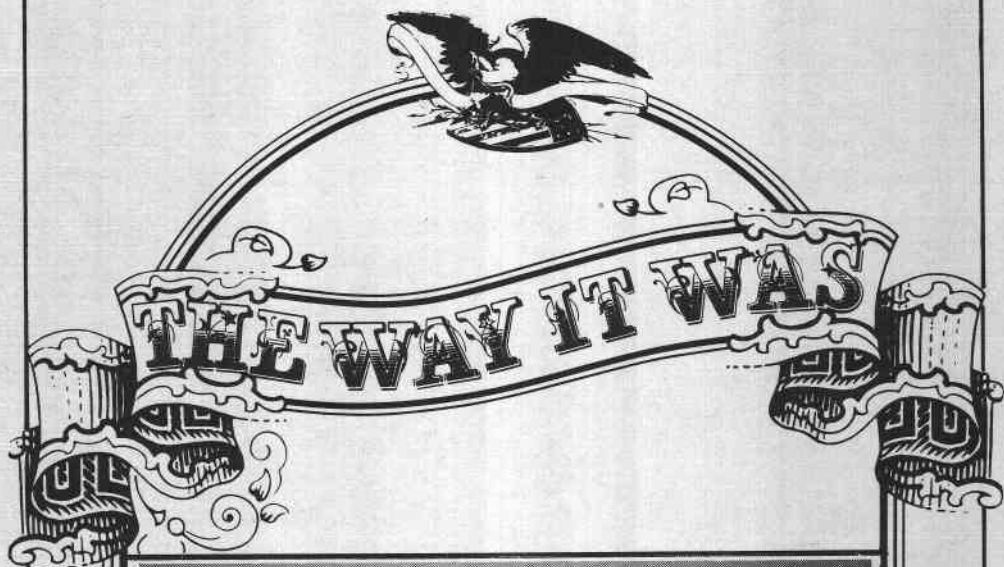


Lane County Historian



Coy Lansbery and second cousin Freeman Lansbery with the Indian ponies they bought. Lansbery family album, courtesy Cheryl Pfaff

The Lane County Historical Society
Vol. XXVIII, No. 3 **Fall, 1983**

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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YOU ARE INVITED TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Correction: Apologies to Susan K. Barry whose name was misspelled with an e in previous issues of LCH. Ed.



William & Mary (Sankey) Lansbery family, 1898. Standing l-r Daddy, Mark, Lynn, Coy, Ward & Claude. Seated l-r Mother with Ruth, Paul, Kate, Hugh and Bruce, Lansbery family album, courtesy Cheryl Pfaff.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF COY V. LANSBERY

I was born August 29, 1885, the fourth son of William and Mary (Sankey) Lansbery, a family of 13 children.

We lived on a 50 acre farm. The first recollection I have of life was when I was four years old, the year of the Johnstown Flood. My dad took us boys down to the river, which was two miles from where we lived. We saw all kinds of buildings and some animals. One chicken coop with three chickens setting on the roof with only their combs out of water. That was such a vivid picture, I never forgot it.

There were seven boys born before a girl showed up, so us boys had to do

work as soon as we were old enough to stick our nose in the dishpan, as well as help on the farm. Of course all work was done by hand. We had a team, a plow and harrow and a cultivator. Harvesting was all done by hand even to cutting the grain with a cradle, raking and binding it by hand. The grain was all stored in the barn and in the fall the thrashing machine would come around and thrash the wheat, oats, buckwheat and rye. After the thrashing was done and the grain put in the granery, the straw was put in one side of the barn to use for bedding for the stock, then we would haul the corn shocks in and stack

on one side of the barn floor. Every Saturday we would husk enough corn to feed five or six hogs for a week and cut the fodder up in a hand cutter to feed the cows. Besides a team of horses we always had four or five cows, about 15 sheep, about 15 to 20 chickens and some turkeys. We would shear the sheep in the spring and trade the wool in the fall for yarn. My mother knit all our socks and mittens for winter and in her spare time, after baking eight loaves of bread twice a week, washing over an old washboard and cooking for that tribe, I think she must have sat up nights to do all that knitting. When I look back on those days, I don't see how she ever did it.

Out in the back yard we had a 50-gallon iron kettle to heat water in, a scalding vat and a hog gallows. We would butcher four hogs at a time, hang them up to dress them out and use the iron kettle to render out the lard. We cured all our own meat and stored it in the cellar for winter use. We also used the iron kettle for making apple butter, 50 gallons at a time. We had a large orchard and a large garden and would put cabbage, carrots and turnips in the cellar for winter. We had six hives of bees and our own honey. I remember my mother would can 100 quarts of tomatoes and would make our own ketchup.

From 1889 until 1893 life was very uneventful. We went to school in the winter and worked on the farm in the summer. In the spring of 1893 we had an epidemic of scarlet fever. We couldn't get a doctor out. We lived six miles from town and the roads were drifted full of snow, so we couldn't get help. I had one brother and a sister die

at that time. Mother was the only one to look after us as my father was bedfast with rheumatism. My mother's sister came in to help out and a cousin came and helped out. I was the only one of us kids that wasn't bedfast. I had the fever but not as bad as the rest, too ornery I guess! Our nearest neighbor, who lived across the creek from us, came over and fed the stock and watered them and did the milking for us during the epidemic.

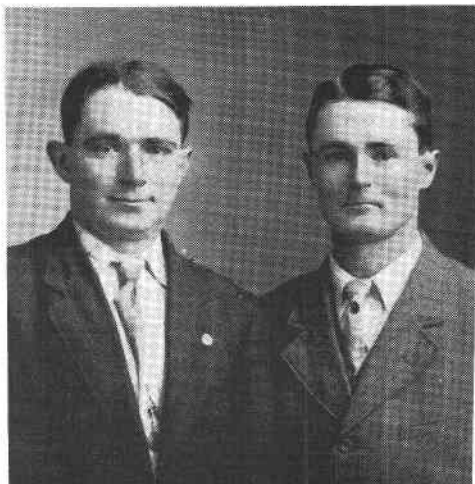
In the fall of 1895, when I was ill, I stayed with Uncle Robert Flegal and helped with chores and went to school. I also stayed there and helped on the farm. I also stayed there and went to school the winter I was 12 years old. When I was 13 years old I worked for a red-headed Irishman by the name of Little for \$4.00 a month and my board and clothes, driving a team of mules that I had to get on a bushel box to put the harness on. I had to do most of the farming as my boss was some kind of a politician. (They called him Squire Little). He had a team of ponies and a buggy and was sometimes away three or four days at a time and usually came home drunk. On one occasion after he had been gone almost a week I went out to do the chores and found his team standing at the gate and found him laying in the fodder cutter with his head under the knife. I went in and told his wife. She said I should have dropped the knife on him. I went home when school started the fall I was 14.

