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An Eye for Business

By PERCY L. CROSBY

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## Rededication of Old Fort at Kings Valley

By C. J. McIntosh  
(Agricultural Writer O. A. C. in Oregon Journal)

Corvallis—Old Fort Hoskins was located on the Luckiamut river in Benton county on the farm now owned by E. O. Frantz, 11 miles above Airlie and 20 miles northwest of Corvallis, and not, as the government war office shows, on the Siletz river across the coast range and 40 miles from Corvallis. Such is the testimony of a half score citizens familiar with the events of the Fort Hoskins era, as presented to the 2000 citizens who gathered at the old barracks Memorial day to establish stone markings of the old fort and dedicate a flag in loving memory of Phil Sheridan, who was stationed there.

"Information sent out by the war department that the fort was on the Siletz and hence not in Benton county at all," said John B. Horner, professor of history at the Oregon Agricultural college and director of the ceremonies, "means that according to these records Phil Sheridan was never stationed in Benton county. This has raised considerable controversy over the two points mentioned and the accuracy of the war department records. The citizens of Kings Valley have been particularly interested in sifting the matter and having the facts presented as they are."

That Sheridan was here and supervised the building of the fort, which he commanded until superseded by Captain C. C. Augur, and remained for two years is the testimony of the oldest pioneers.

Some of these men and women pioneers knew Sheridan, entertained him in their homes, ran horsereaces with him, hunted with him, helped cut the

up or repair these buildings, helped tear them down or remove them when the fort was abandoned, saw Sheridan put various tribes and parts of tribes on the Siletz and Grand Ronde reservations, went to school with Captain Augur's children while he commanded the fort and in committee findings backed by independent judgment gave the exact location and approximate description of the nine principal buildings.

The recitals of these people, now grown old in body but still bright and logical in thought and expression, were made in part before the huge gathering at the memorial, but chiefly in private interviews. It develops that the stories told by different members of the group vary in minor details, but the completed structure of the sum total is not inconsistent in the least with any individual story heard at the ceremonies. These men and women are independent thinkers and manifested no disposition whatever to compose such small differences as did arise, all of which lends verisimilitude to the completed recital.

The whole plan determining the location and character of Fort Hoskins, and establishing historically the truth as it existed, was conceived by J. B. Horner, professor of history at the Oregon Agricultural college. After getting the facts and marshaling his evidence in their support Professor Horner had a replica of the early fort made in accordance with his findings, by S. Maurice Ball, a Corvallis photographer. He then arranged a celebration, or dedicatory ceremonial to get the facts into history and to demonstrate to this and other communities of Oregon the great interest

lumber for the buildings, helped put of local history now while the few remaining witnesses of the historical events are alive and able to certify to the facts.

The program was inspiring, held on the exact spot where the commanding officer's house stood from the time it was erected in 1856 till after the fort was abandoned by the war department in 1866. A low platform was erected for speakers and grouping of pioneers, and ample grounds prepared for the O. A. C. military band which provided the music, and for the big crowd gathered to witness the ceremonies.

Mayor N. R. Moore of Corvallis and some of the other speakers were unable to attend, but Professor Horner hurriedly rearranged the program, starting it with an address by Glen O. Holman of Dallas, Mass. singing of the "Red, White and Blue," "America," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic" was led by the band under Captain Harry Beard. A number of band pieces, featuring the old time patriotic airs, were played.

Dr. F. M. Carter, an employe of the federal service for more than a half century, spoke on Sheridan's construction of Fort Hoskins and of a wagon road over the mountains from Kings Valley to the Siletz agency.

A tribute to the American flag, recently received from the author by the Daughters of the American Revolution, was read by Mrs. A. B. Cordley, regent of Winema chapter, Corvallis. A detachment from the military department of the college then conducted a flag raising exercise in which Old Glory was floated aloft on the same spot from which it had flown in the days of Sheridan, to the strains of the national anthem. This was followed by a salute of 21 guns from the field artillery.

Dr. William Henry Ellison, associate professor of history at the college, spoke on the disappearance of one particular American institution—the frontier.

John G. Flook, pioneer and author of the legislative bill locating the agricultural college at Corvallis, reviewed some of the early events.

Miss Helen Humphrey, student of the college, presented an American flag to the custodians of the old fortification site in these words:

"In loving memory of Lieutenant Phil Sheridan, who was once stationed at Fort Hoskins, students of the Oregon Agricultural college purchased this flag to be dedicated according to the military usages of our country, and for that purpose I now present it to you.

The donors also name the school board of Hoskins as custodians of the flag, with the expressed wish that these colors be raised and lowered on such occasions as may be fitting.

"Long may these Stars and Stripes wave over the scenes where brave soldiers under the gallant Phil Sheridan did nobly their part in enforcing the laws of civilization."

The flag was received by Major Walter F. Winton of the military department.

