

Looking Around the County



CECIL

This early settlement could have celebrated the centennial of the first of its resident's arrival in 1863, as the William Y. Cecil family settled there then. A celebration was held in 1967 to mark the 100th year of the Cecil Postoffice. James Rast was the first postmaster. The postoffice is located in the Cecil Store which is also quite an historic institution. Bob Lowe of Heppner stated that the store was started by the Lone Trading Co. about 1888 when the railroad came through. Bob Lowe's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Lowe, owned and operated the store from 1913 until 1925.

Founder Cecil was born in 1819 in England, then as a child with his parents to Illinois, and later to Missouri. He and Mary Robison were married in 1847 and came west in 1862. They were the parents of 10 children. Mr. Cecil died in 1896, Mrs. Cecil lived on for quite some years after his death.

Presently the Henry Krebs family owns considerable property at Cecil.

RHEA CREEK — RUGGS — MIDWAY

The list of county post offices in Homesteads and Heritages does not include Ruggs, however it was a going, community with a store

before Heppner got started. The Rhea family settled in 1864 as did the Albert Wright family. The Taylor Spencer store was moved from Ruggs to Heppner in the summer of '73. Orin Farnsworth arrived in 1874 at the settlement called "Midway." This busy spot was nearly half way between The Dalles and Canyon City on the first through freight line — later the route went from Alkali or Arlington to John Day.

The site of the Ray Wright ranch was taken by George Noble in 1872; he is remembered especially for his business as a harness maker and dealer in Heppner later. Other early settlers were the Henry Gays, Crockett Kirk, Henry Schersinger, Jim Hayes, Lafe Penland, Charles Miller, Jeff Jones, Jack DeVore, and a Mr. Howell. The first postoffice, called "Midway", was established by Albert Wright and no record of its discontinuance is given on the listing of county post-offices. Many Wright descendants still live near Ruggs and the Wright's store is the present community center. The name Ruggs is after an Anson Wright son-in-law, Ed Rugg.

LENA

Government records show that the Heppner and Lena postoffices were established

in consecutive years, Heppner '72, Lena '73, C.E. Hinton was Lena's first postmaster. Several of the ranches originally claimed are still being worked by members of the original families — up to the fourth generation — the Vinsons, the Hughes, the Brosnans, and the French families. Many interesting stories are told of life along Little Butter Creek. The Lena Postoffice was discontinued in 1942 — and the several schools along the creek have been consolidated with



Buffalo now roam at Ruggs

Heppner. The Lena Cemetery, near the Currin Ranch has markers memorializing these early settlers; Kenny, Howards, Felix Johnson, Wigglesworth, Vinson, Waddell, Adams, Day, Hinton, Newman, Presley, Pearson, Franklin, Smith Shell, Bennett, Fleek and Crawford. An Indian War casualty, Harrison Hale, was buried there in 1878. A first store was near the present Eddie Brosnan home; a later store was back of the present Randall Martin home. Mrs. John (Zetta) Brosnan was postmistress for a while after 1908.

HEPPNER'S TWIN POSTOFFICE, WILLOW FORKS

Two postoffices were established in Morrow County, on June 3, 1872. The one at Heppner still lives, but its twin, known as Willow Forks, was discontinued Dec. 24, 1878, and its mail was ordered sent to Lone.

The area at the junction of Willow and Rhea Creeks was surveyed by the government land office in 1859. John Jordan was the first settler there and the area now is known by the Jordan Elevator which was built on his ranch. In 1868 Amanuel C. Petteys settled there. John Jordan

and Tom Ayers on Butter Creek helped one another harvest their crops. Mr. Jordan planted a hop yard and built a hop dryer in 1892 — but after two crops he decided hop growing didn't pay.

Amanuel C. Petteys was postmaster at Willow Forks as long as that postoffice existed. The day it was discontinued he became the postmaster of Pettysville where he served until it was discontinued nine years later in 1887. Postmaster Petteys often rode to the stage crossing on the John Day River for his packet of mail. A Republican, he was elected county assessor, took the 1890 census, and was an early community leader.

HARDMAN

John F. Royce and his brother settled twenty miles south of Heppner on an open, fairly level spot, now Hardman, in 1870. They soon had neighbors. A school was established and taught by Mr. Royce in 1879. David Hardman obtained a post office in 1881 and "By the consent of the government he brought the postoffice with him when he moved from the farm into town around 1882. The town took the name of the office."

Yesteryears of Morrow reports three doctors practiced

there. "In '90 Dr. Akers and soon Dr. Chick and

Dr. Gaunt came." Hardman prospered because of the freight line and stage route from The Dalles to Canyon City.

"Many farmers moved their families in for school, which was taught by Mr. Smith. Another early teacher was Mrs. E.E. Bleakman, who later ran the postoffice and lived in Hardman until she died. It is told that she brought her baby to school and rocked the cradle with one foot while she heard the classes recite. At one time there were 90 pupils in the school.

"At the height of its prosperity Hardman consisted of a four-room grade school, a two teacher high school, three hotels, three livery stables, three stores, two lodges, two saloons, and a church." (Taken from Yesteryears of Morrow, pg. 38)

ELLA

Ella was a changing place for the horse-drawn coaches that ran from Castle Rock on the Columbia to Heppner by way of Blackhorse Canyon. Mr. Oviatt was its first postmaster in 1882, and he was instrumental in the construction of the Ella School in 1888 with lumber hauled from a mill at Hardman. Ella was named in honor of Ella Lord, daughter of a Confederate Army doctor, John R. Lord.

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Congratulations to Heppner on their 100 years. We have been a part of "our town" in business since Nov. 1. 1963.



**Howard & Jo
PETTYJOHN'S
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Berniece Lott Says—



Congratulations Heppner on your

100th YEAR

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