The next spring my father leased the Sankey ranch, as the Sankey boys had moved away and left Grandmother Sankey alone, so I stayed with her and helped on both farms that summer. I had finished the eighth grade that spring, but there was no high school to

go to so I worked on the farm and helped the neighbors. In 1901, when I was 16 years old, my uncle Ben Jury, who lived in DuBoise, offered me board and room to stay with him and go to high school and help him evenings and Saturdays with his Transfer and Delivery business which he owned and operated. He also sold farm machinery and after one year in high school I enrolled in the DeBoise Business College. In the fall I was one of the first graduates of the college. After graduation the college got me a job with the B R&R Railroad as clerk for the head air brake inspector. After a few months I got itchy feet and quit my job.

An old schoolmate and I went to West Virginia and hired out as firemen on the West Virginia Central, and after shoveling coal into one of those 12 foot fire boxes for nine months I decided that wasn't what I wanted either, so in the spring of 1906 I quit and went back to Pennsylvania and went back to work in the woods for my brother Claude and uncle Grant Sankey who had a contract making ties and cutting logs for a lumber company. We skidded the ties and logs out to the main road then in the winter we hauled them to the mill and railroad on bobsleds. In the winter of 1906 and 1907 I hauled ties to the railroad with my dad's team and on the 25th of March, 1907, my brother Bruce and I left for Oregon.

Our brother Ward had come to Oregon in 1904 and letters he wrote home about lots of work and good wages prompted us to make the trip. We both went to work logging where Ward was working. I started falling timber with Ward, and Bruce was swamping road for the horse team as most of the



Coy and Bruce Lansbery ca. 1910

logging was done by horses and oxen then. We worked there until the job was finished about the 15th of June. Then Bruce and I went over the Mohawk to see Rennie Koozer and his brother Alfred and their uncle George Shaw and wife, who were working for Hammitt Bros. at Donna. They had come west when Ward came in 1904. Rennie, Bruce and I decided to go to Newport for the 4th and spent a week there. To get to Newport in those days we had to go to Albany by train, change and go to Toledo on a branch line then take a stage from there, crossing Yaquina Bay by ferry boat to get to Newport. When we came back from Newport after the 4th, Rennie and I took a contract falling and bucking for George Barnes, who was logging at Deerhorn back of where Dale Koozer now lives. Barnes was camped in the old Lane house that stood where Hart Brothers service station now stands. Bruce, Rennie and I put up a tent on the bench above where Dale Koozer now lives. After we finished that job about

the middle of August a man by the name of Dennis Means (who had been working for Barnes with a team), Bruce, Rennie and I started on a hunting trip up Gate Creek on the road to Gold Hill. After a day's hunt we decided there were no deer there so we came back to Vida on the highway. Bruce and Dennis came back to Deerhorn. Rennie and I took what grub we had in our pack sacks and a blanket apiece and hiked on up the river to Finn Rock. There were two timber cruisers on the other side of the river at the mouth of Quartz Creek. We got them to put us across the river and we started hunting up the creek, one on each side. We would meet at the creek at night. We hunted up the creek for three days and never saw a deer. At this time, after we had supper, we had just one spud left and no lard to fry it in so decided to start back down the creek. That day we shot a quail, a fish duck and caught a fish. We dressed them all out and with the spud put them all in a kettle and boiled them for a Mulligan Stew that evening. The next day we got back to the river and across to the highway and back to Deerhorn. We had a wonderful trip if we did get skunked.

Then there was a family by the name of Ulery who invited Rennie and me to go on a trip to Clear Lake. We got to Belknap the evening of the second day. From there on was no road. We had to leave the wagon and pack in from there by trail. While we were eating supper Freeman Lansbery (a second cousin) rode into camp with an extra pony and wanted me to go back to McKenzie Bridge and help him finish the Log Cabin Hotel. His partner had quit and he couldn't do much alone, so I cut my trip to Clear Lake and went back with

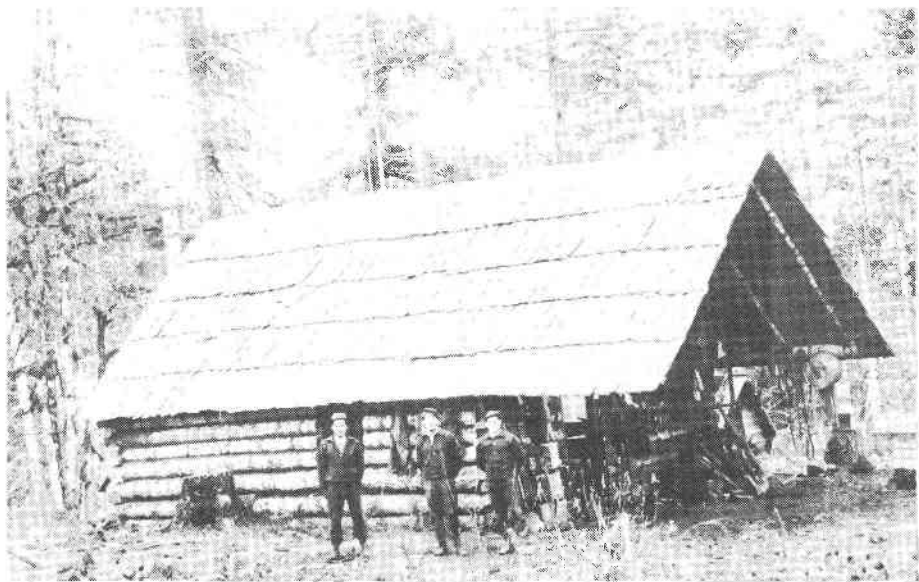
him. After we finished the Log Cabin (which by the way is still being used as a restaurant), we built a house for uncle George Frizel. Also a fireplace for a man by the name of Stubbs, who had a summer home up along the river from the hotel. While we were working at McKenzie Bridge, the Indians came over the mountain with a bunch of wild ponies and we each bought one and worked with them evenings and weekends. By the time we were ready to leave we had them pretty well trained. So we packed them up with our belongings and came down to Jimmy Resides (Freeman's cousin) who had a homestead just above Thompson's Resort at the mouth of Martin Creek on the south side of the river. Rennie Koozer met us there and we packed into the head of Martin Creek on a hunting trip. We got in there and made camp in the evening. The next morning Rennie and I started hunting and left Freeman to break camp and follow us. About one-half mile from camp we killed three deer. By the time Freeman caught us we had them all dressed ready to pack on the horse. We had only taken one horse in with us so we packed two deer on the horse and Rennie and I took the other on our backs and packed it six miles down to the homestead. This was in November and the nights got pretty cold. We hung the deer up under an apple tree. They froze solid over night. In the daytime we wrapped them in deer bags and layed them on the frozen ground and covered them with canvas.