W. I. Stoddard of LaGrande read Joaquin Miller's tribute to the "Mothers of Man."

Wiley Norton, a pioneer of '44, made an impromptu talk certifying to the accuracy of the site selected as the former location of the fort. Mrs. James Plunkett also made a few remarks of like effect after the statement by the chairman, Professor Horner, that Mr. Plunkett used to run horse races with Phil Sheridan at Fort Hoskins.

George H. Himes, secretary of the Oregon Historical society ever since its founding—told of the work of the society in promoting a better understanding of local history.

"We crossed the plains in '44," said Wiley Norton who was born the year before in Missouri and spent nine months of his babyhood on the long road. His father moved to the Luckiamute the following year '45, and Mr. Norton still lives near Airlie. His mother founded the little town of Norton, on the railroad from Corvallis to Newport. His father knew Phil

Sheridan well and also a Mr. Carroll, who owned and ran the sawmill that cut the lumber for Fort Hoskins in 1856.

Wiley was about 12 years old when Sheridan came to the country and began the erection of the fort which he called Fort Hoskins. He saw the young lieutenant about frequently and has seen him directing the work of putting Indians on the Siletz and the Grande Ronde reservations.

Another man who knew Sheridan slightly and his successors much better is Sol Tatom of Polk county, on the Luckiamute. He, too, was born in Missouri, crossed the plains in early boyhood and was reared in Oregon, which he reached in '49, at the age of 5. He remembers when Sheridan was superseded in chief command of the fort he had erected, by Captain Augur. He knew the people well and attended school in Kings Valley with the captain's children—which he thinks would have been pretty hard to do had Fort Hoskins been at the Siletz agency.

Tatom recalls the coming of Captain Dent and Ulysses Grant, his brother-in-law, to visit him. He names a Captain Smith and one other commandant and a Captain LaFollet, who, he thinks was in command when orders to abandon the place were received.

Most interesting of all, however, was Tatom's clear recollection of the location and character of the various buildings. He was not a member of the committee on reconstruction and replica of the old army post appointed by Professor Horner, yet he gave an account that tallied exactly with the findings of that committee. Yet he took me over the grounds and pointed out and described the three headquarters buildings, soldier quarters, commissary, guard house, hospital, powder house and animal quarters. This

was before the replica had been displayed by Professor Horner and agreed with it in all essentials.

The sawmill, built by Mr. Carroll, was later owned by Tatom's father. This old mill, established to cut lumber for the army buildings, was later rebuilt and then sawed the lumber for the first Oregon Agricultural college building now standing—the administration building in which Professor Kerr has his offices.

Both Tatom and Norton said that some two dozen different tribes and remnants, numbering about 3000 persons, were held on the Siletz reservation and about half that number on the Grande Ronde. During Sheridan's two years at the fort he made frequent excursions into hostile territory to round up restless savages and bring them to the reserve.

The facts of the building of Fort Hoskins were related by Dr. F. M. Carter of Siletz, who said two questions are now being answered—where Fort Hoskins was located and whether it was built by Phil Sheridan. He gave the Luckiamute site as authentic and Sheridan as the builder in 1856.

"While supervising construction of the fort," said Dr. Carter, who was at the agency at the time, "Lieutenant Sheridan undertook to build a wagon road from Kings Valley to the agency where a blockhouse was located, over a route he surveyed himself.

"He saw the huge mountains, deep canyons and gorges, fallen timber and charred stumps which he undertook with the courage and enthusiasm of a young pathfinder.

"To try out the road when it was completed Sheridan took a government wagon load of 2000 pounds of freight, drawn by six yokes of oxen, and escorted by a small detachment of soldiers. When about 10 miles

from the fort the sergeant in charge came running back to report that the team was stalled. Going out where the wagon was at the foot of the steep hill, I took up a whip and directed the boys to lay on their backs. Each man had a vine maple switch but with all their whipping the wagon did not move. Following the example of early frontiersmen he began to use cuss words, I joining in. The oxen commenced to go up with a tremendous rush and were soon at the top. The trouble had been the oxen did not understand the language.

Dr. Carter gave two years—'56 and '58—as the period of Sheridan's stay at the fort and quoted from Sheridan's Memories to substantiate his recollection. He also told of how Sheridan quelled an uprising in the winter of '57, when some of the Indians were on the verge of starvation. The hostilities were prevented by Tye John, an influential member of the tribe, and by the arrival of Sheridan's forces.

Two boys of the period, now the Fowler brothers—C. A. and J. W.—of Corvallis, lived just across the meadow from the early fort when it was built by soldiers under Sheridan. They were born in this valley. C. A. Fowler was 5 and J. W. Fowler 10 when the fort was built. Their parents often entertained Sheridan as a visitor and the father, G. A. Fowler, was official huntsman for the garrison. They at least have no doubt as to where Fort Hoskins was located a little more than half a century ago.

"A number of other pioneers, some of whom were unable to attend the ceremonial, made signed statements of their knowledge of the location of the fort and other facts connected with its history," says H. M. Stone of Corvallis in a statement signed by

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