to the mansion style architecture.

Less distinct is the simple farm house which originated from the log cabin. From the porch across the front there rises a steep unbroken roof, like the salt box, but the house itself is wide the length of the front porch and only as deep as the width of the side gable. Architecturally it is the ancestor of the Oregon ranch house, often featured in modern architecture and house magazines as one of our most desirable styles. A good example of the resulting house is to be seen on the Pacific Highway just