When we left the bridge, that man we built the fireplace for told us he was going to send a present when he went back to Portland. So while we were at Jimmy's he sent us a two-gallon jug of

whiskey. Freeman and Jimmy camped with the jug for two days. Rennie had fattened a hog and we wanted to make some mince when we got back to Deerhorn. So we swiped two quart bottles out of the jug and hid them in our pack sacks. When we got to Deerhorn Freeman went to town and Rennie and I butchered the hog and took all the trimmings from the hog and the deer and made a washtub full of mince meat and used some of the whiskey in it. Freeman came back in about three days. We got the mince meat mixed up. We had him sample it. After he sampled it he said it was good but would have been better if we had saved some whiskey to put in it. We never told him any different.

The camps on the river closed down in the winter because they were afraid to put logs in the river on account of floods, so there was little work. Rennie and I put in a lot of time hunting

cougar. There was a \$50 bounty on them and we made enough money to keep us in supplies anyway. Bruce, Rennie and I batched in our tent the winter of 1907 and 1908. In the spring of 1908 the Ulreys moved to Olympia, Washington and Bruce rented their ranch. Rennie went to work for Booth-Kelly Lumber Company. I bought a team of horses and Harve Potter and I put our teams together on a four-horse Bagley scraper and worked on the ditch when they started to dig the canal for the Waltherville Power Plant. After the 4th of July I bought a wagon and took a contract hauling freight for two stores at Leaburg and Goff and for Millican Store at Deerhorn. They all laid in their winter's supply before the rain started on account of bad roads in winter. That fall I sold the team to Bruce, and Rennie and I took a contract falling and bucking 160 acres of timber on the Goff Homestead across the river from



Koozer-Lansbery logging camp, 4-13-1910 l-r Johnny Rossman, Ward & Coy Lansbery. This is a camp house they probably built. At this point they ran a small logging camp and contracted the logging. Coy Lansbery coll. Lane County Museum.



Rossman family l-r seated, Johnny, Della, Minnie, Edna. Standing l-r _____?, Faye, Percy, Coy I. Lansbery family album, courtesy Cheryl Pfaff

Walterville. We moved our tent down there and set it up while we built a log cabin for our permanent camp. So in early January 1909 we started cutting as the loggers who had the contract to put the logs in the river wanted to cold deck some logs before they started putting them in the river. In those days we had to peel the bark off and trim the limbs off close for horse logging. So when the sap came up in the spring we put on two extra sets of fallers and three peelers and trimmers and cut enough timber to keep the four-horse team logging all winter. In the fall we layed the extra crew off and Rennie and I alone had to buck the logs to keep a four-horse team hauling. They cold decked the logs on a high bank next to the river so they could roll them in in the spring. My brother Claude and wife,

who had just married, came out from Pennsylvania as well as Bill and Wash Selfridge. We put Claude's wife running the cookhouse and Claude and the Selfridge boys worked in the woods for us that summer. Also my brother Ward worked that summer for us. After we layed the crew off that fall Claude and Sara and Wash Selfridge went back to Pennsylvania and Bill Selfridge went to Alaska.

My Dad and sister Ruth came out to the Seattle Fair and came down and stayed with us, then went back home with Claude and his wife. After we layed the crew off all we had to do was buck just enough logs to keep the four-horse team hauling to the cold deck. We could buck enough logs in a week to keep the team going two weeks, then we would go hunting. If we were short of

meat we would go hunting for deer, otherwise we would hunt cougar. On one such trip we found two cougar tracks by a small creek. We kept the dogs on a leash and followed them for two days. The morning of the third day we found a fresh deer carcass they had killed. We knew they wouldn't be far after a big feed, so we turned the dogs loose and in less than an hour they had them up a tree. We got the pair of them. One measured nine and one-half feet and the other eleven feet from tip to tip. They brought \$100 bounty. I still have a picture of them, the cats and the dogs.

In the fall of the next year (1910) we finished that contract and dissolved the partnership with the exception of hunting. I am getting ahead of my private life. During the past two years Johnny Rossman and I became more chummy. He had worked for Rennie and me in our camp and had invited me to go home with him one weekend to meet his family, which consisted of three sisters,

two brothers and his parents. They treated me like one of the family and made me feel at home. After a few visits I became interested in the oldest daughter. We became engaged in 1910 and on March 14, 1911, we were married in Eugene. I bought a house and two acres of land. We started housekeeping and I went to work for Booth-Kelly Lumber Co. at the Deerhorn camp, which was just across the river from my home, so I could stay at home. I had about one mile to walk to work. I took a job firing the road donkey that hauled logs 3700 feet and kicked them into a mile long running chute into the river.

My brother-in-law Charley Carter bought four acres from the Rossmans joining me on the west and we both had about thirty big fir stumps on our place. In the winter of 1911 and 1912 when the camp was shut down, we put in the time pulling stumps with a handmade machine. We would use powder to bust them into pieces then use the machine



Mr Coy Lansbery, John Rossman, Charlie Carter, George Kebebeck. Courtesy Louis Polley.

to pull out the roots. We worked two winters before we got the stumps all out. On the 23rd of December, 1911 our first child was born, named Naomi Bernice. I went up to Pepiots to phone for a doctor and Mrs. Pepiot and her sister Mrs. Deadmond came home with me and acted as midwives. They had the baby here an hour before the doctor got there in a horse and buggy from Springfield.

In the summer of 1912 I worked in the camp again and again pulled stumps in the winter. I stayed with that job until 1913 when the game commission got a law passed to prohibit driving logs in the river. Booth-Kelly had a mill at Coburg so they had to quit that mill. But in 1911 the company mill in Springfield burned so they built a larger mill in Springfield and had to ship the logs in from Wendling. So in the fall of 1913 they moved Deerhorn camp to Wendling. They dismantled the donkeys and hauled them to Wendling on wagons. I helped in this operation and moved to Camp 4 above Wendling and went to running a donkey on construction, building railroad grade. We lived in camp about a year, moving back on the river the fall of 1914, but I still stayed at the same job, part time running yarder on logging and part time on construction.

