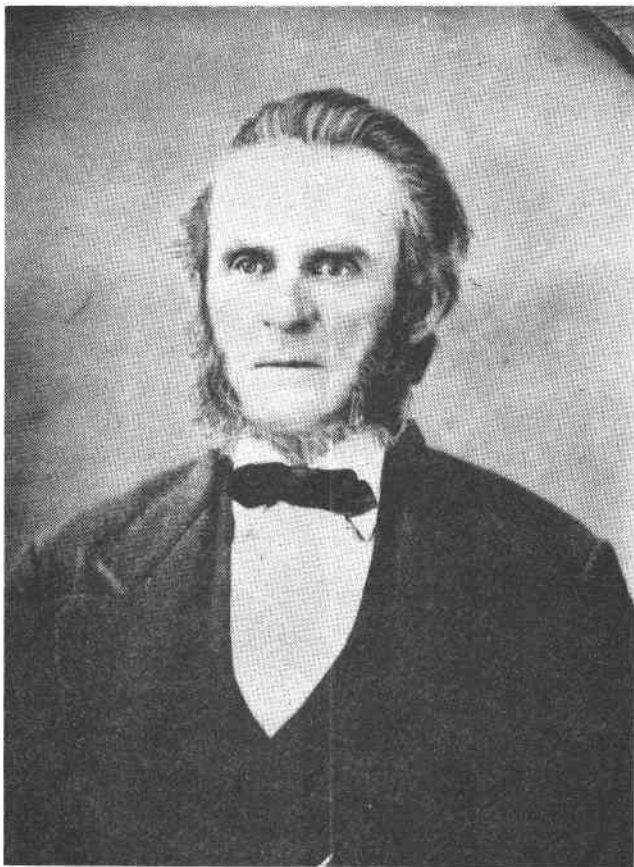


Lane County Historian



MITCHELL WILKINS

Lane County Pioneer of 1848 (#510-F)

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LANE COUNTY PIONEER—HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2161 Madison St., Eugene, Oregon — Merle S. Moore, Editor

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Mitchell Wilkins and wife Permelia Ann Allan, Lane County Pioneers of 1848. Taken on porch of their farm home in 1898 (#511-F).

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The Mitchell Wilkins—Pioneers Of 1847

By Lucia Wilkins Moore, granddaughter

Our paternal grandfather and grandmother, Mitchell and Permelia Allen Wilkins, came to Oregon Country by ox team and covered wagon in 1847. Grandfather, born in Orange County, North Carolina, was twenty-nine, his wife twenty, and they had spent the first two years of their married life at a place called Fancy Bottoms, fine tobacco land along the Missouri River north and west of the little town of Weston, Missouri.

Mitchell Wilkins had long been an orphan, his parents (both Scotch) had died when he was about six. The youngest of three brothers and two sisters, he was cared for by his older brother in Indiana, but he went, as a teenager, to Missouri where he learned the carpenter's trade. There he built flatboats for the river trade on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, made trips with his boats to New Orleans. He worked at his trade in St. Joe, Missouri, building the first warehouse there. In St. Joe he met Permelia Allen, whom he married on Christmas Day in 1844, in a "log school and church house."

In a year they began hearing exciting stories of high mountains, clear rivers and green land in the Willamette Valley in Oregon Country and by winter of 1846 Mitchell Wilkins was making ox yokes, "readying" wagons and breaking steer to work them. It took time and patience to make the hickory (sometimes oak) oxbows, treat them in hot water, dry them in frames four oxen and two yokes were needed for each of the two wagons, for Permelia's father, Robert Allen, was coming along with them. As they worked on their own wagon and ox equipment they also fashioned ox yokes and bows for use on teams going to Mexico, and grandmother said, "This was the only money we earned as the

Missouri River overflowed and ruined our crops for two years in succession."

Their start westward, with the Willamette Valley in Oregon Country as goal, was made in April, 1847 from St. Joe, where they joined about ninety wagons which had been gathering for some time. Quoting Permelia again, "Uncle Billy" Vaughn was elected Captain. About May 5th we started on the long journey. Our team consisted of three yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows. The cows were pure white and stood the trip better than the oxen. The cows were milked every night and morning, the milk being fed to the dogs of the company. We started with two horses and three head of cows."

Grandmother was not too enthusiastic about all of the dogs. Especially when on the Barlow Road, grandfather's two fine hounds were missing and she walked far back to find them. Maybe I'm wrong about her feelings about dogs, because that terrifying search along the timbered and difficult road must mean that she truly wanted to find the two hounds. One thing I know burned her. Having failed to find the dogs she came back to the wagon to see her one and only 20 yard bolt of calico unwound and trailing in the dust.

