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# A GLIMPSE OF NEWPORT

75 YEARS AGO

•  
*Second Series*  
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By  
LUCY F. BLUE

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### SCHOOLS—

In the autumn of 1876, after we had moved back from Corvallis "for keeps," my mother, an ex-school teacher, made up her mind that I must keep up my school work that winter not waiting for the short summer term next year. The few other parents living in and near Newport had become accustomed to the 9-month vacation and took for granted it must be that way.

When Mother told them she intended teaching me all winter

herself, they begged her to take their children, too, so she finally consented, and in a short time school began; first, in an old house at the foot of the hill going to the Ocean House, one that we had traded some property in Corvallis for, when we first came back.

There were Ed and Mort Abbey, Nellie Case and Ida, the three Hammond children (more or less—they did not care much for school, so came or not as they felt.) Three from the Jes-

sup family a mile away, always on time, and combed and scrubbed to the last inch. A week or two later the four boys from Grandpa Miller's up in the Bend.—\*(1)—thirteen, I believe, besides me, and possibly one or two others coming in later.

The tuition was 25 cents a week per scholar which was thought by some to be "plenty high," although the good folks really did appreciate having the children off their hands, or the streets, for five or six hours a day. Especially were my mother's efforts welcomed at Christmas time when she planned a small entertainment and community Christmas tree, which she brought off with great success. I wonder who, in these lush times, would consider it such. The next fall there was a real demand that she would do a "repeat" with the addition of many more children.

That winter the schoolroom was in Wright's Hall and a door from our kitchen opened directly into it, which was very convenient for my mother, as she could give an eye to household matters during recess and have dinner started when noon came. Wright's Hall was also used for all the dances the town was accustomed to promoting, for a Sunday service, of sorts, when-

\*(1)—Miller ranch now owned by Judge Gilkey.

ever an unwary man of the Gospel wandered our way, and then my mother had another idea—she would start a Sunday School!

Soon she had one going with several of the older people helping with the few classes. She interested some Corvallis people in sending her some hymn books, discarded there but very welcome in our "Union Sunday School," as she very wisely named it. There were few who had been Church members of any denomination so I think she showed good judgment and great understanding of how to weld the people into some sort of definitely social life.

The Christmas tree that year even had a few "boughten" presents on it, but were mostly home-made and homely things, like wearing apparel, knitted articles such as scarves, wristers, and even pairs of socks.

Aunt Mary Davis over on South Beach, made a very good-looking gray flannel coat for a boy that she wanted to have attend school with her two husky lads, who were always well and comfortably dressed and it would have been very embarrassing for this boy otherwise. Mrs. Jessup brought a whole box full of pinballs and needlebooks, homemade of circles of cardboard covered with longtreasured bits of cloth saved from

other and more fortunate days, perhaps. Two circles thus covered were stitched together on the edges, and then pins stuck in them all around. Small squares or oblongs fashioned in the same manner, but with two or three "leaves" of white flannel sewed in between the two covers formed needlebooks, with two or three precious needles stuck through the flannel leaves. Pinballs for the boys, needlebooks for the girls, and for each of her old friends among the women. Believe me, it was a happy time all around, and the pins and needles that went into those articles really meant no small sacrifice on Mrs. Jessup's part, being the only thing that cost her money.

The holiday entertainment that year was also a much more ambitious affair, too. There was a small "stage" built across the rear end of the hall, and by means of wires carefully strung and many sheets basted together and hung on them, we had a curtain that could be drawn from center to side and vice versa, just by having someone at each side (hidden by a sheet, of course) to pull them along the wires. How we came to have so many sheets was this: My mother foreseeing our need of sheets, had bought a whole bolt of unbleached muslin some time previously, and in one end of our

big kitchen there had been piled for weeks two or three sheets at a time, being "whipped" together down the middle, for this was just the yardwide muslin, different widths of sheeting not having appeared in Newport in those "good old days." When sewed through the center to make the seam flat, then my mother put in the hems with old Wheeler & Wilson machine, brought with her from Wisconsin.

