

BEAVERTON ENTERPRISE

BUSINESS OFFICE AND PLANT PHONE BEAVERTON 2321
Plant located in Beaverton—Tualatin Valley Highway and Short St.

Published Friday of each week by The Pioneer Publishing Co., Inc., at Beaverton, Oregon. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office Beaverton, Oregon.

STANLEY W. NETHERTON Publisher
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1950
NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION
ACTIVE MEMBER

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One Year	\$2.00
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SANTA MAKES IT BETTER

It's about this time of year when most of us are brought face to face with the decision as to whether we should lay low the alleged myth of Santa Clause or continue it as a traditional fiction of the young.

Memories of many an adult's early years will include the cherished faith in a Santa Claus who most generally came into the house by way of the chimney to reward those of us who were good. The anticipation of the Christmas Eve visit made the last ten days before Christmas drag on weighted feet. And yet, as a whole, it was a fascinating bit of supposition.

Now, with the pace of life stepped up, the Santa Claus story still strings along. Perhaps it is a delusion and only an attempt to recreate the earlier pre-Christmas memories, that there is even any attempt to keep the idea of jolly Saint Nick alive.

Merchandisers have taken Santa Claus to their money-making hearts and here again a fresh complication arises. A youngster, with the direct and simple faith of the truest believer, sees these fabulously pot-bellied characters enthroned in a wonderland of toys and gift-gadgets, holding forth as though they were the lords and masters of the child's most delightful world, instead of 9:30 to 5:30 employees devoted to the task of selling merchandise by an indirect method of suggestion.

Perhaps the disappointments that might arise through such a Santa's unfulfilled promises is not a serious thing. But, on the other hand, little influences can sometimes effect drastic results.

So there are many justifications in telling your offspring, "Don't you believe it about Santa Claus."

Yet, such a statement of heresy would impoverish the adult as well as the child. Maybe there are better things to believe in, but Santa is good enough in his own right. For, you know, there really is a Santa Claus. He is a spirit as much a part of the Christian civilization as church pews and songbooks. He embodies a generosity of heart and a concern for those who are less blessed with joy and gladness.

His legend is much abused, used to promote selfish purposes, distorted and "interpreted" in a multitude of ways. Yet the myth of an heroic Saint Nick in whom small fry, without question, put the utmost of faith is robust and well able to stand up under any number of impositions.

Whether the outward expression of this spirit be the shivering gentleman behind a batch of false whiskers, wearing a somewhat soiled and ill-fitting monkey suit of red and white or the traditional Santa Claus with flowing beard and flying reindeer charging down from the North Pole for the busiest one night of the year that might be imagined, he rules significantly during one holiday season a year.

Sometimes it seems lamentable that realistic living and inquiry causes the Santa legend to be explained. Much good is accomplished, with the help of it. Too bad that we must leave the childish faith in discard, while we "explain" that there is no Santa Claus.

There is nothing too hypocritical of old Saint Nick. He always does a noble job in all the stories written and told of him. Our Christmas season might just be a bit less fascinating without him.

On the question, therefore, of whether or not there is a Santa Claus, you guessed it! Our verdict is a resounding "Yes". We think the observance of Christ's hallowed Birthday is translated more deeply throughout our people by such a belief.

And you'll find, even in your own family, that on Christmas Day, the story of Santa makes it better.

ONE MORE BRIGHT STAR

In its determined fight for statehood, Alaska has lost another round. This vast northern territory, striving for the stature of a sovereign state and representation in the halls of Congress, has fallen athwart a determined opposition which listens to no reason.

In a radio interview, for instance, Republican Senator Robert Taft seemed to mainly oppose the proposition because it would increase the number of possible Democrats in the Senate and House of Representatives.

Elsewhere are contentions that Alaska has no industry but fishing; that it is mostly populated by soldiers on outpost duty; that its population is too thin to qualify for statehood.

There is nothing said, publicly, of financial interests, of absentee nature, which might be willing to spend a considerable amount in places of influence, that such a fact of Alaska statehood would never be.

Consider the situation. Alaska is a territory, famed in gold-rush legend, which has been called "The Last Frontier". It has amazing potentialities but somehow many of them seldom develop to great proportions.

It has oil, vast reserves of it, held by the government and now being in the first development stage by the U. S. Navy. It has agricultural lands, as dramatized by the

colony at Matanuska. It has great mineral wealth—even yet, after having been worked extensively for years. It has timber, both for lumber and for newsprint. It has a diminished supply of fur-bearing animals.

