

Independence Claims a Long History

Town Used to Be Known for Its Hops; Now It Is Becoming Somewhat Industrial

By BEN MAXWELL
Capital Journal Writer

Independence in Polk county is well named. Quivey and Waller, who published The Riverside there in 1881, flaunted from the masthead of their weekly newspaper, "Independent in All Things, Neutral in Nothing."

Even the town itself started that way. Mrs. Thomas Burbank supplied the name to E. A. Thorp, a pioneer of 1845, who platted North Independence in 1850. (The name, naturally enough, was that of Independence, Mo. point of departure for the covered wagon trains.)

In 1867 Henry Hill, pioneer of 1847, platted Henry Hill's town of Independence. When the state legislature granted the town charter, Feb. 25, 1865, the two independences—divided both by Ambilions and Ash swale—were lumped together as a city "in name if not in population."

S. W. Smith was first city mayor and he, too, was independent. He left his father's farm along the Luckiamute in 1872, became a leading independence merchant and ultimately financially independent.

Three Intervals
Independence has had three intervals of transition. In the 1880s the town was the center for an expansive grain producing area of Polk county. Two large flour mills and a grain storage for 250,000 bushels were located there. Steamboats came regularly to mill docks. Independence was the head of low water navigation on the Willamette and cargo not consigned to the boats went to Portland on Henry Villard's newly-built West Side railroad.

Next, starting in the 1890s, came production that gave Independence the distinction of being the hop center of the world. Thousands of acres of rich alluvial land along the Willamette and its tributaries were planted to hops. Seasonally more thousands of pickers from the Siletz Indian reservation, from Portland, from almost everywhere came by wagon, boat and train for the harvest.

Independence in 1904 with I. L. Smith's "Bureau," John R. Cooper's and Johnson and Lambert's saloons was a rowdy place on Saturday nights in September. About a decade ago the hop price went down and the town's interesting hop industry and festival went out.

Agriculture, however, still contributes a substantial share to the property of Independence. Other crops, vegetables, mint and to an extent berries; have replaced the hops. (Hops, however, are now again being planted). A large corporation with a plant in Salem is reported as leasing 400 acres of hop land for asparagus that will come into production this year.

Becoming Industrial
Independence is now becoming industrial. Francis Holt, present town mayor, started manufacturing agricultural equipment and accessories for the small logger in 1946. Holt Manufacturing company now employs 110 persons and has a monthly payroll of \$50,000. Production now features bulldozer blades, logging arches and drums, loaders and fork lifts. A year ago last April this concern suffered heavy damage by fire. Now the plant is rebuilt, expanded and more efficient than formerly.

Mountain Fir Lumber company is a new and flourishing independence industry. The firm started operations during May of 1953 and now employs between 50 and 63 hands.

Associated Central Paving and Valley Concrete companies are related. Central Paving lays asphalt base pavement for municipalities, state and private interests. Now it has only 35 persons on its payroll but come the peak of the season in mid-summer, and the number will reach 125. Valley Concrete specializes in ready-mix, sand and gravel for local distribution. Ten to 20 employees are on its payroll. Among smaller independence industries are Rein Lumber company with 12 to 13 employees and Interstate Shingle company with 20.

Independence is served by two railroads: S.P.'s West Side branch from Portland to Corvallis and the Valley & Siletz line.

