

FLORENCE, OREGON



ROYAL FLEET, 7TH RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL, FLORENCE, 1914
Alberta Knowles Collection

Lane County Historian

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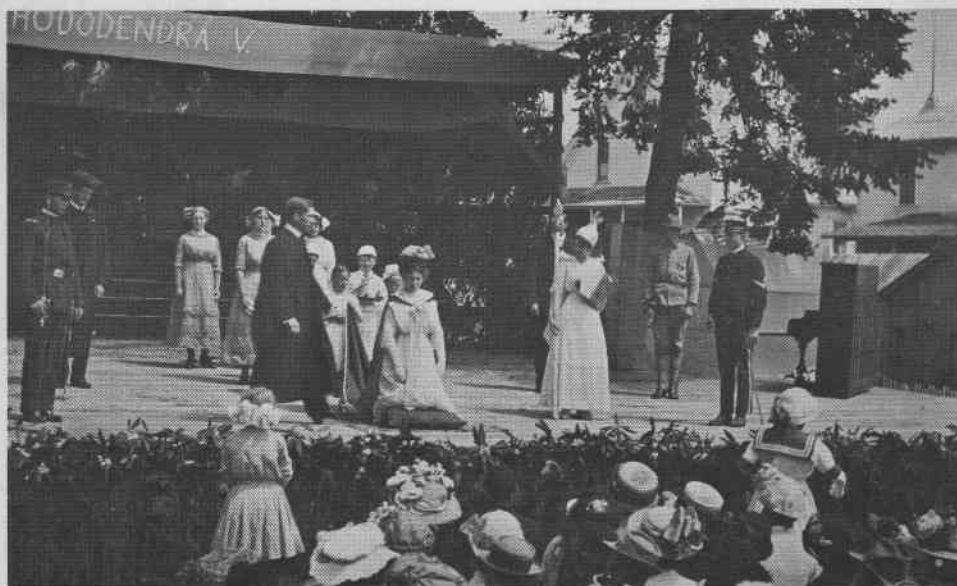
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University of Oregon; author and freelance writer
Author: "Pioneer Woolen Mills of Oregon," 1941



ALBERTA KNOWLES CROWNED QUEEN RHODODENDRA, 1912
Alberto Knowles Collection

Flowers, Queens and Barges

First Rhododendron Festival at Florence

By Mary Lou Skinner

The first Rhododendron Festival at Florence, Oregon, was held on May 20, 1908. Joaquin Miller, world-famed "Poet of the Sierras," was invited to be the Grand Marshal and crown the Rhododendron Queen.

Florence was a bower of flowers. Arches of rhododendrons and ferns laced the streets. Baskets and boxes of rhododendrons were placed at street corners and in front of stores for visitors to help themselves. People from the inland valley and up and down the coast arrived for the three-day celebration. Every home was a hotel.

The Siuslaw Improvement Club, which sponsored the festival, scheduled an athletic contest, a clam bake on the beach, a "calitumpian" parade and a grand ball. John H. Hurtag from Eugene was invited as the speaker.

A contest had been held to name the queen. The young lady with the most votes purchased in her name was selected as the queen. Excitement had run high, on May 8th, only 20 votes separated the two leading candidates, Laura Johnson and Emma Brynd. On May 15th, Laura Johnson was proclaimed the winner. The princesses were Flossie Chapman, Dena Schreuders, Marguerite Hurd, Eva Walker and Florence Fox.

On May 20th, the Royal Barge wreathed with rhododendrons, bunting and flags with the queen and her princesses led the parade of profusely decorated boats and barges up the river to the Court of Honor at the public wharf.

At the Court of Honor, a bower of rhododendrons, ferns and greens, the Queen and her princesses were greeted by George P. Edwards, mayor of Florence.

On the platform, Joaquin Miller with a spray of rhododendrons waited for the royal party. As the queen knelt on the satin pillow, Joaquin Miller, world traveler, author, poet, editor, lecturer and judge, gently placed the crown on her head and proclaimed her Queen Rhododendra I. Mayor Edwards presented her with the key to the City of Florence, carved from rhododendron wood. The band played and choruses sang.

It was very quiet when Joaquin Miller rose to speak. His long white hair and beard fluttered in the sea wind. Seventy years old, his dark eyes still had the power to hold his audience entranced while his voice added music to his words.

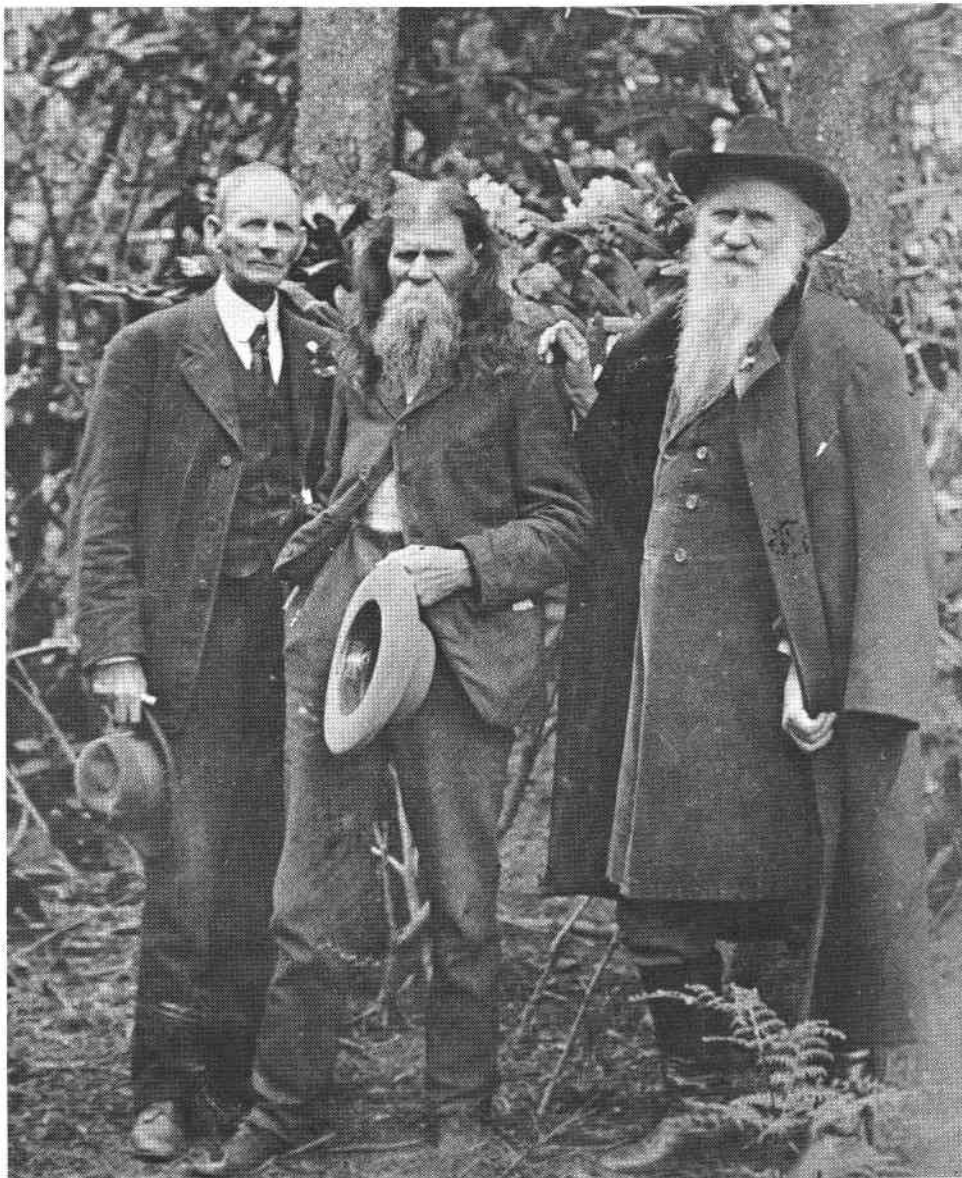
"I congratulate you with all my heart for having chosen this flower from your fields and dooryards. A generation ago I heard at Geneva that the ancient Greek rose tree, the rhododendron, was most pleasant to the sight. I believe that this flower which we celebrate has come directly from the Garden of Eden. I want you to remember," and he paused and spoke sternly, "that the secret of happiness and contentment is the love and appreciation of beauty." Then he lowered his voice and bent down to the people, "I am afraid of the man who does not love beauty."

