

Markers Commemorate Site of Old Log Town



AT SPINNING WHEEL—Mrs. Jennie Young, 908 West 10th st., Medford, is shown at the spinning wheel. She is among the few southern Oregon residents who remember living in Log Town when it was a gold mining community. Mrs. Young will be 80 in May.

John McKee Family Settles on Creek; Move From Midwest

By MAUDE ZIEGLER
Mail Tribune Correspondent

It is only a mediocre spot along the highway. The rains fall on the gentle slope, spring flowers bloom, and the seasons pass.

A couple of markers commemorate the site of old Log Town, one of many mining villages that sprang up a century ago and are now extinct. A cemetery is there.

But this is where the family did the washing in a big kettle hung on brass bars, or in a Dutch oven. They heated the water there in a big barrel, and when there was bedding to be done the children got in the barrel barefooted and jumped up and down.

At night there were no lights but the candles, and "kicking up the fire" would always make it real bright in the room.

Cooking Over Fireplace

There was no stove, just the fireplace. That is where all the cooking was done in big kettles hung on brass bars, or in a Dutch oven. They made their own cornmeal and flour and the bread baked in that fireplace was the best. Folks didn't know what white bread was.

Sometimes they went out in the grain field and stayed all day, because Indians might come to the house. Two squaws were digging cameras one time, and came in the house. The mother could see them in the mirror, and how one held an axe to show that she could strike with it. But they only wanted bread and made themselves some corn-cakes.

Chinese Cook

They had a Chinese cook, but he didn't want to wash the diapers. The father gave dancing lessons, and there was one big bedroom, where they could have two sets of quadrilles, as well as schottisches, polkas and waltzes. Folks came from far outside the little village for their Saturday night "hoedown."

There is one living today who lived at Log Town as a child and relates these stories rich in pioneer lore. She is Mrs. John Higginbotham of Central Point, now 84.

She was too young to remember some of the events, but has related them as she heard her parents speak of them. She is a daughter of John and Maryum McKee, who were married in Sullivan county, Missouri, and came to Oregon by ox team in 1852.

Important Exception

As with most rules, however, there is an important exception; no matter how high the 1959 earnings were, the administration can pay a check for any month the beneficiary does not earn wages of more than \$100 and does not operate his business, Jacobson said.

All these facts are brought out on the annual report form, Jacobson explained. He said that every beneficiary received a card in February which they can use to order the report form.

Anyone needing help with the report can get it by telephoning or visiting the district office at 1005 East Main st., Medford.

trail from Crescent City to Jacksonville. In the Sixties many of the miners left to go to new strikes in Idaho, and many Chinese moved in, bringing the population at one time to 250 whites and 400 Chinese.

Besides many homes, there were two blacksmith shops, a livery stable, a store owned by the Law's, two meat markets, one of which belonged to the Ish brothers, a hotel, school house, and church, three saloons, and two Chinese stores, according to information given by descendants of these families.

The Chinese lived in huts across Forest creek, and when they arrived in such great numbers many of the miners returned from Idaho and took the mines back, burning the Chinese stores, and in one known instance killing one.

Large Log Home

The home that John McKee built for his family was a large one of logs with a porch across the front, where they liked to sit when they had time. One of the blacksmith shops belonged to him, and it was he who invented the "strap-eyed" pick used by miners. One of these is on display at the Jacksonville museum.

John could make five dollars before breakfast most any day sharpening picks for the miners. Their meat was venison, pork, bear or mutton. They made their own candles from mutton tallow, wicks and a mold. Often they merely inserted the wick in the fat.

Maryum McKee was a busy woman with 12 children to care for. She washed fleeces, carded wool and spun it into yarn, then knitted the socks and stockings for the family. Oak bark boiled in water made pretty brown dyes. Mrs. Higginbotham was 13 before she had any "boughten" stockings.

Maryum rode her little pony to go where there was sickness or need; she also was called when babies were born.

Yellow Rose Slip

She was not too busy to bring with her from Missouri a little yellow rose slip which she planted at the gate. The rose has been classified as the Harrison yellow rose originally from England.

