

# Tenderfoot Early Writer About Willamette Valley

By BEN MAXWELL

Sometimes during 1881 a tenderfoot from the east, reporting his observations for Harper's New Monthly Magazine for May, 1882, visited this region and submitted a contribution "In The Wahlamet Valley of Oregon."

Seventy years ago railroad companies and other interests were actively engaged in promoting advantages of the West, particularly the Willamette valley of Oregon, among a potential immigration on the East coast and in Europe. The anonymous contributor in Harper's was prepared for intellectual readers who had also developed a curiosity about the region.

Oregon & California railroad then reached only to Roseburg but the contributor urged all visitors not to miss this trip "for few regions are fairer, and the domestic scenes that intermingle with nature's unchanged grandeur are doubly interesting to eyes weary with the utter wilderness encountered in coming from the East."

Over 20 miles of travel southward from Portland he noticed that easily accessible forests had already been despoiled of all likely trees and only one sawmill was to be seen along the railway.

Donation land claim act of 1850, Harper's correspondent believed, operated for both good and evil. The good, he thought, lay in the impetus it gave to immigration; the evil in the fact that where choice land lay in small areas it placed too much in single hands. Aggravating this situation was the nature and character of the early immigrants settling upon these desirable lands.

"The people who came, took up land, and settled, were, as a rule, an extremely poor class of vagabond farmers from the border States, the Pike County region of Missouri and the lowlands of the Ohio river and Arkansas furnishing the majority. They were poor also in the sense of having little money, and this helplessness, added to their thriftless habits, made their possession of the best land in valleys a misfortune to the state."

But Harper's writer goes on to say that this enterprising class of farmers, locally spoken of as "the old Oregonians" had declined in influence and then was represented by the loungers in the community. Even their children had lost their drawl of speech and action.

Of all cereal grown in the Willamette valley 70 odd years ago the reporter saw little but wheat. This, he learned, was first sown on French Prairie in Marion County in 1831 and the same field, in 1879, produced 35 bushels to the acre. Valley wheat, he learned produces a plump, full "berry" from which flour of uncommon whiteness was made. In the English market it commanded a premium of from 3 to 5 cents over the best produced in California.

Many varieties of wheat were in cultivation, the old white winter wheat, originally introduced by the Hudson Bay company, being excellent in quality and retaining its hold on popular favor. Other varieties included white velvet, Chill Club, Little Club and Australian. Owing to dry summers in this locality exported wheat was not affected by the long sea voyage to Great Britain or the double passage through the tropics.

Finally the correspondent reached Eugene where he saw the state university housed in a \$50,000 building—"far more useful, I hope, than it is attractive to the eye."

Salem's significant industry, he found, was flour milling, the largest mills in the state being here. He regretted that the town was not named Chemeketa and mentions that Salem and Portland have about as much character in respect to names as though they had simply been lettered A and B.

Harper's benign writer regretted that old settlers and their sons were intolerant toward the Indian and never spoke of the aborigine except as a "damned Injun" and never conceded him to be "good" until dead.

"The man who asserts the red man's humanity and immortal worth in the eyes of his and our Creator goes flatly against the theory and practice of this class, and must expect the same treatment as martyrs to other unpalatable truths have received."

## Keizer

KEIZER—Mr. Virgil R. Ballantyne is now home and is able to have visitors. He resides at 4910 No. River Road, and was taken to the Salem Memorial hospital on May 30 after heart attack. He was released from the hospital Wednesday, Mrs. Sam T. Holman, daughter of the Ballantynes, flew here from Philadelphia, Penn., on June 6 to spend the summer and be near her father. Accompanying her was her daughter, Cathy. Mr. Holman plans to join her later.

Leo Deutsch, owner of Leo's Barber Shop, and his family are leaving for a vacation and camping trip which will be spent in the state park recently opened near Tillamook.

