



**Native Growth Rules**—Some of the proudest old trees in the Willamette valley are found in pioneer cemeteries, such as the Sand Ridge cemetery, shown above, in Linn county. Oak, cedar, fir and maple predominate and many of the finest specimens of dogwood are to be found in these isolated places. (Lebanon Express photo)

## Memorial Day Recalls Early Days of Pioneer Cemeteries

By KATHRYN HARRIS

Lebanon—On Memorial Day a traditional ceremony will be reenacted at the pioneer Sand Ridge cemetery a few miles southwest of Lebanon. Accented by a sprinkling of majestic fir trees, it lies at the base of Peterson Butte in a fold of lower foot hills.

Here on May 30, George W. Simons, a native son of Linn county—tall, white-haired, scholarly—bearing his 80 years with erect dignity, will raise one of Oregon's historic flags. Here lie his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Simons, and the patriarchal heads of the Shedd, the McKnight, Coyles, Kirkendahl, Wheelers, Hustons, Morgans, Frums and Hazens.

The flag which George Simons raises each year was made by his mother during the winter of 1862, eight years after their covered wagon came to rest in the valley of the South Santiam. Fashioned of fine cotton, it has retained to a remarkable degree its original colors. It is a large flag with 36 stars in its field and every tiny stitch is hand sewn. It was first publicly displayed at a Fourth of July celebration in Brownsville in 1863.

The raising of this treasured flag each Memorial Day is symbolic of other rites in more than a score of pioneer cemeteries throughout the Cascade lowlands, where other commemorative services will be held by the clans whose forebears blazed the foothill trails. By accepted custom it is an annual homecoming for native sons and daughters.

It is doubtful if any man now living knows so well the location of these old cemeteries as does George Simons. Certain it is that no one has been called on more often to pay the last tribute to passing members of the old families. During the past 50 years he has conducted so many services in these remote spots that he himself is unable to calculate their number.

Tranquility marks these hallowed grounds of the first families. Without exception they are sentinelled by great trees, beloved by the founding fathers after cruel months of struggle through flat horizoned plains; the sagebrush wastes; the passive rocks of the Snake and Columbia gorges.

For the final resting place of their people, high knolls were sought, marked with stands of fir, oak and cedar; their roots strung in the soil, matching the pioneer's determination to sink deep his life line in the lands of the Santiam. Hence though many of these spots have been little used for many years, the great trees remain intact.

The Providence church with its adjoining burial spot is as quaint a scene as any of old England. Situated near Scio, it occupies a rolling knoll with a view of the lush valley farms and the mighty Cascades as a backdrop. Stately firs guard these grounds and line the winding roadway to the hillcrest.

Here lies Joab Powell, famed circuit rider of the 50's, for Providence was his church and formed the nucleus of his wide-ranging gospel missions throughout the foothill settlements.

Joab Powell first came to Oregon in 1845, according to the records of his great, great nephew, Curtis Stringer of Lebanon. Acquainting himself with the westward trail, he then returned to Missouri to bring back his family and other relatives, including his sister and brother-in-law, Jane Powell Beeler and John Beeler. All settled in the Providence vicinity, John and Jane acquiring the donation land claim from which the church was built. From the time of the arrival of the Powell train in 1852, this spot was a meeting place for religious and civic convalesces, and in 1854 the church was built. It stands today serving the community as in the days of a century ago. Its cemetery continues to be a favored resting place for descendants of many of the old families. It is used annually for Easter sunrise services, and every summer the Powell family picnic and reunion is held there, bring-

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**True Pioneer**—George W. Simons, 80, who is in constant demand, is the son of wagon train pioneers, born in Linn county and educated at the historic Santiam Academy at Lebanon. Though an ordained minister and has conducted innumerable rites in the secluded burial grounds dotting the Cascade foothills, he prefers to be known as Elder Simons. (Miner studio photo)

that section and is now little used, but many services are still held at Gilliland and Nye.

**Resting in Peace**  
On a secluded hill of the road from Foster to Quartzville, lies the Lewis burial grounds. So steep and rock-ribbed is the trail leading to it that it is the current practice for a farmer living nearby to furnish a team and buckboard to transport the casket up the hill. The mourners follow on foot. Interments there are infrequent but they still follow the pioneer pattern.

