

Expansion, Prohibition and Fire... 1905-1918

1905

Coquille in 1905 had a population of 1500. It was home to the courthouse, a public school building, an academy building, a furniture and box factory, a large sawmill, coal mines, three creameries, two newspapers, and was well supplied with various mercantile establishments, and home to the best water system in the state. Coos Bay was boasting a population of 2,500, the largest city in Coos County.

1906

The city council accepts a bid of \$275 for the construction of a firehouse. Orvil Dodge formally launches The Coquille Sentinel which later merges with the Coquille City Bulletin and the Coquille City Herald

1908

J.E. Perrott was named as Coquille's first fire chief. The standing timber in Oregon that year was estimated to be worth \$3,000,000. That was about the same amount as the sum of the national debt at the close of the Civil War. At that time, there was not enough money in the entire United States to buy it at the then present price of \$12 per thousand feet. It was estimated that the timber would last 150 years without allowing for growth.

1909

Riverton school was built and the town had a baseball team. "Better roads for Coos," read the headlines of several papers in 1909.

1910

Population of Coquille numbers 1,398, Myrtle Point reaches 826, a total of 17,959 reside within the county. Two chemical fire trucks were purchased at \$573.50 each for the fire department.

The Sentinel ran a contest for the most popular lodge or school and the most popular young ladies of Coos County. A total of ten prizes were awarded, valued at \$1,500. A Kroeger Cabinet Grand Antique Piano was



George Butler and Felix Schultz serve at Bill's Place in 1918.

given to Coquille High School. The prize for the most popular young lady, Goldie Childs, was an 80- by 100-foot lot in Coquille's Sunnyside District. Ladies with the next largest amount of votes, Edna Gilkey and Rae Carey, received lots in Lakeside. Minnie Wilson, Genevieve Tellefson, and Letta Bell received a trip on the steamboat "Elizabeth" to San Francisco, where they spent 10 days with a chaperone, and Earl Schroeder won a \$20 suit order. Many social events were held during the contest, and many subscriptions to the Sentinel were sold in an attempt to buy votes for the candidates.

1911

In 1911, the Fat Elk Drainage Project came to an end. The project entailed dredging the canals and installing tide gates. There were approximately nine miles of canals ranging from 12 to 36 feet in width and from six to eight feet in depth. Adding tide gates opened 3,000 acres of land for cultivation. The project took almost two years of continuous work.

1912

In 1912, land was purchased by citizens of Myrtle Point who said they would organize a fair association. Today, this plot of land is the Coos County Fairgrounds. The land was purchased for \$5,175.

The present City Hall was built to house the fire department and library. The first football team was turned out by Coquille High School.

1913

In 1913, Coos County ranked third among the 34 counties in Oregon in apple production. The Coquille Valley produced more apples than all other areas of the county. Oregon was a top world producer in Spitzenbergs and Yellow Newtons.

A Coos delegation sought to improve the state road to Roseburg. Oregon Power Company established. The Coquille district board of education was formed. Coquille High School's first yearbook, "The Laurel" was published.

1915

The steamboat Santa Clara wrecked, striking bottom of the Coos Bay Bar. Sixteen lives were lost in the accident, as well as all of the cargo on board the ship. According to the captain, something went wrong with the ship's steering to cause the accident. The first rescue boat filled with women and children capsized. Three boats made it to safety, and the last boat (officers and crew) also capsized, was turned around, and capsized yet again. In the end, it was found that if all had remained on the boat there would have been no casualties.

1916

In late January, A. W. Johnson of Soda Works was convicted of breaking the law. He broke the newly enforced prohibition law by selling cider that had fermented. There was quite a stir when the cider was found to be intoxicating and even a greater dispute when the court tried to prove that the cider had an alcohol content. The law stated that cider could not be sold if it contained more than .5 percent alcohol. A pharmacist later testified that the cider contained 6.75 percent of alcohol. Johnson shipped his large stock of hard cider to California, but he was not the only one to be charged with selling hard cider that year. In late December, E. A. Beckett was arrested for receiving liquor that was brought into town secretly carried in paint cans.

Chester Farr started a business selling feed.

1917

The Coquille Sentinel and Coquille City Herald were consolidated into one newspaper, The Coquille Valley Sentinel.

1918

Massive fire rages out of control and destroys much of downtown area. The first telephone book in Coos County had 64 pages.



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