

Stories Of Staunch Loggers Still Live In 'Ghost' Logging Camp In Elkhorn Valley

THE VALLEY NEWS COLUMNS

From The Oregon Statesman's Valley Correspondents

Ernest Powell of Jefferson Mail Carrier Past 30 Years

JEFFERSON—The mail must go through in 1950, just as it did years ago, and Ernest Powell has seen to it that the rural mail out of the Jefferson postoffice got through for the past 30 years.

There has never been a time, since he began carrying mail, that he hasn't served at least part of the route, despite bad roads, car and tire trouble, storms and floods.

Valley Briefs

Statesman News Service

Pedee — About 150 descendants of Riley and Elizabeth Burbank, early Oregon pioneers, attended the annual family reunion Sunday at the C. L. Burbank farm.

Jefferson — The Don Reed family moved to Hubbard this week. The Bert Kelleys have traded their town property on Third street for the D. T. Henion acreage north of town. The Earl Robbins family moved last week from the Hart Barnes house in north Jefferson to the Rex house on South Main street.

Pedee — Notice has been received here of the death of Mrs. Herman McCaleb, former Pedee resident, at Medford recently following a lengthy illness. She was born at Pedee and was married here. Her husband died in 1947.

Lebanon — Loren E. Sommerfield, navy boilerman, is summering in the western Pacific aboard the transport USS Horace A. Bass. He is slated to arrive in San Diego, Calif., later this month.

Monmouth — H. W. Buss who suffered a heart attack late last week is recovering at Salem Memorial hospital. He operates a hardware store here, and Mrs. Buss is in charge of the business during his illness.

Large Crowd at Liberty Outing

Statesman News Service

LIBERTY — Many parents, friends, and relatives attended the Liberty school picnic last week at the school.

The students attended school until noon with many pre-school children visiting. A covered-dish dinner was served at noon and the sixth grade was in charge of the potato salad. In the afternoon the girls gave an exhibition in tumbling, and the boys had a baseball game.

Louis Bartlett, head teacher, was in charge of the affair, and announced that report cards will be given out at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, June 6.

Valley Obituaries

Mrs. Nellie May Morris

PEDEE — Funeral services were held last week at Independence for Mrs. Nellie May Morris who died earlier in the week at Salem. Interment was at Old English cemetery south of Monmouth.

She was born at Lewisville, Feb. 25, 1878, and lived most of her life in Polk and Benton counties. She lived at Kings Valley for many years.

She is survived by the widower, Walter Morris of Corvallis; sister, Mrs. Clara Williams of Independence and by two brothers, Lee O'Kelly of Hopkins and Robert O'Kelly of California.

Earl W. Gibbens

WOODBURN — Earl W. Gibbens, lifelong resident of the Woodburn area, died at his home here June 5 after a lengthy illness.

He was born here Sept. 30, 1889. He was a farmer for a number of years. He was a past master of AF&AM lodge 106 and past worthy patron of Evergreen chapter, Order of Eastern Star.

He is survived by the widow, Rose Gibbens of Woodburn; son, Waldo Gibbens of Greenland and brother, Pearl E. Gibbens of Woodburn.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday, June 7, at 2 p.m. at the Ringo chapel here with the Rev. D. Lester Fields officiating. Interment will be at Belle Passi cemetery.

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There has never been a time, since he began carrying mail, that he hasn't served at least part of the route, despite bad roads, car and tire trouble, storms and floods.

Telling of his experiences recently, Powell said: "There was a time during high water back in 1921, when the mail almost missed going through. A bridge near the present McGill brothers farm out Marion way, that I crossed one day, was washed out the next. The neighbors and I fixed up a cable between two trees, attached a hog crate to hold the mail and me and pulled us across the swollen stream. I walked the remaining mile on the route, and mail May 16, 1920, taking over the mail from that day."

When Powell started carrying route from Glenn Bilyeu, the route was 24 miles long, serving 90 families. It is now 60 miles long with 330 boxes. In that time, he has seen some of his patrons marry, become parents, then grandparents, remaining on the same rural route he serves. Jake and Nelson Gilmour out at Sidney are two of his patrons who have married and become grandparents since he started carrying mail to them. S. H. Goin on the Greens Bridge road, is another of the old-timers still being served.

For the first two years he carried the mail, Powell used two horses and a rubber-tired buggy. He alternated the horses on the route. In 1922, he motorized his route, buying a Model-T Ford. His first route was over the Greens Bridge road to the Denny place, then back to the Kelly corner, making a loop down to the Santiam river, back to the Greens Bridge road and north to Marion road east to where Dick Vose now lives. From there, he came back over the Marion-Jefferson road to the present Mack Hamby corner, up Parrish Gap road and back to Jefferson.