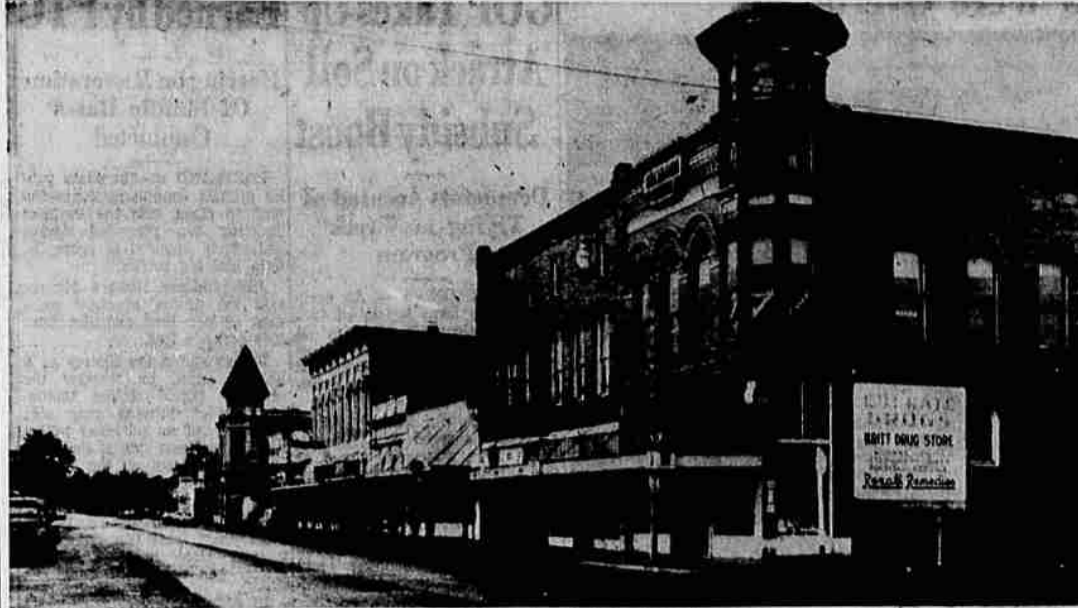
No 'Chuff'
Nor has Independence heard the chuff and the swoosh of a stern-wheel steambot for 25 years. Now log towing is the only river transportation from this point. It is no trivial commerce. On the average two and one half rafts, containing not less than a half million feet of logs each, leave

Mayor



Francis Holt, above, is mayor of Independence. He is a long-time resident of the town.

Looking Down Main Street



The two pictures above show the town of Independence and the proprietor of its largest industry. The top photo shows Main street. Down the street can be seen the home-owned and home-operated First National bank, started by Joe Hirschberg in 1889. The lower picture shows Mayor Francis Holt with some of his agricultural and logging equipment. Holt is proprietor of Independence's largest industry, which provides work for 110 employees. (Capital Journal Photo).

ferry at the Independence crossing. Marion county records for 1853 show a road projected from Salem "to the ferry landing opposite the town of Independence" and in July of that year a license was granted John Leabo to operate a ferry there.

Independence bridge, spanning the Willamette, is a two lane structure, 2,214 feet in length, costing nearly \$1,000,000. It was dedicated on Monday, Dec. 18, 1950.

Verd Hill, 74, son of Henry Hill, who had platted part of Independence 83 years previously, had an active part in dedication ceremonies. He had ridden with Gov. Douglas McKay on the last trip made by the inter-county ferry. He was scheduled as a dedication speaker. At 3:05 on that dreary Monday afternoon, only minutes before he was to speak, Verd Hill collapsed and died of a heart attack.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON Big Top Gone But Ringling Circus to Go Back on Road

By CHARLES R. SMITH
United Press Staff Correspondent

SARASOTA, Fla. (UP) — The big top has folded but the "greatest show on earth" must go on. The circus did not die last July 16 when John Ringling North abruptly ended the annual tour in Pittsburgh with an announcement which brought heartbreak to performers and a nostalgic choke to the throats of thousands, young and old.

Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus is preparing to hit the road again, playing in indoor arenas and ball parks instead of beneath the big canvas which became a parcel of the American scene.

Fifteen hundred persons a day flock to winter headquarters here to watch the daring young men on flying grapevine limber up for 40 days in Madison Square Garden in New York and shorter stands in Boston, Providence, R.I., Rochester, N. Y., Hershey, Pa., Norfolk, Va., Charlotte, Raleigh and Winston-Salem, N. C., Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

Not The Same
Across the street from the main gate sit oldtimers who say it will never be the same. "It just won't be the real circus," said a former roustabout. "There's nothing like working around the circus grounds until past midnight and then coming into the train for a good meal, a few drinks and a poker game."