Their train had no trouble with Indians. In the last of the mountains grandfather's team wearied, gave out, and the wagon was left, along with tools, ox chains, bedding; some things were put in Robert Allen's wagon, some loaded on the last ox and one horse. Permelia and Mitchell walked. Camp was made at Foster's, where they bought potatoes, onions and garden vegetables "and had the best supper we ever had." Permelia wrote: "We boiled the little fellows (potatoes) with their jackets on and ate

them the same way . . . The potatoes were small as Foster kept the large ones and let the emigrants have what was left. . . . The second day after this we reached Butte Creek (in Clackamas County, about 24 miles from Oregon City) where we found two families. Here on October 1st, 1847, after five months journey we took the packs from our horse and ox . . .

"We struck camp and went to plowing and sowing and kept at it until 10 acres of wheat had been sown. After that rails were made and the land fenced. During this time we put a puncheon floor on a log cabin built for a smokehouse and moved in. We went to Oregon City and got wheat ground for winter. . . . On Butte Creek, Marion, our first baby, was born on August 10, 1848. The best doctor in the neighborhood was the Indian wife of Dr. McKay, so she was called and did good service. . . .

That first baby was my father, Marion Wilkins, and when he was two months old his 31 year old father decided the upper part of the valley "looked more likely" for the grain and the cattle he wanted to raise. He found an ideal spot at the foot of the spur of hills we call the Coburgs, brought *Permelia* and the baby there and the first night made camp under an ash tree.

It was October, the ash trees were turning color and the Coburgs were soft blue with haze. They camped under a wide ash tree—two young people and a baby, for grandfather Allen had remained on Butte Creek—planned their cabin, cut logs for it at once. That cabin would later be taken down and moved, log on log, three miles north to the foot of "West Point," the rocky high ledge just inside the Lane County line. Of course this was all Benton County then—no Lane and no Linn boundaries. The land to which the log cabin was moved was *Permelia's* part of their donation

land claim, and she was proud to have it there to be used for years as church and school.

The Marion Wilkins diary says of this land claim: "My father and Thomas Cady had staked out claims early in 1848. These claims were on unsurveyed land and so were marked out without particular regard for point of the compass but with an eye to timber and grazing lands. . . ." he says later . . . "Sixty years after that first camp under the ash tree the tree was marked by the family, gathered together in appreciation of a father's and mother's long journey and their founding of a pioneer home." That pioneer home stood at the edge of what was the East Side Territorial Road which followed early Indian trails along the higher ground of the foothills, for the valley was high in mud in winter, high in tall grass in summer. The first cabin was 16 by 20 feet, a log cut from the east side for light, a mud and stick chimney and fireplace in the south end, a door cut in the west log wall.

The next house, the pioneer one which stood for eighty years on the slope directly east of Centennial Butte, was wide and low with gallery porch across the west side overlooking the valley. Its plan hinted strongly of houses grandfather had known in his southland, with its row of bedrooms off a big "parlor," its sunny south sittingroom, wide open-at-end inner porch passages with dough room, harness rooms, storage rooms abutting. An open room toward the east slope of hills and orchards was where the big family ate and sat in warm summer days, and there at its north corner were milkhouse and the pump.

Here stage coach and pony mail rider passed along the East Side Territorial Road, and the first post office called Willamette Forks was but a cubby-hole box* in one of Grandfather's several

*The cabinet-counter of the Willamette Forks Post Office (one of the earliest in Lane County) is on display at the Lane Co. Pioneer Museum—a gift of the Wilkins family.

sheds. Mitchell Wilkins, Hulins Miller just to the south and other settlers along that highway planted seed of the osage orange, a tree many of them had known in their old homes, and for a distance of ten miles the trees grew, welcome shade to travelers. My father named as other planters: Thomas Cady, Wm. Nelson, Willoughbys, Macys and W. Vaughn. the trees at the west of the Wilkins home outlived most, and several are still standing.

Almost as soon as house and barn had been completed Mitchell Wilkins built a carriage, (father wrote in his diary that he remembered it as being in about 1860), and here is the story of that carriage as father put it down:

