

# Applegates Among First White Men in Rogue Valley

(Editor's note: This following summarized history of Medford was compiled and written by Seth Bullis recently. Sources of information include city and county records, "History of Medford About 1933" by Miss Jane Snedcor, Wallins history written in 1884, and "The Applegate Trail" by Walter Meacham, 1947.)

**By SETH BULLIS**  
Perhaps the first white men to traverse this valley were those of the party of Jesse and Lindsey Applegate (some 15 men) who started from the Willamette valley in 1846 to find a "southern route," free from possible English aggression, and also the difficult Columbia river passage.

The large party brought back by them through Nevada, Tule Lake and south of Mt. McLaughlin had no thought of pausing here, no matter how attractive it must have appeared after the Humboldt desert. It was September, 1846.

However, other men came, and more after the discovery of gold on Jackson creek built up the town of Jacksonville, as the second established community in Oregon (after Astoria).

### Take Up Claims

When the land was thrown open to donation land claims, Napoleon B. Evans and Reason B. Packard took up claims that comprised the original townsite of Medford.

The creek, originally Stuart (or Stewart) creek, from a soldier killed nearby by Indians, but later bearing the commonplace name of Bear creek, was forced here at the "Middle Ford."

When the railroad was re-buffed by the self-satisfied citizens of Jacksonville in its request for a \$25,000 bonus, on the ground that no railroad would fall to touch the largest town in southern Oregon, it was built on a tangent from where it emerged from the Rogue River canyon at Tolo to Phoenix, called "Gasburg" by the stage drivers because of the loquacious hostess at the stage station.

### Townsite Promoted

Thus in 1883 a townsite was promoted with the railroad which the railroad engineer, David Loring, named after Medford, Mass., through the name of Middle Ford confused the background of the name for years.

By now the land had been acquired by others; C. C. Beekman owned the southwest corner, C. Mingsus the northwest, I. J. Phipps the northeast and C. W. Brobeck the southeast. A prominent promoter of the town was J. S. Howard, whose son was railroad surveyor, but the actual plat was surveyed for dedication by Charles Prim signed the original dedication.

Twenty acres in the center were given to the railroad for depot and yard purposes. In addition, every other block, the even numbered ones, was turned over to the trustee, Mr. Prim, to be sold for the benefit of the railroad, as a bonus. The railroad was, and is, the Oregon & California. The land deal was handled by its subsidiary, the Oregon and Transcontinental company.

Present Park  
However, Mr. Howard persuaded the company to give the present park to the city, while Mr. Beekman sold to the city the library block for \$200. The passenger depot was planted for years squarely in the middle of the present Main st. All this in 1883-84 when the railroad was built from the north as far as Phoenix.

That winter some 40 wood-frame buildings were built, plus foundation for a single brick building, a store and assembly hall on the site of the present hotel at Main and Front sts. The first hotel, the Torrey House, was built that year at Main and Riverside, then called State rd.

On Feb. 24, 1885, the Governor signed the incorporation papers for the town of Medford and five trustees were promptly elected. The first ordinance made fighting and rioting unlawful, the second prohibited the loitering of minors on the railroad depot platform; it was a typical Western TV town.

Fire Protection  
Fire protection started in 1886 when the town purchased its first equipment of ladders, buckets, and ropes.

The town got too congested for individual wells and the trustees borrowed money in 1884 to start a water system. A ditch was built from Bear creek, south of town, to the city park and pumped into elevated tanks there. Later, this pumping plant was moved to Bear creek opposite the end of Eighth st. The first water distribution system was built



in 1889. "Mountain spring" water came July 1, 1927. The bond issue was voted Oct. 8, 1925.

### First Electric Plant

Ashland and Grants Pass were older, larger towns and had electric plants by 1890, but the younger Medford did not get its first electric plant until the summer of 1894.

Previous to that, the town had contributed oil for three street lamps on Seventh st (Main). The town contracted in August, 1894, for four "arch" for the streets at \$10 each per month.

In 1900 the city purchased the electric plant; in 1904 it contracted with Condor Water and Power company for service to its plant at 3 cents per kilowatt hour. That company had just built its plant at Gold Ray, a plant which was thought to be so big that the valley never could absorb its capacity. In 1908 the city sold its electric system to the power company.