Alaska also has a strategic place in World-traffic airlines and a vigorous air transport system within its widespread boundaries. There is also the Alaska Railroad and the Alaska Steamship company, one fact that is impressed upon anyone who has sojourned in the northern clime.

Alaska could easily support a much larger population, but the stranglehold that seems upon the Territory makes it difficult to achieve. Development in new lines of industry is slow and blamed by some on the fact that so much wealth of the Alaska has been siphoned off by absentee owners and their stockholders that there is nothing left for financing new and venturesome endeavors.

The Territory has had a long and intimate acquaintanceship with absentee ownership. It has no vote in Congress or the election of a President. And even its governor is forced upon them, in appointment by the chief executive in Washington, D. C.

Henry Benson, Territorial Commissioner of Labor, who is an accredited Alaskan by all standards, declares that the Territory might petition the United Nations to work in behalf of declaring Alaska an independent nation.

Benson, also a Republican, highlights the willingness of Alaska to stand on its own, even in spite of its nearness to Russia. But such a move would be a sorry chapter in the story of United States neglect, as shown to this territory which cost about 2c an acre in 1864 and has since returned a thousand fold its asking price.

Better for Alaska and for the United States that there be one more bright star on our flag, for the Land of the Midnight Sun.

WE ARE OF THE WORLD

The situation in Korea has been progressively worsening and events are happening in such fantastic sequence that one on this side of the world can only shudder to imagine what the end result will be.

Conflicting views are voiced, one saying we should be calm and not attach too drastic an importance to the fragments of news that come through to us. The other view seems to introduce us to an all-out war of 50 years or more.

Our position, it is plain to see, is perilous. We do have a rather academic point to prove. But in doing so, we stand to lose so much as to make it of doubtful value.

Our reason for first going to Korea was defensible. It seemed for awhile that under our willingness to take the lead, we had succeeded in galvanizing the United Nations into a course of determined action.

Since our courageous epic of counter-attack against Red Korea, it has become more and more evident that many member nations of the UN have lost their first flush of enthusiasm. It has become a situation of American soldiers, marines and sailors bearing the burden of the United Nations, with but token assistance from others.

With the flood-gates of China's manpower cracked open and an ever increasing force pouring out of the North, the weight of numbers is pressing heavily against us.

Here the fantastic faith in the atom bomb begins to thin out and serious doubts of its effectiveness arise. And we are beginning to re-evaluate the Korean venture, in the light of cold reality.

In the United States, grave concern over civilian defense has spurred closer attention to this problem. Wide publication is made of how to survive an atomic bomb. County by county and city by city, organizations are being set up to handle the multitudinous problems such an attack would occasion. Meanwhile, draft quotas are being liberalized and the main thought in government and military circles, as well as in the millions of families of the United States, is a dreaded war.

It seems we have been maneuvered into a shaky position, far from our source of supply. Some of our leaders have sounded off rather intemperately, too, and this adds even more weight to our plight.

The big question that many are considering, these dark days, is whether or not it is possible to retire from Korea and save at least a piece of our defenses, there, for use on our own homeland, or in a theater less removed and with some advantage to be won in victory.

The shoe of internationalism begins to pinch. And, in such a case, many would prefer to cast it off for what has long been our tradition—isolation from the rest of the world.

In times of stress, we do not always regard a situation with cold logic. The truth is, it's later than isolationism. The modern age has presented us with that reality. Our foreign policy has sealed our affinity to the international point of view.

However Korea ends, we must accept as our growing burden the realization that we are of the world. . . . and it is of us.

Pioneer Land Clearing Job Proved Long, Tedious Deal

ROBINSON TACKLED TREMENDOUS TASK HEWING HOME FROM SITE OF PRESENT-DAY PROGRESS

By Hervey S. Robinson

Any reader who has additional information on names, places or events covered by Mr. Robinson are invited to write the newspaper. In this way, a more complete historical series will be possible. Address letters to Hervey S. Robinson, % Beaverton Enterprise, Beaverton, Oregon.

When William J. Robinson had staked his claim on Fanno Creek in the spring of 1852, out where Robinson station now stands, one of his first tasks was to slash out a road from the old Oregon City-Tualatin trail to his location so that he could bring his wagon and supplies out from Oregon City. Then, when he had erected a shelter for his little family, he went to work in a Milwaukee sawmill to earn money to make his start in Oregon, as we related in our last.