Just after we moved back on the river in 1914 a couple bought and moved into a house east of us. They acted queer. He would go down to the post office. I met him on the road several times and he would pass with his hat over his eyes and never look up. In about thirty days the sheriff, whose name was Parker,

came up and handcuffed the pair and took them to jail. We found out their name was Ennis and they came from Texas. He was an attorney for two old spinsters who were pretty wealthy. He had talked them into giving him their money to invest for them. Instead he killed them and buried them in a pit of acid in his back yard. These ladies had a brother living there. He asked Ennis where they were and was told they had gone East on a visit. After Ennis had left, the brother started an investigation by digging up the pit that Ennis had covered up with dirt. They took the Ennises back to Texas but I never heard what they did with them.

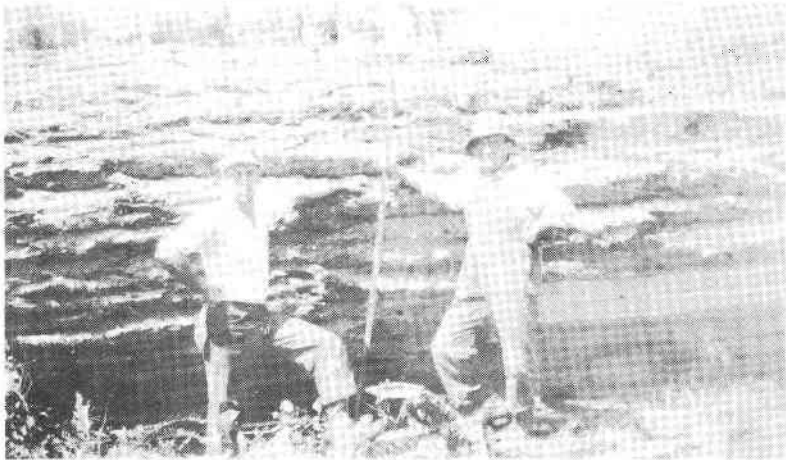
On January 3rd, 1915 our second child was born, named Carroll William, after his two grandparents. 1915 was very uneventful except I built a barn and bought a cow. I planted three acres of corn and worked at Booth-Kelly camp and was only home on weekends. My wife ran the ranch, milked the cow, fed the pigs and hoed the corn. I was running donkey on construction up until they shut down for the holidays. I came home and was grubbing some stumps and got inflammatory rheumatism and was in bed for a month. January 1916 the camp was shut down on account of snow until February 15th so I didn't lose any time. I was able to go back to work by the time camp opened up. I went back to running donkey on construction. About the 4th of July 1916 we moved down on Mill Creek at the mouth of Nebo Creek. The camp was Camp 11. My brother Paul was cooking there. We built a spur up Nebo Creek about one mile. I used to go home on

weekends and would come to Camp 10 and have dinner there Sunday evening then would go on down to Camp 11 after dark. I always carried a tin can and a candle to see to walk by. I had to go through an old cutting that had grown up with greasewood. Several evenings I heard noises in the greasewoods, thinking it was wildcats hunting birds until one evening I heard a noise close behind me. Throwing my light around I saw a large cougar cross the Trail behind me. The next Sunday evening when I was within a mile of camp, I heard the darndest scream you ever heard down toward camp and thought it was someone in camp. At the same time Paul was out on the porch filling a lamp and heard the same scream and thought it was me up on the trail. After comparing notes we decided it was a cougar, so after that I carried a gun with me going over the trail after night.

We finished this job on Nebo Creek the first of July 1917 and moved our equipment out on the summit east of Camp 10. Until they got our camp moved we had to stay at Camp 10. That

first evening the camp foreman, Joe Jackson, came into the bunkhouse and offered me a job scaling for the fallers and buckers who were working on a bonus. I took the job and never unloaded the donkey off the flat car. Paul, my brother, quit cooking at the same time and joined the Army. He got a job cooking for the officers of the 16th Engineers in France. With the exception of when the camp was shut down, I kept the scaling job for the fallers and buckers until 1938 when the company began truck logging. They transferred me to the Springfield log dump to scale for the truckers who were hauling by the thousand board feet.

I am getting ahead of myself. In the fall of 1917 I bought my first car, a 1917 Chevy. 1918 was very uneventful, work as usual. We enjoyed our car and took a good many trips on weekends and followed a ball club all summer called the Red Sides. It was sponsored by the Cascade Resort. I was official scorekeeper and my family got to go to all the games free of charge. Wayne Yarnall was manager and Rube Montgomery was our official umpire. We



Walden Hileman and Coy with his scaling stick ca. 1928 near Booth Kelly camp #35 on the ridge between Camp Creek and the McKenzie up from Walterville. Courtesy Louis Polley.

had a celebration at Cascade Resort on the 4th of July and played a game with a team from Bend of retired professionals. We beat them so bad it wound up in a free-for-all fight. The crowd from Bend had bet all their money on the Bend team and lost. My wife learned to drive the car that summer. Of course the roads weren't paved at that time and were pretty rough in places. In the winter it was hard to get to Eugene but we never tried to go very much in the winter anyway.

leave of absence and my wife and youngest brother Paul made a trip to Brookings to get my sister Kate, who was teaching school, and bring her home. On the way down we ground up the bearings in one front wheel going up Cow Creek Canyon. They were working on the highway and had it all tore up. We had to detour several places, had to drive up the creek bed some times for a half mile then crawl back up a steep bank on to the road. We got to Oakland, Oregon the first night and spent most of the night working on the car. The next day we got to Monumental on the Oregon Mountain without any trouble. The road was mostly a one track with a passing place every mile or so. Going down the mountain the next day we broke both front springs. We cut a tire iron in two and clamped them in, got some bailing wire at an old deserted homestead and wired them up to get us into Crescent City. We couldn't find any new springs to fit so settled for a set of second hand ones out of a wrecked car and got to Brookings that night. School was out and my sister was all packed so we left for home the next morning. We made it over the moun-

tains without any trouble. Coming off the mountains west of Grants Pass, in shifting gears, I broke the shifting lever off about four inches above the floor board. We made it into Grants Pass but it was Decoration Day and all the garages were closed. We drove a few miles north and found a road crew and they had a temporary black smith shop set up along side the road. The black-smith welded my lever for me for nothing and with the exception of a tire blowout we made it on to Springfield without a mishap. We had left Naomi and Carroll with my mother and they both had the measles at that time. When we got back they were about over them.

In August 1919 we traded our home on the river for an eight room house on the corner of 16th and Ferry Streets in Eugene, and moved to town. On account of poor market conditions the camps were shut down for three months and I got a job with Ax Billie's Department Store, clerking in the grocery department. Naomi was eight years old and went to Patterson Grade School situated on the northwest corner of 13th and Patterson Streets. Carroll was only 5 on January 3rd, 1920, too young for school. My wife and kids didn't like it in town so in the spring of 1920 we sold the place in town and bought our old house and one-half acre of ground and moved back home. My wife was raised on the river and never liked city life.

