

LAND WAS CHEAP ON FRENCH PRAIRIE IN THE OLD DAYS

Donation Land Claim Where
Woodburn Lies Was Sold in
1858 for \$2000; Slump
brought it Down to \$1 Acre.

By Fred Lockley.
Woodburn, Or., July 12.—When French prairie was settled by such men as Lucien, Francis Xavier Matthei and other ex-employees of the Oregon Bay company, Jean Baptiste Matthei took up a donation land claim where Woodburn now is. On the 12th of January, 1858, Jean and his wife Catherine, sold it to W. B. Mager for \$2000.

Three years later claim No. 61, containing 341 acres, and claim No. 80, containing 314 acres, both of which were owned by W. B. Mager, were knocked down at sheriff's sale for \$555. Alexander A. Sattelmier, the price realized was \$1.48 an acre, certainly a very conservative valuation. Though the sale occurred early in 1861, the sheriff did not issue his deed till March 25, 1862. On December 28, 1864, A. A. Sattelmier sold the 655 acres to his brother, Jesse H. Sattelmier, for \$500 cash.

J. H. Sattelmier, the founder of Woodburn, came with his people across the plains in 1848. In 1857 three of the seven brothers—W. F., H. W. and Jesse H. Sattelmier—started the Tangent nursery near Albany.

In March, 1861, J. H. Sattelmier started the Woodburn nursery. When he bought the ranch it was uncleared. Big trees, down timber and brush had to be removed to make room for his nursery and his proposed town. Gervais was three miles to the southward and four miles north was Hubbard. Mr. Sattelmier gave a lot to anyone who would build a house. To each religious organization that would erect a building he gave a quarter block; to the school district a full block. He gave the Oregon & California railroad 35 acres for locating a station on his place, and to the Oregon Railway company he gave 36 acres to do the same. The latter road was a narrow gauge road, running from Roy's Landing on the Willametta river to Coburg, near Eugene.

When the city began showing signs of growth some lawyers discovered that the sheriff had never served the execution papers on the wife of W. B. Mager. A long and costly suit followed, which was carried to the supreme court and Mr. Sattelmier lost his case and was compelled to purchase his claim from Mr. Mager. When the narrow gauge road made Woodburn its northern terminus in place of Roy's Landing, Woodburn began forging ahead. One of the factors which helped greatly in Woodburn's prosperity was the fact that in 1869 the net profit of this company was over \$60,000.

In talking with Charles L. Ogil, one of the pioneer residents, he said:

"When I first came here I was railway mail clerk on the narrow gauge, and J. M. Peckham was conductor. We ran from Roy's Landing, near Newberg, to Coburg. Our largest business was hauling wheat to Roy's Landing. The other end of the road from Roy's Landing was not paying expenses and accidents were of daily occurrence. The two bridges across the Bantam washed out so the road south of West Solo was abandoned. About 22 years ago the other end of the road from Roy's Landing to Woodburn was abandoned, so our run was greatly shortened. We used to pound along at as high as 15 miles an hour, but that was a pretty dangerous speed. The dogfennel would get the rails and stails and we would have to get out and pull dogfennel. We used to stick in Al German's field near Switzerland and we would have to back up three or four times for a new start before we got up the grade."

J. J. Hall, another pioneer resident, said:

"My father bought his farm in 1852. Woodburn has spread over part of our old farm. I was born within the present city limits of Woodburn in 1857. When I was a boy it was the day of the big farm and the wheat raiser. There used to be a string of wagons three or four blocks long waiting to be unloaded; now you rarely see a load of wheat. The big farm is no more. Where we had one farmer we have a score. In place of wheat we are raising onions, potatoes, hay, loganberries, hogs, fruit and other diversified products. This is really a fine fruit district. We have trees here that have been bearing for over 70 years. I remember when I was a boy my father unloaded 35 acres adjoining the city on an unwary stranger at \$21 an acre. He took half cash and a mortgage for the other half. He was greatly worried for fear he would have to take the land back on the mortgage."

I am going to close this article on Woodburn with a few figures and some statistics. Woodburn has about 1850 population. It is 36 miles south of Portland and 17 miles north of Salem. It is on the main line of the Southern Pacific and at the intersection of a branch line to Natron, on the line of the Oregon Electric through a spur to West Woodburn and the Portland, Eugene & Eastern will soon give it electric connection with Portland. It has municipal waterworks, paved streets, electric lights, sewers, rural delivery routes, city library, fire department and a \$25,000 armory, a \$22,000 Masonic temple and a \$10,000 postoffice. Eighteen steam and 32 electric passenger trains daily give it quick and excellent service. It is a center for the hog industry and is becoming a loganberry center. It is forging steadily ahead and is a live and prosperous community.

Summaries

Since the latest returns of mercantile mortality give the best indication of present conditions, it is particularly interesting to note the statistics for the month of June. These have not yet been published.

Small—only \$6,417,372, against \$17,833,235.

Failure statistics for the half year are compared below for 10 years:

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