

KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON, SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 1963

Forest House Ranch Once Boasted Many Businesses

By J. O. McKINNEY

Five miles out of Yreka, Siskiyou County, on the Fort Jones Road, Forest House Ranch is located. More than 100 years ago it was the headquarters for more going business branches than are to be found in the whole of Siskiyou County today. The ordinary enterprises of the country were on this ranch that is situated on either bank of Forest House Creek, and there were others not found here today. Nowhere now will one find a bonded distillery. No commercial orchards are operating. No brick kiln, no fruit drying, canning, or packing plants.

The list could go on. Ordinary modern enterprises such as sawmills, box factories, and stock raising that are common now were also carried out here during the days of grizzly bears and gold strikes.

And probably the most unique activity of this versatile economic center of the long ago was a toll road. A turnpike was built over Fort Jones Mountain and maintained by the Forest House owner to be used at a price. Today a freeway stretches across this

spur of the Siskiyou Mountains on which cars may scoot without paying toll. It is a far cry from freight wagons and bull teams.

This storied economic structure of early days was founded about 1850 by the firm of Knight and Short, and initial development was begun on land leased from the federal government. When all the enterprises built by this far sighted team were going concerns, the men decided they should own the land. The princely sum of \$75 gave them a patent to it.

Today if a would-be buyer came along and offered \$75 per acre for the spread, he would be either laughed out of the country—or run out, according to the present owner, Fred C. Burton.

Besides being a local industrial empire, Forest House in early days was a social center. It was here that all dances of more than ordinary standing were held. Here were where all big-time weddings were solemnized. Here was where folks wanted to be seen at all public functions.

And here was located one of the big early-day entertain-

ments—a battle between a grizzly bear and a rampaging range bull. This was necessarily staged inside an arena from which neither contestant could escape. Getting the winner out of that cage after the battle was never considered. It never needed to be. Both these beasts asked for no quarters, and both died in the arena after a display of courage and fighting heart that excited the admiration of all who witnessed it. Each were champions—and died like such.

One of the industries of Forest House lasted well into the memory of present dwellers of Northern California. That was ice production and distribution before the days of artificial refrigeration. A nearby pond, beside which an ice house was built, supplied with the aid of freezing weather and an ice wagon all the ice needed for the community. At one time it is reported six men were hired to saw and store ice during a convenient cold snap.

But the pride and joy of this business empire was Forest House orchards. At one time it is reported 10,000 bearing apple trees were growing there. Peaches, pears and plums also added to the total. The first carload of freight shipped from Yreka over the Yreka-Western Railway was a carload of apples from Forest House.

A dehydrator, called evaporator in the early days, was built about 1860 to dry fruit. It was in evidence until several weeks ago, but more than 100 years of existence had taken its toll. Fred W. Burton, son of the present ranch owner, Fred C. Burton, who helps his father manage the big spread, said it was necessary to tear down the old fruit drying building on March 9. Its decrepit state made it a hazard to livestock which now covers the ranch.

The old icehouse, a concrete structure made from material developed on the ranch, is still staunch. If, and when it is removed, dynamite will have to be depended on to reduce it to rubble.

An old barn across the road from the home place was once a stage station and hotel, and it is still filled with stagecoaches and other equipment used 100 years ago during ox team and stagecoach days. The Burtons at times run out a four-horse rig and drive it in parades.

Fred W. Burton, an attorney with offices in Yreka, has taken time to search old back numbers of Yreka Union, a newspaper of that region dating back to the 1850s. He has a box full of clippings which tell of many interesting episodes in the annals of the old holstery.

The old headquarters, Forest House, whose history opened in 1852, has expanded its name to take in the big ranch. But it is an unusual place in itself. During early days when wine, cider, brandies, and whisky were manufactured under federal permit there, the front room contained a bar, but liquor was never sold there after 1895. Religious scruples curtailed that activity. Knight sold his interest to a man named Brown, a nephew of Short, in 1890, and Brown's wife, a Presbyterian, finally ruled out all drinking.

But the big bar still remains. It is used now as a show place for Indian baskets and other artifacts given the late Mrs. Burton, wife of owner Fred C. Burton. She was a great favorite of Indians who never visited her without leaving some cherished trinket.



FOREST HOUSE — Built in 1852 and still a stately old structure, Forest House in its time was a stage station, hotel, bar, ranch headquarters, and one of the social centers of Siskiyou County. Located five miles from

Yreka, the Forest House Ranch had numerous business enterprises conducted within its confines, including a distillery and a commercial orchard with 10,000 fruit-bearing apple trees.