### Jacksonville Railroad

Jacksonville got its railroad when, in 1890, a railroad was constructed after Jacksonville had contributed \$15,000 and Medford \$7,500. The latter sum was advanced by a group of Medford citizens, later reimbursed in warrants by the town. A street car system was installed in 1914 but after a few years it suffered the fate of other small town transportation systems. The Jacksonville railroad also succumbed, in the early 1920's to automobiles and trucks.

Mud on Main st. got deep; board walks were first constructed by the town, later the responsibility was transferred to property owners. Paving came later, with more than 20 miles of paving laid in 1910.

Through the 90's the maintenance of the individual sanitary installation was constant matter of town board mandate, until in 1898 the first sewer system was installed.

The first religious services were Union Sunday Schools, but in 1885 the first church was organized. Most of the early church sites were donated by public spirited citizens.

From 1885 until the county courthouse usurped the corner of Oakdale and Main in 1933, a school building of increasing proportion was maintained there. School buildings have kept pace with the growth of the town.

The commercial pear industry dates from the first planting, south of Medford, in 1885. A pear planting boom from 1907 to 1910 gave the industry a tremendous impetus. The chamber of commerce, first the Commercial club, in 1895, and an aggressive women's club from 1904 deserve

major credit for the healthy growth and civic pride of a Medford which has always been a city leading the way in civic and cultural good living; fortunate because the most capable citizens have always been ready to give their time and talents, without monetary recompense, to the needs of the community, both governmental and cultural.

Further evidence of this stability is that the city (it was reincorporated as a "city" Feb. 7, 1905) successfully handled the impact of Camp White with its 35,000 soldiers during World War II; with its hundreds of soldiers' families to house and its thousands of men turned loose nightly in town for recreation. After evacuation of the camp, the only "ghost town" visible was the camp itself, and most of that was soon utilized by the Veteran's Domiciliary and by industry which has contributed

## 186 Permits Are Issued by City For Buildings

A total of 186 permits, the largest number, reportedly, in any one month in recent years, were issued by the Medford building department in March, according to the department's monthly report.

Total valuation for the permits is reported to be \$828,387, more than twice the \$406,958 valuation for permits in March, 1958, and over four times the \$173,737 valuation for the same month in 1957.

Some 69 permits were issued in March, 1958, and 68 were issued two years ago.

Twenty-four permits for new residences, with a total value of \$308,200, were issued last month. Other major permits were issued for a new \$82,183 church, a \$35,000 City of Medford reservoir atop Barneburg Hill; a \$95,000 business structure in the East Jackson st. shopping center; a \$50,000 service station in the shopping center, a \$15,000 service station at another location and a \$20,000 duplex.

Eleven permits with a total valuation of \$150,610 were issued for businesses being remodeled or repaired. Eighteen permits for remodeling or repairing residences were also issued.

Residents took out 30 electrical permits and 52 plumbing permits last month. City inspectors reported making a total of 1,145 inspections. Total fees collected last month amounted to \$3,004.14.

## Evangelist to Start Revival Services

Evangelist Dean McKay, Seattle, Wash., will begin a series of revival services today at the Medford Evangelistic Center, Esquire theater building, according to the Rev. Ray McCoy, director of the local Center.

The services will begin at 7:45 p.m. each day and be held through Friday, April 10.

Mr. McKay was formerly the assistant to the Rev. Ralph Sanders of the Old-fashioned camp meeting broadcasts and has been a missionary to Mexico much to the city welfare.

## Fire Control Meeting Set at IV Station

Cave Junction-The Illinois valley ranger station has scheduled a fire control meeting April 10 at 1 p.m. at the station for all lumbermen and independent contractors who buy national forest timber.

The purpose of the meeting will be to explain the fire protection requirements in the timber sale contracts and to outline plans for the approaching fire season.

A dairy cow requires about 150 more manhours of labor per year than any other kind of farm animal.

## Medford High Ends 14th in Contest

Eugene-Medford High school has been announced as the 14th place winner in the Oregon Mathematical contest for 1959.