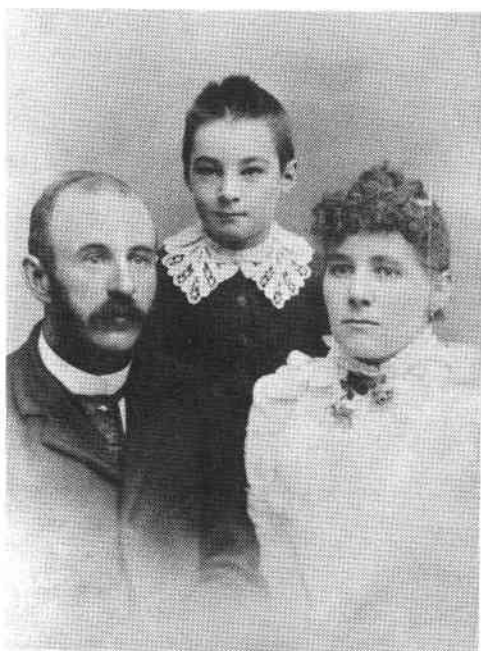
"My father's motto was no driving or overwork. After all, he was a son of the South. He believed in starting early and not crowding men or teams. We needed a comfortable way to travel after some twelve years with oxen and wagons, and I remember how patiently he got out spokes, hardwood for fello and hubs, and pine boards for the body of our carriage—all saved from the home built in '54 and stored upstairs in what we called the loft. Macys had built a blacksmith shop one mile north of "West Point" (on land that now belongs to heirs of the Wilkins family); Joe Luckey's father had a shop west and south of Macy's, and these two did the iron work for us. Often I went along barefoot and was glad to sit on the old forge to get and keep warm, and there I learned that sparks blown out by the bellows were not dangerous and wouldn't stay on my feet long enough to do much damage. At the end of a year the first (and for a long time the nicest) carriage in the neighborhood was finished. By that time we had a good team and were often out for a drive. Father loved horses, and being a good judge of them he was often called to pass on their quality and breeding. . . ." He

tells, then, about the race tracks men managed to build, in several parts of the county, and how they got together on Saturdays to race favorite horses, and sometimes to gamble. Father was sometimes taken along, and he declares that his father stayed out of the betting, the drinking and fighting—for fights frequently happened.

But to get back to early cabins. Grandmother had brought a supply of punk over the far trail, and she speaks of the way fires were started — "by shooting a piece of cotton from the gun and having a little punk ready." Her husband went to the California gold fields in '49, and what a time she must have had with her year old baby and no neighbors except other lonely women. During that time a woman sometimes had to carry buckets of coals, bright from a neighbor's fire, to kindle her own fire.

Grandfather came home at Christmas time with his small gold supply out of the Trinity River, and this enabled him to buy the fine cattle that had been his dream and to begin culture of the grains that would send him to three world fairs and home with awards. It was after his return from the Philadelphia Centennial that he planted the circle of maple and fir trees on the round butte directly west of the home, carried water to help them live and named the hill Centennial Butte. It was on this brown-grass-in-summer hill that he released seven pairs of China pheasants imported earlier by Judge Denny, (a relative of mother's)—birds that were to multiply famously through the years until too many guns almost exterminated them.

Fairs were grandfather's meat. He was one of the organizers of Oregon's Agricultural fair which became the State Fair, was an early president of it and active on its board for so many years that he was allowed a cabin inside the high Fair fence—there were but two—I



Sons and daughters of the Mitchell Wilkins' — taken late 1880's. Upper lf.—Marion (F. M.) Wilkins, b. 1848, brought to Lane County when 2 mo. old. Pioneer druggist Eugene City, 1878 to 1899, former mayor and civic leader. (#512-F) Upper rt.—Jasper Wilkins, farmer and stockraiser, adjacent to Coburg (#513-F). Lower lf.—Amos Wilkins, third son, his wife, Virian Babb and son Welby. (#514-F). Lower rt.—3 daughters, lf. to rt.—Angeline (Mrs. Sam Holt), Lida (Mrs. Bentley), Etta (Mrs. Kays). (#515-F).

believe the other one belonged to Mr. Savage—and at that spot our families gathered in reunion every year at Fair time until grandfather, in a wheel chair, could no longer attend.

Those were the families* of the three sons, Marion, Amos and Jasper Wilkins, and the three daughters, Angelina (married to Samuel Holt) Lydia (married to Albert Bently) and Etta (married to Joseph Kays) who had gone out from the pioneer home. Two of the sons, Amos and Jasper, and a son-in-law, Samuel Holt, carried on the farm tradition, owned and worked large holdings. My father, Marion, came to the very new Eugene City in 1876 and spent sixty-five active years here, early school board, park boards on which he served for thirty years, part of the time as its president; Eugene's mayor; and in the last years he was named Eugene's First Citizen, an honor he greatly cherished for no man who built here built more deeply and sincerely for the good of Eugene.

Since this is a time of looking back to Civil War years I ought to quote from father's diary: "Those were exciting days never to be forgotten by the younger generation. . . . Much of the Willamette Valley had been settled by families from Southern states, and feeling on both sides ran high. . . . Of course there on the foothills in a house vacated by James Daniels—a very isolated and mysterious house to me who was only 13. I was taken into the League because I knew the words to JOHN BROWN'S BODY. . . . Those nights were all very trying to me and very frightening. We would go alone on horses or in twos like nightriders, toward the hills and the lonely house, tie up outside and slip into the house to light one candle; to talk in low tones and pledge our faith

to the Union." Then, telling about his father's torn allegiance he wrote: "I remember what he said when news came to us that Ft. Sumter had been fired upon and that southern states were seceding. He was digging a hole for a cedar post down where our barn road left the Territorial Road and I was standing about trying to help when Joe Smith, a neighbor on the old Holt place, came along riding a bald-faced mare. When he told us his news father said, 'Poor fellows. They will regret it.' He talked with Smith a few minutes, then went on working. It was not until we returned to the house for dinner that he told the family what had happened. His North Carolina sympathies may well have been with the South but he quickly showed his faith in the Union. In 1862 he was elected to the Oregon Legislature. Gibbs was the second governor of the state and was called our "war governor."