That spring I was appointed Deputy Assessor for the River from Waltherville to the head of the river. I had to get a two weeks lay-off from Booth-Kelly to do this little job for the County and in so doing I discovered Booth-Kelly had three camps in our school district to the

value of 191,000.00. We had an old school house that had been a one room and when they got crowded they had built a story on top. At this time we discovered it was spreading on its foundation, so while we had the extra Booth-Kelly valuation we built the building that is still standing at Leaburg. In 1921 I was elected to the School Board and served on the Board until my kids were out of school in 1932. We proceeded to build the new building in 1922. Also I was appointed Deputy Assessor for three years and I saw that Leaburg got the valuation of those three camps. Up until then Wendling had been getting that valuation. I thought I was going to lose my job with Booth-Kelly but I didn't.

In the fall of 1923 the Booth-Kelly camp was shut down for six weeks. I got a job with the Eugene Water Board running an electric hoist when they added another turbine to the Walterville Power Plant then went back to my old job at camp. During the time these three camps were in our school district I stayed at home and scaled for fallers and buckers. When these camps finished on the McKenzie side they moved over on the Mohawk and I had to stay in camp. Life went on as usual until 1929. When the depression hit, the camps were down for about three years. In May and three weeks in June, 1929, I worked for a contractor who was logging for Booth-Kelly just north of my place. Seeing he was going broke and couldn't pay his men, I quit and Walden Hileman and I spent the weeks before the 4th looking for work in Eastern Oregon. Finally got a job with Forest Lumber Co. on the head of the Williamson River, 30 miles east of Highway 97.

We worked there until the first of September, 1929. We were layed off there and went over to Prospect to see my sister and husband. He was working for Cop Co. I put in an application for work and came home. In about a week they sent for me to come back. They had a job for me. I went down about the 15th of September and stayed there until December 15th. We finished that job and I came back home just in time for the holidays.

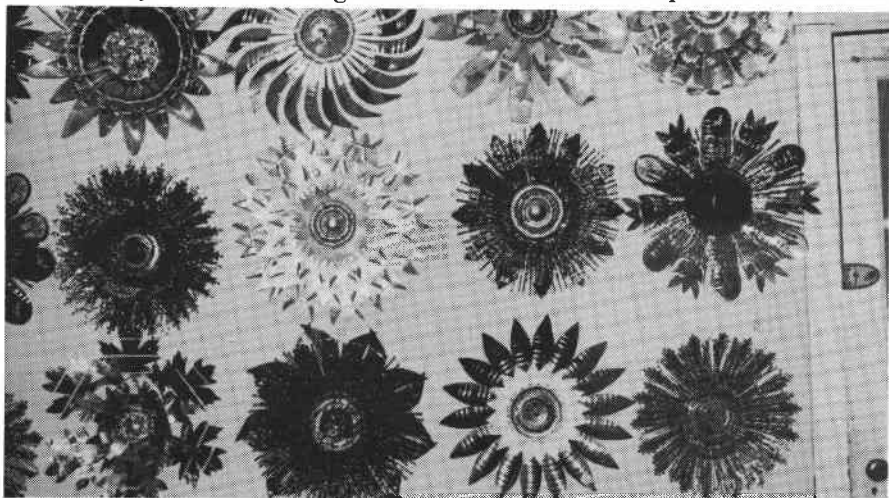
After the first of the year Mickie Smith bought an old house in Leaburg and wanted me to help him remodel and paint it. (He was a timber faller from camp). We spent about three months on this job. When this job was finished, my brother-in-law had a carpenter from Springfield build him a new house, but he didn't do any finishing. He gave me the job of building built-ins in the kitchen, clothes closets in the bedrooms and bathroom, which took another three months. By that time Rennie Koozer, my old partner, gave me a contract to build him a new house which I started that December. I hired three men to help pour the foundation and put up the frame and get the roof on. Then I layed off all the help and finished the house my myself, which took about three months.

After I finished the house Rennie got me a job with the McNutt Bros. (whom he was working for) on a road job down at Drew, Oregon. They were connecting the highway up between Canyonville and Trail on the Rogue River. I worked there until the first of July, 1932. Just after I returned home my house burned so I was busy the next two months cleaning up the debris and getting ready to rebuild. With the help of my

neighbors and friends from camp I dug a basement, poured the foundation and had the frame up and the roof on by the first of September. Then the Booth-Kelly Co. sent me word they were starting back to work on the 16th. I went back to camp and worked on the house on weekends and had it so we could move in between Christmas and New Year's. Then was about a year getting it finished. Mrs. Farnham had a vacant house a short distance from us and she let us move into it until we got our new house built. The Booth-Kelly Lumber Co. sold me all the material for the new house, including doors, windows, brick and cement for \$700 and let me work it out. That was a big help to us at that time. They would hold out \$50 each month and it was soon paid for. That was a bad year for me.

In 1961 my wife passed away with heart trouble. Well, I stayed in the house and batched until 1968 when my eyes got so bad I had to quit driving my car. In 1962 trip I saw a wall plaque made out of tin cans which gave me an idea for a hobby. After returning home

I purchased two pair of tin snips, a long-nosed pliers, made a small workbench and began collecting tin cans of all types. I started experimenting on making wall plaques. After I had made 30 some different designs, I wondered how many different ones could be made. By September I had made 100, no two alike. My friends urged me to take them to the Lane County Fair, which I did. I couldn't sell them at the Fair or I would have to pay commercial license for my booth. As a hobby it cost me nothing, but I took orders to be delivered after the fair. I was so encouraged from the results at the Fair, I spent all my spare time that winter and by fair time the next fall I had made 240 different designs. Again I took them to the Lane County Fair with results that by the time the Fair was over I had sold over 100, mostly for \$10 each. The largest order was the sale of 11 to a man from California. I sold five to a lady from Boston, Mass. Then I gave about 100 to friends and relatives. After the Fair I was invited by the principal of Creswell Grade School to put on a demonstration