I remember one dialogue taken from our fifth reader, "Sir Peter and Lady Teazel," done by George Landreth and me, because he, with white whiskers firmly attached, could look very stern indeed, and I was the only girl big enough who was a rather "quick study." I only tripped twice over the train of my long dress, fixed for the occasion out of my mother's unused "best."

Naturally, I remember best what concerned me most and while many of the other pupils had very good parts on the program, it is all too hazy, even if it mattered now, to be worth a description. One other scene which had a ludicrous ending, but should have been tragic instead, went like this!

A family had come to Newport the previous summer, with a very pretty daughter who claimed to be fifteen, but seem-

ed indeed to have reached full growth. This daughter had an organ, which was, I think, the first musical instrument in Newport, barring my father's cornet, which didn't count. The daughter also had rather a good voice and sang some of the old songs very well, among them being the "Gypsy's Warning," so my mother thought it would be nice to have May (the daughter) and May's organ on the stage and have her sing, giving the entertainment quite a glamorous air. I had to be the lady who was being warned because I was the only girl who could play on the organ—not very well, to be sure, but still could handle the simple air with the accompanying bass.

Unfortunately, the young man chosen to be the one I was being warned of (would one say, the "warnee?") was one whom May had marked for her own and about the middle of the second verse she could hold no longer, but stepped up to the organ, grabbed the sheet of music with one hand, shook me quite urgently with the other, saying "You are not playing that right!" At a hasty signal, the curtain started to come together, but hitched on something, exposing about three feet of great confusion; but in a few moments the Program moved on serenely to the end—without

music.

Some of the larger boys from the outlying ranches came in to town that winter and "batched" in several of the old houses. They would go home Friday night, to return Sunday night with clean clothes and provisions for another week of sitting at tables in the schoolroom studying very diligently a very motley collection of text books. All ages, all grades (as we would know them now) seemed to travel along together, and sorry to part when the spring days claimed the larger scholars to help on the several ranches they came from.

The two winters following this second year of my mother's private school, Miss Hattie Wass, whose father was Captain at the Foulweather Light Station, came over and continued the work so successfully begun by my mother, Mrs. Emily Stevens. This school was conducted in the old "office" of the Ocean House \*(2) where Mr. Samuel Case and family were living at that time, and Miss Wass lived part of the time with us and part with them. And at the foot of the Hill, in the house that my father built a main part on to, all the big boys and what girls there were,

\*(2) No record of school ever having been held in the "Ocean House" says Mrs. Ida Ingalls.

came in the evenings to sit around the big fireplace, while my mother read good and amusing books to them, or set them to playing games which she provided, winding up with corn-popping or a candy "pull." Most anything to keep those big boys from being enticed into the saloons, of which there were four along that Main street, that did not have much else to distinguish it.

One amusement that Mrs. King, of Toledo, may remember, was when Mother read to us the first of Marietta Holly's most entertaining group of books, "Samantha Allen," and suggested that we cast the characters among ourselves and act in accordance with them. Rachel (Mrs. King) was always included in this fun, and a rare good addition she was, although she had no time to be attending school just then. She was staying that winter with her sister, Mrs. Sam Case, helping care for the large family in the big house.

On Hallowe'en that fall, while I was waiting for the "tick-tackers" to begin their antics, came a loud knock at the dining room door, and when I opened it, a shirt, rather plump Spanish-looking gentleman stood there, hat drawn down over his eyes, and a rather droopy black mustache concealing his mouth.

He mumbled something about board and room (we were keeping occasional wayfarers at that time, having built the addition on the south side that year). I said "I'll see mother about it," when a curious cough came from the stranger, the drooping mustache fell off, I lifted his hat, Nellie Case stepped out of the shadow beyond the door and there stood Miss Rachel in an old suit of Mr. Case's and we all enjoyed a hearty laugh over the little Hallowe'en joke. No thrilling movie to see, no speeding autos that night to be brought in by the wrecking crew in the wee sma' hours, no broken heads and limbs to be taken to the nearest hospital, just a lot of innocent fun, as they finally all gathered round the big old fireplace, or prepared for a game of table croquet on the long table. I write this to show how very little we had for entertainment in those long-ago days, but I think we felt no lack—it was indeed a simple life.