Pioneer Pictures

Pioneer pictures, available at Dotson's Photo Shop, 111 E 11th Ave. Eugene.

Since 1953 the Lane County Pioneer-Historical Society has been borrowing for copying, pictures of pioneers, their homes, scenes, churches, schools, etc. Making negatives of these pictures was done at first by the Eugene Vocational School but the bulk of the even thousand were copied by Dot Dotson, free of charge—the plane being to recover his cost by making prints for those who wanted copies.

A start has been made in numbering the photos used in this issue of the HISTORIAN. Anyone desiring prints of these pictures may order them from the above Film Shop—giving the numbers under the pictures.

*See pictures of the 3 sons and 3 daughters, page 6.

The Baileys Of Bailey Hill

By Edward F. Bailey, grandson of John

Bailey Hill is located about six miles southwest of Eugene, in Lane County, Oregon, on the Bailey Hill Road. It was in the Bailey Hill School District of Lane County before the consolidation of this district with School District No. 4; and it is in the Bailey voting precinct. The hill, the road, the school district and voting precinct are named after the pioneer family of John Bailey, Sr., which came into being in Clay County, Kentucky, during the period 1812 to 1830. The family consisted of ten children, nine sons and one daughter. Nothing is known about the mother of this family, and little about the antecedents of John Bailey, Sr. Tradition has it that his father was James Bailey, a Virginian, who went from Virginia into the Kenetucky Territory long before it became a state.

All of the members of this family were tall people. The shortest was the daughter, who was an even six feet tall, and the sons ranged from 6'2" to 6'9" in height. All of the family came to Oregon during the years 1847 to 1853 except one son, who came in 1869, and two sons who remained in Kentucky.

John Bailey, Sr., was born in 1789, came to Oregon before 1853, and died in Lane County in 1853. His grave is in the Oak Hill Cemetery located about seven miles west of Eugene, Oregon. Following is a brief resume of the principal known facts concerning the remainder of the members of this family:

1. Isaac Bailey crossed the plains and located near Myrtle Creek in southern Oregon.

2. Ezekiel Bailey crossed the plains on or before 1850, took up Donation Land claim No. 40 in the Bailey Hill area, married Nancy Wright, sold his claim to John Bailey in 1860, moved to central Oregon and then to Idaho.

3. Thomas Bailey came to Oregon before 1853, owned land in the Bailey Hill area, d'ied in Lane County in 1870. His grave is in the Oak Hill cemetery.

4. Hollen Bailey, born 1822, came to Oregon before 1855, killed by Indians on Cow Creek in Dougas County in 1855. Grave in Oak Hill Cemetery.

5. Joseph Bailey, born 1829, came to Lane County 1853, served as Captain, Company A, 2nd Regiment, Oregon Mounted Volunteers, in the Indian war of 1855. Killed by Indians on Pitt River in southern Oregon in 1860. Grave in Oak Hill Cemetery.

6. Blackgrove Bailey, born 1815, came to Oregon from Texas in 1869, lived and owned property in Bailey Hill area, died 1893, grave in Oak Hill Cemetery.

7. Elizabeth Bailey Wright came to Oregon on or before 1850, married Jackson Wright, brother of Ezekiel's wife, took up the land claim known as the Jackson Wright Donation Land Claim in the Bailey Hill area about 1850. Sold the claim to John Bailey in 1857 and moved to Douglas County.

8. John Bailey—see below.

9. James Bailey, and

10. Samuel Bailey, both remained in Kentucky.

John Bailey, mentioned above, was my grandfather. He was born in 1818, came to Oregon in 1847, went to California in 1849, returned to Kentucky in 1850 via the Isthmus of Panama, and returned to Oregon in 1850. He married Elizabeth Wright, sister of Jackson Wright and Nancy Bailey above mentioned, in 1850. He lived in the Oak Hill area about seven miles west of Eugene until 1857 when he purchased the Jackson Wright Donation Land Claim and took up his residence there. His wife



The tall Baileys of Bailey Hill, Lane County, pioneers of 1847 and later — photo 1888. Seated lf. to rt.—Samuel, 6'4"; John, 6'3"; Isaac, 82—his first picture, 6'2½"; back row—Elizabeth Bailey Wright, 6'; Ezekiel, famous Indian fighter, 6'9"! Photo loaned by Mrs. Elsie Doan (gd. dau. of John) (#374-F).