Mrs. Laurel Lamb of Quincy was called to Mt. Angel Thursday night by the serious illness of her mother, Mrs. Dora Mohring.

Vacation Bible School will be held at the Keizer Community Church from July 19 through July 29. Classes will begin at nine o'clock in the morning and dismiss at 11:30. Assisting Mrs. Robert Goertz, director of the school, will be 20 women of the church, and several teenagers.

Surprise guests at the P. O. Paytons, 689 Churchdale last Thursday were Mr. and Mrs. Ezra Berg, of San Diego.

Mrs. Bert Siemens, of Goldfield Iowa, has been visiting at the home of her sister, Mrs. Fred H. Reinwald, 890 Plymouth Drive, for a few days. Mrs. Reinwald and Mrs. Siemens went to Portland to visit their brother, Leslie McCarty. Mrs. Siemens returned to Iowa by train.

A slumber party was held at the home of Linda Laiky, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ray H. Laiky, 1045 Maine Avenue, on Wednesday evening. The party was given for Linda's cousin, Cheryl Abrams, of Olympia, Wash. The girls were guests for dinner Wednesday evening and breakfast Thursday morning at the Laiky home.

A special meeting of the Lion's Auxiliary will be held at the home of Mrs. Fred H. Reinwald, 890 Plymouth Drive, on Tuesday evening, July 13 at 8 o'clock. This meeting is to discuss plans for Keizer Day and all Cub and Scout Mothers are also urged to be present.

## East Salem Has Many Visitors

EAST SALEM — Captain Donald M. Townsend of 3725 Monroe Ave. in the air force reserve, has reported at Chanani Air Base near Rantoul, Ill. for two weeks active duty. His family accompanied him east and will visit with her mother and other members of the family at Newman, Ill.

Returning, they will visit Yellowstone Park, Grand Coulee dam and other points.

Weekend guests at the George Maske home on Monroe ave. were her parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Rahtz of Eddyville; with Mr. and Mrs. Jake Schmidt and children Larry and Shirley.

Guests at the Henry Hanson home were Mr. and Mrs. Art Tjon and Mrs. Bryce Fry with Mrs. Twilla Blessing of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Mrs. Stuart Johns entertained Wednesday for two new neighbors on Monroe ave. Mrs. George Mroczk and Mrs. Robert Everest, who have bought the Glenn Moody homes.

Other guests were Mrs. Ray Fisher, Mrs. Paul Gilmer, Mrs. Loran Richey, Mrs. Henry Hanson, Mrs. George Maske, Mrs. Donald Townsend and Mrs. Bryce Fry of Twin Falls. Other weekend guests in the home were Mr. and Mrs. Julius Hochhold of Eugene.

Guests in the John's home for a family dinner honoring Mr. and Mrs. Al Boardman, George, Mark and Mary Ann from San Mateo, Calif. were Mr. and Mrs. George French; Mr. and Mrs. Jack Goldade, Mrs. Wilfred Willer, Fred, Dorothy and Keith.

## South Salem Junior Riders Hold Meeting

SOUTH SALEM—Richard McKillop and Michael McKillop were host to the South Salem Junior Saddle Club Saturday at their Liberty Road home.

Mitchell Murdock conducted a business meeting following the group's drill in their field on W. Browning Ave.

The club accepted an invitation to ride in the parade at the Keizer Carnival days scheduled for Saturday, July 31.

Plans were made for the group horse show, date tentatively set late August.

Elected on events committee were Bonnie Jean Kurth, Clayton Steinke, Karla Anderson and Gerald Kurth. Grounds committee, Michael McKillop, Mitchell Murdock, Clark Jackson, and Lynne Hammerstad.

Junior Saddle Club were awarded trophy and blue ribbon Monday at St. Paul Rodeo for participation in the parade and grand entry.

Guests were Mrs. Holly Jackson and Ralph, Mrs. Clayton Steinke, and Mrs. Louis Kurth.

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