

Gives Historical Account
of Old Colony TimesInteresting Story of Early Days Told
by Eva E. Kraus

The history of Aurora as told by pioneers is one of unusual interest. There yet remain a few old men, picturesque houses with tiny paned windows and mossy roofs, and massive old trees to link the past and present.

The Aurora colony, founded by Dr. William Keil, March 20, 1857, and named after his daughter, was based on communistic or socialistic ideas of social philosophy that Dr. Keil had formulated in Prussia. The biblical saying, "They had all things in common, neither was there any among them that lacked," was the ideal on which the colony was founded. Everyone was on an equal basis—there were no rich or poor as everything was held in common. Each colonist had a sense that he owned all and yet had no power to withhold any needed article from another.

Dr. Keil, born in Erfurt, Prussia, March 6, 1911, came to America when he was 30 years old and settled in Pennsylvania where he preached his doctrine and organized a communist group. With Dr. Keil as leader this group moved to Bethel, Mo., and was established as a colony in 1845.

Tales of good soil, cheap land and mild climate, together with a prevalence of ague at Bethel, led Dr. Keil to send a party west to investigate the country. Among those who were Michael Schaefer, Adam Schuele, John and Hans Stauffer, Joseph and Adam Knight, George Link and Chris Giesy.

Thirty-five wagons and 150 persons left Bethel in the first train in 1855. Each train was organized in a military fashion with a captain and divided into companies of three wagons. Each company camped, cooked and ate together. The body of Dr. Keil's son, William, who had died while the scouting party was out west, was taken along on the trip in an alcohol-filled coffin, as the son had requested not to be buried in Missouri. The trains were stopped at various forts and often advised not to go on because of Indian uprisings. Dr. Keil had no trouble with the Indians as the colonists treated them kindly—feeding them and giving gifts.

The trip took five months. The colonists spent the winter at Willapa, Wash., where Dr. Keil's son was buried. Dr. Keil was dissatisfied with Willapa as it was remote and inaccessible by roads. Dr. Keil and some other men looked for a more favorable location and found a place on the stage road half way between Salem and Portland that suited them. Here was a grist and saw mill. They bought this land for \$1,000 from George Smith and George White. During the winter the men built houses and cleared land so that in the spring the families could move to Aurora.

Enjoys Surprise

A party of friends surprised N. E. Manock last Thursday on the occasion of his thirty-third birthday. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Manock and family there were present Mr. and Mrs. M. N. Criswell and family, Phil Wiegand and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Snyder, Mrs. W. G. Letson, Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Taylor and daughters. Refreshments were enjoyed at a late hour.

Other trains came across the plains, and by way of Panama until the colony was a thriving town. Persons living in the country were asked to join, though for the most part the colonists were exclusive, as they were afraid the colony would lose its individuality if too many belonged. The officials of the colony allowed no member to marry outside the colony and if one did he ceased to be a member and lost his share. Marriages within the colony could be forbidden if they displeased the officials.

The colony soon had a lumber yard, shoe shop, tannery, harness shop, blacksmith shop, drugstore and mercantile store—in fact it was an independent community. The enterprises were on a socialistic basis, the expenses and profits being shared by all.

A church erected in 1865 was also used as a school house. The first school was conducted by Carl Ruche. Arithmetic, spelling, grammar, German and Latin were taught. The colonists were very fond of music, organizing a band which became noted. Benjamin Holliday, president of the Southern Pacific, took the band on an excursion through Washington and British Columbia. Christoff Wolff trained the band and George Ehlen was one of the leaders.

A hotel and restaurant were built to accommodate the stage that ran from Sacramento to Portland. This stage, a coach pulled by horses, stopped every 20 miles to change horses and allow the passengers to obtain food. Later the Southern Pacific railroad was built through the town and the passengers and trainmen would stop there at noon. Jacob Giesy had charge of this hotel for many years after the colony dissolved.

Two parks were planned by the colonists. One, now spoken of as the Ehlen park, was laid out in paths and flower beds. A big house was built where dinners were cooked and many good times were had. The other was called Snyder park. They received much publicity and were visited by many persons.

One sport of the men was hunting deer in the fall. With large packs of hounds they scoured the hills and quickly obtained a supply of venison. It was kept by salting or jerking—a process of drying and smoking.

The property of the colony, assessed at \$120,000 in 1870, was divided among its members when it dissolved after Dr. Keil's death in 1877. The division was in no way equal, nor according to any plan. It was simply arranged that each person had a home provided for

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Rural Electric Rates to be Reduced

Announcement is made by Mr. Strickland, manager of the Molalla Electric Company that a new rate tariff has just been filed with the Public Service Commission of Oregon. This new rate will give a very noticeable reduction to their rural customers who use more than 13 KWH per month, and will become effective August 1st.