Since 1908 the Rhododendron Festival has been an annual event

at Florence except during World War I. Thousands arrive each year for the colorful festival and to see Rhododendron Land with its masses of rhododendrons in bloom. This year, 1971, the dates for

the Rhododendron Festival at Florence will be May 21-23.

Editorial Note: Laura Johnson, later the wife of Melvin George Miller (deceased), the son of James H. Miller, is a resident of Eugene, Oregon.



From left to right, George Melvin Miller, James H. Miller and Joaquin Miller at Rhododendron Festival, Florence, in 1908.

—Courtesy Lane County Pioneer Museum

Florence, the "Fir-Clad" City

By Mary Lou Skinner

The Siuslaw River flowed down through the folding hills, widening, deepening, joyfully gathering the small streams unto itself. At Top-of-Tide it met the sea and reached higher towards the alders and willows. It filled the sloughs with shining water and tugged at the roots of the firs, cedars, maples and spruce that reflected themselves in the spreading river.

The pull of the ocean increased as the river cut into the blowing sand dunes. The channel at its mouth, changed with the tempo of the sea, the wind and the season. The Indians called the river Kahits, "the gleaming river." It was the life line of the Siuslaws. It was the water highway for the pioneers which meant success or failure.

Until 1876 the 552,960 acres of watershed belonged to the Siuslaw Indians. About fifty Indian villages stretched along the river and up the North Fork. The river was their line of communication and a life line. The Indians hollowed out canoes from cedar and spruce logs or stretched skins or bark over light frames. Wherever they traveled, on the river or on the twelve lakes in the watershed, they left one or more canoes at each landing or trail end for the use of passersby. Their large canoes which held 50 were used for transportation on the river or across the bar to hunt whale or sea lions in the ocean.

The Siuslaws were intelligent, gentle and happy people. They believed in strict discipline in the family and maintained a sense of strong responsibility for the tribe.

In 1852 the United States Gov-

ernment demanded that the Indians release a major part of their land. A treaty was drawn up with the Siuslaws and a full payment was promised for the land.*

In 1855 the Siuslaw Indian Reservation was established by the Government. It extended from the Tsiltocoos (sic) River to the Siletz. It reached forty miles from the sea to the mountains and for seventy-four miles along the coast. Twenty years later the reservation was cut to an area around Siletz and the Siuslaw Valley, the home of the Siuslaw Indians, was thrown open for settlement. In 1876, the Indians were offered a choice; 160 acres of their own land or a move to the reservation on the Siletz River. Many chose to stay and several hundred acres on the west



Indian Dan, resident of Indian Town
Dan Bowman Collection

*As of August, 1970, no payment has been received by the Siuslaw Indians

bank of the North Fork became known as Indian Town.

Indian Dan who lived in Indian Town, claimed he had known 105 summers and had signed the Treaty in 1855. He was famed far and wide for his hunting. He carried only one shell when he went hunting but always brought back meat for the tribe. He hunted seals by lying down on the south sand spit under a seal skin.

It was fortunate for the pioneers that Indians in Indian Town were near. From the Indians they learned how to survive in a land beside the western sea. Many were midwestern farmers who had never seen an ocean.

The Indians taught the settlers how to make salt. A rock was sought on the beach with a deep depression in it. The hole was filled with salt water and a fire was built around it to boil out the salt. The pioneers learned how to build weirs in the river to catch a winter's supply of fish; how to find the good berries, the vegetables and seasonings which were available in the marshes and along the coast. They learned how to dig for clams and trap crabs. The Indians gathered secret medicinal herbs for the pioneer women and often left woven baskets with ducks, venison and bear meat as a gift.

In 1835 there was a great fire. It burned from the Siuslaw River north to Astoria. The Indians were terrified. One Alsea Indian described the horror of unchecked flames. "We were coming back from the Siuslaw when the world turned to fire. It seemed to be dark all over. What was nature going to do? The fire was flying around like birds. Even the blossoms on the highest trees were burning. For ten days it was dark all over."

The Indians went to the beaches where they shared the sand with

thousands of panic-stricken creatures. They put their children and small possessions in canoes and floated them outside the breaker line. It was a time of hardship and a time of grief.

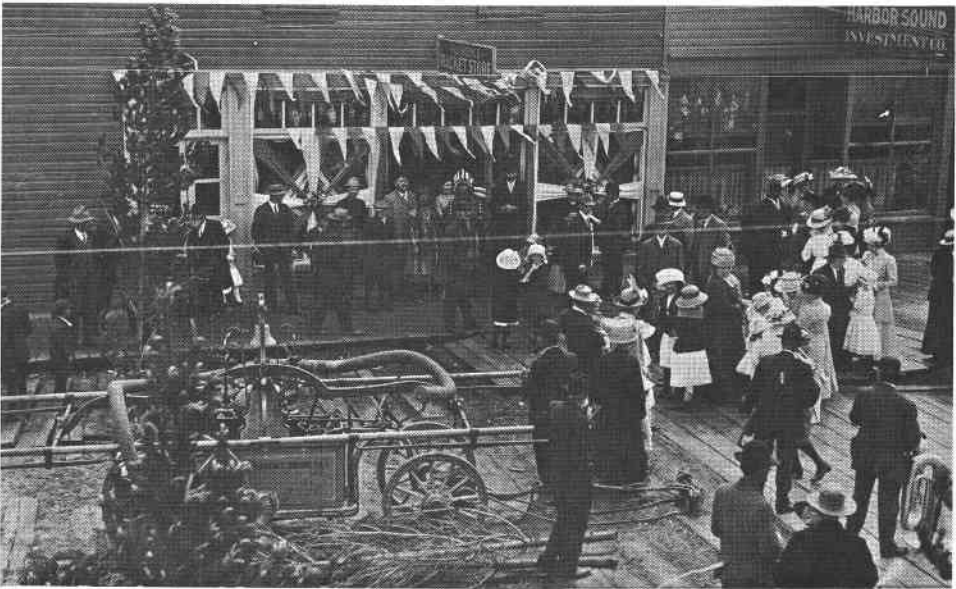
Another gigantic fire in 1868 left blackened trees and stumps along the coast. For two weeks it was dark as night. The charred and blackened trees presented serious problems to the farmers but the burned-out thick underbrush proved a blessing in disguise; the cleared area made it easier to plant a first crop.

