

Sherburne Recalls Early Days In Klamath Falls Area

A number of persons are still living who had an active hand in fashioning the early day history of the Klamath Basin.

Recently a letter from one such individual was turned over to the Herald and News by W. Donald Harlan, 1405 Lookout Street.

The letter was from Harlan's uncle, Percy Sherburne who now resides in Phoenix, Ariz. We have reproduced the letter here:

"On June the 8th, 1880, I was born in a sod shanty on the prairie near Madison, South Dakota. My family moved to California when I was about 3 1/2 years old.

"William D. Harlan, who had learned sawmilling from his father in Ohio, came to the Klamath Falls, Calif., about 1900. He was the father of Donald Harlan and Mrs. Lucille Caley of Klamath Falls and Raymond Harlan of Lakeview. In 1902 I married Will's sister, Lottie.

"When the Reclamation Project began in the Klamath area, Will (as he was called then) got interested, and in early 1906, he decided to go there and take a look. He persuaded me to go along.

"We went by S.P.R.R. to Thrall, and then by box car to Poleskama. Early next morning we took the stage for Klamath Falls. The road bed was frozen and not much wider than the stage. The snow was about four feet deep, but on the north side where the sun could get at it, the rut was numerous and deep, making the trip very slow and rough. Sometimes Will and I would get out and walk ahead until conditions got better and then the stage would catch up with us. After a long day we arrived at Klamath Falls after dark. When we got to the top of the hill nearby we could see the lights of the town, and they were a joy.

"We got a room in a hotel, likely the Baldwin, but I am not sure. We spent a couple of weeks looking around the town and farm land. I recall one trip to look at timber. A man took us by team to a farm house near Merrill. Next morning we hiked up Siskel Mountain in the snow. We decided the timber was too high up and too far from Klamath Falls, but we did get frost-bitten ears and toes.

"There was also a man who owned all the land around the east shore of the swamp. This man later became Bishop. He wanted to sell it in order to start a hardware in Klamath Falls. His name was Burns, I believe. He offered this land to me for \$800, but I thought it was too far out of town for a sub-division, and I went back to San Jose, but Will stayed. Now, what about foresight and hindsight. Just see what the Bureau Vista Land Company did with this land.

"On my way back to San Jose, I took the stage to Poleskama. When I arrived I was informed that the train would not go to Thrall the next day. So I got up early and at 7 o'clock I started out and walked, trotted, and ran down the track and made the main line train south at 1:30 p.m.

"Will Harlan got settled in Klamath Falls and came to San Jose right after the 1906 big earthquake and took his wife and children to Klamath Falls.

"Then in early June of 1897, my wife and I went to Poleskama Falls. We went over the Poleskama route for a two-week visit to see Will and his family. We rented a room from Mrs. Van Brimmer. Then we went out to Long Lake to see the family. Will was the sawyer

there for the Husson and Cantrell saw mill. They also had a planing mill in town. At that time they had a contract to furnish the millwork for the office of the U.S. Reclamation Service, but they could find no one to make the window frames to



FAMILIAR SCENE IN 1912 — Excursion trips up Upper Klamath Lake were a part of the recreation pattern of the area around 1911 and 1912. Both the steamer Winema and Klamath were operating, the Winema on the Upper Lake and Klamath on the lower lake. However, the Klamath was later moved to Upper Klamath Lake. This view was taken of one of the deck areas where a number of persons, mostly women, were awaiting the arrival of one of the boats.

meet the specifications. Will harness to the Harman man-toll Husson that I could do the larger for a sewing machine wag-job, but that I was there only on account of the sap, but I was completed, a staircase and balustrade problem came up, and I did that work also.

"The next problem was a load of 50 oak logs cut in Northern California that came to the mill. They were about six inches in diameter and five feet long and green with the bark on. It was a nasty sticky job, but I was an edgerman, and was also turned them to a five-inch diameter. They were the rollers that were used to move the Winema boat to the upper lake. My work in the mill kept on going until I had to quit in late September and get ready to return to San Jose.