A comparison of the new and old rate follows:

OLD RATE		NEW RATE	
First 6 KWH per Mo. or less,	\$1.75	First 6 KWH per Mo. or less,	\$1.75
Next 14 " " " at	15c	Next 7 " " " at	15c
Next 20 " " " at	8c	Next 7 " " " at	7c
Next 60 " " " at	4c	Excess over 20 KWH at	3c
Excess over 100 KWH at	3c		

A 5 per cent prompt payment discount applies on both rates.

It will be noted that for a consumption of 13 KWH or less no change is made. From this point on, however, the next 7 KWH are reduced from 15c to 7c. The next 20 from 8 to 3c and the next 60 from 4 to 3c. On the old rate 100 KWH had to be used before the 3c step was reached, whereas on the new rate after 30 KWH have been used all excess is at 3c. 20 KWH on the old rate amounted to \$3.83 while 20 KWH on the new rate will be \$3.29 and the following 20 KWH will cost only 60c.

Since there are many customers who use 20 KWH for lighting purposes, all that they might use in addition for power or cooking will only 3c per KWH, and this means that the average family can do all their cooking and light their house for approximately \$6.00 per month.

Local Items

Jack Hempstead spent the week-end in Aurora.

Miss Eva Grazer was home for the week end.

Mrs. Snyder and Aileen were Portland visitors last Tuesday.

If you need a harness, go to J. E. Adams, Aurora Shoe Shop.

Mrs. E. G. Carpenter attended Chautauqua at Gladstone Sunday.

S. A. Miller has purchased new combination hearse and ambulance.

Mrs. John R. Kraus spent a few days in Portland the last of the week.

Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Hendricks of Salem were Aurora visitors Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Humburg, of Portland called on Capt. Miley Friday.

House for Rent—Close in. Will put in shape. Knapp & Kraus.

J. A. Adams was the guest of his brother, C. A., at Woodburn last Sunday.

N. E. Manock has just had his sedan repainted and is now enjoying a car that looks brand-new.

Mr. Brierly, of Lindahl & Brierly, Woodburn realtors, was an Aurora visitor Thursday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Feller, of Woodburn, visited their daughter, Mrs. A. W. Kraus, Friday night.

Eynon Jones and Miss Helen Foulks of Oregon City, were visiting friends in Aurora Saturday evening.

Lutheran church will give picnic exercises in Hempstead park Sunday. See church program elsewhere.

If you need reading glasses, see Piper the Jeweler, at Woodburn.

Mrs. Jonas Will, Miss Lenora Will and Mrs. Ernest Snyder went to Newport Sunday for a week's holiday.

Mrs. Fay Carpenter returned to her home in Eugene Saturday, after a week's visit with Mrs. E. G. Carpenter.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Becke, Mrs. Powers and son, Robert, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Pierce in Aumsville.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Fry, Miss Tillie Fry and Mrs. E. G. Carpenter listened to Billy Sunday at the Gladstone Chautauqua Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Carter, Miss Leona Kail and Miss Celeste Joley, of Portland, made a brief call at the home of Margaret Knapp while enroute to Silverton Saturday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Yoder and Miss Edna Schwartz attended the Chautauqua at Gladstone Park last Friday.

A fine display of northern lights was observed here Thursday night of last week. The streamers of light extended entirely to the zenith.

M. D. Leabo has purchased from Mrs. C. A. Speight the ranch occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Speight as a home place out west of town.

Light showers fell here early Sunday morning and late in the afternoon, but not enough moisture fell to lay the dust.

W. C. Miller has been very busy at Woodburn in his warehouse and his partner, W. H. Massey, of Woodburn has been coming over and looking after the business at the Aurora Fountain and Cafe of evenings.

For Lumbago or indigestion see Dr. Hoeye, chiropractor, in the Yoder block.

Mrs. George Zeigler and mother, Mrs. Tremayne, motored to Monmouth Wednesday to attend the graduation of Mrs. Ziegler's sister, from the Oregon State Normal.

The management of the W. O. W. dances desires to thank their patrons for their attendance last Saturday night and announces their next dance for August 6th.

Let Piper fix your watch. He will make it keep time.

Walter A. Lundeen, former Aurora boy, called at the Observer office Monday. Mr. Lundeen left Aurora on the death of his father in 1909, since which time he has lived in Portland and the middle west.

The Camp Fire girls enjoyed a generous patronage at their lawn fete Friday night. There was a very large attendance, including many from outside, and they staid by till the curtain rang down on the ice cream.

A large crowd listened in to the Dempsey-Sharkey fight at Stoner Bros. Garage, which came through in fine shape direct from the ring side at the Yankee Stadium, New York city. Everyone seemed to enjoy it as it sure was a whale of a fight. Hurrah for Dempsey! Tuney is next.

Miss Anna Voget, manager of the Anna hospital, reports the arrival of two baby girls at that institution, the first one coming to Mrs. F. Draeger of Aurora and the second one to Mrs. W. L. Jones of Woodburn. Miss Voget gives personal supervision to all of the cases at the hospital and is assisted at times by one of her nieces.