Florence had no fire equipment. The first fire engine in the early 1900's was greeted with a band, flowers, bunting and a parade. An enthusiastic volunteer fire department was organized. It took 20 men to operate the pump, but the fire had to be near the river.

A. R. McLeod, Hudson's Bay Co. trapper, was probably the first white man to explore the Siuslaw River. In 1836 he traveled the river to trade, got 15 beaver pelts before he returned to Fort Vancouver.

David Morse was the first white man to file on a homestead claim in the area. He is sometimes called the Father of Florence. He planted the first mud clams in the river after packing them up the beach from Empire on Coos Bay. In 1876 William Moody arrived with a pack of trading trinkets. His first store was an Indian shack. He nailed a few boxes to the wall and set up a post office. The mail was addressed simply to "Siuslaw River." For families up the river, the address was usually "Head-of-Tide."

Few settlers found their way to the valley of the Siuslaws. There were no roads. There were only the forests which folded back in great waves of oceans over the coast mountains. Ships had not yet found their way into the mouth of the



Florence Fire Engine in 1908

Alberta Knowles Collection

river for there were no charts and the bar was a changing pattern of currents, tides and sand bars. At the northern end of the beach was the rock fortress called Cape Perpetua. On the south was the Umpqua and the forests of coastal pines.

It was from the south that the pioneers first started to come. They came up the beach across sluggish marshes and through sand dunes until they reached the river.

All were seeking luxuriant valleys with good black soil. They found them on the North Fork, at Top-of-Tide and up small streams and creeks that opened into lush valleys. They settled near the river for the river was a highway to supplies, to a market for their produce. The river made them mobile and became the center of their lives.

Later, settlers came across the mountains from Eugene. A path was slashed out of the thick underbrush. The trail was ankle deep with mud in the winter and over-

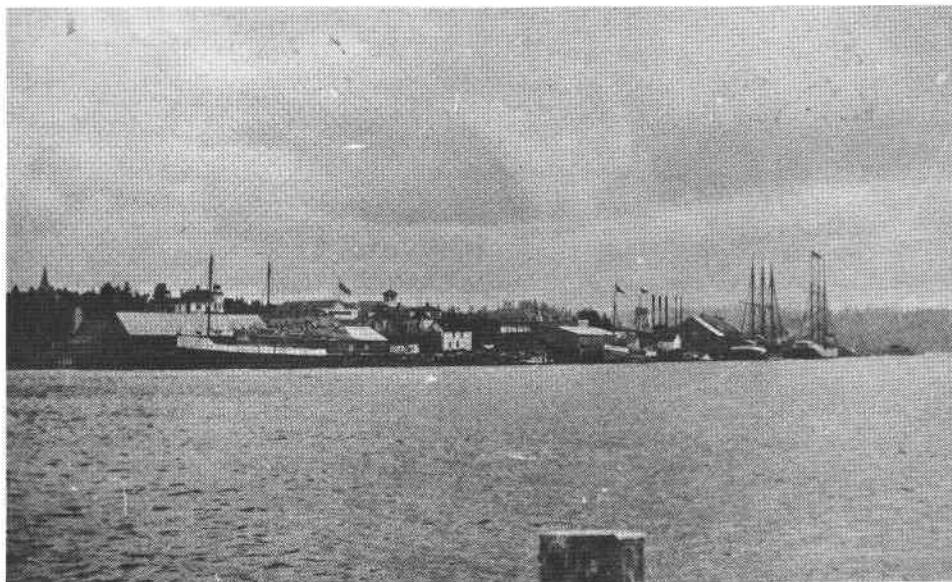
grown with blackberry, huckleberry and salal in the summer. During the spring the trail led through carpets of flowers; hill upon hill was covered with the soft pink and lavender of rhododendrons and the brilliant yellow flame of Scotch Broom.

The men arrived first to stake a claim of 160 acres. Later, they brought their families and possessions, packed in by mules or trekked on their backs. It took strength and character, and the pioneers had it. It took "guts" of which they had a surplus.

By 1880 many families were settled up river, up the North Fork and on the streams that drained into the river. Some also settled around the lakes.

In 1880 Indians found a board 8 by 10 feet long, probably from a ship-wrecked sailing vessel. On the Board was printed *Florence*,* possibly the name of the ship. The printed board was leaned against Moody's store. When the Safley

*See Page 33 for photo of Florence Hotel



Florence about 1900; at left, the Kyle Cannery, ships anchored at wharf.
Don Bowman Collection

Hotel was designated a post office, the board was nailed across the front door.* The community was soon named for the sign rather than the sign made for the town.

In 1893 the weekly newspaper, *The Florence West*, described Florence as the "Fir Clad City" with a population of over a thousand people living in the watershed. "This," said the newspaper, "is double the number living in or near Florence in 1892. The North Jetty is being built and there are twice as many boats on the river." The editor of the paper was Colonel N. Falley who wore "three hats." In addition to being editor, he was President of the Florence Council and a Senator from Lane county to the legislature.

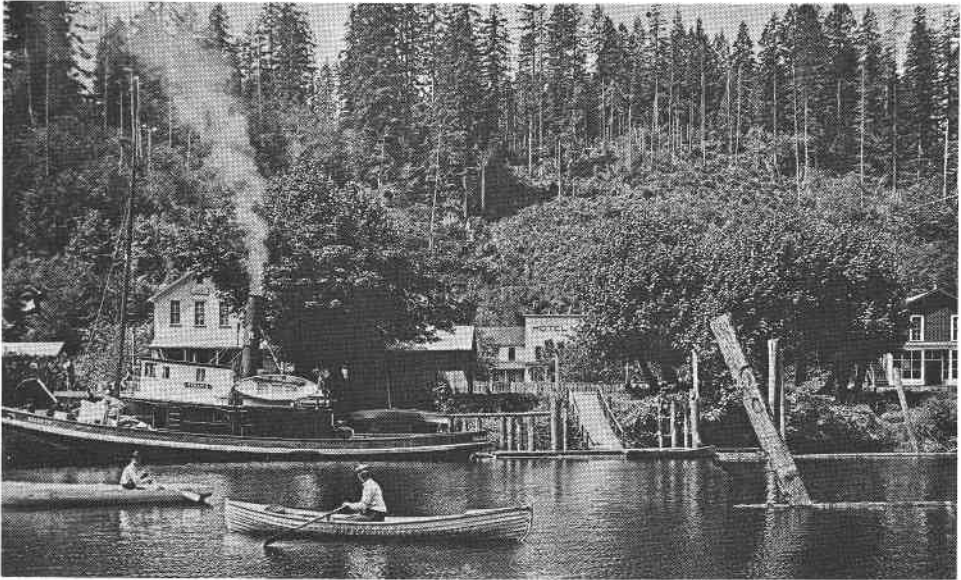
Across the river from Florence on the south bank was a community called Glenada. The town site was platted by George H. Colter who named it for his son Glen and for his wife and daughter, Ada. The main street was parallel to the

river. The town had a saw mill, hotel, church, a dozen houses and a deep-water wharf. Glenada became an active port and a competitor to Florence.

