

M'KENZIE HIGHWAY BUILDER HONORED

Stone Commemorates Work of 60 Years Ago.

FELIX SCOTT IS LEADER

Breaking Early Road, Eugene to Idaho Mines, One of Romances of Oregon History.

(Note—Sixty years ago the first road was built over the wilderness of the McKenzie pass. Felix Scott Jr. and his party were the hardy pioneers who carried out this difficult feat and their labor is to be recognized today in the unveiling of a tablet at the upper McKenzie river bridge, some 50 miles from Eugene, erected there by the Lane county chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The following account of this pioneer effort at road building and of the character of the man, who headed the enterprise has been furnished by A. L. Veazie, Portland attorney, whose mother was Felix Scott's niece.)

BY ARTHUR LYLE VEAZIE.
This afternoon, amid scenes of mountain grandeur, on the bank of one of the fairest of Oregon's many beautiful rivers, a group of people who love the history of our state will gather to unveil a monument, which will commemorate the achievement of Felix Scott Jr. and his companions in opening the McKenzie river road and taking loaded wagons across the Cascade range in 1862.

Was it an achievement to build the first McKenzie road? Let him who doubts it look at the sturdy river pouring its crystal waters down from the limpid lake in the mountain heights to the level of the sea and think of striving with that young giant. Then let him think of the monarchs of the forest who had lain down across the way as if to say that only over their dead bodies could things on wheels go through, and of the cliffs and crumbling precipices to be scaled; the great mountain range to be overcome, and last and most terrible of all, the miles and miles of the descending eastern slope, where volcanic rage in days not so long past, had scattered the landscape into the debris of lava beds—bunmocks and pits, ravines and hillocks, all of cutting, grinding glassy rocks, almost the despair, even today, of the road builder.

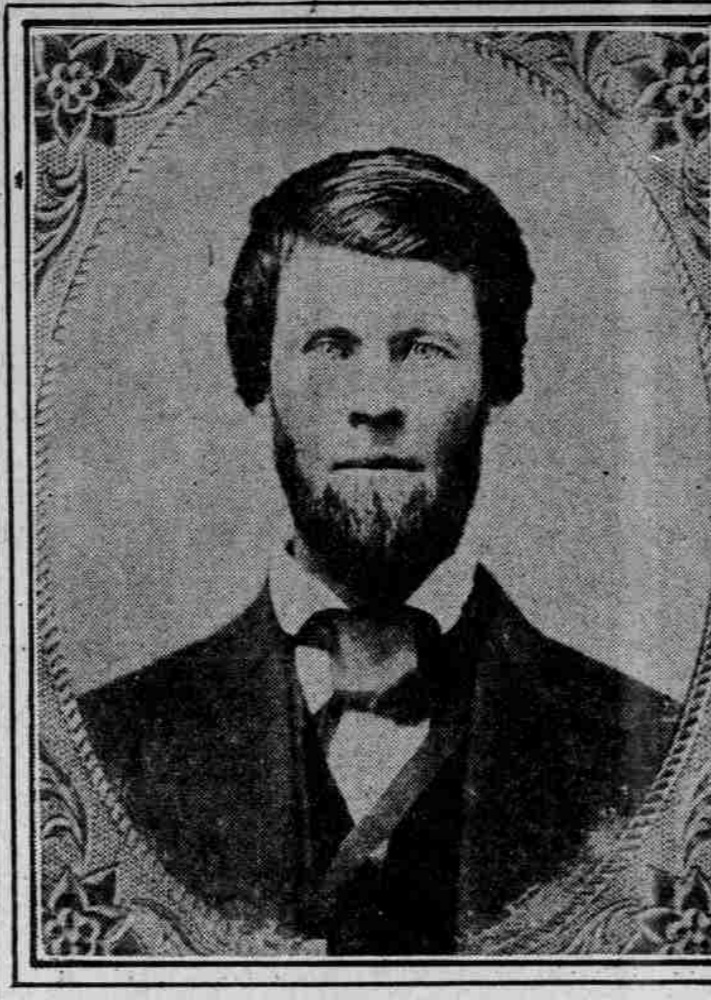
Feat Typical of Oregon History.
But when all is said as to the difficulty of the feat, it is not because the passage of the McKenzie route in 1862 with loaded wagons was any great or unusual event of pioneer history that it is worth our while to pause and think of it, but rather the reverse. Felix Scott Jr. and his comrades did not win a large scale, with good equipment and in a favorable season of the year, what pioneers everywhere in this mountainous, stream-cut and forested country of ours were doing by necessity on a small scale. They merely went with teams and wagons where they needed to go, regardless