There is one pioneer cemetery which will receive no commemorative attention on this Memorial Day, nor has it for many years past. No public or private sight will so much as acknowledge its existence. Yet it lies in the heart of Lebanon—an eerie and desolate waste.

Sightseeing visitors are routed away from it. Curious new residents ask questions and are given evasive answers—for there is no answer.

Its area grows more valuable by the year. A closely knit residential district nudges it. Even industry eyes it speculatively. But all schemes of encroachment stop dead at its boundaries.

Through the years many civic groups have planned to clear and improve this tract, restoring its original quaint charm and utilizing a part of it for a memorial building and park. Complete frustration has met every attempt. Progressive Lebanon seems seized with a strange lethargy when it comes to doing anything about the old cemetery.

Here lies Lebanon's founder, Jeremiah Ralston and his wife, Jermima—they, whose wagon train made its final stop so near

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the spot, 102 years ago. Many of the city's proudest names are carved on its headstones. Here also rest Morgan Kees, owner of vast lands in pioneer days. It was he who set aside a sizeable sum whose income was to provide a perpetual fund for the ground's grooming. In the course of years the entire fund disappeared and with it, records vanished. Investigations came to naught. Bitterness arose, and soon after the old cemetery was suddenly abandoned.

**Progress Is Defied**  
Nature took over. Tenacious vines climb the headstones, many of which are reduced to rubble. Brambles run riot and the exact location of many graves is now impossible to identify. A strange and forbidding aura hangs over the deeply shaded expanse and it seems protected against the inroads of change by some inexplicable fate. Lost records involving legal complications, or sentiments of descendants of the pioneer clans foil every effort to modernize the area. Even the state highway department, seeking to carve through a corner for one of its two through streets was discouraged by the prospect. It now appears that a higher jurisdiction than that of the City of Lebanon will be required to effect any change and that nothing short of action by the state legislature will end this peculiar stalemate.

In the meantime it lies, defiant in its desolation. Above it rise its great trees, aloof and imperturbable. They guard the strange secret of its obscure history, even as they watch over the last resting place of the founding fathers. Among their group, the mightier cedars saw the dying fires of the vanishing Calapooya tribes as they faded into the mists of racial obscurity. They looked down on the vanguards of Western civilizations as their wagon trains wound through the tall grasses of the valley to establish a toe-hold west of the Cascades. They saw the retreat of the pioneer as the era of expansion drew swiftly to its close and a new mechanical way of life moved into place.

## Deportation Cuts Life Line

Washington, May 14 (AP)—Elizabeth Bentley, acknowledged former communist courier, told senators today that deportation of subversive aliens would "cut the life line" of the American communist party to Moscow.

Miss Bentley played a key role in last year's congressional investigation of communist spy activities.

She told a senate judiciary subcommittee today: "If you deport aliens who engage in subversive activities, you will be taking the brains away from the communist party in this country."

The subcommittee is studying legislation designed to tighten the nation's immigration defenses and to get rid of any subversive aliens already in the United States.

The witness repeated much of the testimony she gave before the house committee on un-American activities last year.

She testified again that she once was a communist and that she once had "some 40 to 50" American government employees feeding her information she passed on to Moscow.

The senate committee today sought more information in secret from a Russian who split with the Kremlin, on his charge that all Soviet diplomats have a "spy responsibility."

**Reserve Officers Meet**  
Portland, May 13 (AP)—The Oregon Reserve Officers association will open its annual convention here today. About 75 delegates are expected.

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## Fire District Petitions Ready

Liberty—There will be a public meeting of all property owners of the Liberty-Salem Heights proposed fire district next Wednesday night, at 7:30 o'clock in the Liberty school gym at Liberty.

The petitions for the fire district have been prepared. All interested property owners are requested to attend to sign the petitions and to have their questions answered. Contributions for the fire truck can be made then.

Motion pictures of fire fighting equipment in action will be shown and explained. A. J. Butsch, deputy state fire marshal, will also be at this meeting. All property owners in the area are urged to attend.

The fire district committee members are Wayne Hardman, Ted Cotman, William Linfoot, O. W. Gorton, H. W. Fasching, John VanLoh, Mrs. Donald Griffith, Mervin Seeger and Gerald Knepper.

