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'Stoney' Wells Immortalized by Feature Story in 1903 Sunday Oregonian

Stonewall "Stoney" Jackson Wells, 86, who on September 14th bade his beloved canyon farewell forever, unfolded a bit of Oregon's beauty to an Oregonian writer, Marion Macrae of New York, who immortalized "Stoney" in a feature article entitled, "A Tenderfoot in the Coast Range" appearing in the Sunday Oregonian, August 30, 1903.

A city woman's memories on a scenic and memorable Siletz country trip, wherein "Stoney" figured, rest in print in the 1903 Oregonian.

We quote: "I was just a bit 'shaky' about going so far with an absolute stranger and to the Indians' own hunting ground, too! But, after crossing that first hill, I realized that I had instinctively selected the right man for my driver and guide, thereafter in him I put my trust."

"Stoney" was his name, and he proved not only a gallant and chivalrous attendant, but a delightful companion as well. I asked him questions from the time we started until our return three days later, and found his knowledge of local matters and events inexhaustible.

"Stoney" had a wide acquaintance. He knew every man, woman and child—both Indian and white—in the country, and every man, woman and child in the country knew him and called him 'Stoney' with an affectionate familiarity. He knew every hillside like a book. He knew where the heaviest timber grew and under what hills the big coal veins lay. He knew where the deer could be stalked, where they always came to drink at the river.

A gentle and touching scene described in this epic casts a thought many desire to hold of "Stoney". The New York woman wrote, "The sun was slanting in the west as we reached the edge of the reservation. The blue haze was settling closer over the mountain tops, and the gentle breeze which sprung up seemed to be singing an evening lullaby. The stillness descended like a fog, broken now and then by the cry of a night bird or the distant bark of a dog. Suddenly there rose on the air a weird, chanting moan. It rose and fell with a jerky, pathetic rhythm.

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There was a tremulous, heart-searching pathos to the chant, and somehow, without knowing why, my eyes filled with tears, for the chant was suggestive of death. Stoney noticed my tears and said: 'Its squaws singing the death song.'

"Stoney was right, for as we rounded a turn in the road, we came in view of an Indian home. The voice of the mother rose higher than the rest, and while the words were unintelligible to me, there was no mistaking the fact that the pathetic, grief-stricken voice that chanted was that of the mother pouring out her woe in the funeral hymn."

Those who knew "Stoney" Wells intimately—as everyone seems to have—speak of him as having "lots of life".

One of the many stories "Stoney" created deals with his having killed a nice fat bear, slicing and curing it as one would "jerked" venison, all for a good purpose. No doubt "Stoney" chuckled to himself many times as he saw his friends dive in and eat bear meat he carefully told them was "jerked" venison!

"Stoney" quickly took a dare and seldom, if ever, came out the worse for his efforts. Mrs. Wells, his widow, relates how in a young manhood escapade "Stoney" "rode", by standing straight up in the saddle, a wildly running horse through the streets of Corvallis just because his pals dared him just to ride this particular horse!

Horses and mules played a dominant role in "Stoney's" life and never was he without them. People in Mill City, before the advent of pulling machinery, repeatedly called upon him to use his mules to move their home, buildings and other heavy objects.

"Stoney's" faithful animals never failed to accomplish their assigned tasks under his careful and loving guidance.

The unusual meant the usual to "Stoney". Only recently he taught his dog to ride about upon the back of a pet horse while "Stoney" worked the horse in the garden.

The pioneer parents of "Stoney" came across the Great Plains from Indiana in 1852. "Stoney" began life in Pleasant Valley, Benton county, Oregon, in 1863. Since the Indians lived in the area of his boyhood and youth he learned to speak the "jargon" of the Indians as fluently as the English language.

As "Stoney" shared his domain and knowledge of natural beauty of Oregon with a New Yorker, who recorded that trip, we of Mill City express loss of Stonewall "Stoney" Jackson Wells from this our North Santiam canyon.

FOX VALLEY

By MRS. J. H. JOHNSTON

Mrs. Walter Bevier is reported as slowly improving at a convalescent home in Salem.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Morris of Mill City were Sunday callers at the Albert Ring home.

Mrs. Hugh Johnston and daughter Kathryn went to Jordan Sunday for the dinner at the Catholic church.

Clyde McRae of Portland, a former resident of Fox Valley was here this week attending to some business connected with his property here. He has an acreage in Fox Valley where the family resided for many years previous to moving to Portland.

Mrs. J. H. Johnston with Mrs. Hugh Johnston and son Kenton were Silverton shoppers Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Allen of Portland were Fox Valley business callers Monday evening. The Allens are residing in Mill City at present and Mr. Allen is employed at the Detroit dam.

Everyone is glad to see the heavy rain the past weekend.

Kenneth Bass of Mehama was a Fox Valley caller Monday evening. The state is bargaining for the houses west of Mehama, and one is where the Bass family live, consequently Kenneth is looking for another location. They don't know just when or how soon the places will be sold to the state highway commission, but it will probably be in October.

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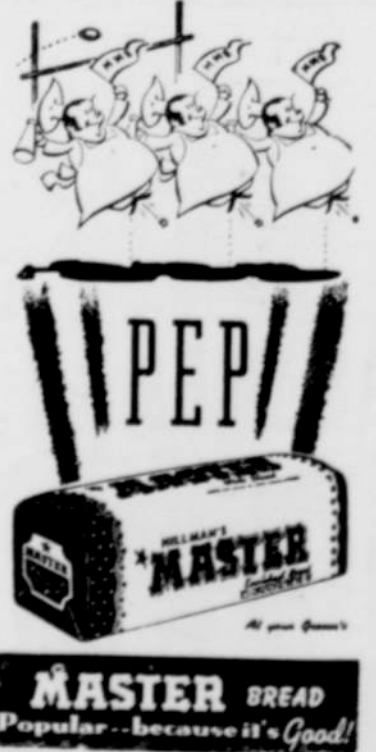
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Exterior Door Hinges for stronger pillar construction	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Door Opening Height for easier entrance and exit	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Door Opening Width	43.7	44	43.18	44.44	44.2
Cab Head Room	37.7	37.3	37.2	37.59	37.3
Springweight Seat—C.O.E.	38.62	38.75	37.2	38.75	38.75
Air Wing Door Glass Ventilators	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
One-piece Safety Windshield	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
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