PRESENT OWNER — Fred C. Burton, owner of Forest House, poses among the numerous Indian artifacts displayed around the old bar area in the front room of the house. They were given to his late wife by Indian friends over a period of years. Burton, a livestock man, now conducts a cattle and hog operation on the 111-year-old ranch.



ICE HOUSE — Before the days of artificial refrigeration, the community depended on another Forest House operation for its supply of ice. In this ice house was stored as much ice as six men could cut from an adjacent pond during the winter freezes. The ranch alone produced and distributed all of the refrigeration needed by people in the area.



OLD DEHYDRATOR — The Forest House orchards were once both productive and profitable, so a fruit drying house was built in 1860 to dry the apples, pears, peaches, and plums for the packing and canning operations which were established on the ranch. It served its purpose for many years, but it was in such a decrepit state that it was necessary to tear it down several weeks ago.

Glamour Of Early Day Boating Industry On Upper Klamath Lake Recalled By Shasta Senior Citizen

Steamboating on the inland waters adjacent to Klamath Basin may sound like science fiction to the uninitiated today. However, it is not fiction, but cold facts. George Thornton, a 91-year-old resident of Mount Shasta, vouches for its authenticity. Not only does he know such existed, but he has ridden on all the routes traveled by early boat.

The boating industry was pioneered during the Modoc Indian War. It continued until 1909 when changing conditions brought about

a decline. Today an outboard motorboat is a convenience well able to handle all demands for water travel. What a visitor today sees — big grain fields and an elevator in which to house the crops — looks little like paddle-wheel steamers that once carried cargoes across that same territory.

One of the early day boats, the Mayflower, was built in 1829 by a Captain Dustin. It was a wood-burning stern-wheeler that, on its maiden voyage, got stuck on a

mud flat. It survived this initial mishap, and carried freight and passengers for a few years.

Two other boats, each named Canby, did a hitch in the Upper and Lower Klamath lakes, Lake Ewauna, Link and Klamath rivers. They were built by a man named McCormick. When Canby No. 1 cracked up, parts of it were used in its namesake, and successor. These didn't last long. The boat that proved to be the queen of these waters was the Klamath, built in 1905. It navi-

gated until 1909. Its ruins are said to be in the channel to Pelican Bay Sawmill on Upper Klamath Lake.

During this boat's heyday it was quite a social event to take moonlight trips or Sunday excursions on it. Mrs. Dolly Nixon, of Yreka, as a young lady, was cook on the floating palace. She states it achieved much local fame as an aid to romance.

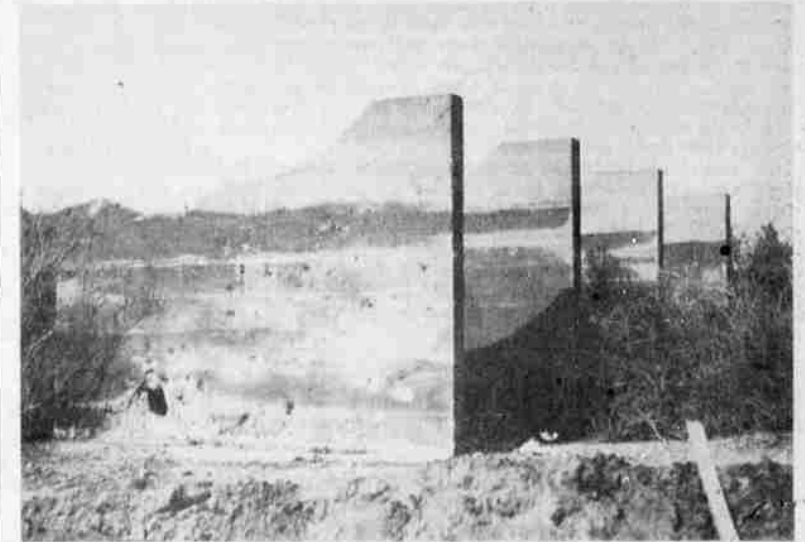
This steamer was a link in one bit of transportation that today

has the appearance of being designed by Rube Goldberg. A traveler could take the Klamath from Klamath Falls to Laird's Landing at the south end of Lower Klamath Lake 55 miles away. From this debarking point, a stage connection went to Bartle, 45 miles south, where a McCloud River Railway train carried the traveler to Upton on the main line of the Southern Pacific Railway 33 miles west. All these places were prominent in their way. Upton

was a town of 3,000 residents.

Today, both Upton and Laird's Landing are gone. Bartle is but a section hand stop on the McCloud Railway.