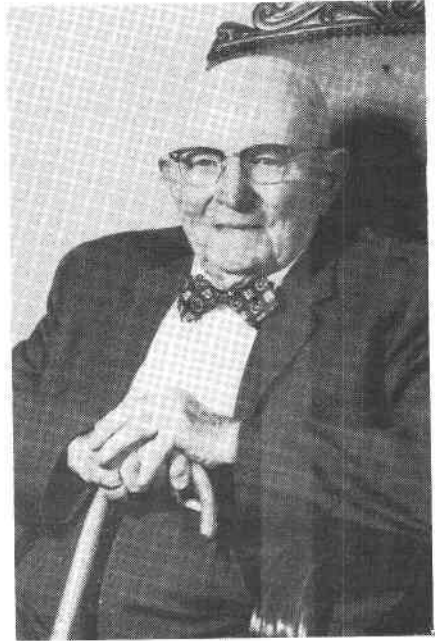


Some of Coy's tinware creations pictured as they hung on his living room wall. courtesy Cheryl Pfaff

for the grade pupils, which I did for two days. I was also invited to put on a demonstration for the art class at Laurelwood Academy at Gaston, Oregon, which I did for three days. Also I was invited by the principal of Junction City grade school to demonstrate the art. In the fall of 1964 I had an invitation to display my work at the Arts and Crafts Hobby Show being held in Vancouver, B.C. So I boxed up 15 of my best remaining ones and shipped them up there by express. Results when my display returned were, I was awarded a blue ribbon and the hobby show paid express for shipping both ways. By the year 1965 my eyesight began to fail me and I gave up the tin works.

In January 1965 I sold my place on the river with the privilege of using the cabin as long as I cared to stay there. I stayed there until 1968 when I moved into a cabin in Springfield that belonged to my daughter and her husband. For a pastime then I began gathering data for a family tree. For the next four years I worked on this project. During this time I made two trips back to Pennsylvania to visit and gather data for my tree. After four years of research and correspondence I have completed the family tree both on my mother's and my father's side of the family. The book consists of over 100 pages and I was lucky to go back eleven generations on my mother's side (the Sankeys) but only five generations on my father's side, although I am still working on it.

During the time I lived on the McKenzie River from 1907 to 1968 I always loved to hunt and fish.



Coy Lansbery on his 90th birthday.

Although we have a large herd of elk on the headwaters of the South Fork of the McKenzie I never hunted in that area. From when I first came to Oregon until 1960, when they outlawed hunting mule deer with any gun less than a 30-30, I had hunted with a 25-35 rifle, keeping track of all the deer I had killed. I had 27 notches on my rifle for blacktail and five for mule deer when I gave the 25-35 to my grandson Larry on his 16th birthday and bought a 30-30 Winchester carbine. In 1969 I couldn't see to hunt. I sold the 30-30 to Don Dudley and have never hunted since. I think I have covered the highlights of my life, up to the present time — July 1, 1975.

Ed. note: Coy Lansbery celebrated his 90th birthday August 29, 1975 with 111 guests signing the guest book. He passed away March 30, 1979 in his 94th year.



Hop dryer at Thistledown Farm on River Road, Eugene, 1983 Doug Newman photo

HISTORY OF HOPS GROWING IN LANE COUNTY *by Doug Newman*

Ever consider hops? If you've travelled the back roads of the lower Willamette Valley, chances are good you've probably seen several of the few remaining monuments to a once-thriving Oregon industry:

Hop houses.

Once, the barn-like hop house — also known as a kiln or dryer — was a prominent feature on the rural landscape throughout the Willamette Valley. The unique structures — capped with one or two cupolas — were designed for drying hops, a crop which at one time was a major factor in western Oregon's agricultural economy.

Today, hop yards and kilns are a thing of the past in Lane County; hops are no longer grown commercially. Of primary importance to the brewing industry, hops are now chiefly produced in the drier climes of eastern Washington and Idaho, though some yards still remain in commercial production near Salem and Corvallis.

How did the hop — a non-native plant — get started in Oregon? According to ***OREGON NATIVE SON***, a historically-oriented publication popular around the turn of the century, the first hops in Oregon were planted by Adam Weisner near Buena Vista, Polk County, in 1867.

Weisner, who had brought the roots with him from Wisconsin, rented five acres and planted a crop. Unfortunately, though he had gone to considerable expense to prepare the ground and hop house, the land was unfit for hop cultivation and the crop failed.

Regretably, this account does not exactly coincide with one given in "History and Present Status of the Oregon Hop Industry," by Karl G. Becke, a senior thesis prepared at the University of Oregon in 1917.

According to Becke, the hop industry in Oregon dates to 1850 when eight pounds of hops were dried and used for making yeast by an early Oregon settler [unnamed]. Hops adorned the front porch of the settler's house, a practice soon employed by other individuals, who, by 1860, had dried 493 pounds for yeast-making. Though Becke does not so indicate, perhaps Weisner was the first to attempt production on a commercial basis.

As previously noted, Weisner failed.

Enter George Leasure. Leasure, then a resident of Polk County, purchased enough roots from Weisner for a similar five-acre plot and transported them south to Eugene City.

In 1869, he planted the hops on a piece of choice bottom land on a donation land claim established by his father, John Leasure, on the south bank of the Willamette River. Their property was adjacent to a claim owned by Eugene F. Skinner, Eugene's founder.

Where Weisner failed, Leasure was successful. A hop yard was established and a dryer built. According to *OREGON NATIVE SON*, the Leasure hop yard was the first in the state to yield a harvest and was still being

successfully cultivated on a commercial basis at the turn of the century.

According to Becke's thesis, small farmers began to see the value of hops in the manufacture of beer in the early 1870s, planting some land to hops as a cash crop — a good return on a small investment.

By 1880, 42 farmers were involved in hop production, with 200 acres cultivated — the largest yard being ten acres. Things continued with gradual growth until 1888 — when the price of hops suddenly soared to \$1.00 per pound. Everyone jumped on the bandwagon. By 1890, Oregon's annual production was 3,673,726 pounds, even though the price had dropped to 40 cents.

Even at 40 cents, one-farm units could do well with small plots, since growers used women and children in the family to harvest and work the fields, resulting in low overhead.

In 1897, Becke reports Oregon farmers produced more than 18.5 million pounds of hops, with demand increasing. Beer consumption was increasing at a rate faster than the growth of population.

In 1900, a threat to market stability occurred — Oregon growers had trouble with hop lice and mold and spraying was employed in an effort to control the problem. The U.S. Bureau of Agriculture and Oregon Agricultural College conducted experiments, which, among other things, proved Oregon hops were equal to any grown elsewhere in the world.

Due to pest problems and the increased cost of spraying, Becke indicated that in 1899 some farmers plowed crops under — good fortune for those who held on, since the price

leveled off at a steady 30-cents per pound in 1902.

Growth continued until 1914, when Oregon's annual production reached 30 million pounds. At this point, growers began to resent the hop buyers or middlemen, who prior to this time had been considered a necessary evil. The growers became convinced the buyers were, "getting rich at our expense. . ."