Glenada had the Barret Stage Line to Gardiner where transportation was available to North Bend and Marshfield, or up river to Scottsburg to connect with the Oregon-California Stage Line. A Barret Stagecoach left Glenada, Monday, Wednesday and Friday at low tide for Gardiner.

The Whisman Brothers' Stage made runs on Monday and Thursday between Top-of-Tide and Eugene. The hotel at Top-of-Tide was the western terminus of the line. Passengers for Florence continued by tug. Mapleton residents who shopped in Florence, rode down on the out-going tide and returned when the tide was full.

President W. H. Taft gave Florence a boost when he signed the Homestead Act of 1912 which allowed settlers to prove up on their



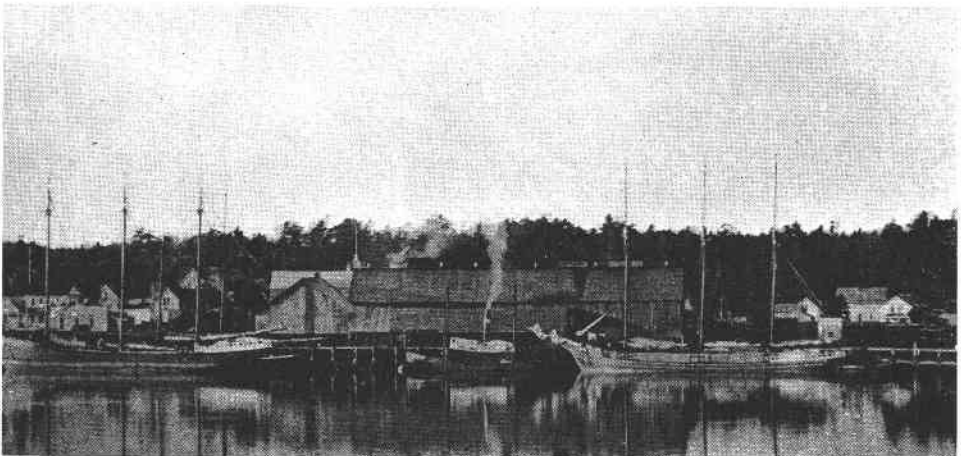
Whisman Stage Stop, Mapleton Hotel, 1894
Alberta Knowles Collection

claims and a minimum forty acres only, in three years instead of five and permitted a five-month's absence from the claim.

Many new settlers arrived and the sawmills could not keep up with the demand for lumber for new homes. Some sawmills cut lumber

from daybreak to sunset. Ships and barges carried cargoes of lumber to California. The Tidewater Lumber Co., the largest sawmill on the river had an annual payroll of \$50,000.

An electric light plant was installed in Florence in 1912. When



Sailing ships docked at Tidewater Lumber Co., 1912
Alberta Knowles Collection

the lights were turned on, pioneers who had lived and worked with lanterns, candles and oil lamps, felt as though the sun had come up in the middle of the night.

A ferry was instituted in 1913 between Florence and Glenada. On the Florence side the ferry slip was in "Old Town" across from Cooper's store; on the Glenada side, it was just east of Pier Point's lower lot.

In 1913 the city council of Florence outlined an ambitious plan for the future:

1. To build a city wharf that would be modern and adequate.
2. To construct and man a life-saving station.
3. To install a telephone system, especially between Florence and Mapleton.
4. To build needed houses quickly for many families in Florence were still living in tents.
5. To gravel the streets as the planks were too expensive to maintain.

In 1912-1915 a railroad line was constructed between Eugene and Marshfield. It opened up an entire area in transportation and gave an impetus to development and growth in the entire coastal area. Florence quickly felt the impact and expanded into a central trading, commercial and industrial area.

By 1913 there were well established towns on the Siuslaw River which were named as follows:

1. Top-of-Tide was called Mapleton.
2. Seaton, a mile up river, was abandoned.
3. Acme became Cushman.
4. Beck was changed to Tiernan.
5. Portola would be known as Veneta.

* * *

George Melvin Miller was the first real estate agent in Florence, Oregon.

He was born in Lane county on a farm called "Sunny Ridge," near Coburg, on May 17, 1853, the son of Hulins and Margaret Witt Miller. An elder brother was Joaquin (Cincinatus Hiner) Miller, famed as the "Poet of the Sierras."

In 1882 George Melvin Miller hacked his way across the mountains from Eugene City to Florence where he found a small community of settlers and a store owned by A. J. Moody.

Miller tried to buy the store but Moody refused to sell. Several years later, Moody died and Miller, the sole bidder at the auction, bought the store surrounded by 90 acres of rhododendrons and salal, the "center of Florence," for \$900.

Miller filed on a homestead adjoining the Moody property, bought a half interest in another section and 150 acres more. He platted a townsite and sold lots to new settlers who were arriving by boat and stage.

As Florence's first real estate agent, he was soon active in all the internal affairs of the city government and became an elder in the Presbyterian church. He was the most enthusiastic promoter of Florence.

In the 1890's when the Alaskan gold strike was at its peak, Miller claimed each man would return with at least \$6,000 in gold.

Miller and associates organized the "Alaska Gold Mining and Navigation Company" and ordered a vessel built by Captain E. H. W. Hansen at Point Terrace which they named the *Klondike* and offered 10,000 shares of stock at \$10.00 a share.

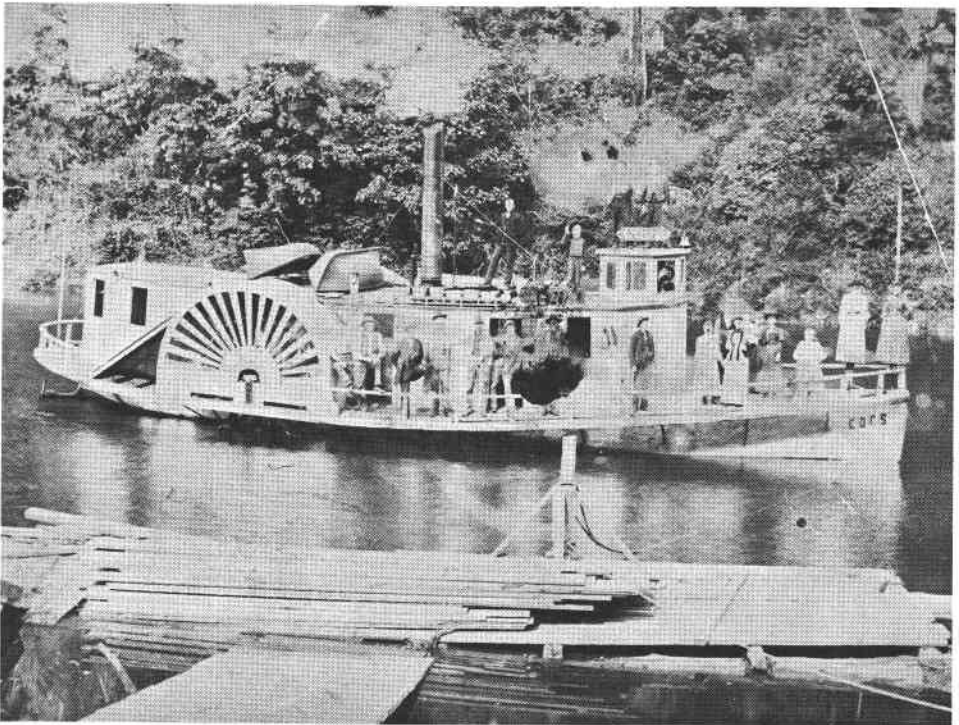
In Florence, Miller married his second wife, Alice McCormic. On the wedding night, the couple was surprised by a shivaree. When Miller did not respond to the shivaree, the young people became noisier.

