

Fort Wagner Gives Talent Area Protection

Facility Built as Settlers Arrive In Larger Groups

By MARY L. BAGLEY
During the summer of 1853 there was considerable trouble between the Indians and the settlers and because of this Captain Alden and his men from Yreka, Calif., built a fort on Jacob Wagner's place, now known as Talent, to protect the people.

It was also at this time that the early settlers began to arrive in substantial numbers, the largest of the wagon trains being the Lupton train, which arrived at Ft. Wagner Aug. 30, 1853, under the guidance of Major Lupton, who was later killed by Indians at Rogue river.

There were 60 wagons in the train and people and stock in proportion. In spite of the Indian trouble, the pioneers were favorably impressed with what they saw. The bunch grass was almost waist high all over the prairie and Jacob Wagner had a small garden which yielded immensely. The garden consisted of potatoes, melons, onions and tomatoes which he sold to the immigrants.

Trouble Subsides

The Indian trouble soon subsided, because at the time immigrants were arriving Gen. Joseph Lane with volunteers from the Willamette valley also arrived, resulting in the Table Rock treaty of Sept. 10, 1853.

One of the families to arrive at this time was the John Beeson family who settled in the vicinity of Ft. Wagner. Part of the Beeson farm is owned by Anna Beeson Carter and Everett Beeson, who are descendants of John Beeson.

Two months after the Lupton train reached Ft. Wagner, the Royal train arrived led by the Rev. William Royal. This train was known as the Preacher's train, as it consisted mostly of ministers and church members. As soon as the train arrived Mr. Royal let it be known that he wished to hold a meeting.

Account of Service

In the "Talent News" dated Oct. 1, 1892, Welborn Beeson gave an account of this church service: "A message was sent around among the settlers far and near that a meeting would be held on the following Sunday at the Walton cabin (the old Ed Ross place on Wagner Creek rd.). It was something new in the history of the Rogue River valley and everybody came, mostly on horseback, a few with ox teams. The men came with their spurs clanging and pistols and knives belted to their waists. The meeting was held in the shade of a wide spreading oak.

"Rev. Royal then delivered a sermon. It was probably the first sermon that the sturdy pioneers had heard since they left their far away home in the East, and although many of them had had hard experience and were rough in exterior appearance, when the good old man called for assistance to build a church edifice somewhere in the valley, the 'boys' chipped in \$20 gold pieces faster than dimes are put in at the present time."

The Stearns wagon arrived a few weeks after the Preacher's train. The Stearns outfit was composed of the Rev. John Stearns a Baptist minister and his sons and daughters and their children and a brother, Avery P. Stearns, who was the first probate judge of Jacksonville.

Family Group
There were 28 members in this family and the wagon train was strictly a family group until the end of the journey when they were joined by several more wagons. Mr. Stearns preached his sermon in the Walton cabin a few Sundays later than Mr. Royal.