Long after the last trace of buildings at Log Town had rotted away, the rose bush remained, and finally the Jacksonville Garden club encircled it with protective white posts, and in Oregon's Centennial year, the Applegate Valley Garden club planted 60 of the rose plants as a decorative hedge at the front of the cemetery. Some years ago the rose was eulogized in a poem published by Fred Law, grandson of John McKee.

It was also during the Centennial year that dedication ceremonies were held by the Jacksonville Garden club, and a granite marker commemorating the yellow rose was unveiled by Teri Lee Wolfe, daughter of Leonard McKee and great great granddaughter of John McKee. The Jackson County Centennial commission also erected wooden markers commemorating both Log Town and its rose.

Supply Point

Log Town became the supply point for many mines in the area, and was on the pack

First Burial

The first burial in the cemetery was that of James Dun-



PIONEER FAMILY—This is a reproduction of an early picture of John and Maryum McKee, pioneer family of Log Town. Many of the couple's descendants live in southern Oregon. The McKees arrived in southern



YELLOW ROSE—This is the marker which has been placed at Log Town cemetery marking the rose which was planted by Mrs. John McKee in 1853 soon after they moved to the area. The marker was erected by the Jacksonville Garden club. The Applegate Valley Garden club planted 60 similar roses to form a hedge around the cemetery.

lap in 1862. A rail fence once enclosed the cemetery. For a period of years the burial spot was neglected, but in 1939 an association was formed for improvement of the plot. The first board of directors included Mrs. Harry Whitney, Leonard McKee, John Black, and Mrs. Anna Jeffrey Lozier of Medford. Parents of John Jeffrey, Portland attorney, are buried there.

Mrs. Ed Smith was instrumental in compiling records, and markers were placed at all unidentified graves. Other improvements have included a wire fence, log archway over the gate, and water pump. Other pioneer cemeteries still in use in the Applegate area are at Sterling, Watkins, and Missouri Flat.

School District Formed

County school superintendent's records show that in the early 1860s a school district was formed known as Log Town-Uniontown, No. 27, and among those attending school at Log Town was B. F. Irvine, noted blind editor of the Portland Journal prior to 1937. He lived with his father, Jesse B. Irvine, on Forest creek.

Volume 23 of the Oregon Historical Quarterly gives pertinent notes on doings of the area in the '60s and '70s. Mining laws of that time said "This creek from the forks of Jackass and Poor Man's creeks near Log Town to its junction with Applegate shall be called 'lower Jackass.'"

The name of J. B. Irvine was signed as chairman, with D. K. Henderson as secretary. Other documents were signed by Samuel Hinkle, John D. Buckley and Francis Legg. **Miner's Meeting**

Recorded in the Quarterly is a miners' meeting at the house of Miller and Savage, Jackass creek in 1876.

At one time mining laws prohibited Chinese from holding claims unless they had citizenship. It is said that Jackass creek was so rich for a time that a man shoveling into a sluice box could make \$100 a day.

It is believed that Log Town (recorded in some instances as Logg Town) was named for Francis Legg. The last remaining house of the little village was destroyed by fire about 1910, and about this time the name of Jackass was changed to Forest creek. The town declined as mining ceased.

There is another person re-

known resident of the area, is a great grandson of another of John's brothers, Joe McKee. Fortunatus Hubbard, one time co-owner with his brother of the pioneer Medford hardware store of Hubbard Bros., married Tressie, one of John McKee's daughters. The McDonough family is another of the pioneer families of Log Town.

Children of Couple

Amos, one of the sons, was married to Charlotte Pence. Ernest and Floyd McKee of Medford and Mrs. John Byrne and Mrs. Rolland Smith of Applegate are children of this couple.

Adelbert McKee, John McKee's eldest son, took up a ranch about two miles above the present Star Ranger station. The McKee bridge and campground is at the lower end of that ranch, and were named for him.