There was much talk in those days about getting an appropriation from an almost mythical Congress in Washington, for deepening our channel over the bar, much begging of our Congressmen "to put it through." It seemed that they could always get a big slice for Columbia bar

(which certainly was a bad one) but nothing for insignificant little Yaquina. Portland had many voters on election day, Yaquina very few indeed. Hon. R. A. Bensell, who was for many years a correspondent of the "Morning Oregonian" from Newport under the pen-name of "Rialto" did much to keep the question before the people. Finally the excitement was great when a small amount was allotted to the project for preliminary surveys and at last a Government tug appeared in our waters and a handsome young engineer, Capt. J. S. Polhemus, came to start the work rolling. I won't go further with that now, for it is all a matter of history for the researcher of a later day to hunt out.

I recall the last keeper of the small lighthouse on Yaquina Head, over-looking the bar, who was there when we first came to Newport in 1873, as one Captain Charles Pierce, a Scotchman who certainly looked the part, for he invariably wore a Scotch cap with ribbons down behind over his curls, which in their turn overhung his collar. He had a family of eight children, from Charles, Jr., quite a young man, down to a wee baby. When we returned to Newport to make our home some three years later, as a refuge from a period

of disaster including illness, losses by fire—even death of my father's young sister, the Pierce family had drifted on no one seemed to know where, just a part of the human flotsam and jetsam that were always drifting in and out like the Yaquina tides.

Mr. Bensell and his wife then occupied the lighthouse for several years, as care-takers, I think.

The second year of my mother's teaching, my father and grandfather built a beautiful little sailboat, with two masts, for main and foresails, but for some reason I have forgotten, no jib.

My grandfather had learned the ship-building trade when a young man, putting in three hard years in a shipyard in Boston, Massachusetts. My father was a good mechanic, so the two of them enjoyed this work very much. They had seen the fishing boats on the lower Columbia River and modeled theirs on the same plan—double ender: that is, nearly as sharp as the bow or stem. I recall now the foresail had no boom, and so took the place of a jib, and handled easily when "tacking."

We named her the "Western Belle" and for several years she was the finest sailboat on the Bay. They took summer visitors

on trips over the bar when it wasn't too windy, giving them a chance at deep-sea fishing. They made their own fishing gear, except the hooks, of course, and moulded lead in the shape of small herring, with a hook protruding from its mouth, and the line firmly embedded in the tail. When these were thrown overboard, the line let out for deep water, then the fishermen jerked the line up and down in a regular rhythm, and many an unwary cod or grouper was lured to the end I suppose they were intended for.

At other times during the summer they took parties up to Oysterville, seven or eight miles where they would buy a bushel of oysters, usually of Tommy Ferr, which my father would "shell" expertly, and on those trips my mother would go, too, if the party consisted largely of our boarders. She would take along a big kettle, a lot of bowls and spoons, and put together a fine stew, purchasing milk, butter and cream also from Tommy, who was a thrifty rancher as well as oysterman, and lived well with poultry, dairy and vegetable garden to draw on. The summer people always enjoyed these picnics very much; and then came the long trip home tacking down the bay against the afternoon nor'west-

er.

## ABOUT BUILDING THE BOAT

Sawlogs sometimes escaped from a "boom" far up the river and came drifting down to become the property of anyone who wished to tow them in; or sometimes they came bobbing in over the bar, drawn by a strong flood tide—these latter were usually runaways from some port farther south.

My father saw a fine looking log drifting in one day after a "southerly," and towed it ashore thinking what a fine lot of firewood it would make for the rest of the winter, but the first chip out of it disclosed the fact that it was a Port Orford cedar. It was not uncommon for them to drift in on our shores occasionally in that era. My grandfather suggested it would be a good idea to build a boat of the lumber it would make, but there was no mill running at that time, the only one on the Bay, at Oneatta, had been closed down for some time.