Donation land claim home of Mitchell Wilkins, about 2½ miles north of the present town of Coburg. Painting by Nina Wilkins McCornack (gd. dau.), to show the home on the eastside territorial road, the row of Osage orange trees planted by M. Wilkins and his neighbors and "Centennial Hill" on which he planted trees in 1876 to commemorate the centennial of the Declaration of Independence.

Home contained "Willamette Forks" post office, established Jan. 10, 1851 — third in the present Lane County, after Skinner's (Eugene) Jan. 8, 1850; and Pleasant Hill, April 9, 1850. Original painting in Wilkins collection of historic buildings in Lane County Museum (#119-H).

died in 1861, and in 1864 he married Elizabeth Murphy. During the remainder of his life, he resided in the Bailey Hill area, and at different times acquired a total of about 1,800 acres, including both the Ezekiel Bailey and the Jackson Wright Donation Land Claims. He set aside the two acre tract which is known as the Oak Hill Cemetery. He died in 1895, and his grave is in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

By his first wife, John Bailey had the following children:

Mary Lindley, who had four sons and two daughters, none of whom reside in or near Lane County.

Joseph Bailey and Scott Bailey, both of whom died while young men.

Thomas Bailey, my father, who was born at the Bailey Hill home in 1857. He married my mother, Anna Flint, in 1882, and there were six children, three sons and three daughters, of whom four are still living: Elsie Doran, Mary Ellen Shrode and the writer, all of whom reside at Eugene, and Louise Stam, who resides at Palm Desert, California.

Ellen Hill, who married Reuben Hill. There were five children in this family, two sons and three daughters, of whom one son, Richard, resides in Eugene, Oregon, and a daughter, Ruth

Turnbow, resides in Oakland, California. The remaining children are deceased.

By his second wife, John Bailey, had the following children:

Lee Bailey, who married Ella Blanton and had two children, May Andrews, who resides at Eugene, Oregon, and Harry, who is deceased.

Frances Wood, who married William Wood and had four daughters, Carrie Shuck and Winona Schneider, who live in or near Eugene, Ina Calloway, who resides in Grants Pass, Oregon, and Lola, who is deceased.

Euen Bailey, who had six daughters and one son, none of whom reside in Oregon.

Frank Bailey, who never married.

Susan Rait, who had no children.

One other daughter died while young.

All of the children of John Bailey are deceased, but Ralph Wait, the husband of Susan, is still living.

The graves of Joseph, Scott, Thomas, Lee, Euen and Frank are located in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

The Bailey family have never kept diaries or saved old letters. This in part accounts for the very incomplete history of the family.

Pioneer Communications

By George M. Robinson, Portland

No subject is more fascinating than man's struggle to establish communication with others of his kind throughout the history of man. Postal service originated when communications first began. It started before there was any alphabet, reading, or writing. Friendly gifts like the olive branch or the torch for a call to war were well understood. Next came crude pictures or hieroglyphics which conveyed elementary ideas and information.

The book of Esther in the old testament, chapter 8, verse 10, states "And he wrote King Ahasuerus' name and sealed it with the King's ring and sent letters by post on horseback and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries." This was about 300 years before Christ.

Here we find that the rulers and well to do people employed personal messengers to communicate their ideas at all distances. The Marathon runners of Greece carried messages. The Romans

and the Spanish did the same. We find Mexican runners carrying messages many miles per day during the Spanish invasion.

Julius Caesar established the *Cursus Publicus* which became the postal service of the Roman Empire. Its use was limited to government business. Perhaps the first account of a general postal service was that established by Kublai in Asia in 1259. He employed four million horses and ten thousand post houses over his entire empire at distances of 25 to 30 miles apart.

Postal service began to pick up after the 13th century when paper was invented. The first system of postal service was organized by Louis XI of France, but the rates were so high that few could use it. England established postal service in 1538 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was used very little because of the high rates. Benjamin Franklin was appointed Postmaster General for the British Colonies in North America which included Canada. Franklin was discharged in 1774 for activities against the British Crown. Paul Revere was a post rider during this time and his famous ride of April 18, 1775 was merely one of his regular route trips. The British would permit the regular mail carrier to make such a trip, whereas they would halt others. The first Postmaster General of the United States was Samuel Osgood of Washington's cabinet. The Postoffice Dept. was at that time a part of the Treasury Dept. The year 1836 saw the transition from stage coach to the railway car. Much of the above data comes from the Information Service of the Postoffice Dept.