Finally, he opened the door. To their surprise he was wearing a tasseled stocking cap and a long flannel gown. He was bald as an eagle. He gave the group \$5.00 and told them to go away and buy ice cream.

Years earlier, Miller, a dreamer, an inventor, a promoter and a golden-tongued salesman, had a vision of a transcontinental highway which would connect Florence with New York City. He drew a map of the route which he entitled "The

Florence-New York Continental Highway."

The far-sighted dream with the flamboyant title became a reality because a man on a mountain summit saw a super-highway where others saw only dense woods and impassable passes. Miller lived to see the day when Florence, a small community on the Pacific Ocean, became the western terminus of a ribbon of cement which reached to New York City on the Atlantic Ocean.



Originally the Coos; sidepaddles were removed, a propeller installed, renamed the Marguerite for O. W. Hurd's daughter.

—Courtesy Ackroyd Photography, Inc.

Early Shipping and Industry in the Lower Siuslaw Valley*

By Alfred L. Lomax

The early business history of the lower Siuslaw Valley is one of persevering pioneer personalities who recognized the moneymaking opportunities in the forest-covered mountains and the swarming salmon runs which literally choked the river. The output of the small canneries and sawmills made attractive cargoes of canned salmon and lumber for coasting vessels from San Francisco which dared the crossing of the inhospitable, dangerous Siuslaw River bar. Inbound they brought supplies for the settlers and the mills.

Until the 1870s the only inhabitants of this isolated Lane County area were a pitiful remnant of an Indian tribe. But, in 1877 a fish cannery was built by one Duncan near the mouth of the river where later a Coast Guard station was located.

In 1878 Duncan erected a sawmill next to the cannery with the help of Frank Knowles, who became a permanent settler in the area. While he sawed boards and pounded nails, Mrs. Knowles picked berries which Duncan canned for her.

Although no record exists of how Duncan obtained the machinery for these enterprises, there is strong assumption that the equipment came on one of the coasting vessels which nosed into Coos Bay, the Umpqua River, and the Yaquina River to serve the settlements on

these waterways. The most likely one of these vessels would be the *Alexander Duncan*, a 300-ton twin screw coasting steamer owned by R. D. Hume of San Francisco, which called in July 1877. She was the first vessel to cross the rough Siuslaw bar. Her days ended as a coal barge before she was finally wrecked on the California coast.

Duncan's perseverance and grit, evidenced in the operation of his sawmill and cannery, was no match for the free-blowing sand from the dunes which settled in the machinery. Disgusted, he closed down the embryonic industries after running for approximately two years.

About the time Duncan left, Thomas Safly moved in and built the first so-called hotel in the settlement. The lumber was purchased at Gardiner, a village near the mouth of the Umpqua River. When Safly mounted the nameplate of the wrecked *Florence* over the entrance to the hostelry, it was known as the Florence Hotel and the settlement became known as Florence.†

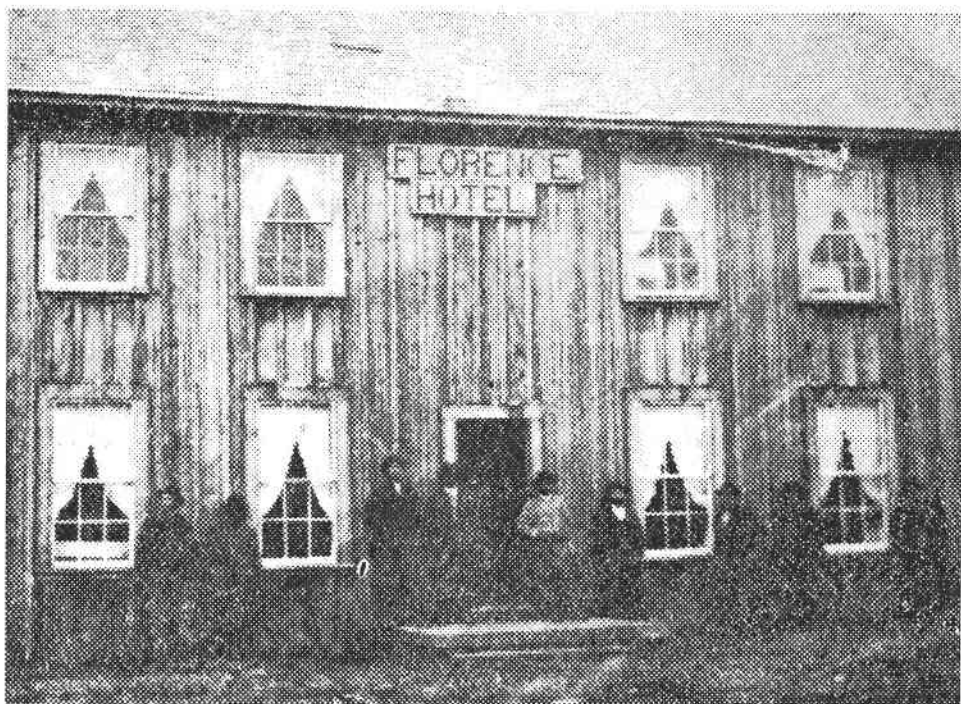
The *Mary D. Hume* was the second steamer to enter the Siuslaw River. The small craft of 158 tons was built at Ellensburg (Gold Beach), Oregon in 1881 with dimensions of 98' x 23' x 10'. In 1882 she carried the Albert Knowles family from San Francisco to Gardiner, thence by stage on the beach to Florence.

The following year she took out

*Sources: Lewis and Dryden Marine History of Pacific Northwest; **The West**, Florence; **Siuslaw Pioneer**, Florence; **Register-Guard**, Eugene.

Wm. Kyle Business Records, Special Collections, University of Oregon Library; Correspondence: Alice Weatherson, Salem; Mrs. Knowles Morris, Florence.

†Lane County Historian, Vol. XI, No. 2



The Florence Hotel built by Thomas Safly, ship nameplate over the door.
Courtesy Siuslaw Pioneer

900 cases of fish for the Bay City. New owners employed her as a whaler in the Arctic and also as a tug boat. She established the reputation of being the oldest commercial vessel in the Pacific Northwest.