School ranking is determined by the total of scores of top three students in each school participating in the contest. The score for Medford this year was 117. Winning the contest was Tigard High school with a combined score of 292.

Individually, one Medford student placed high in the contest. Jack Lee Haring was 35th with a score of 41.5. James Franklin Hays of Crater High school was 26th with

ca and by the Society of Actuaries in each state. In Oregon this year, 79 high schools participated with approximately 3,250 students competing.

today is only  
**APRIL 5**  
REMEMBER, SAVINGS DEPOSITED BY THE 10th EARN FROM THE 1st AND THEY EARN MORE AND THEY EARN MORE  
**JACKSON COUNTY FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION**  
126 E. Main • Medford

**IT'S HERE!** **IT'S NEW!**

**IT'S BIG!** **SERIES "H"**

# NOW ON DISPLAY THE NEW CAT D8 TRACTOR

**LOOK FOR THESE FEATURES!**

### BIG NEW FEATURES

- BIGGER . . . STRONGER UNDERCARRIAGE**  
New track roller frames and diagonal braces . . . Bigger track links, pins, bushings and rollers.
- LIFETIME LUBRICATED ROLLERS AND IDLERS**  
Oil, sealed in reservoirs during assembly is retained by floating ring seals. Roller lubrication is eliminated until rebuilding time.
- DRY-TYPE AIR CLEANER**  
Reduces air cleaner service to five minutes—Removes 99.8% of dirt from engine air.
- DOUBLE REDUCTION FINAL DRIVES**  
Reduce load on transmission, bevel gear and pinion, steering clutches and brakes. Provides almost TWENTY INCHES ground clearance.
- COMMON LUBE SYSTEM FOR TRANSMISSION, BEVEL GEAR AND STEERING CLUTCHES.**  
Uses engine type oil, filtered, cooled and under pressure. ENTIRE power train is pressure lubricated with 100% filtered oil.

### BIG RETAINED FEATURES

- OIL TYPE FLYWHEEL CLUTCH**  
The oil clutch has given D8 owners thousands of hours of trouble-free operation. This clutch is a major advance in tractor design.
- OIL COOLED STEERING CLUTCHES AND BRAKES**  
Filtered and cooled under pressure cool steering clutches and brakes.
- YOUR CHOICE OF DIRECT DRIVE OR TORQUE CONVERTER**  
Direct drive equipped with 6 speed forward and reverse transmission. Torque Converter has 3 speed transmission.
- LIVE POWER TO WINCHES AND CABLE CONTROL**  
Power directly from engine assures good working speed of rear mounted attachments.
- IN-SEAT STARTING**  
Operators like the convenient D8 starting system that helps to get the machine on the job quickly.

**BIGGER! MORE POWER!** **IT'S ALL NEW! TAKE A GOOD LOOK!**

On Display Now At Your **CATERPILLAR DEALER**

Klamath Falls  
Redmond  
Medford

CRATER LAKE MACHINERY CO.

**SEE IT NOW!**

OPEN HOUSE

**TUESDAY**  
**8 a.m. Till Dusk**  
Everyone Welcome

No. Pacific Highway — Medford  
CAT AND CATERPILLAR ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THE CATERPILLAR TRACTOR CO.

Learn how to hypnotize tax collectors

Get money at  
**"MONEYLAND"**  
...where it's almost fun to borrow money!

At "MONEYLAND" (your nearby Pacific Finance office) you may borrow the one thing tax collectors are interested in—money. What's more, your request for money will be handled quickly and courteously.

So whatever you need cash for—to pay taxes, to reduce monthly payments, to take a trip—come to "MONEYLAND." It's the place to borrow money for any purpose.

**NEW FINANCING PLAN!** In addition to our personal loan service, we can now "finance" (buy contracts on) most anything you want to buy on time—automobiles, furniture, appliances, etc. Investigate competitive rates available before buying.

**PACIFIC INDUSTRIAL Loans**

**is MONEYLAND**

16 South Central • Phone SP 3-5308  
Jim Elbert, Manager

Open Weekdays: 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.  
Mondays until 8 P.M. — Closed Saturdays