There was no organized postal service in the far west or the west coast. Ox team freight haulers carried the mail from the east to Salt Lake. However most of the mail from the coast was dispatched via sailing ships going around Cape Horn. Here was a waterproof bar-

rel anchored to a tree at Cape Horn in a quiet cove. Ships going by the Cape would put out a boat and deposit mail for any point in the world to which they were not going and pick up any mail for points to which they were bound. The old time sailors called it the Mail Buoy. Ship captains would visit taverns and boarding houses to pick up mail before sailing. There was the usual fee of forty cents which they would pocket and any letters they delivered at a destination, they would again collect that fee.

One instance will illustrate the system. A letter addressed to San Diego, California, was picked up in Portland by a sea captain. His ship had a cargo of lumber going to Cape Town Africa. His boat did not stop at San Diego, so he put the letter into the barrel at Cape Horn and four months later a boat bound from Spain to San Diego picked up the letter from the barrel and delivered it.

Oregon Territory did not have any U.S. mail service at all. Letters going from one town to the other were carried by persons going in that direction as a matter of courtesy and left at a general store or Tavern. A man at Forest Grove had written to a friend in Portland. They met each other about three weeks later and found the letter had not been received. The Forest Grove man wrote the editor of the Oregon Spectator at Oregon City concerning it and the editor explained as follows

The letter had been picked up at the General store in Portland by a ships captain and taken to Sacramento for distribution and collection of postage, since the Government had no one to distribute it at Portland and collect the postage. The letter came back to Portland on another sailing ship and was eventually received. Such was mail service those days and much complaint caused the Territorial legislature to appoint a Postmaster General for Oregon Terri-

tory with power to appoint Postmasters, establish rates and mail routes.

William G. T'Vault, who was connected with the Oregon Spectator, a newspaper at Oregon City and a strong pro slavery writer was appointed to the position of Postmaster General of Oregon Territory in 1845. He established several routes and appointed several postmasters. The main route was from Portland to Salt Lake. The contract on this route was for one round trip per month at \$8,000.00 per year. The distance was 900 miles and there were few places to stop over enroute. It required a month to go one way which meant that another man was hired to make the trip in the opposite direction. The mail carrier rode one horse and led a pack horse with food and bedding as they were forced to camp out each night winter and summer. The postage rate was one cent per mile per ounce and on no trip were more than twelve letters carried. The high cost of \$9.00 for a single letter kept the quantity to a minimum.

Narcissa Whitman complained that it required two years to get a reply to the letters she wrote to the east coast. Paper was scarce and mostly there were no envelopes. She used one sheet of paper and wrote both crosswise and lengthwise on the same side of the paper and folded the blank side out for the address.

The U.S. Government took over mail service in the territory in 1850 and

established an office in the cabin of Eugene Skinner at Eugene. Mail came once a week. Regular mail stages operated between Portland and Sacramento in 1881. It took five days to make the trip one way. Much later Eugene had daily service.

Before the appointment of a Territorial Postmaster there were no mail service into Eugene and the pioneer settlers there about were without communication except when some peddler came along with gossip. There were no telephone, telegraph, radio, TV, newspaper or any communication except when two people happened to meet. Most of the pioneers could not hear from their loved ones back east at all and many pioneer women worried themselves into a terrible mental state. Several became mental cases. One of these women walked to Eugene once a week asking for mail but never received any. She lived in the Grand Prairie area which was about a fourteen mile walk each way. She did it bare footed and became too despondent to meet townspeople. It developed into a delirium of loneliness that nothing except a letter from her loved ones could remove. Those pioneers who could not read or write never seemed to develop such mania.

The word "Post House" was used until the mail service became enlarged enough to require separate buildings to handle the mail and then the title of "Post Office" became desirable.

Eugene City In 1871

In 1871, the year of the coming of the railroad to Eugene City (from Portland), the pioneer village had grown (since Eugene Skinner and his family had become the first white settlers at the west end of the butte, in 1847) in 24 years to a population of about 1200. The iron horse was replacing the Oregon-California stage coach and the cov-

ered wagon era was coming to a close. The *Guard* of December 23, 1871, listed the following business establishments and organizations: 2 schools, 4 variety stores, 3 hotels, 2 book stores, 2 tin shops, 11 saloons, 1 brewery, Lodges—Masons (1856) and Odd Fellows (1860), 6 churches—Baptist ('52) Cumberland Presbyterian ('53), Methodist ('54),

Presbyterian ('55), Episcopal (before '59), Christian ('66); 6 fireproof buildings, 9 dry goods stores, 3 wagon shops, 6 blacksmith shops, 4 restaurants, 1 bakery, 2 drug stores, 2 grocery shops, 1 picture gallery, 1 tannery, 3 boot and shoe shops, 2 saddle and harness shops, 1 saddle shop, 2 meat markets, 3 family

grocery stores, 1 furniture store, gunsmith and cooper, 2 planing mills, sash and door factories, 1 livery, feed and sale stable, 1 feed store, 6 doctors and about 12 lawyers. Ed note—the above parenthesized dates are taken from Walling's *History of Lane County*, published in 1884.