None of the roads were paved at that time, some were graveled and there was always plenty of mud to fight during rainy weather. The Pacific highway through town was paved in 1921, paving of Greens Bridge road followed, with the Marion and Talbot roads hardsurfaced last. Now, two-thirds of his route is hard-surfaced.

The present route, consolidated in 1926 with the route through Talbot then served by Ed Jones, now goes north seven miles on Pacific highway to Looney Butte road, across to foot of Ankeny Hill, on to Buena Vista ferry, back through Talbot (taking in side roads as he goes) to Jefferson. Then south out of town on Greens Bridge road to old Wilson place beyond Denny's, back to Kelly corner, making a loop south down to Santiam river, back and north from Greens Bridge to Marion road to Hamby corner, through Parrish Gap, and again south to Jefferson.

"I remember finding a man lying in the road on my route once," said Powell. "He was Hans Jorgenson, father of Chris and Ole Jorgenson, and he had suffered a paralytic stroke. I put him in my car and took him to his home a mile away."

Powell had been married about 11 months when he started as rural letter carrier here. He was married to Nettie Meritt of Scio in June of 1919, first living where J. A. Smith now lives. Then in 1929 he moved to the farm on Marion road where the family lived until 1944, when it bought the Jacob house on the river in Jefferson, where it now lives. Mr. and Mrs. Powell have two children, Mrs. Virgil Bailes and Gen. Powell, both of Jefferson, and one grandson, Terry Bailes.

Asked when he planned to retire—(he is now eligible)—Powell replied: "No plans yet for retiring. I'm not good at loafing!"

Mrs. S. J. Relected to Head Woman's Club

Statesman Society Editor

PEDEE — Mrs. S. J. Yates was relected president of the Womens club last week.

Other officers include Mrs. Alice Wing, vice president; Mrs. R. L. Siddall, secretary, and Mrs. Louise Potter, treasurer. Mrs. Leslie Carson, Mrs. H. Hawkes of Salem and Mrs. Nellie Lacey were visitors. Quilting was done.

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By Jean Roberts
Statesman News Service

MEHAMA — Nestled in a narrow draw high above Elkhorn valley and almost obscured by rapidly growing alders stands an old deserted logging camp built many years ago by the C & H Logging Co. It resembles a ghost town with its rows of bunk houses neatly outlined by board walks, and a huge cookhouse still standing as though in readiness for the crew of loggers to return for the evening meal.

The camp was vacated almost overnight, leaving stoves, sinks, kettles, ladies and other cookhouse equipment still in place. Bunk houses, though run down and in need of repair, evidence an air of a once orderly camp. Beds, mattresses and stoves are plentiful and a wood-log still lies by the bath house depicting the bull cook's realm.

Logging camps, once an accepted part of the logging industry, are fast disappearing with the diminishing virgin forests. This camp like many others has its own never-to-be-forgotten history, an array of outstanding figures that made it what it was.

Salted Coffee

One of the first cooks was Tant Myers, an early Elkhorn resident who always staunchly maintained that coffee must be salted "same as anything else," or it wasn't fit to drink. Fryng hotcakes was his specialty as he deftly tossed them with the pan sometimes catching one in his hands. As he cooked, he talked of his cougar hunting days, occasionally reaching down to pat the head of a faithful hound who slept by the cook stove.

Loggers Tough

An outstanding figure was Ed Ingram, an old time logger who could chew tobacco all day and never spit. Thin as a rope and twice as tough, he was always happy for any excuse to quit work and go cat hunting. With his hounds, a gun, and a blanket he would disappear into the woods for perhaps a day or maybe a week. He always insisted that "you can't get lost, if you don't care where you are," but he had been "a bit confused" several times.

There was Phil Dooley, a high climber who thought nothing of tossing his hat in the air from the top of a spar tree and then descending the tree in a flash, bracking occasionally with belt and spurs, to beat his hat to the ground.

Smoky and Ole were falling partners and every morning Smoky carried Ole to work. Every one laughed when Smoky insisted that Ole was the best partner he had ever had. Ole, you see, was a "rubber man," a piece of innertube fastened to a nearby tree to pull Smoky's falling saw back and forth. In this way Smoky felled timber by himself, but always talked about the efficiency of his partner Ole.

The caretaker at the camp was a soft-spoken man with white hair whose manner indicated a better-than-average education. His downfall however, was alcohol, and he shamefacedly admitted having seen "snakes" several times.

Not all was fun and fancy, however, as any logging camp can tell a tale of the logging industry which is a dangerous one with death ever striding along with the men in the caulk boots.