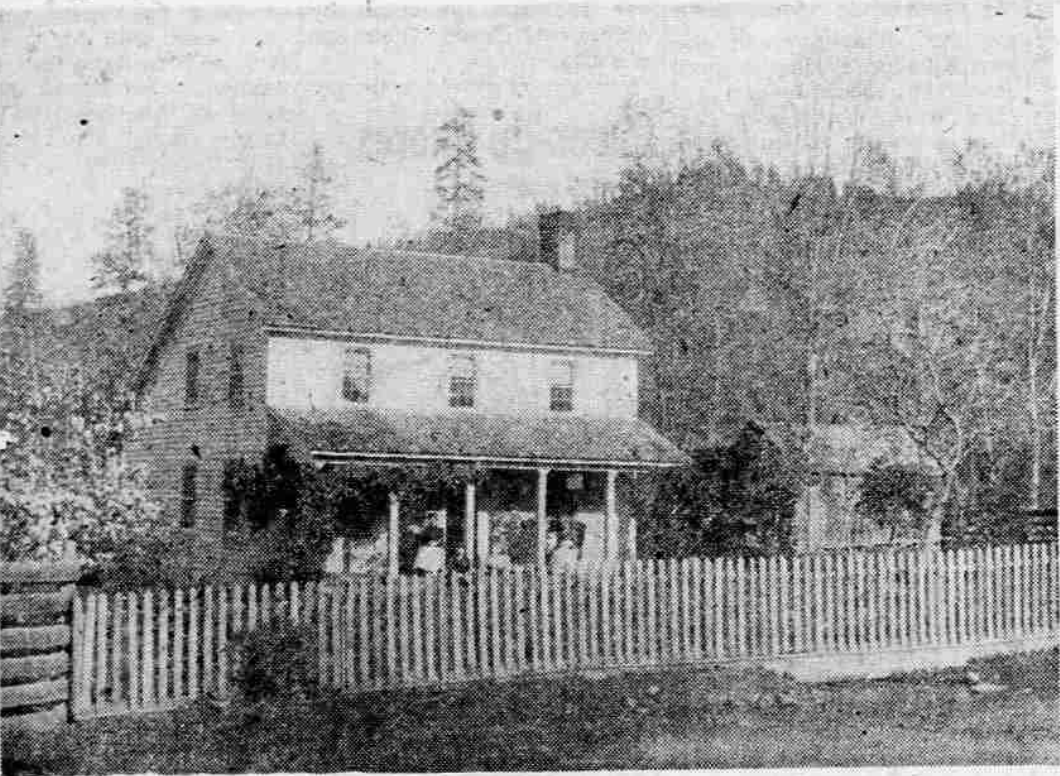
Orson Stearns reported on his arrival as follows: "We camped near the Jacob Wagner claim. The following day David Stearns traded a wagon valued at \$200.00 for 100 hills of potatoes and dug them himself. They were able to sell part of these for 25 cents a pound and the rest fed the family for the entire winter.

"All groceries and meats were scarce and high, except beef, which was from 30 to 35 cents per pound. No flouring mills were in the valley as very little wheat had been raised and that sold at \$10.00 to \$12.00 per bushel and could be had only for seed. Squashes, pumpkins and turnips as well as potatoes were mixed with flour to make bread and several varieties of vegetables, beans, peas and



EARLY SAWMILL - The saw mill shown above, which operated between 1885 and 1890, was owned by Bill Abbott and was steam powered. It was one of the first mills

in the county, and was located about five miles up Wagner creek from Talent. The company used only pine logs at the mill.



EARLY SETTLER - John Robinson, an early settler of the Talent and Wagner creek area, built this house in 1866 to replace a log cabin. It was on a donation land grant. The boards and other work necessary in construction was done by hand and

nailed with square nails. The house still stands on Wagner Creek rd. Ormy Goodard of Talent loaned the picture of the Robinson house and the sawmill for reproduction.



WAGNER CREEK - This is a general view of the Wagner creek area where many early pioneers of Jacksonville settled. Not far from the above area, Captain Alden and his

men from Yreka, Calif., constructed a fort on the Jacob Wagner property, which is now known as Talent.

corn were used to make coffee." **Ill Prepared**
The first New Year's day found some of the newly arrived immigrants ill prepared for the weather. Snow covered the ground over two feet deep.

Fortunately wild game came close to the cabins and the settlers were able to obtain meat. When later on a pack train of mules arrived from the Willamette, loaded with groceries the settlers were glad to exchange gold dust for salt at an even trade, putting gold just into one place of the scales and balancing it with salt on the other.

John B. Wrisley, with his family were at Ft. Wagner that winter and there his daughter, Alice, was born. She was the first white girl to be born in Jacksonville. She married Carlos Goddard, the great uncle of Omy Goddard, who still lives on Wagner creek.

According to the records and stories told by the early settlers of Ft. Wagner, this community could claim many 'firsts' in the history of Jacksonville.