The Daniel Christian House And Its Builder

By Josephine Evans Harpham

The historic house at 170 East 12th was built by Daniel Christian III about 1855. It is now the property of Mr. and Mrs. L. O. Meisel of Eugene. The present occupant is Mrs Robert Burnett.

The two story house rests on a foundation of hand-hewn timbers and is of all wood construction, overlapping weather board being used throughout. The house and barn both were put together with wooden pegs.

The downstairs consists of an entry hall with an old fashioned stairway leading to the second floor. On the left is the living room and off that the dining room which contains an attractive built-in china closet. Adjacent to this is a bedroom. Just off the dining room is the kitchen, a small hallway and porch, back of which is an old fashioned wood shed. Originally, a hall, several bedrooms and a bath comprised the upstairs.

In 1947 Mr. and Mrs. L. O. Meisel completely renovated the pioneer home. The upstairs was all remodelled. During this process the walls were stripped back to the original eight inch wood boards. Pasted on these were old papers dated 1868, over which cheese cloth and quaint wallpaper had been placed and old flues became visible, another reminder of the past.

The front porch still has its old style weather-boarding and supporting pillars and the cornice extends far around the gable ends of the house. Likewise



The old home of the Daniel Christian family, built in 1855, originally on NW corner of the present 12th and Pearl Sts., now at 170 E 12th.

many of the original small pane windows remain.

To the rear of this historic home one may still see Waxen and Bellflower apple trees which were on the one hundred and sixty acre donation land claim of Daniel Christian.

Crossed The Plains To Oregon 1852

In 1852, a year of great westward emmigration, Daniel Christian (III), his wife and five children, joined a party of over 100 wagons headed by Samuel and John Alexander whose destination was Oregon. This well managed train encountered few real difficulties. It was

well supplied with dried fruits, berries, corn and flour, while the cows provided milk, cream and butter. They escaped the dread cholera and had no trouble with Indians. However, a young chief seeing Daniel's pretty daughter, tried to bargain for her. Fearing he might steal her, she was hidden in another wagon until the young brave gave up following them.

Storms were encountered and droughts when both man and beast suffered for lack of water. There were cattle stampedes while crossing the Rockies. But perhaps the most difficult time was the crossing of the Snake River, when wagon beds were turned upside down and lashed together contriving a ferry.

Six months after beginning their trek westward, they reached the Columbia River and proceeded down it by flat boat to The Dalles. From there they proceeded by primitive portage railway, consisting of wooden rails and using mules for power, and on by steam boat to Portland. After a short stay the Christians settled for the winter in East Tualatin.

The following Fall (1853) Daniel Christian acquired a donation land claim, 160 acres, in what was to become (the Christian addition) one of the basic areas of Eugene City. Its location is south of 12th Ave. to Amazon Creek; bounded on the west by the alley between Willamette and Oak Sts. and on the east by the alley between Pearl and High Sts.

The eldest grandchild of the Christians, the late Irena Dunn Williams, handed down to her children, Mrs. Howard Hall of Eugene and Mrs. Wallace Hannah of Vancouver, Washington, many stories of the happy times spent with her grandparents; memories of stirring apple butter in an old brass kettle; of eating fresh baked bread spread

with delicious homemade butter; of popping corn on winter evenings; of Bible reading—for the Christians were devout Methodists.

It was Daniel Christian who cut and hand hewed the lumber for the First Methodist Church of Eugene*. Through the years this pioneer family has contributed much to the religious, cultural and educational life of the community, since that far off day when Daniel came to the Oregon country well over one hundred years ago.

Many Hazards

IN 1849 Jacob and Joseph, younger brothers of Daniel, made the trip to California, returning later with stories of the gold discovery and also of the wonders of the Pacific Coast. Impressed, Daniel sold his property and began making preparations for the long and hazardous trek across the plains. At this time the Christian family comprised Daniel and Catherine and their five children, the youngest of whom was only two. They supplied one wagon, two huge oxen, named Buck and Babe, and two milk cows. Another family joined them and so with two wagons and three yoke of oxen they set out in the spring of 1852 for Council Bluffs, Iowa, the departure point for the general caravan.

At Council Bluffs, the Christian party joined themselves to a train of over one hundred wagons headed by Samuel and John Alexander. It is estimated that in this year there were over twenty thousand people who traversed the long arduous way along the banks of the Platte to their final destination into the far western country.

The Alexander train of which the Christians were a part, was very well managed. There were plenty of dried apples, tomatoes, blackberries and

*The Methodist church was built about 1859—Oregon's statehood year, at the SW cor. of 10th and Willamette, present location of the McDonald Theater.

enough flour and parched corn and the cows supplied all the milk, cream and butter needed. All members of this train escaped the dreaded choera and only one oxen was lost enroute.