Another well-known coaster which served the ports was the *Gussie Telfair*, a Scotch-built steamer originally used as a blockade runner during the Civil War, but captured by the North. She was then sold to John T. Wright who outfitted her for commercial purposes and sent her to the West Coast. Ben Holladay, builder of Oregon railroads, bought the 260-foot vessel and put her on the Portland-Victoria, B.C. - Puget Sound run. In 1878, a new owner had her on the local Coos Bay coastal route. The assumption can be made that Duncan's enterprises might

have involved the *Gussie*. Her days ended as a wreck in the Coos Bay area in 1888.

Except for the intermittent calls of the aforesaid vessels, commercial activity languished on the Siuslaw until, in the 1880s O. W. Hurd came to Florence and must have been impressed with the business opportunities in Florence because he started to erect store buildings, one of which was occupied by the Florence Drug Store. Organization of the Hurd Lumber and Navigation Company is further evidence of this business acumen as was the construction of a cannery just below Acme (Cushman), and a creamery. A sawmill followed, bought later by Porter Brothers. In 1884 Hurd bought the *Mary Hall*, the first steamboat to run between Florence and Mapleton.

Hurd continued to buy boats during the 1890s which included the small sidepaddler *Coos** brought to the Siuslaw in 1892 by George O. Knowles, W. W. Neeley (Seaton postmaster) and Charles Gettys. The paddles were removed and a propeller installed. After being outfitted and launched she was christened *Marguerite* for O. W. Hurd's daughter. The rebuilt boat was then ready for daily trips between Florence and Mapleton carrying passengers. Additional revenue came from towing logs to the sawmills. The *Mink*, a Marshfield-built river boat was also purchased as was the *L. Roscoe*, a seagoing tug. Both were still in service at the turn of the century.

In 1884 William Kyle arrived and opened a general merchandise store, and a cannery on the river front which produced 350 cases of salmon daily or 15,000 cases annually.

In 1887 a cooperative cannery was built at Rose Hill on the south bank opposite the mouth of the North Fork of the Siuslaw River.

Salmon were so plentiful that the three canneries seined the river, there being no prohibitive game laws then. San Francisco suppliers shipped in sheets of tinsplate, solder, soldering tools, seine twine and rope. Chinese from Astoria not only butchered the fish caught in the handmade nets, but shaped the cans and soldered them. Schmidt & Company furnished labels and lithographs at \$1.55 a hundred. Some of the brand names under which the salmon were marketed were: Waterlily, Surf, Marigold, Golden Gate, Carnation. Each cannery employed from 30-40 orientals.

Canned salmon production on the Siuslaw was as follows:†

	No. of Cases	Value
1887.....	18,146	\$99,806
1888.....	13,946	69,730
	(2 canneries)	
1889.....	12,189	48,156
	(1 cannery)	
1890.....	4,077	16,308
	(1 cannery)	
1891.....	2,121	8,484
	(1 cannery)	
1892.....	18,283	72,952

Study of the William Kyle records revealed that Astoria merchants furnished supplies used by the Florence Packing Company for their seining and canning operations: salt, tan bark, cedar net floats, coal tar (barrels), fish knives, presses, crimping machines, pig tin, copper wire, and rope. Invoices showed the names of Foard & Stokes, Arndt & Ferchen, and the Clatsop Mill Company.

C. E. Whitney & Company of San Francisco acted both as supplier and distributor for Kyle who sold the salmon at \$5.00 a case. Barrels of salmon bellies and salt salmon went out on the steam schooner *Mischief* owned by J. J. Winant of Newport for transshipment there. One billing showed 8,383 cans of salmon (four dozen to a case) and 58 barrels of bellies for a total value of \$29,494.89, less brokerage and commission of \$1,728.19. Astoria got the pack from the Rose Hill cannery in 1892 shipped on the *Chance* and the *Sue Elmore*.

News of the respective successes of the Kyle and Hurd enterprises must have been noised abroad for by 1891 new names appeared in the local newspaper advertisements. Kyle's store sign was changed to Meyer & Kyle, and Hurd added Davenport to his. M. E. Saubert opened a store at Acme; C. C.

*See photo, Page 31

†The West, April 28, 1893

Cushman was president of the Siuslaw Lumber Company at Acme; Knowles & Gettys were merchants at Seaton; Morris Bros. had a tobacco and variety store at Florence; and J. H. Moss advertised he carried pure wines and liquors for *medical purposes* (italics ours). Kimball, Stevens & Company was planning a 100,000-foot daily output sawmill with a fat payroll. As woolen mills were all the rage at this time, there was talk of building one here, in spite of the lack of essential industrial location factors.

This evidence of community expansion was induced by several factors. The Siuslaw & Eastern Railway had been incorporated by Eugene business men with grandiose plans to construct an east-west cross state line from Florence to a junction with a transcontinental road in eastern Oregon. Dirt was thrown at Eugene's city limits in 1892 and iron was unloaded at Florence. The village would eventually become a major port with seaplanes fanning out to world markets. But the underfinanced project never materialized—Florentines still had to depend upon Whisman Brothers stages to Eugene.

Other expansion projects of greater substance were jetty construction at the mouth of the river, channel improvement, and the erection of Heceta Head lighthouse.

In spite of blasted railroad hopes, real estate promotion came on full tilt with George Melvin Miller, a Eugene attorney and Florence booster announcing in a two-column ad that he was the owner of an addition in the town of Florence "The coming seaport of central and western Oregon." W. A. Cox's ad said "The man who owns property in either Florence or Acme will be the capitalist of the Siuslaw Valley," while across the

river Glenada was being platted.

Accommodations were available for travelers at the "Head of Tide" hotel, Mapleton. W. W. Neeley proprietor, who advertised that his tables were furnished with all the delicacies of the season including wild game, fish, and fruit in season.

Although Siuslaw people were always hopeful of improved inland transportation facilities, they never relinquished their dependence upon the schooners and small steam and gasoline powered coasters which kept them in touch with important business centers like San Francisco and Portland. Contacts were also maintained with other coast communities of Coos Bay, Gardiner, Newport, Tillamook, and Astoria.

Two- and three-master lumber schooners dominated the shipping over the Siuslaw bar. Some of these, financed by San Francisco capital, were built in a local shipyard near Saubert's store at Acme. C. S. Jorgensen with J. S. Kimball and others built the two-masted *Acme* there. San Francisco money also backed the Siuslaw & San Francisco Lumber Company owned by A. W. Beadle & Company of that city, which also owned or chartered schooners for the Siuslaw-San Francisco run.

Among the schooners which tied up at Florence's sawmills were the *Bella*, a three-masted schooner built at Acme by E. H. W. Hanson in 1896 and purchased by William Kyle. Dimensions were 121' x 32' x 6' with a 180 gross tons rating. She was reported to be the largest vessel built on the river, and also laid claim to be one of the fastest vessels on the coast with a time of four days from Siuslaw to San Francisco.

In March 1902, the *Bella* loaded the most valuable cargo ever taken from the Siuslaw River consisting

of 100,000 feet of lumber, 5,000 cases of canned salmon and 250 barrels of salt salmon. Her useful days ended when she stranded six miles south of the Siuslaw River in November 1905.