First School House
O. A. Stearns wrote as follows: "The first school house of which I have knowledge was built by the early settlers of Wagner creek section in the summer of 1854. The house was located on the banks of Bear creek about one-fourth mile northeast of where the town of Talent now stands; it was about 18x32 in size with a slab or penchion floor, the cracks between the logs were chinked with pine

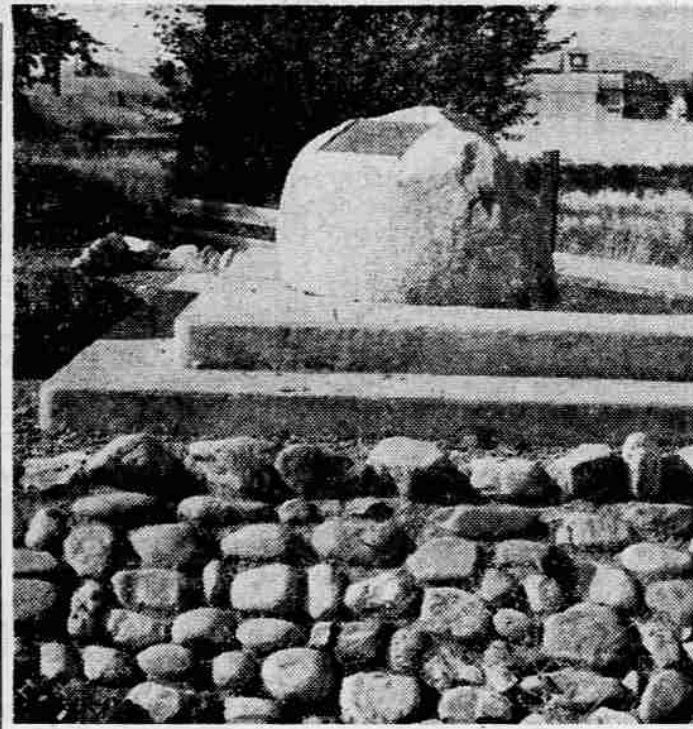
blocks left from the splitting of the shakes with which it was covered. One or two windows on either side were made with muslin cloth (flour sacks).

"There was neither fireplace nor stove, as it was strictly a summer school. Mary Hoffman was employed to teach the first term of three months. There was a fee of \$10 collected for every pupil and there were some 29 of these, by far the larger number of whom were nearly or quite as old as the teacher. The scholars had to depend upon books as were brought across the plains with them, and they were of all varieties in use in the several states, scarcely any two families having the same series, but by using tact and lending one to another, our teacher managed to get along surprisingly well."

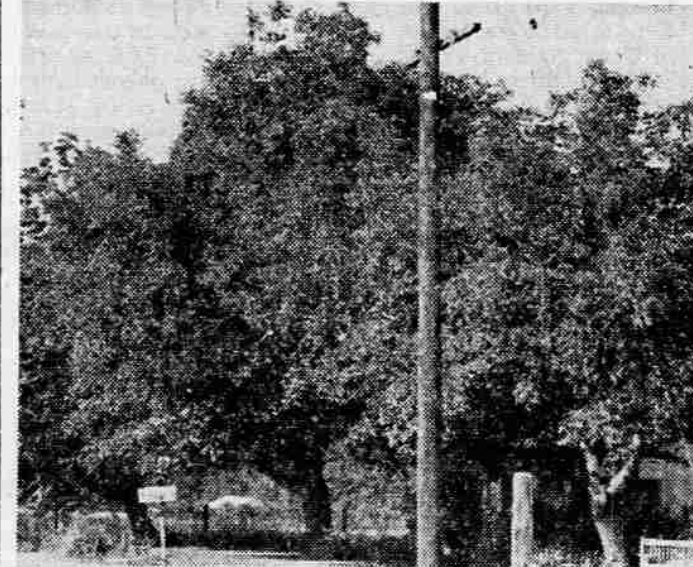
Many "firsts" in the field of agriculture are also credited to the settlers of Wagner creek. Eli K. Anderson and his brother, Firman, the first to take donation land claims in the area, sowed wheat and oats which they brought on pack horses from Yamhill county, and in 1853 they had 12 acres in wheat which brought them eight dollars per bushel. This wheat was tramped out with cattle and fanned with a sheet.

Sell Watermelons
Jacob Wagner sold potatoes at 25 cents a pound and was able to sell a wagon load of watermelons in Jacksonville for \$200. Samuel Robison set out peach seeds in 1853 and is given credit for the first peach orchard in Oregon.