These two resourceful men were not long in deciding that the boat must be built, and so, with an incredible amount of labor they rigged a saw-pit, and with double fall blocks and tackle managed to hoist their log on a frame above the pit, made of timbers cut in the



surrounding woods near the water, hand-hewn with Grandpa's trusty broadax, towed to the beach nearest the site of their "shipyard" in front of the old Pilbean house we had traded some of our Corvallis property for when we came to make our home there.

From somewhere they procured a "Whip-saw", sort of a cross-cut with a long slightly curved handle on each end and worked by two men, one standing above the log and one below; they pulled it up and down through the log, which first of all was squared on the four sides by removing a slab. Then it was lined with a chalk-line, top and underneath to guide them in pulling the saw, cutting planks an inch thick, planks that then had to be planed by hand also. These planks had then to be measured and marked for hand-sawing into the shapes that fitted over the ribs that also had taken much painstaking labor.

They searched many days thru the woods for limbs that would have the natural curve they wanted; they would naturally be stronger than one bent to shape. Can you imagine anyone with such patience, such industry, connected with the necessary knowledge and skill, in these modern, ready-made days?

The next year they could get

sawmill lumber, so they built a smaller craft that Grandpa called the "Jolly Boat" and it was very broad of beam and just one sail, and I was permitted to sail her all by myself, for you couldn't have upset her with a cant-hook.

Another job they did that year was building a walk straight across from our old house to the store where the Post Office was located, and on a level with it, so that it was from four to six feet above the beach. This walk was a great convenience to others besides ourselves, but not one man offered to help with the work although every day there would be "kibitzers" drift out of the saloons to offer their sage advice as to height, width, etc.

Later on the lots abutting on this walk were sold to "Uncle" Billy Neal, a newcomer who had two store buildings put up there, the sidewalk was raised and made much wider and finally became a street.

One building was rented by Charley Shaw, who opened the first hardware store in Newport and about the same time M. M. Davis came from Eugene and put a drug store in the other one.

The year after our big boat was built, Hon. Allen Parker, of Albany bought the sawmill at

(\*3) Oneatta and moved there with his large and interesting family. These events all came to pass between 1876 when we returned from Corvallis, as to a refuge from a lot of disaster and 1880, when we were all delighted by the advent of Government tug to tow their scows of rock down from the rock quarry a few miles above Toledo, which had been discovered and developed for that purpose. That same quarry sent huge blocks of stone to San Francisco later, on the R. R. steamers, and among others the whole front of the Parrot building is faced with it. (4).

We were much more interested in the rock that built the jetty on the South shore. If I can not be entirely certain of the exact year of each event I hope you will bear with me, remembering that to a child of eleven to fifteen years the event stood out much plainer than the year it happened.

To return to the Parker fam-

\* \* \*

(3) 1 mile south of Yaquina City, now owned by Mr. Dundas. A marine shop and boat works now occupy where old mill stood.

(4) Also "Call Bldg. is constructed of it and withstood earthquake of 1906.

ily: The Hon. Allen was a slow-spoken man with large ideas which did not always bring in the expected returns, but somehow they always "got by."

From the quiet, always busy mother down to eleven-year-old Frank, the baby—the whole bunch added zest to our growing society. There was tall, handsome Ted with the weak chin and a dimple in it. Then quiet, dignified Nancy, who was a good dressmaker, and would "go out" by the day for a dollar per, which some even considered a "little high" in those old days. Next came Ann, the handsome, dashing one of the lot, who gave music lessons to a few who had something to take them on. Shy Mig came next, and she was no threat to any Yaquina girl as a rival, for she had left her heart in Albany with the young man she later married. Next younger than Mig was Rowena, not beautiful but a general favorite with everyone and always seemed to have a shadow of tragedy in her large dark eyes—later to be verified by the sudden vengeful shooting of her young husband in an eastern state, leaving her among strangers and her only solace a tiny baby.

Clara, or Clad as she was always called, finished the roll call of girls. She was a little

younger than I and we were quite good companions until the time and changing conditions moved us apart. So four of the family met their fates among the numerous young men that were brought there by the building of the Oregon Pacific Railroad.