George Thornton now states he is curious to see what other changes may come to this region before he checks out. He states that both Laird's Landing and Upton once appeared destined to become prominent places. Now



GHOST TOWN — Once a thriving town of 3,000 people and an important link in transportation connections in the old steamer days, Upton has now all but disappeared from the scene. From Klamath Falls, a traveler then had to take a steamboat, stage, and a train to reach Upton, which was on the main line of the Southern Pacific Railway.

Liner Graceful in Drydock

SOUTHAMPTON, England (UPI) — For you blasé souls who have been everywhere and done everything, here's something new to try some time: go take a stroll under the liner Queen Elizabeth.

It can be done—it has been done. It just takes a little status, nerve and a strong back.

There is a six-week period each year when you can walk under the Queen. That is the time she spends in drydock in Southampton for her annual overhaul, which is perhaps the world's biggest spring cleaning job. During that time, the liner is scraped and painted, one of her four sets of engines is replaced, and the cabins and staterooms are all spruced up.

To make your sub-liner trip, you will have to go to the bottom of the dry dock, which is a pit about 80 feet deep in which sits the Queen Elizabeth, looking eerie and uncomfortable out of water.

But from just under the bow of the ship, the ship's grace of line is most evident. She looks sleek and beautiful. As you walk back along the side, you notice that the 1,031-foot liner is neatly balanced

in the center and along the sides on steel supports.

To set it on the supports so it will stay up requires pinpoint accuracy. The center of the bottom of the hull must be settled within one inch on the center supports. Skindivers direct the operation from beneath the ship and if she misses the first time, the liner is refloated until she is perfectly set down.

Walking beneath the bottom of the hull is like walking in a cave. For about 100 yards, you walk stooped over in a space about four feet high. But there are compensations. To bump your head on 83,673 tons and survive is bracing to the ego.

CITE NATHAN LEOPOLD

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Nathan Leopold, 1924 Chicago "thrill killer," has been cited by the National Science Foundation for research in the social sciences.

The 39-year-old Leopold, who recently completed his parole, was among three students at the University of Puerto Rico who received honorable mentions for scholarship.

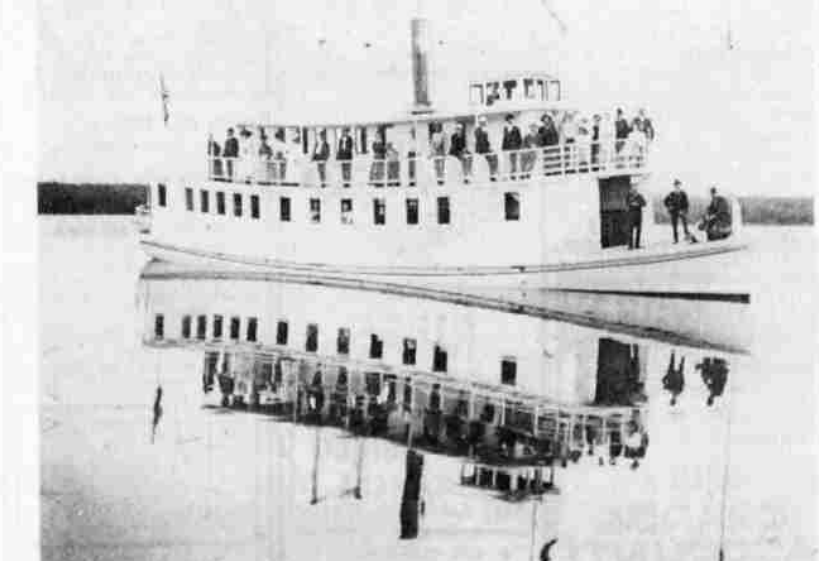


WATER TRAVELER — George Thornton of Mt. Shasta is one old-timer who can remember the steamboat era well. He has ridden on all the inland water routes adjacent to the Klamath Basin which the early boats traveled.

both are gone and he still remains.

But covered with water and cattails, the abode of waterfowl and muskrat, or growing thousands of tons of brewing barley, Klamath Basin can never be commonplace. Whatever station it occupies, it heads that list.

It is that kind of a country.



STEAMBOAT EXCURSIONS — Built in 1905, The Klamath was the queen of the waterways for four years. Not only was it a necessary mode of travel, but it provided moonlight trips and Sunday excursions for those who enjoyed the romance of a boat ride. The remains of the steamer are said to be in the channel to the Pelican Bay sawmill on Upper Klamath Lake.



DEBARKATION POINT — Laird's Landing, historic site at the south end of Lower Klamath Lake about 55 miles from Klamath Falls, once marked the end of the line for a steamboat ride and the beginning of the stagecoach line for travelers to the south. This building, where the steamers discharged their cargoes, was destroyed by fire in 1960.