Bike for sale cheap. Observer. 30-1tp

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Kraus and family, Mrs. Wm. Grover and daughter, Geraldine, of Detroit, Michigan, and Mrs. S. W. Grover and daughter, Ruth, also of Detroit, spent Sunday in Corvallis at the C. A. Baeringer home where members of the Feller family held reunion. Mrs. Grover is a sister of Mrs. Kraus and is expected to visit her within the next week or so.

Young Girl Saved From
Drowning in Pudding River

An accident which nearly resulted in tragedy occurred at the Aurora swimming hole on Tuesday. Gertrude Grim, disregarding the warning of the other children, went in over her depth and came near drowning. Noticing her plight Betty Kraus, Ruth Brush and Lee Preston rushed to the rescue, but such were her struggles that they were unable to do more than sustain her until Bernard Cole arrived. He succeeded in bringing her to safety. All four are to be commended for their bravery and prompt action. There is a large expanse of shallow water at the children's beach and there is no danger as long as the swimmers stay within this radius.

Edwin Robinson was in town shopping Tuesday.

Clarence Adams of Woodburn was a business visitor here Tuesday.

For Sale Cheap—1 3/4-inch Bain wagon in good shape. W. F. Prahl, Route 8, Aurora, Oregon.

Harold Massey of Woodburn, who had been on a visit to relatives at Amity, was here Sunday on his return trip.

J. C. Brewer, who lives near Meridian, was in town on business Monday and stated that the weather was so hot at his place last Saturday the honey in two of his bee-hives melted and ran out over the ground, which is something he had not seen for many years past.

Last Saturday was the warmest day recorded throughout the Willamette valley for some years. At Aurora the thermometer registered an even 100 degrees which was exceeded at a number of other places, the mercury going to 105 at Salem, which was the highest reported in the valley.

Messrs. Frank L. Miller, Ben and Ed Stoner attended a dinner at the hotel Marion in Salem Monday evening. The dinner was given to the dealers in Pontiac and Oakland cars and their friends by the manufacturers. Entertainment was furnished by moving pictures of automotive themes and a lecture on subjects connected with the industry.

Operator Aged 70 Aids
Hunt for Bank Bandits

Mrs. Mary Norviel of Huntsville, Ohio, who is white-haired and seventy years old and who claims the distinction of being the oldest active telephone "girl" in the state of Ohio, recently had her first experience with bank bandits. She was on duty when three bandits entered the state bank of Huntsville next door to the telephone office. When informed that the bandits had visited the bank and gotten away with a large amount of loot, she at once spread the alarm through neighboring towns and cities.

Quilting Bee is Entertainment at
Celebration of Mrs. Fry's Birthday

Many ladies from Aurora and some from elsewhere gathered at the home of Mrs. Walter Fry last Friday morning, forming a large quilting party, the occasion being the celebration of Mrs. Anna Fry's 86th birthday. The ladies all enjoyed recalling old times and incidentally engaged in a pastime with which they were all familiar in former days, many of them being experts in the work. At the noon hour the hostess served an excellent dinner, to which the ladies did full justice, and toward the evening hour left wishing Mrs. Fry many happy returns of the day. Invited guests were Mesdames Henrietta Wills, Matilda Fry, William Kraus, Geo. Kraus, Henry Kraus, Charles Beck, Erbsland, Lebo, Rose Giesy, Bird, Caroline Fry, Stahl, Carpenter, Geo. Galtbreath, Siebert, Hinman, Chas. Snyder, Zimmerman, Christina Stauffer, Reese, Henry Ehlen, James Kidenour, Misses Louisa Miller, Christina Koehler, Katie Burkholder, Mary Giesy, Elizabeth Foshner, Art Stahl, Lizzie Fry.

Former Aurora Boy Called to Pulpit

Walter A. Lundeen, one of Aurora's boys, has accepted a call to become minister of St. Luke's Lutheran church in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Young Lundeen used to be one of the boys about town here. For some time he was Aurora's bootblack and shoeshiner in the barber shop of Smith and Garrett. Upon the death of his father Lundeen left Aurora for Portland, where he sold papers and shined shoes. In 1914 he went east where soon after he began to work his way through school. He supported himself while attending Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, by working nights in a newspaper office and as a linotype operator. In 1922 he was graduated as one of the honor students of a class of 52 students. He was also a member of the college football team in which he earned the college letter. After graduating he became a full instructor at Minnesota College in Minneapolis, in the department of Sociology and Political Science. He served in this capacity until 1925 when he became the Registrar of the Northwestern College of Law in Minneapolis. While in this work he was given the opportunity to continue his studies and so completed his theological training at the Northwest Theological Seminary this spring, with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

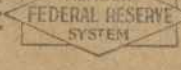
Mr. Lundeen will take up his new work in August at Waukesha. Before doing so he will visit old friends and relatives in Aurora. Mrs. Fred Schneider, his sister, lives in Aurora. He will be in Aurora soon.

Miss Olivia DeGuire of Silverton, Oregon, is visiting Diana and Aileen Snyder for a few days. Miss DeGuire is a graduate of U. of O. and is teaching in the Silverton schools.



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