of obstacles. Because the builders of this particular road typify the courage and determination, the resourcefulness and resistless energy of the men of their day, we may well set up a tablet to their memory.
Felix Scott Jr. was trained to pioneering from his boyhood. His father, Felix Scott Sr., was born December 13, 1788, in Monongalia county, Virginia. He moved in 1819 to St. Charles county, Mo., where Felix Jr. was born July 2, 1829, and in the spring of 1845, with his wife and seven of his children, he joined an emigrant party bound for Oregon. He spent the winter of 1845 at Sutter's fort, the present site of Sacramento, and in the early spring of 1846 he came with pack and saddle horses to Yamhill county. In June, 1846, in company with Elijah Bristolow, Eugene P. Skinner and William Dodson, he went up the Willamette valley on an exploring trip, which resulted in these four men becoming the first settlers in Lane county. Skinner's claim became the site of Eugene. Scott settled on the bank of the McKenzie opposite the mouth of the Mohawk, and the other two men at Pleasant Home. In 1847 gold was discovered in California and Scott with his sons Felix and Marion joined in the rush to the diggings. They spent several years there, were successful in their mining and business operations, and returned to Oregon in 1849 with a considerable capital. With this then happened which shows what the men of those days thought of dangers and hardships. Felix Jr., a youth of 20, was sent by his father on horseback to Missouri with a part of their gold dust capital to buy and bring out a band of livestock for their Lane county ranch. The long and perilous journey was accomplished and the boy returned with the livestock in company with his older brother, Presley, and family who had in Lane county and several of Scott's grandchildren named Comeyes came also, settling in Polk and Lane counties.

Idaho Gold Rush Starts.
In the spring of 1860 gold was discovered on the Clearwater in Idaho, and a year later the great rush to the diggings of that region was on. A line of steamers was established from Portland, the town of Lewiston was founded, and men poured into the field by the thousands. Before the winter closed in new diggings were discovered at Florence. The terrible winter of 1861-1862 ensued—the worst this country ever knew—and most of the livestock of the interior country perished. In the summer of 1862 Felix and Marion Scott concluded it would be a good business venture to take supplies and cattle to the Florence mines. Felix took charge of the expedition and set out from Crescent City with eight or nine loaded freight wagons, some 60 to 80 yoke of work oxen and a band of loose cattle, variously estimated at from 700 to 900 head. Arriving in Lane county, Felix announced the project of crossing the mountains by the McKenzie route. Cattle had been driven across the mountains into eastern Oregon in several previous years, and the preceding summer an expedition had crossed from Lane county bound for the mines. On June 23, 1861, a correspondent at Eugene sent in the following item, which was published in the issue of the Weekly Oregonian of July of that year:

"On Tuesday last the prospectors for gold started on their hazardous trip—others have been leaving since—others are to start today, and to rendezvous at Big Prairie, 40 or 50 miles east of here, and then to start on the big ox across the Cascades. I believe they intend to push on to Clearwater unless they 'raise the color' somewhere on this

PIONEER ROAD BUILDER OF OREGON TO BE HONORED.



Felix Scott Jr., who conquered McKenzie pass 60 years ago and for whom tablet will be unveiled at upper McKenzie bridge this afternoon by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

side. By reference to the map you will see that by far the most direct (if practicable) route to the northern el Dorado is to cross the Cascade mountains directly west of this place (Eugene), and the whole road is supposed by many to be more or less auriferous. Success to the enterprising party, say I."