The growers classed the buyers as un-productive laborers who added no material value to the hops which were placed in their hands. As a result, growers banded together and formed a Hop Growers' Association, with goals as follows:

- 1) To buy wholesale all supplies necessary to grow and market hops.
- 2) To distribute the supplies to members at lowest possible cost.
- 3) To pool crops and have the Association sell directly to consumers.

About this time, two additional events transpired which effected hops: First, war erupted in Europe and England declared an embargo on U.S. hops, thus reducing demand for surplus Oregon hops on the world market.

Second, in this country, Prohibition began to loom as a problem as numerous areas went "dry". At one point, for example, Eugene was "dry" while Springfield remained "wet."

World War I was perhaps the first great limiting factor on the growth of the hop industry. At the time, the world Hop Market was controlled by the U.S., England, Germany and Austria. The U.S. surplus was exported to England. Thus, European crop conditions virtually controlled the U.S. price, and when the embargo was imposed, the

situation for the U.S. hop industry worsened.

Due to price fluctuations, from a business standpoint hops were a risky business. Great fortunes could be made and lost in a year's time.

In the yards, two to three years' growth are necessary before hop vines will produce a marketable crop. Consequently, when more acres are added to production, the effect is not immediate. Then, the year the new hops reach maturity, a large amount are dumped on the market, causing the price to plummet.

In addition, the crop cannot be held over from one year to the next, since quality is reduced by storage. Finally, while some contracts were given by buyers to growers prior to harvest, buyers still maintained the right to reject the hops — leaving the growers to their own devices. Hold-outs must sell at a loss, or lose all.

Beyond the role of hops in Oregon's economy, the crop had ties to several other historical elements. For example, growth of the hop industry mirrored innovations in agriculture in general, as production of crops moved from small, one-family farms to larger, more organized operations.

Hop drying is typical of agricultural progress: The first hops in Oregon were simply sun-dried. This worked to a degree, but soon proved ineffective as the acreage grew and more hops were processed. There was little control in sun-drying and the hops were often discolored with quality damaged.

Thus, the kiln was developed — housed in the cupola-topped, barn-like structures still occasionally visible today. The hops rested 20-25 feet above the ground on which the furnaces were

placed. Heat of 160 degrees was necessary for 18 hours, to ensure well-dried, quality hops.

In 1979, as part of a project to record oral history in this area, Barbel Leber, with the Springfield Historical Commission, interviewed Hubert Gray, a man with personal experience around hop yards. A portion of their conversation follows.

Leber: How did they dry them? [hops]

Gray: They had big buildings. Hop dryers, they called them. And they had, now at Seavey's, [a well-known hop yard north of Springfield] that was the biggest hop yard around here, they had several of them. They'd pick the hops and put them in these big sacks and haul them into the hop dryer and spread them out on the drying floor, a slotted floor with a gunnysack material on top of it. They'd pile them up about eighteen or twenty inches deep, up to two feet. And then there was furnaces underneath and they had people hired to keep these furnaces going day and night, 24-hours a day.

When the hops were dry they'd take them off the floors and send them down to the...[cooling room] a great big building, and dump the hops in there, and then from there they went into a baler. They baled them in this gunnysack material...like the grain sacks used to be made of, burlap. They pressed these hops into bales that weighed about 500 pounds and they put the burlap around them right in the press and two men were hired as

sewers. They sewed the burlap around and it was an enormous amount of hops they'd put in one bale...I sewed burlap one year and I would say the bales were about six feet by two by about three.

Another individual with personal recollections of the hop yards is H. Farmer Franklin, who was interviewed by Ellen Kotz, as part of the Springfield oral history project:

Kotz: You said that there were about 200 growers. Did all of these people have their own kilns?

Franklin: Yeah — practically all of them — yeah.

Kotz: So there were loads and loads of kilns?

Franklin: Oh yes...you had to have a little kiln regardless for whatever size yard they had — why — he had his acreage over here — better than 100 acres — he had eight kilns and there would be maybe a 10-acre patch that had one kiln — just whatever the number of acres a grower had why that's about what size the kilns he had to have to dry the hops...

They all had cupolas and were built pretty high on account of drafts — they get the draft — then in later years they'd put electric motors up on the sides of these cupolas and had an airplane propeller inside the cupola and that increased the draft — it sucked air up through the hops better — in some instances it was good and others it wasn't — there were a lot of arguments for it and a lot of arguments against it...

Kotz: How did the kiln work in relation to the cooling room?

Franklin: Well, the cooling room is apart from the kilns because there wasn't any heat near that cooling room — those hops had to cool in there . . . a car . . . hauled the dry hops up and we'd take them out and dump them in that cooling room and that's where the balers was — that was where they were baled.

Kotz: How come you needed so many kilns and only one cooler?

Franklin: Well, that cooling room was pretty big — it would hold a crop. Sometimes we'd have to bale out some to make room but it would usually hold a whole crop.

Kotz: I read a book describing the construction of the kiln and it talked about a floor being raised a certain amount and how many crops you could put on the floor . . .

Franklin: Well that floor is a permanent deal — they were about 32 feet square — those kilns — and they had a furnace down there and a network of pipes that went round and it was probably 20 feet from the ground up to this floor and there was a bunch of slats with some light burlap over those slats and they would dump these green hops that had just been picked that same day and they dump them on the floor and they'd pile them in there I'd say about three feet deep and then they built a fire and put in the sulfur pots — they used sulfur to bleach them in those days . . .

The summer typically got underway when the fields were plowed, using a small plow which allowed the ground to be turned as close to the row as possible. The dirt was then hoed away from the hop hill — suckers were trimmed — and the hill was covered once more with the hoe.

Next, twine was placed on each hill, and when the plants started to grow they were trained up the strings to an overhead system of wires, then trained onto the wires. The ground was constantly cultivated — stirred — to try and hold moisture. July and August were always difficult months, due to a lack of rain, but overhead irrigation sprinklers were eventually developed.

Spraying, to rid the plants of insects, was also a major activity.

With luck, the crop matured, survived insects and mildew and was eventually picked, dried, baled and sent to the brewery.

In 1979, Ellen Kotz interviewed another person who remembered life in the hop yards — Crystal Fogle — who worked both as a picker and book-keeper:

Fogle: . . . I went picking hops once and I did quite well the first day and then the second day I got lazy and didn't pick as much and when my parents came over to help me . . . my father told me if I were going to do something — to work at it — to not stop — so I didn't get to go back the third day.

. . . In years later — I kept books for one or two summers in the hop fields. The hops were grown and trained on wires and people would pick hops and they

would have a certain container fastened to their bodies and they would strip the hops off the vines trying to get as few leaves as they could. Then they would empty these containers into large sacks, tie up the sacks.