At one point there was a stampede of oxen and difficulties were encountered near the Hog's Back, while crossing the Rockies. Man and beast were deprived of water for several days and Daniel said, "The oxen have tears in their eyes." A fierce storm blew the tents flat and the wagons had to be staked down. At Salmon Falls where the Snake had to be crossed, and many different trains were waiting to go over, a real tragedy occurred. Two young men were getting the parties across for a fee. This was done by turning two wagonbeds upside down, then lashing them together, thus contriving a ferry. The wagons were stripped and the wheels taken off before

passage was possible. With loud bellowing the oxen were made to swim across. The brothers were returning for another load when the rope was wrenched from their hands and the two men and the crude ferry and its occupants were swept down the current and over the Falls before the eyes of the "horrified" onlookers.



Catherine Emyer Christian (Mrs. Daniel), Eugene pioneer of 1853; mother of Cecilia Christian Dunn (Mrs. Francis Berrian) (#13-F).



Daniel Christian, Eugene pioneer of 1853, family home at 170 E. 12th Ave. (built 1855) (#509-F). from an old daguerre-o-type, loaned by Roy Christian, gd. son.



The Midgley-Hollenbeck-Grimes pioneer house, 245 E. 8th Ave. of particular interest at present—to be razed (or moved?) soon to make way for Eugene's new city hall. Built by George Midgley, (1881—founder) of Midgley Planing Mill. (#120-H) See also picture of double wedding held in this home, opposite page.

Miss Nellie Snidgrass:-
Your presence
is requested at the mar-
riage of J.W. Christian and
Mary Humpfer, and H.F.
Hollenbeck and Rose Midgley,
at the residence of
G.W. Midgley, on Dec. 24th,
1888. 8 o'clock P.M.
Eugene City, Or., Dec. 15th, '88



Double wedding, Dec. 24, 1888, Eugene City, of (lf. to rt.): Rose Midgley to Henry F. Hollenbeck and Mary Mumper to John W. Christian, at the home of George Midgley, brother of the bride. J. W. was the son of the Daniel Christians, pictured in this issue, was born while his parents were crossing the plains to Oregon—only one day's stop was made as the wagon train could not be delayed. This 90-year-old, picturesque house is of particular interest at present as it is to be razed (or moved?) to make room for Eugene's new city hall. (#214-F). See the Geo. Midgley house, page 18.

LANE COUNTY PIONEER - HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized, June 4, 1883 ___ Affiliated with the Oregon Historical Society (1954)

Incorporated January 23, 1955

Originally organized, June 4, 1883

CHARTER OFFICERS

John Whiteaker (first state Gov. of Oregon)	President
A. S. Patterson (Eugene Post Master from 1869)	Vice-Pres
Thom. G. Hendricks (founder, First Nat'l Bank)	Secretary
Joshua J. Walton (County Judge & U of O regent)	Cor.-Secy
Robert B. Cochran (M. Legislature for 28 years)	Treasurer

1962 OFFICERS

Ethan L. Newman	President
Edward F. Bailey	Vice-Pres.
Leah C. Menefee	Secretary
Ruth E. Richardson	Membership Secy
Percy M. Morse	Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Term expires, Dec. 1962

Edward E. Gray	Pauline Walton
Frank J. Hills	Mrs. Archie Knowles, Mapleton
Ruth E. Richardson	Mrs. Crystal B. Fogle, Springfield

Term expires, Dec. 1963

Lester E. Calder	Merle S. Moore (Pres. 1955-60)
Mrs. Clarence A. Chase	Clarence A. Pitney, Junction City
Leah C. Menefee	Ray E. Nelson, Cottage Grove

Term expires, Dec. 1964

Harold L. Edmunds (Pres. 1961)	Ethan L. Newman (Pres. 1962)
Alfred L. Lomax	Edward F. Bailey
Percy M. Morse	Mrs. Ed Clark, Oakridge

OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY

To preserve and make available museum, records and other material relating to the history of Lane County; to stimulate an interest in, and knowledge of the locality's past, to carry on the tradition of the annual pioneer picnic, and to preserve and enlarge our wonderful museum collection which has been built up and arranged by Mr. and Mrs. Cal Young. . . To disseminate historical information and arouse interest in the past by publishing historical material . . . hold meetings (from the constitution and by-laws).

Everyone interested in the history of the old Oregon Country and of Lane County in particular, is invited to join. Especially those having local pioneer heritage should identify themselves with the SOCIETY and be on the mailing list for its publication and announcements. Dues are \$2.00 per year, payable to the Membership Secretary, 868 W. 10th Av., Eugene, Oregon.

Lane County Pioneer-Historical Society
2161 Madison St., Eugene, Oregon

Non-Profit Organization U. S. POSTAGE P A I D Permit No. 28 Eugene, Oregon