This brings to mind several circumstances of note (to me, at least) occurring during the winter that Miss Hattie Wass taught school, following my mother's two terms. One was the presentation of a play much in vogue over the country at that time, "Ten Nights In A Bar Room" and again my mother was asked to "direct" as we would say now. She had to cast the characters from whatever material was available and then try to mould them to her ideas. Sometimes it worked!

A family had moved to Newport that year, from a ranch somewhere up the Bay, that wouldn't yield a living for the five of them. The father, who was a violinist of sorts, thought it would be much easier to play for the dances which were becoming much more frequent as one after another the new families came drifting into town. They had a pretty daughter, Annie, who played "second violin" to her father's "first."

Mr. Stout was perfect in looks

for the part of the "Stranger," who was supposed to visit that bar room, once a year, it may have been, till he had been there ten times—the ten nights—each time commenting in a few well-chosen words on the evils of intemperance, etc.

Mr. Stout seemed fine in the part except for his pronunciation of a couple of words in his lines. "Drama" was "Dray-me" and "epitome" was "epi-tome" just like that, in spite of my mother managing to bring the word into the general conversation before and after rehearsals several times. Finally, when the advertised time drew near for the play to be given, my mother said quietly to Mr. Stout, "I believe that word is now pronounced 'Dram-ah.'" He looked at her with a sort of grin under his big black mustache, and just as quietly said, "Well some do and some don't. I don't."—And he didn't!

This man had rather wanted his pretty daughter to have the part of Mary, the Drunkard's little girl who gets killed by the bar-keep, but my mother had already put me in that for I was skinny and spindle-legged, as a drunkard's daughter was supposed to be, while Annie was a plump little girl with round cheeks, who couldn't help smiling broadly while begging her

father to "come home with me now."

Ted Parker was the remorseful father, when I had been "conked" with a pasteboard bottle aimed for him by the equally drunken bartender. Finally my death caused my father to reform, and when the Stranger next visited the scene, my stage mother, Miss Wass, was wearing her sister's best black silk dress Ted had washed the red paint off his nose and put on his best, very tight trousers, the Stranger walked on and made the final speech, which according to him was the "epi-tome" of the whole "Dray-me!"

#### DANISH SCHOONER—

It is time now to tell you about the Drifting Danish schooner. One beautiful February morning in 1878 (I am almost sure that was the year) my father went before breakfast to the house above us on the hill, where my grandparents lived, as his custom was, to lay out plans for the day's labor. They always had so many things in view it took careful planning to bring it all about.

My grandmother met him at the door, looking very much upset about something. She said, at once, "George, I wish you would take the spy-glass" (a sort of telescope at least two feet long,

which pulled out in three sections, the small end to your eye) and go up to the old lighthouse and scan the sea. All last night I have been seeing a vessel in great distress. She has been badly disabled and now seems to be drifting slowly this way and may go ashore."

My father smiled, and said, "Just a bad dream, Mom; what did you eat for supper," "But it's a nice morning for a walk, and breakfast will be ready by the time I am back; I'll go just to ease your mind."

It was a morning to make the blood quicken in one's veins, such as Yaquina Bay people often enjoyed at this time of the year, and in a short time he stood on the bluff above the old Point of Rocks (\*5) scanning what at first seemed like an empty sea of dark blue glass; then almost beneath his feet, in a narrow channel inside the outer reef, and swept on by a strong flood tide nearly at the full, was a badly disabled lumber schooner, evidently uncontrolled except for the small help of a torn foresail, and one jib, which, as there was no wind so early in the day, were no good at all.

It was unprecedented that any boat of that size would try that channel, but there she was,

(5) Below Coast Guard look-out.

making it safely into the narrows of the Bay as though towed by strong unseen hands.

My father turned and ran back down the trail to town, and calling to another early riser to follow, jumped into his skiff and rowed quickly out to the vessel which by that time had come abseast of the village, and was letting go her anchor. In a few minutes he was back on shore again, and rushed into our kitchen as my mother was putting breakfast on the table, and wondering audibly why he wasn't there to eat it.