The *C. A. Klose* was a three-masted schooner owned by Beadle & Company, and built especially for the Siuslaw-San Francisco trade. Her first voyage to the river was in May 1902. Cargo capacity was said to be 600,000 feet of lumber. In May 1905, she capsized at sea, drifted ashore at North Beach, Washington, and broke up.

The *Danielson* was built by S. Danielson at Parkersburg on Coos Bay in 1892 on which Kyle shipped 3,500 cases of salmon, 30 bundles of fur, and a cargo of lumber. The following year she unloaded railroad iron for the Siuslaw & Eastern Railway.

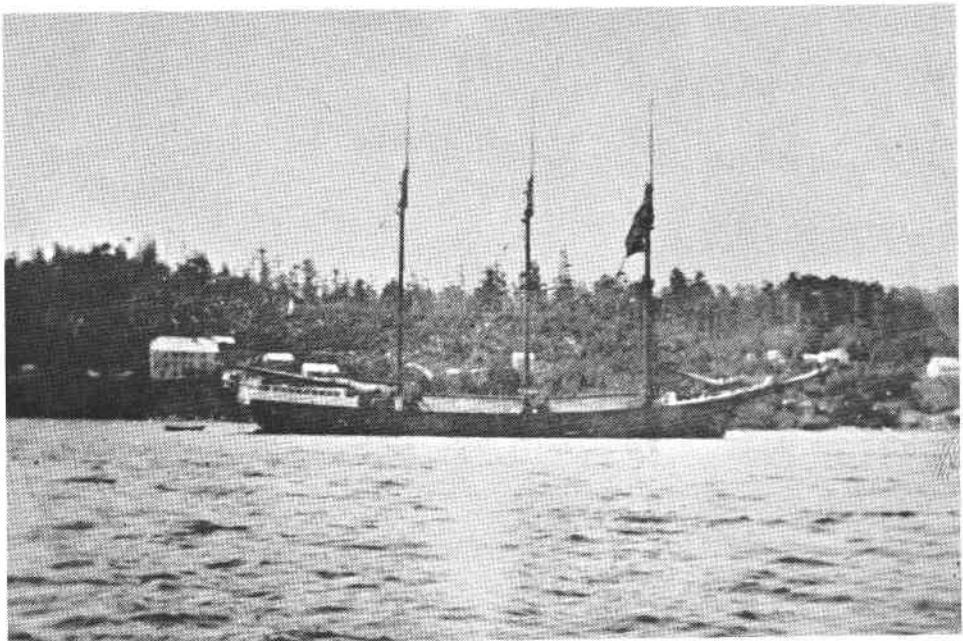
Also built at Parkersburg was the two-masted schooner *Gem*, in

1885 and reported to have taken out 250,000 feet of lumber, the largest ever taken out of the Siuslaw up to that time. She stranded on Nehalem Beach in February 1904.

The *Hugh Hogan* was a three-masted schooner which entered the Siuslaw in 1913. Her dimensions of 160' x 38' x 13' gave her a 700,000-foot lumber carrying capacity. Hers was a short life on the Siuslaw-San Francisco run as she was wrecked on the bar the following year.

Lizzie Prien was another Danielson schooner built at Parkersburg in 1884 which crossed the Siuslaw bar for many years. One time she went aground at the river mouth but was successfully refloated and brought to Glenada, pumped out and repaired. She stranded on the Mexican coast in 1913.

Mary Gilbert, schooner, was of the vintage of early 1890's, and like the others carried lumber and salmon out and supplies in. She was



The Hugh Hogan, typical three-masted lumber schooner which loaded in the Siuslaw River.
Margie Y. Knowles Collection

lost off the south spit of the Alsea River in 1894.

The *Moonlight* was a small, two-masted schooner 68' x 24' x 7', built in 1890 by Olaf Hansen on the Siuslaw for W. H. Elliott. She became part of a cannery fleet up north, took fifty miners to Alaska during the goldrush, used as a seal hunter on Puget Sound and finally was sold to some Mexicans for \$16,000.

A two-masted schooner was the *Nettie Sundborg* owned by Julius Hyman of San Francisco for the lumber trade. In January 1902 she also experienced the agonies and possible loss by stranding in the river, but was floated across to the north shore at high tide and repaired. Disaster again hit in December with another stranding, this time on the Siuslaw bar.

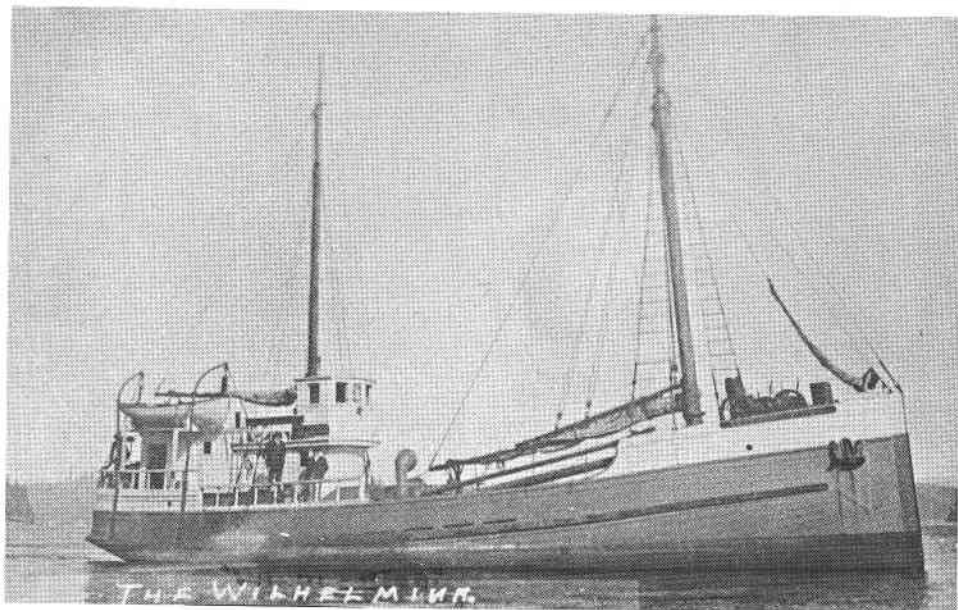
Another oldtimer was the *Ralph J. Long* built in 1888 at Bandon with dimensions of 87' x 27'4" x 5'7". She continued in service until well after the turn of the century

carrying lumber for the Siuslaw & San Francisco Lumber Company.

The *Sacramento* was built in 1868 in San Francisco as a river schooner-barge, but later converted into a two-masted ocean going schooner for the Siuslaw lumber trade in which she was employed until 1905 when, like her contemporaries she too stranded on the foggy Oregon coast, a total loss.

Wing and Wing came about 1900 for the Siuslaw & San Francisco Lumber Company. In October 1901 she was driven by a winter storm off course and wound up in Astoria for repairs and provisions where she was promptly libeled by Foard & Stokes for \$1,828.07. The following May she hit the Siuslaw south jetty, drifted across to the north shore where she was pulled off by the tug *Robarts*.