Three Men Killed
Tragedy struck one summer week and before the end of the next, three men were killed. The first was the driver of a loaded log truck out of control that plunged over a steep bank and crashed several hundred feet below. The huge old growth logs rolled over the cab and driver, flattening the truck like a pancake.

A few days later another truck driver perished when he jumped from his truck only to be run down by the trailer. Cause of the accidents was not determined as air brakes were always checked and watered at the top of the hill before starting the steep, two-mile descent.

The camp foreman known as Scotty met a fiery death the next week when a gasoline drum exploded, spraying him with the burning liquid.

For years loggers were regarded as men of brawn but with very little brain, some of them being unable to read or write. One bucker had to learn to write the numbers on each log, occasionally getting them upside down or backward, but though many were lacking in formal education their bodies and minds were trained for split second action.

C & H Logging Co. is now a thing of the past, but it still lives on in the memories of the men who were a part of its existence. One of the former owners, Earl Hitchman, who now lives in Salem, is still affectionately known as "pappy" by any of the men who ever worked for C & H.

Secretary of State Office to Expand

Statesman News Service

The accounting division of the secretary of state's office Monday was moving into quarters previously occupied by the state board of control on the first floor of the state capitol.

This space also will be utilized by the state budget division and the state property control division.

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Pro-Leopold Party Adds to Election Lead

Statesman News Service

BRUSSELS, Belgium, June 5 — Social Christians increased their pro-Leopold victory today but Socialists said there was doubt the king would return permanently to his Belgian throne.

A correction of errors in the count in the districts of Charleroi and Tournai gave the Social Christian party and the communists one additional seat each in the House of Representatives as a result of parliamentary elections Sunday.

The revision raised the Social Christian representation to 108, an absolute majority of two in the 212-member lower house, and four more than the combined opposition.

A leader of the Socialists also admitted that the pro-Leopold party was sure to get control of the senate, too. The ministry of interior claimed the Social Christians would get at least 90 of the 175 senate seats.

Exile in Switzerland
The party which may choose Jean Duveusart, 50-year-old minister of economics, as the country's next premier thus seemed to have the power to bring back King Leopold, a captive of the Germans and an exile in Switzerland for 10 years.

But Socialist leaders, who have threatened strike action to prevent the king resuming his throne, expressed doubt that the royal question which has kept Belgium split in four elections since the war, finally had been settled.

King as Ally
They said they were confident

they had a new ally—the 48-year-old king himself.

One Socialist leader said he believed Leopold would refuse to return permanently to his throne. Some support for this view was given by Leopold partisans themselves.

A source close to the king's secretariat said the king would expect now to be returned to the throne. But he added that only then would the monarch draw conclusions from the political situation.

Earlier today the king's secretary in Brussels, Jacques Pirenne, told reporters "King Leopold is waiting for the decision of parliament. The king would comply with the wishes of the two chambers."

Communists lost a greater proportion of their seats Sunday than any other party. The Liberals also were heavy losers.

A semi-official tabulation showed this House standing:

Social Christians, 108, a gain of three.
Socialists, 77, a gain of 11.
Liberals, 20, a loss of nine.
Communists, 7, a loss of five.

Savings Bond Sales Totalled

Savings bond sales in Marion county last week totaled \$20,827, according to Sidney L. Stevens, drive chairman. This brings total sales up to \$34,214 as the Independence bond campaign enters its third week.

Marion county has collected 11 per cent of its \$302,000 quota. Sales over the state have boosted Oregon to 12th place in the nation, it was reported.

TO PRESENT PUPILS
MONMOUTH — B. Carolyn Elliott will present her piano pupils in recital at the Christian church Tuesday night.

The Statesman, Salem, Oregon, Tuesday, June 6, 1950—3

Detroit Area Fire Quelled

Statesman News Service

DETROIT, June 5 — Forest fires at the Detroit dam site were being mopped up today and the situation, once critical, was "well under control," according to the Detroit forest ranger station.

The blaze which roared through about 175 acres of trees and brush on the south and north walls of the canyon just east of the dam site had flickered down to only a few small burning patches by this afternoon.

A sharp wind Sunday caused the fire to renew in temporary fury but it was soon quelled by scores of fire fighters. The blaze, which started early Friday morning, was confined mostly to the Santiam river canyon area but did not greatly hinder work on the dam.

"Trash" fish, suitable only for oil and fertilizer, sell for about one cent a pound in New England markets.

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PEDEE BOY HOME

PEDEE — Earl Gage, Jr., 7, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Gage, returned home last week from Salem General hospital. He underwent surgery there for an injury received when he was struck by a baseball at school recently.

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