According to O. A. Stearns, Feb. 1, 1893, Welborn Beeson gave an account of travel and the mail in the Talent News: "There was no U.S. mail through this country for several years after the pioneers had formed quite a settlement. We obtained our communications as best we could. It generally occupied six months to receive answers to our letters written 'to the girls we left behind us.'"



MONUMENT - Above is the monument marking the location of the first irrigation system in this area. The bronze plaque on the monument reads, in part, "1852, Jacob Wagner diverted water for irrigation, establishing the first known 'water right' in Oregon." The monument was erected by the Oregon reclamation congress in 1952.



CENTURY TREES - A walnut tree planted by the Stearns family about 1854 on the property which is now the Emmett Beeson place in Talent. The walnut trees were among the first planted in Jackson county. The Stearns family also planted other fruit trees in the valley.

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"In the spring of 1854 there was a total eclipse of the sun; but having no almanacs for that year, we knew nothing about it. It took place about 10 o'clock in the morning on a bright May day. People were at their usual avocations when all at once it began to grow dark and yet there were no visible clouds.

"Capt. J. M. McCall came riding up and after consulting with him we came to the conclusion it was an eclipse, which proved to be the case when our long delayed almanacs arrived around Cape Horn via the Sandwich Islands, which we had ordered in the fall before.

Garries Express

Later on C. C. Beckman of Jacksonville began to carry express over the mountains, making connection with the outside world at Shasta City. The price we paid for a paper or book like Harpers Weekly was one dollar, and we were glad to get our letters at any price.

"William Rockefeller (who filed a claim adjoining Jacob Wagner in 1853) soon had what was called a passenger pony-express and made regular trips carrying passengers each way. It then became less dangerous for the hitherto lonely expressman.

"About this time, quite a number of our mining population, who had come alone, and left their families behind, began to send for them, directing them to come via the Isthmus, thence up to the Sacramento river to Shasta City, then take the mule or pony train for Rogue river."

Arrives in March
Jacob Wagner, who arrived in March, 1852, is given credit for establishing the first known water right in Oregon.

There is a diversity of opinions as to the building of the first saw mill, however, according to O. A. Stearns who wrote "I have always been of the impression that the sawmill on Wagner creek, built by Granville Naylor and Lockwood Little and a doctor, was the first, and that Milton Lindsey at Gasburg second, but some claim the sawmill built by the Emery brothers at Ashland was first. However, all three of these sawmills were erected very early and were running in 1854. None of them could saw much more in a day than two good whip sawyers."

Many changes have taken place in the hundred years since the early pioneers settled around Ft. Wagner, Low-

Suspect Wanted In Policeman's Slaying Caught

Salt Lake City - (UPI) - Alex Robillard, 19, of Redwood City, Calif., wanted in the gun slaying of a policeman, was to be returned to California this week end by San Mateo County Sheriff Earl Whitmore, two of his deputies and Redwood City Police Chief Bill Faulstich.

The six-foot, red-haired fugitive paved the way for his quick return to California when he waived extradition here yesterday afternoon before City Judge Marcellus K. Snow.

Robillard is wanted in connection with the slaying of a Hillsborough, Calif., policeman, whose bullet-punctured body was found lying beside his patrol car on a remote San Mateo county road about 20 miles south of San Francisco.

The 19-year-old convicted burglar was captured Friday night by two detectives as he slept in a downtown hotel room. Robillard put up a fight until he saw the arresting officer's guns and then surrendered quietly.

The youth has steadfastly maintained that he did not kill officer Gene Doran, 36, although he admits being at the scene of the crime. He also told police that a .32-caliber revolver found under his pillow was the weapon used to kill the policeman, who was the father of two teen-age boys.

Robillard said the policeman was shot "by another man." The tight-lipped suspect refused to elaborate on that point.

Infant Killed In Car Wreck

Salem - (UPI) - A six and one-half month-old infant was killed and six other persons injured Friday afternoon in a one-car accident about nine miles north of Albany, state police said.

Police identified the victim as Kenneth Little of Milwaukee. Also injured and hospitalized was Salem General Hospital nurse Donna Jean Schultz, 39, of Portland and Bobbiette Little, 24, of Milwaukee.