He was employed, at first, as an ordinary laborer about the mill. But one day when it was necessary to get a huge log across the stream and the regular drivers had failed to get the oxen to do the trick, Robinson, during the lunch hour while the drivers were eating, walked up to the yoked oxen, gave them a simple command and with very little trouble "shot the stick across the stream to the place where it was wanted." After that he was made an ox driver, and did a great deal of the hauling.

It was he who hauled a load of lumber from Milwaukee down to Portland to be used in building a house on the site of present day Meier and Frank's store.

When he finally got money enough ahead he quit his job at Milwaukee to go to work on his claim, which consisted of 320 acres. He bought out another man who had 160 acres adjoining him and began to clear and work the ground. That was a real job. He could not work between the trees as he had done in building the road. The trees had to be cut down and the stumps taken out.

Even today, with the aid of powder and machinery, stump grubbing is no easy task. In those days it was a tremendous one. Many of those large fir stumps had roots larger than a man's body. It was the common practice to burn them but, so far as possible, brush and tree tops were piled over the stumps and fires were kept burning for days and weeks. The fire would creep along an underground root, smoldering in the pitchy sap for weeks.

There on the claim, the Robinson children were accustomed to play, running about the rough ground among the piles of brush and debris and the smoldering stumps. One day tiny three year old Lenora, following Daddy about the place, ventured too close to a roaring brush fire.

The wind shifted suddenly and before she could get away the flames caught her dress and blazed about her small body. Her screams brought her father to her side in a flash. He smothered out the flames, but she was horribly burned. Every available home remedy was applied to no avail and in a few hours she died.

The work of clearing was slow and tedious, but progress was steady, and in time the Robinson farm was rated among the best in the community. That farm has remained in the possession of William J. Robinson and his descend-

ents to this day and "it is a remarkable fact," wrote a biographer, in 1912, "that there has never been placed a mortgage on this property, either by William J. Robinson or any of his children up to this time."

When Roy L. Davidson, a correspondent for this newspaper, interviewed Harry Robinson, grandson of William J., upon this place, some nine years ago, Harry pointed out to him three old barns, which his grandfather had built upon his claim. They were of hewn lumber, pinned together with long wooden pegs, like all other barns built by the early settlers and appeared "as sturdy and substantial as they were on the day that they were put in place."

The pioneer log cabin had long since been replaced by a better home, which the Robinsons enjoyed for many years after their farm began to pay dividends.

As he prospered William J. Robinson reached out to help others. He assisted, in a financial way, some young people striving to secure an education. He cooperated with his neighbors, the Fannos, Denneys and others in the development of a community center about Ames Chapel, where Progress now stands and in the establishment of the McKay school.

With these same neighbors he was instrumental in getting a road built across the hills to Portland. This road was constructed, largely with pick shovel and ax, and without benefit of engineering. It was some distance south of the present Canyon Highway. The sole idea was to get over the mountain. It was cut straight away to the hill-top, up one side and down the other, so steep that it tried the mettle of the strongest oxen.

In later days Robinson traveled over the Canyon route, which, at first, followed the line of least resistance down the bed of the creek—a rough and mucky proposition in the rainy season.

There were six children in the family of William J. Robinson, five daughters and a son. Berilla died at the age of sixteen; little Lenora met her tragic death at the age of three, as we have just related; Agnes became the wife of James Walker of Washington county; Viola married Dr. Joseph Smith of Portland and Florence, who tenderly cared for her parents in their old age, continued to reside in the dwelling which her father built in 1874.

Raleigh S., the only son, assisted his father in the operation of the home ranch until he came of age, when he rented a portion of it which he operated until his father's death, in 1898, when he inherited eighty acres.

He added to these holdings from

time to time, until he owned a fine ranch of one hundred and thirty-five acres, all under a high state of cultivation. In addition to this he was the owner of twenty acres of good land elsewhere in the county and two residence properties in Portland. Today Harry Robinson, third generation of Robinsons to occupy the old farm carries on the work started by his pioneer father and grandfather not only in conduct of his private affairs but also in community enterprise. It was from him that Roy L. Davidson, in 1941, obtained many of the facts that we have incorporated in this story.



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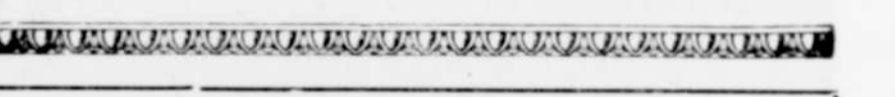
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