## Mrs. Bennett Heads Little Garden Club

Salem Heights—Mrs. Robert Hawkins was hostess to the Little Garden club of Salem Heights in her home on South High St. Officers were elected with president, Mrs. L. L. Bennett, vice-president, Mrs. Ed A. Carleton, and secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Emmett Welling.

Mrs. Kenneth Zwicker is in charge of the flower arrangement entry to the Men's Garden club flower show to be held May 14 and 15 at the YMCA. The club's entry will compete with other garden club entries. Mrs. Carl Harris will assist Mrs. Zwicker.

Plans were made for a covered-dish dinner and installation to be held at the home of Mrs. Lewis Judson on Judson St.

## Six Flying Discs Seen By Ex-Flier of Boise

Boise, Ida., May 14 (AP)—Robert Smith of Boise, a former B-24 pilot reported Friday to the Idaho Evening Statesman that he saw what he described as six flying discs at 11:05 a. m., 10 miles west of Shafter Butte here.

He said he saw them while driving from Caldwell to Boise. Smith reported the discs were flying in tight formation at 14,000 feet; that they spiraled down 3,000 or 4,000 feet and then shot up rapidly until they were out of sight.

"I'm not kidding," he said. "I know what I saw." He said the objects had a black bottom and silver top and were about the relative size of a four-engine plane. They appeared to be intelligently controlled, he added.

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## Aymong Freed on Embezzlement Charge

Portland, May 14 (AP)—Amyot F. Aymong, 40, former employee of the First National Bank of Salem, was free today on his own recognizance on an embezzlement charge.

He appeared yesterday before Federal Judge James A. Fee who ordered the release.

Deputy District Attorney Edward Twining said the actions charged involved writing checks on his personal account and by mis-routing within the bank preventing them from showing on the books. The total sum involved was \$445 and restitution has been made, Twining said.

Amyot F. Aymong was employed by the Salem branch of the First National Bank of Portland in 1945, after leaving war service, and his services were terminated at the bank last fall. He had banking experience in a large bank in New York City.

## Father of Rudy Vallee Dies at Maine Home

Westbrook, Me., May 14 (AP)—Charles A. Vallee, 81, father of Movie and Radio Star Rudy Vallee, died at his home Thursday after a long illness.

A native of Island Pond, Vt., Vallee was a druggist here for many years.

Neighbors said that Vallee had much to do with his son's start in the musical world and followed his career closely.

## Salem Heights School Notes

By PAUL HARVEY III  
Seventh grader, John Wilbur, sprained his ankle Wednesday at school.

The fifth and sixth grade softball team played Liberty Friday at this school. They lost to Liberty 10-4 last Friday at Liberty.

The pictures of each class have been received and they will cost 25c apiece.

Mrs. Fenimore's sixth grade has done finger painting with two colors. They were displayed at open house last Friday. The school girls craft classes are finishing projects such as weaving of baskets and textile painting. There are now 223 students enrolled in this school. The fifth grade has 31 students.



**Curly Comes Early**—Meet Leo Poppe, one of Curly's veteran employes. Leo, who lives at 1740 N. Church street, started working for Curly's home owned and friendly dairy 21 years ago and has driven a milk route since 1932. He was born in Salem, owns his home, is married and has two daughters.—Adv.

**"Holly" Says**  
The beach and the sand a proposal. The river and a boat a proposal. The summer the moonlight a proposal. The lake a canoe a proposal. This time of year everything seems to go with proposal and with every proposal should go a Holly Jackson (pardon me for using my name) diamond ring. It just seems that everyone who is becoming engaged likes our way of doing business, and that makes me feel good, no end. I get a kick out of this business anyway—it's fun and besides it is the means of me getting something to eat (not every day but quite frequently), and several fellows have already reported as to how easy it was just to hand the little lady that orchid. Or didn't you know about our orchid deal? Well, each diamond engagement ring we sell we place over the petal of a real live, full grown orchid, placed in a box and beautifully tied with an orchid colored ribbon. All a fellow has to do is hand the lucky girl the orchid and the rest "just comes natural." No extra charge—it's just our way of wrapping up a beautiful ring in a beautiful package.

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