Correct Date Determined.
I am aware that Walling's history of Lane county gives the year of the building of the road as 1861, but good reasons exist for saying positively that 1862 was the year. In The Weekly Oregonian of July 26, 1862, appeared the following item: "The people of Lane county are busy opening the McKenzie wagon road over the Cascades to the head of Deschutes. The work has progressed several miles into the mountains."
George Millican fixed the year as 1862. It links in with the discovery of the rich gold field of the Boise basin, which occurred in the fall of 1862. My mother, Mrs. Harriet Lyle Veazie, a niece of Felix Scott Jr. is able through outstanding facts of family history which occurred in the same year to fix the date positively as the summer of 1862.
When the project was broached a subscription paper was circulated and about \$1000 was donated by the people of Lane county towards the expense of the enterprise, and a number of men gave their labor. These facts were given me many years ago by Rodney Scott, the youngest brother of Felix Jr. The wish is borne in upon us that

the McKenzie they had an outfit of 60 yoke of work cattle, nine freight wagons and about 900 head of loose cattle. One wagon was very large and heavy, carrying between 10,000 and 15,000 pounds of freight. The wagons had been brought through from Crescent City. There must have been 50 or 60 men along with the outfit. They had so much team power that they could pull over almost anything. They went through without making much of a road, taking to the river frequently. As soon as they got across the mountains most of the men were dismissed and returned to Lane county.

Felix Scott Described.
A few words now as to what manner of man was Felix Scott Jr. and what befell him. I quote from Walling's history:

"On November 3, 1879, death claimed Felix Scott Jr. His history was an eventful one. His enterprise, determination and industry were virtues that made him beloved. As a pioneer of Oregon he was among the earliest; as a friend of immigration his hand and purse were open; to the distressed he was a friend in need. Coming as he did to this almost unknown territory, he appreciated the wants of the immigrants, and while prosperity showered upon him, he generously contributed to those in adversity.

In the winter of 1846 when the immigration of Oregon was in a state of destitution he, being always ready to assist the needy, went to their rescue with stock and provisions and generously administered to their wants. He was one of the party at that time, and by their united efforts many lives were saved. . . . In 1872 he removed to Arizona and at the time of his death was extensively engaged in the stock and freight business. . . . Even a glimpse within the family circle may not be out of place. To his numerous young nieces Felix Scott was 'Uncle Bountiful.' My mother still speaks of the silks so heavy that the skirts would stand alone and the joys of girlhood finery which his visits brought.

Let one incident speak for many: In the time of the bitter need and deprivation of all luxuries which the civil war imposed there came one day to his sister, Mrs. Ellen Lyle, at Dallas, a note written from Salem, saying: 'I am passing through and too much pressed for time to stop and see you, as I would like; but I want to send you the nicest present that I can, and is there anything nicer than coffee to drink and sugar to put in it?' With the note came a 50-pound bag of coffee and a 100-pound barrel of granulated sugar—almost a priceless treasure in those days.

Scenic Highway Replaces Old Road.
Felix Scott Jr. was a typical pioneer, of the race bred up in America to conquer the wilderness. From the road he made has been developed one of Oregon's choicest scenic highways, and today, by the side of that road and on the banks of that beautiful river, the Lane county chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will dedicate their memorial tablet to Felix Scott and his companions. Sixty years ago long lines of tolling oxen bowed their moist noses to the ground and drew the groaning wagons through the gravel of the river margin, over rocks and boulders, a mile or so a day, while gangs of sweating men labored in the van with axes and shovels, picks and crowbars, to open up a way. Today, over the fine new highway, those who celebrate the event will accomplish as many miles in an hour as the pioneer of that first journey did in a month; but none will travel by the power of ox or mule, and the waters of the men are gone, but the scenes of their labor still abide—the cry-



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tal river still goes rushing through its gorge, murmuring a dirge, a lullaby or a summer song, as your humor is; the green-clad mountains "plowed with delta," slope away to the line of heaven's blue; the turf is carpeted deep with springing mosses; the alder, the ash and the maple, the balsam tree, the fir, the cedar and the yew still cast their green shadows on the rocks and are mirrored in the glassy waters; the kingfisher perches on the overhanging bough and the robin and the oriole flit from tree to tree as in the days when the men whose memory we honor were building the first road. The redside trout leap in the pools and cut the waters of the rapids; the grouse fatten on the salals and the deer bound through the glades. The men of that day had their joys, too, in the beauties and the bounties of the scenery and the wild life of our mountains and our streams.

NIGHT SERVICE IS BEGUN
W. L. Hughson Company Announces New Plan.
Night service for repair of cars has been established by W. L. Hughson company, authorized Ford dealers, the service having been inaugurated last week under the direction of Ed Wilson, shop superintendent of the company.
The night shift has been established.

The department of public safety in Pittsburg, Pa., has appealed to motorists for their co-operation in breaking up the practice of automobile drivers giving rides to strangers.

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