Tugs were an important and necessary element in a port which involved sailing ships. This was true not only for river ports like Florence and Portland, but also



The *Wilhelmina*, a gasoline powered freighter, brought supplies from Portland to Siuslaw River stores.
Margie Y. Knowles Collection

on the broad and deep waters of Puget Sound where the tugs towed the great three-masters loaded with grain and lumber out to Cape Flattery then picked up the incoming ships headed for Seattle and Tacoma.

Siuslaw tugs which did yeoman service on the river were the *Robarts*, the *Lillian*, and the *L. Roscoe*, the latter named for O. W. Hurd's son. The former was a steam propeller owned by Kyle. Bar conditions being what they were rescue operations were not uncommon to her, and sometimes brought near disaster to the little tug. One time a big wave knocked the captain to the floor and forced the craft onto the spit where she was rescued by the tug *Lillian*. In March 1893 the *Robarts* towed the first scowload of rock for the new jetty.

She was also licensed to carry passengers and made frequent trips in the summer to Newport charging \$3.00 one way or \$5.00 round trip. This was a much-needed service for the isolated Siuslawers as Yaquina Bay was a transshipment point to San Francisco for passengers who desired more luxurious accommodations than could be had on the craft which came to Florence. The Oregon Pacific Railroad Company ran three steamers from Yaquina to the Bay City in connection with their rail line to Albany and Corvallis where passengers could transfer to the Oregon & California for Willamette Valley cities.

The *Lillian* was purchased at Coos Bay by William Kyle for service on the river. Her regular trips to Mapleton were important for

both passengers and freight. She too, hauled rock barges to the jetty site and at times towed logs from upriver points to the Florence and Acme sawmills.

The *Mink* was built at Marshfield for A. F. Hurd for exclusive use on the river. Later O. W. Hurd was the owner.

Other river boats were the gasoline sternwheeler *Lena* owned by Safly and the gasoline powered *Hazel*, Amassa Hurd, owner, and the *Minnie Mitchell*, a 35-foot passenger launch.

Although sailing ships were the main carriers of early days Siuslaw commerce, steam and gas schooners became more numerous and could negotiate the troublesome bar without the benefit of tugs.

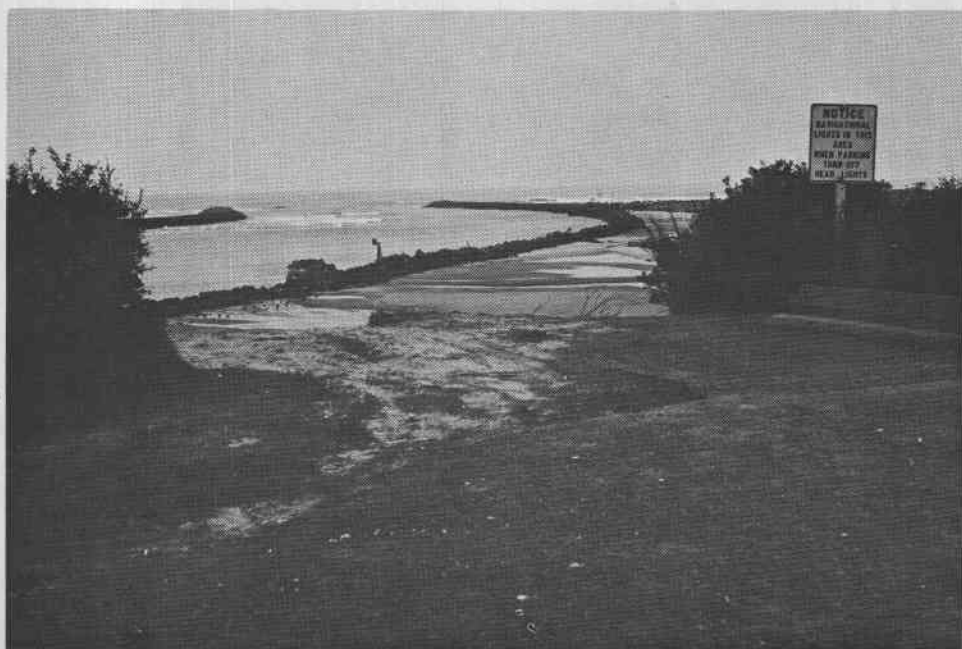
Space does not permit their enumeration, but the following named craft were among those which came to the Siuslaw at one time or another: *Anvil*, *Arcata*, *George Chance*, *Girtie*, *Monterey*, *Sue E. Elmore*, *Wilhelmina*, and the *Luella*. The latter was a steam schooner built by Thomas Peterson in the shipyard near Saubert's store at Acme.

An appropriate conclusion to this article is the table of statistics which shows the important part which ships played in the Siuslaw Valley's commerce before the railroad came in 1915:*

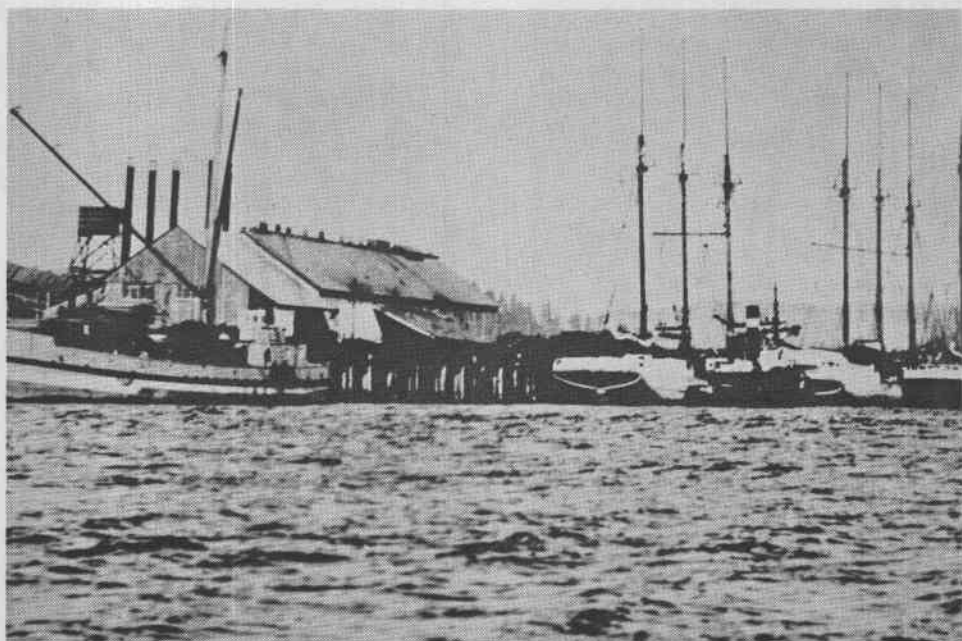
	Sailers	Steamers	Lumber
1900.....	40	34	6,205,252 ft.
1901.....	43	41	7,818,678
1902.....	43	27	10,201,540
1903.....	43	27	7,574,000

No. of Days Loading—On the average, 5 for each vessel.

*Eugene Morning Register Annual Edition, 1904.



Siuslaw River jetties, Florence, Oregon
Alfred L. Lomax Collection



Coasting schooners, Florence, Lane County, Oregon, circa 1891-92.
Margie Y. Knowles Collection

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The Hazel, a steam-powered river boat owned by Captain Amassa Hurd
Courtesy Siuslaw Pioneer