Others injured in the accident were Mike Little, 3; Celesta Schultz, 10; Patricia Schultz, 4, and Cindy Schultz, 1. The four children were receiving treatment at a hospital in Albany.

The accident occurred when the southbound car in which they were riding swerved into a shoulder along Highway 99, went into a ditch and rolled over several times.

Brooks-Scanlon To Use Reservoir

Salem - (UPI) - The state engineer yesterday signed a lease of the Tumalo reservoir site to Brooks-Scanlon of Bend. Brooks-Scanlon proposes to use the site for disposal of materials from its wood processing plant in the Bend area.

Although the lease, which runs for 99 years, covers the entire area of the old Tumalo reservoir constructed 45 years ago, it reserves for use of the Tumalo irrigation district an area of 173 acres in the upper reservoir area.

The company may not dispose of waste in this upper area without specific approval of the state engineer in writing.

Wayne Bodi Found Guilty

Corvallis - (UPI) - Wayne Bodi, 20-year-old carpenter, was found guilty Friday afternoon of involuntary manslaughter in connection with the death of a four-month-old girl.

The jury of eight women and four men deliberated four hours.

Bodi had been accused of striking the girl, Peggy Susan Smith.

Defense Attorney Arthur Biggs said he did not know if he would seek a new trial. Sentencing was scheduled for next Wednesday. Bodi could receive a maximum term of 15 years.

FORGET THE RED TAPE
London - (UPI) - When Magistrate E. R. Guest fined a defendant 5½ pence (about six cents) for stealing that same amount from a news stand, the chief clerk complained. The halfpenny would complicate his bookkeeping, he protested. Magistrate Guest reached into his pocket and handed the clerk a halfpenny coin.

ever, their judgment concerning the agricultural possibilities of the community has proven to be correct, as the many acres of peaches, pears, plums and berries attest.

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Elizabeth II Relaxes At Castle in Scotland

Balmoral, Scotland - (UPI) - A country doctor this week end began caring for expectant Queen Elizabeth II at the royal family's vacation castle in Scotland.

The queen, whose pregnancy was announced Friday at Buckingham palace, was shielded from the public eye at Balmoral. But thousands of congratulatory letters and telegrams were arriving for her from delighted subjects and foreign dignitaries. The only sour note came from the Communist Daily Worker, which wished the unborn baby well but said it was "nauseated" by the "torrent of gush."

Elizabeth had a visit yesterday from Dr. George Middleton, the physician in the nearby village of Ballater who serves as "royal doctor" when the family is at Balmoral.

He will make daily trips to the castle as part of his rounds.

'Excellent Health'
The queen's personal physician, Lord Evans, who pronounced her "in excellent health" Friday, is visiting West Germany.

Middleton scheduled calls on the queen, Prince Philip and Prince Charles and Princess Anne only as a "routine arrangement."

The queen, as usual, was spending her time quietly at Balmoral. She was expected to go to church today in the tiny village of Crathie.

President Eisenhower was expected to travel to Balmoral for lunch after he arrives in Britain Aug. 28 for conferences with Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.

At the castle, the family relaxes as much as possible, but dinner is formal when guests are present. The queen wears an evening gown and Prince Philip wears full Highland dress, including black velvet jacket with ruffles, a

kilt of the royal Stuart tartan, knee-length socks and buckled shoes.

Canasta is a favorite after dinner game, with jig saw puzzles another pastime.

The family traditionally remains at Balmoral until October. This year, the vacation will afford Elizabeth a chance to rest from the rigors of a six-week Canadian tour, which she undertook even in the uncomfortable early stages of pregnancy.

Fashion-Page Flash



by Marian Martin

Direct for the fashion pages—the dashing, dramatic suit—dress that's fall's top news! Easy-sew jacket has no waist seams—cinch with belt. Choose tweedy rayon, cotton, wool. Tomorrow's pattern: Half-size slip.

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to drive out to Hillcrest Memorial Park and inspect the NEW CONGREGATIONAL MORRIS CHAPEL. We want you to see the attractive building located high above the valley in a quiet non-residential area. We want you to inspect the beautiful interior. See the specially designed chapel and family room, the new pews and the large picture window. A beautiful setting for the memorial service.

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