

JACKSONVILLE IS REAL RELIC OF THE HARDY PIONEER DAYS

(Continued from Page 1.)

able growth. All the hillsides and gulches before this time had been staked out, and miners were at work reaping large returns. Dives of all kinds had opened in Jacksonville to trap the miners' gold. Homeseekers from the Willamette valley were settling in the valley. A joint Methodist and Presbyterian church was built that summer by the more staid portion of the inhabitants, most of whom had come from the north. Subscriptions to help the cause were obtained from gamblers and saloon-keepers without a scruple, as the question of tainted money had not arisen in that day. This church, one of the very oldest in the northwest, still remains.

School Teacher Arrives.

The same summer Mary Royal, a young school teacher just from the east opened a school in Jacksonville. Generous gifts of gold from the miners and tuition charges of from \$5 to \$8 a quarter sustained the school. Sixty students were enrolled the first year.

Two other happenings which marked 1854 as a banner year of growth in Jacksonville were the birth of the first white child, James Clugage McCully, August 27, named in honor of James Clugage, the founder of the town and the building of the first brick building. A combination of clay and sandstone of the desert was used as a substitute for lime in constructing the buildings.

The first newspaper of southern Oregon, the Table Rock Sentinel, was established by U. G. T'Vault in 1855. It announced itself as independent in politics, but proved to be democratic, dyed in the wool. In 1857 the Jacksonville Herald was started by Beggs & Burns and for a number of years thereafter Jacksonville boasted of two newspapers. A year or two later the Oregon Gazette was founded, but was doomed to a short existence. The paper became so rascally populist and anarchistic that the government in 1861 refused it the use of the mails. The papers were representative of the civil war times. Politics were fought out in Jacksonville hundreds of miles away from railroad connections with the civilized world with all the ferocity of the period save bloodshed.

In the later 50s the mines began to give out and many of the miners were attracted to Eldorado, newly found in Idaho. By 1860 the prosperity of Jacksonville did not depend upon its mines as greatly as it did upon the fertile farms of the valley. In 1860 a wagon road from Waldo in Josephine county to Crescent City, Cal., was opened for travel. This made it possible for passengers and baggage to be carried by wagon from the seacoast to Jacksonville to Crescent City. The opening of the road cut freight rates in two and brought many of the luxuries of the outside world to the residents of Jacksonville.

Sacramento Stage Starts.

On the first day of July of the same year the California Stage company opened its daily stage line from Sacramento to Portland. The stage made the trip in 13 days and many of the travelers were glad of the opportunity of resting a couple of days at Jacksonville en route. The building of the two wagon roads marked the end of the pack train, which had played such an essential part in the making of Jacksonville. No longer were the strings of mules and their dare-devil drivers seen swinging into town. The packers either left for regions unknown or took up the more staid profession of the stage driver.

During the 60s Jacksonville became noted for its wealth, its fine homes, its culture, its hospitality and its general prosperity. The farms of the valley and the vineyards on the hillsides were extremely productive. Flour, fruits, wine and meat were sold to the miners in northern California. Gradually the supply outgrew the demand and the industries suffered from lack of railroad transportation facilities. However, the Rogue river valley was known as the land of plenty.

Jacksville was not without its troubles, however, during this period of commercial prosperity. In 1868 smallpox broke out among the half-breeds in one end of the town. The doctors pronounced the disease chicken-pox, and before the mistake was discovered the plague had spread throughout the town. Terror seized the townsmen and there were few who dared nurse the sick and bury the dead. It was believed that smoke would kill the germs and accordingly great fires were built in the streets around which the people gathered both by night and by day. The work of the Catholic priest and sisters during this calamity was heroic. They were the only ones who were not afraid to nurse the sick. When the epidemic had run its course, 40 vic-

tims had been buried in the graveyard on the hill.

Flood Destroys Much.

The next year a cloudburst in Jackson creek canyon caused a flood that brought ruin to part of the town and to the farmers along the stream. In 1873 a fire broke out in the Union hotel, which destroyed \$75,000 worth of property within a hour. The following year Jacksonville suffered another fire nearly as destructive. No other calamities of moment struck Jacksonville until 1884 when the California & Oregon railroad passed it by. In fact in 1883 Jacksonville was in a most prosperous condition with glowing prospects.

The August number of the West Shore Magazine in 1883 speaks of Jacksonville as follows:

"The county seat of Jackson county is Jacksonville, once the liveliest mining camp of this region and is still the most important trade center. The conditions of its existence have gradually changed from that of a rudely constructed and transient mining camp to that of a thriving trade center for a large expanse of mining and agricultural country. Its business is firmly established, its business buildings large and substantial, and its private residences neat and often elegant. It has always held the position of the leading town of southern Oregon, which its enterprising business men are determined to maintain."

The fundamental reason why the railroad decided to build a new town in the valley rather than pass through Jacksonville was the elevation of the town among the hills. Citizens of Jacksonville maintained that the railroad would lose neither in distance nor in grading if it laid its tracks through Blackwell gap and skirted the hills to Jacksonville and therefore refused to pay the bonus the railroad demanded.

It is the same ridge of mountains that bars the building of a railroad from Medford to Crescent City. If the desired road from Medford to the sea coast is ever built, undoubtedly the citizens of Medford will be called upon to give a large bonus to help build a tunnel through the obstructing mountains.

Fight Kept Up.

Jacksville did not die without a struggle. For years it fought zealously for commercial supremacy. The cards were stacked against Jacksonville and its game was a losing one.

Until 1891 Jacksonville had no railroad connection with the main line at Medford. In this year Honeyman & Hart company, of Portland, built a railroad between the two towns. A few years later it was bought by William Barnum, who with the boys has been conducting it ever since. The Rogue River Valley railway bears the distinction of being the only railroad company in the world in which all the officers from president to rail greaser are held by members of the same family.

The possession of the courthouse has kept aglow the sparks of life in Jacksonville during the last 20 years. By an act of the legislature on January 12, 1852, Jackson county including within its borders the present boundaries of Josephine, Curry, Coos and Jackson counties was carved from the territory then known as Lion county. The courthouse of the new county naturally fell to Jacksonville, as it was the only town within the boundaries of the new county. Josephine, Curry and Coos counties were formed from Jackson as soon as they became settled.

The Jacksonville county courthouse, built in 1884, is antiquated and outgrown. Better transportation facilities in the shape of trolley lines are being planned in the Rogue river valley and it is extremely doubtful if any serious attempts will be made in the future to change the county seat from Jacksonville. The large shade trees and luxuriant foliage around the homes in Jacksonville, with the town's sheltered position in the foothills, make it attractive for a home, and no protests are made by the county officials for being obliged to live in such a quiet town. The park around the home of Peter Britt, deceased, who was perhaps the pioneer photographer in Oregon, settling in Jacksonville in 1852, is almost tropical in its nature. Its luxuriant shrubbery includes large palm, manna, Smyrna Fig, English walnut and almond trees. Nowhere could be found a spot more beautiful, and there are other homes that have nearly as charming environments.

Aged Pioneers Argue.

In the last meeting of the southern Oregon pioneers in Jacksonville, where so many of them live, strange arguments are heard. The question arose as to who is the oldest living pioneer of southern Oregon. The dispute for first honors between E. K. Anderson and Mrs. Kinney, daughter of T'Vault, the pioneer editor, was carried on under considerable difficulty on account of the deafness of the members of the organization. Finally it was decided that E. K. Anderson had arrived a few months earlier in the spring of 1852 than Mrs. Kinney. This left to Mrs. Kinney the honor of being the oldest living woman pioneer.



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