"While I was working in the planing mill, there was a livery stable where a buggy with shafts, also a single harness was kept, one of little use in Klamath Falls at that time. The owner would give me this outfit if I would buy a horse from him, and this I did. I purchased the horse in an unused dead end street near the mill where I worked.

"At this time I had a friend, John Rice, who was operating Harman's Lodge on the upper lake as a resort, but he was preparing to quit and go back to San Jose. We took our horse and buggy and drove up there going by Long and Aspen lakes. The water was rough and when we arrived we were plen-

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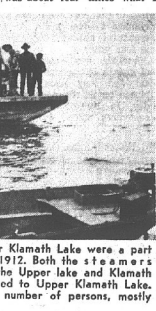
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ty when we arrived we were plen-

wet. I was ready to return right away, but he insisted I stay the night with him. We sat by the fireplace and dried out. It took me to lunch and when I was ready to leave, he gave me a \$20 gold piece, which was about four times what



would have charged. When I got back to Shippington, I learned he was a Weyerhaeuser timber buyer, and with authority to spend a million when and where the timber was available. This authority I had verified by a member of the Weyerhaeuser family years later in Tacoma, Wash.

"I recall that in June, 1909, in Shippington there were only a few homes along the edge of the swamp. These were owned by Clatus Lockwood, Roscoe Cantrell, Will Harlan and myself, and Sonny on the lake shore. There was a boarding house and some cabins for mill workers, and then the saw mill and yard for lumber. If you had been there you could have looked north, east and south and you would only see one more building, and that was owned

by a man named Nosler. The place was called Nosler's Camp. Nosler had some fine stock wire tightly stretched in his wind-downs to make music for him. He had a little field spaniel hunting dog and he was very good for retrieving ducks. Some time Nosler must have insulted him for any time Nosler showed up even at a distance, the dog would start to growl and get ready for battle if necessary.

"I also recall across the lake where Lakeshore Drive is now, there was only one old building in the woods where they used to store ice cut from the lake. There was also an Indian burying ground where we went to dig up beads and arrow heads.

"When the railroad started extending the line north of Klamath Falls they dug a tunnel through the base of Rattlesnake Point and loaded it with powder. The public was notified when the explosion would be made. Will and I went up the north side of the ridge at Shippington to watch the result. When the explosion occurred, up went a cloud of smoke and all of the point west of the tunnel just leaned over into the lake. Someone said, 'Well, now all they have to do is lay the ties and spike down the rails.' Of course, this remark was a little far-fetched, but it did look that way from where we were watching. I must say the powder men sure knew their business.

"I recall in the winter we had

a quarter of beef and always a leader, then a little lead and down he came. Will and family were tightly stretched in his wind-downs to make music for him. He had a little field spaniel hunting dog and he was very good for retrieving ducks. Some time Nosler must have insulted him for any time Nosler showed up even at a distance, the dog would start to growl and get ready for battle if necessary.

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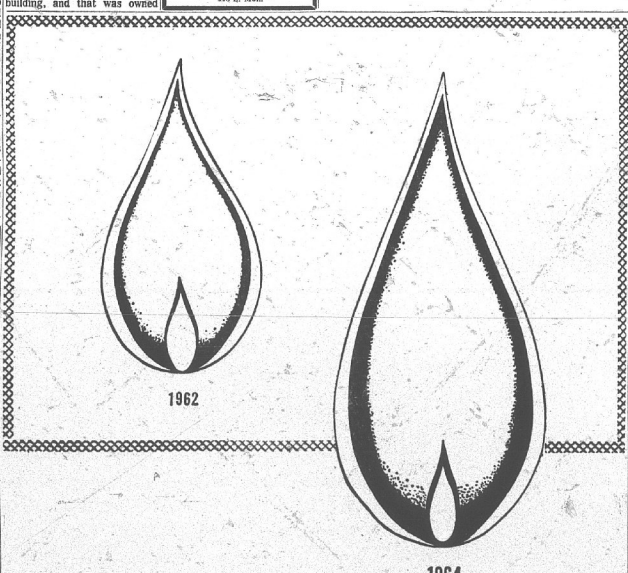
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