Then, the weighers would come along with a tripod and scales and they would hang the sacks up on these scales and weigh them and they were paid one cent per pound. Then in later years if a hop picker stayed the whole season they would be paid a bonus. Some people would camp at the hop fields and some people would drive each day.

Kotz: What was it like to camp in the hop fields?

Fogle: Oh, it was dirty and people would camp in tents and do their own cooking, but that was a way for families to make money during the summertime . . .

Kotz: Where were the fields and how big were they and who owned them?

Fogle: North of Springfield across the McKenzie River was the Seavey hop yards. And west of Springfield on the way to Eugene — the name escapes me now — but there were hop fields not far from the streetcar trestle. And then south of Springfield there was another Seavey hop yard . . .

Kotz: What happened to the hop yards during Prohibition?

Fogle: As I recall, the Seaveys of course would be in what used to be known as the “wets.” The wets believed in taverns or saloons. They felt it was good for the

economy of the country and people who enjoyed beer or near beer should be permitted to drink it and other people, usually the very churchy people, would be the “drys.” And one time Springfield was wet, Eugene was dry and the people who wanted to have beer and wine would come to Springfield. It was during this period that I recall that the movies were open here on Sundays, but they were closed in Eugene.

Harvest time in the Oregon hop yards was an important time for the pickers, as well as the growers. In his thesis, Becke referred to the hop harvest as “Hobo’s Heaven” and reported that 50-60,000 people were involved in the harvest in 1917. All kinds of pickers sought work in Lane County yards, including Indians. Hubert Gray recalled Indians working at the Seavey hop yard, north of Springfield:

Gray: . . . They [Seavey’s] had about 200 acres of hops and the Indians would get down there and camp and pick hops. And it’s kind of interesting, you couldn’t get them to pick a leaf and a lot of people stripped them off the hops and they’d pick up to five and six hundred pounds apiece and the Indians picked each hop separately and sometimes they’d get a hundred pounds. And that meant that the average picker could get many more than the Indians would.

Leber: Did other people talk to the Indians while they were there, or did they keep themselves separate?

Gray: They had a separate camp. Every year there would be some of the Indian women who would make moccasins and, of course, there were white people buying the moccasins.

I thought it was interesting, us kids had a store there at the hop yard and there was an Indian and his woman came up after groceries and he bought fifty pounds of flour and a few other little things in a paper sack and he picked up the paper sack and pointed to the fifty pound flour sack and his wife went over and put it on her shoulder. It was a half mile down to their tent and we were anxious to see if he ever helped and we followed them clear down there and he never once offered to take it and she never set it down in the half mile—she carried that sack of flour without stopping to rest... I never was inside one of their teepees. Some of them had regular tents too, but they were always put up with poles, the same as you see in the pictures of the early Indians... They brought over a lot of horses every year and sold them here. The Warm Springs Indians had pretty nice horses. I know one Indian told me that a fellow, Bart, that I've known all my life, he was just a kid then, he bought this horse and he won every race around after that. They were always having horse races, that was another thing that has

completely died out now...

Besides picking, there were other jobs related to the production of hops. H. Farmer Franklin worked as a buyer for Seavey's, one of the largest dealers in the state. Franklin describes the job:

Franklin: I went around and called on the growers and I would go out and sample crops and take them in the office and we'd mail the samples to the brewers back east... then, once in a great while we would be lucky enough to buy a crop and make a few dollars—and then of course he raised a lot of hops [himself]—at one time he was raising about 4,000 bales and each bale weighed about 200 pounds... I had a car and would go around and call on all these growers and then I had a sampling kit and I'd cut samples...

...It had a big knife and a pair of tongs and needles and thread and I'd inspect a lot, I had a deal kinda like a spear... that we called a trier—I'd pull a handful of hops out of each bale to see if they were all right.

Kotz: What did you look for?

Franklin: Well, lots of things—I found a dead woodpecker in a bale one time... a bucket... a bottle of beer... and of course it was spoiled... it tasted like it was anyway... you found lots of things—of course you were looking more or less for moisture—if it wasn't dried properly why it didn't keep... it would spoil... mold... lots of things you look for in hops... □

BOOK REVIEW

by Mary Rodman

“Pioneering in Oregon’s Coast Range – Surviving the Depression Years” by Ione Reed (Calapooia Publications, 27006 Gap Road, Brownsville, Oregon, 97327, \$7.95, plus \$1.00 postage) is an engrossing account of the reclaiming of an abandoned ranch high in the Oregon Coast Range.

In September, 1927, as a newlywed of 18 years old, Ione Reed and her 23-year-old husband, Ike Reed, took up the challenge of helping Ike’s father, Bert Reed, restore working order to a 640-acre deserted ranch east of Florence.

Driving two wagon loads of household goods from Eugene, the newlyweds began their roundabout journey. The Reeds travelled in a great loop almost to the Pacific Ocean before turning east toward their destination – camping out six nights en route.

“Although the ranch was almost directly south of Mapleton, the only road in wound west through Florence and then east again through Canary. The highway between Mapleton and Florence was unpaved. The stretch between Mapleton and Cushman was known thereabouts as *The Shelf*, and a shelf literally it was. High above the railroad track and narrow, with only a few turnouts for meeting traffic, it

snaked in and out of gullies in short curves. Many travellers between Mapleton and Florence refused to drive it, preferring to load their cars on the mailboat that ran between the towns.”

In the abandoned log cabin awaiting them, the Reeds found newspapers printed in 1899-1901 pasted on the walls. They also found that their first job was to clean up the ravages made by generations of rat colonies who had all too obviously been enjoying undisputed occupancy for many a year. Also, . . . “the barn roof leaked . . . and there were no fences for the stock.” Nonetheless they occasionally took time off to rejoice in their new surroundings – one of their first pleasures, a sidetrip to Roman Nose Mountain.

Enlivened by fascinating and accurate details, the story of the years from 1927 to 1936, is filled with human interest. Ione Reed’s joy in the beauties of the meadows, woods, and streams of the Coast Range as well as her lively sense of humor light up every chapter.

Photographs from the Reed collection and three excellent regional maps by David M. Pond enhance “Pioneering in the Oregon Coast Range.” A valuable contribution to Lane County and to Oregon history. Highly recommended.

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Ca. 1908 Booth Kelley 10x15 Tacoma kicking donkey. Left foreground shows start of chute that went 1400 feet to McKenzie River just above Deerhorn. l-r Geo. Windham, Charlie Carger, Joe Farnum. Louis Polley picture