"You usually would drink and play cards until three or four in the morning and then go to bed. You'd wake up in a new town and the excitement would be starting

all over again." The circus no longer will travel on its own train, furnish its own sleeping quarters, cook its own food in a special house. It meant a slash from 1,200 to 350 employees. "The big change," explained general manager Arthur Canello, "is that we've gone out of the hotel business."

Road treasurer Rudy Bundy says the circus had no choice but to fold the big top. The company, which used to transport its own ushers and ticket sellers, has cut back to find a firmer financial footing. Bundy estimates expenses will be slashed from \$175,000 to \$60,000 a week.

In The Blood
The circus gets in a man's blood, and performers who left last summer are trekking back to Sarasota. They are optimistic. Equestrian director Bob Dwyer says the new setup is "the greatest thing that ever happened to the circus. Most of us had to live in a car with 30 or 40 other peo-

ple. Now it will be a lot cleaner and better for everyone."

"Now," he added, "we will be able to take at least one shower a day."

Trevor Bale, who does a daring act with tigers, summed up, "You just can't keep something as big as this off the road. People want it too much."

But seventeen-year-old Evy Karoly admitted, "For most kids there's nothing like walking around the big top and trying to slip inside."

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Queen, Duke Flying Home From Lisbon

Portugal Visit, Second Honeymoon Smother Rift Rumors

LISBON, Portugal (UP)—Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh ended a state visit to their country's oldest ally today and flew home to their people and their children.

They left at 10:45 a.m. for London, stopping en route at Porto, the head of Portugal's wine-producing area, for a two and one-half hour visit.

Their combined state visit and "second honeymoon" have smothered a report that the queen and her prince consort were on poor terms.

Appearing before tens of thousands of enthusiastic Portuguese citizens during the last five days, they have given every appearance of a happily married couple.

For the Duke of Edinburgh, the return to London will mark the first time he has seen his children, six-year-old Princess Anne and eight-year-old Prince Charles, since he left Britain last November on a world tour in the royal yacht Britannia.

In a colorful dinner aboard the yacht Wednesday night, the queen gave her thanks for the reception she has received in Portugal. A giant fireworks display, terminated by a blazing English crown, Portuguese shield and "God Save The Queen," was put on in her honor by Portugal.

At the dinner were President Craveiro Lopes and his wife. Earlier Wednesday, Elizabeth and Philip made a tour of Portugal's midlands, visiting historical monuments and watching an annual testing of the bravery of fighting bull calves at a ranch in Vila Franca de Xira.

The crowd of 25,000 persons got so excited that part of the royal party was cut off from the queen and duke and some of their aides had to turn cowboy to rescue them.

THEY GO AROUND IN DAZE

Eat-Drink Circuit Saps Solons Pep

WASHINGTON (UP)—Does your congressman lack his usual snap and sparkle?

Rep. Usher L. Burdick (R-ND) says blame it on the Washington cocktail and banquet circuit.

"The complaint is sometimes made that congressmen do not think, and proceed with public business while in a daze," Burdick wrote today in a news letter to his North Dakota constituents.

"That can very well happen, as few members can think at all when stuffed with dinners and when going around without sleep. To give his constituents an idea of the horrors a lawmaker must endure, Burdick added a description of the typical Washington hoe-down:

"First from 7 to 8 p.m. is the 'get acquainted' hour with all kinds of refreshments designed to

loosen up the starch in a congressman's shirt and add more loquaciousness to his natural conversation. As soon as he can see two lamp posts where there is only one, he is said to be thawed out and ready to be seated at a sumptuous dinner."

"After the meal the congressman 'is full—full in more ways than one.' But 'it would be a breach of good manners to eat and run, so he sticks around for an indefinite period, thoroughly enjoying his surroundings."

"He finally lands back at his stopping place early in the morning, and only has time to snatch a few hours of restless sleep when his secretary calls up and announces another party for the coming night."

Burdick said that after a few weeks of this congressman "move around in a dream."

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