

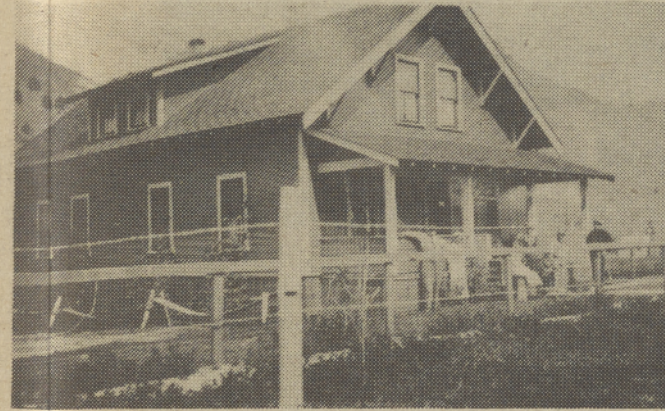
# If only walls could talk

*2nd Lane - over  
Deschutes River near  
Warm Springs Ore.*



At one time, the ferry was the only means of crossing the Deschutes river at Mecca. The now demolished house stands sturdy here.

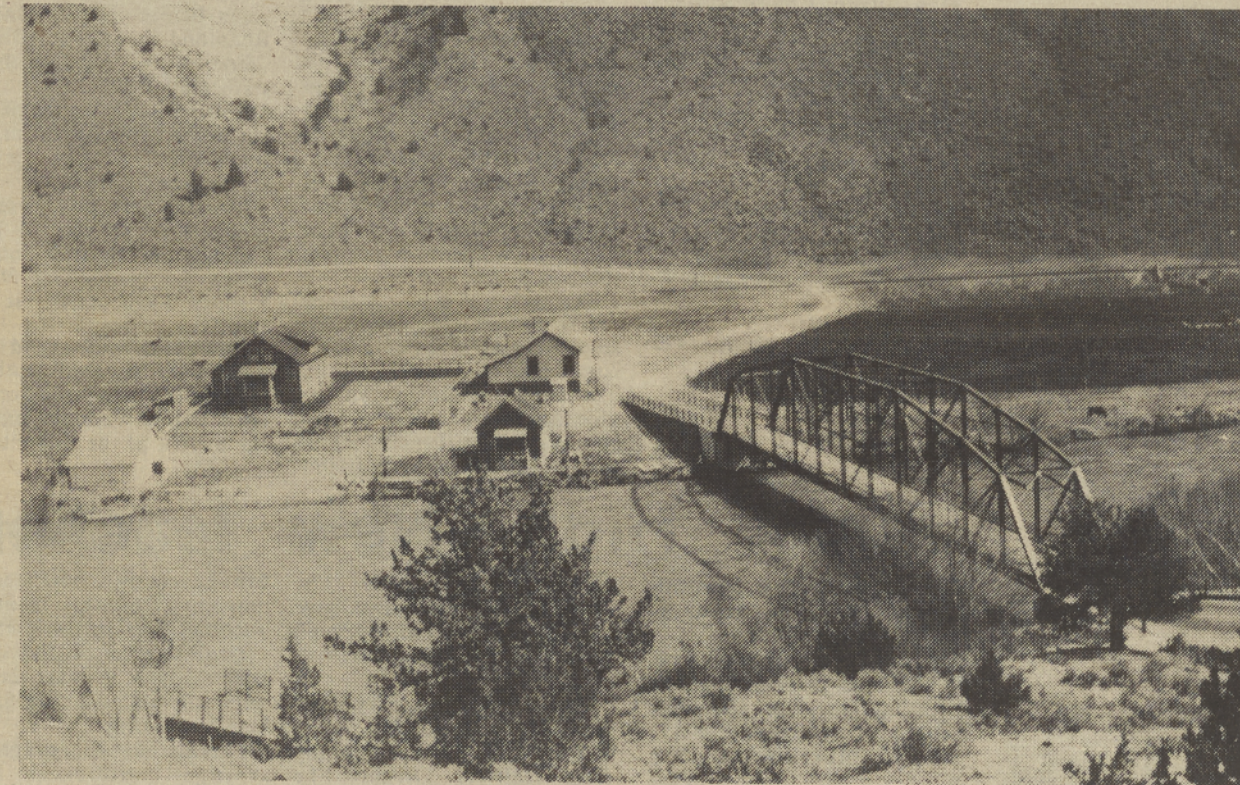
This old house once knew my children  
This old house once knew my wife  
This old house was home and comfort  
As we fought the storms of life



It's early life as a home



A cozy parlor-1905



Access to the house next to the Mecca Trading Company was easy after the bridge was built



Standing stately just before the end

The sounds of living echo through the walls of any house. But a very old house has absorbed, through time, the vibrations of many people and many times. The walls have become a storehouse of words and memories. "If only the walls could talk," says Faye Waheneka.

For fourteen years Faye and her family occupied just such an old house. But now it is being torn down in the name of progress and because restoration would not be economical due to extensive dry-rot damage. The skeleton of the vintage home is slowly becoming exposed as, little by little, its outer covering is removed. The beams of the roof can easily be seen from highway 26.

Although the antique house sits cozily in a hollow off the highway, looking as though it's always been there, the house was actually built three miles down the Deschutes River at the river crossing known in bygone years as Mecca. It was built along with the Mecca Trading Company by Ed and Mame Chalapka. The house then occupied a spot next to the store.

The stately home was situated on the east side of the river when the Deschutes was crossed by ferry. And it was still there when a bridge replaced the ferry. Now the house, the store and the bridge no longer

exist at that location. Mecca seems a little remote now but at one time it was the only place the river could be crossed in this area. A road joined Warm Springs to Madras via this route and the Mecca Trading Company received business from Warm Springs customers as well as from farmers living on the plains.

Wife of Chala, a's nephew, Helen See, a long-time resident of this area says, "It was closer to Mecca than to Madras for some of the farmers. They came down an awful crazy road to get to the store."

The house and store remained at Mecca until around 1924 when H.E. Massey purchased them and moved the building to Warm Springs. Recalling stories of moving Helen See says, "Mr. Earl Massey brought the house and store. He proceeded then, to move both structure to Warm Springs because there was more business there." The house had to be moved in four parts, she recollects.

Ancestor of the current Macy's store is the Mecca Trading Company. A section of the original store flooring can still be seen. The store has been enlarged considerably, however, since it sat next to the Deschutes River at Mecca.

Dan Macy purchased the store in 1955 but the house was purchased by the Tribe from

Massey. The last residents were, of course, the Wahenekas. They reluctantly moved from their home of fourteen years.

Out of necessity Faye recently purchased a new Greeley Heights home but she comments about the house, "My heart is not here. This house isn't made the same. I love old houses. I've loved that old house as far back as I can remember." She reminisces about many warm moments spent in that timeworn structure. "It'll take me a long time to accept reality," that of having moved from the old house, Faye says. She even started to go home to the old house just recently, she says.

There are no plans for the lot which will be left vacant after the house has been completely torn down, according to Ed torn down, according to community services manager or former enterprise manager, Ed Manion. Someone will eventually make use of the space. And in a few years the old house that used to stand there will be forgotten.

A few people will pass by that spot and recall times gone by, when the old house used to sit down in the hollow. They may even recall its history, its origins in Mecca and its being moved in four parts to Warm Springs. Faye Waheneka will be one of those people.

Text by Marsha Shewczyk

Old photos from the album of Helen See



Some people didn't bother using either the ferry or the bridge when crossing the river to arrive at Mecca Trading Company. This was a familiar site from the residence next to the store.