During the time that the Blue Ledge mine was in operation his ranch was the half way point between the mine and Jacksonville and served as a stage station. Relief horses were kept here and lodging and board provided for travelers. Some of Adelbert's children still live in Jacksonville, including Mrs. Verna Culy, Mrs. Luella Dunnington, Mrs. Riley Norris, Mrs. Albert Hackett and Leonard McKee.

Glenn Smith, another well-

the custom to dig a hole in one corner to bury gold. She tells of baking biscuits in a 14-inch Dutch oven set in a bed of oak coals. The lid was put on, and coals heaped on top. Cookies were baked in this way, too.

She remembers they would use oxen to go visiting, as well as for hauling logs and other work. Log Town was not without a murder and burning of a home there, and details were printed in the Oregon Sentinel, Jacksonville newspaper in 1861, according to Paul Pearce, whose father, J. D. S. (Doc) Pearce, came to Log Town in the winter of 1857 via Crescent City and San Francisco. Paul Pearce remembers hearing his father relate the story.

Robber Seeks Gold

A robber came to the home of a Mrs. Hinkle looking for gold. He killed her and set the house on fire to cover up the crime, also burning her two grown daughters who were sleeping in the house.

A few days later a team of blooded sorrel horses was stolen from a Mr. Hill in Ashland. That crime remained unsolved until three years later when Doc Pearce, together with Mr. Hill and other riders, was taking a herd of beef cattle to Virginia City, Nev., through Harney valley, where they stopped to feed and fatten the cattle.

They were told by people who lived in the neighborhood that another party was camped just over the hill with a span of beautiful sorrel horses. Mr. Hill investigated and recognized the horses as his stolen team. "Getting the drop" on the two culprits in camp, they tied them to a tree and were about to hang them for horse stealing, when the thieves confessed to the even greater crime of the fire and murder of Mrs. Hinkle and her daughters. The hanging was carried out.

Gave Themselves Up

Mr. Hill and Mr. Pearce rode on into Virginia City and gave themselves up to the sheriff there. They were turned over to the judge who heard their story, reprimanded them, and set them free. When the men returned to Rogue River valley they told their story, which was printed in the Sentinel.

A second tragedy was the drowning of Mrs. Hannah DeLong Herd as she attempted to wade across "Jackass creek," an account of which is given in a newspaper clipping belonging to her grandson, Leonard McKee.

Referring again to the John McKee family, it is noted that a brother, Silas (Si) Mc-

Most of the symptoms of visual problems, Dr. Anderson explained, are easily recognized by teacher or parent and preventive measures may be taken before the problem becomes acute. Some of the symptoms are day dreaming, rubbing the eyes and holding reading material too close.

Dr. Anderson stressed the importance of early detection of vision problems and preventive care rather than allowing vision to deteriorate to the point where corrective treatment must be given or lenses prescribed.

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Deadline for Filing Earnings Reports by Beneficiaries Nears

The deadline for filing annual earnings reports by working Social Security beneficiaries is nearly here again, Edward B. Jacobson, district manager of the Medford office, has reminded area residents.

Any Social Security beneficiary, man, woman, or child who earned more than \$1,200 in 1959 and was not 72 years old by the end of January, 1959, must file an earnings report by April 15, 1960. If

a beneficiary became 72 after January and he earned over \$1,200 in the year, then he must make the report too.

The purpose of the report is to settle accounts between the Social Security administration and the working beneficiary, Jacobson said. Any person under 72 who earns more than \$1,200 can lose a check for every \$80 he exceeds \$1,200. Accordingly, a person who earns \$2,080.01 would lose all 12 checks for the year, he noted.

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Eagle Scout Banquet

Planned April 29

The second annual Eagle Scout recognition banquet will be held at Kim's restaurant on Highway 99, south of Medford, at 6:30 p.m. April 29. Alpha Phi Omega, sponsor of the banquet, is inviting all Eagle Scouts in the area to attend.

Eagle Scouts and persons knowing such Scouts are requested to send names and addresses to the Boy Scout office, 500 East Main st., or call SPring 3-7371 by April 8.

The average length of a truck trip in the United States is 10.1 miles.

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