"Give me those biscuits," he yelled, "and the coffee pot, too; men are starving on board that boat!" My mother calmly tied the biscuits up in a towel, wrapped a "holder" round the bail of the big tin coffee-pot, then went to a front window to see what he meant about a boatload of starving men, before starting on another batch of biscuits.

By that time several others had taken in the situation and other breakfasts were on the way. Finally our curiosity was appeased when my father returned for his own delayed meal.

The schooner, with a full hold and deck load of very fine lumber from Puget Sound, had started out in January, with San Francisco as her first port of

call, but was caught in one of those sudden storms that occasionally raged along the coast, and were especially vicious above the Columbia Bar. The main boom was splintered, top of the fore mast broken off, and worst of all the rudder post was smashed beyond hope of any repairs at sea. They were blown off their course so far they were quite out of the track of any coasting vessels that might have helped them.

Their deck load was entirely lost and at the same time the galley so badly damaged that most of their provisions were destroyed as they had only laid in supplies to last till they reached San Francisco where they would supply for the long voyage home.

When they got into our harbor that morning they had only half a cup of raw rice and a quarter pound of tea. It had been three weeks since the storm hit them and they had been drifting ever since.

Of course, this was long before such an instrument as a ship-to-shore radio was more than dreamed of, if that, so they could only wait and drift with what patience they possessed.

It was a Danish schooner, and Capt. David Nissen, an unusually fine type of sailing master, soon had arranged for supplies,

repairs, etc.

I am surprised that I can not remember the name of the vessel, for the Captain's name is very clear in my mind. I think likely it could be found in a file of the "Corvallis Gazette" edited at that time by one W. B. Carter, if such is still in existence.

(Ed. Note: Schooner Lizzie Madison.)

Filling all these requirements caused no little excitement in our small town, usually quite dull at that season. My father and ship-carpenter grand father took the job of furnishing a new main boom, and Mr. Jessup, who was a good carpenter as well as farmer and gardener, made and installed the new rudder and post.

The crew of the schooner also worked very hard getting sails, gear and galley in good shape once more and storing fresh supplies, etc. It was not at all a question of money, for Capt. Nissen seemed to be well supplied with cash.

We exerted ourselves to give Captain and crew a pleasant time ashore to compensate for the hardships they had undergone.

One night we loaded up the Western Belle, our big boat, with some of our young people, Captain Nissen and his mates, and went by invitation up to

Oneatta for a dance in the Parker dining-room, where their daughters, recently arrived on the Bay, joined with our girls in dancing with the sailors equally with our young men, and under the Captain's eye, no one could have behaved better.

There was no wind that night no moonlight either, so the boat was propelled by four great oars, a man to each. My father pulled stroke and called steering directions to me, who had to serve as helmsman, for he always seemed to know just where to turn, if ever so slightly. The sailors seemed much amused at my answer of "Ay, ay, sir" to each order as I had been carefully instructed by my men-folk.

It was about three weeks before everything was ready for Captain and crew to bid farewell to their new friends and once more fare forth on the "briny" for San Francisco and then off for home.

A day or so before the time set for departure, the Northwest Trades brought us some very squally weather. One afternoon Captain Nissen went up to Oysterville in the schooner's small boat to finish some business or other with the oystermen—possibly to take some oysters down to the City for them. The Oysterville reach was very choppy that afternoon

with the wind crossing the tide and no one knew how it happened—perhaps an unlooked for jibe of the mainsail, perhaps a sheet wound too tight to slip on its cleat, but on second or third tack the boat capsized. I don't remember if anyone saw it go over but it did and Captain Nissen was drowned.

It was some days before his body was recovered (he was wearing hip boots) and of course the First Mate was then in charge and would not leave without him. No undertaker nearer than Corvallis, and no casket could be brought over those muddy roads, so my father's skill was again called for, and he made a box, not coffin-shaped, but long and straight-sided, and sealed the seams with white lead and when it was dry it held all the alcohol the four saloons could supply, which was plenty. And in such fashion the poor, battered body of Captain Nissen finished an ill-fated voyage.

#### THE NATIVES—

No record of the olden days of our Coastal lands would be complete without some mention of the native inhabitants we knew then. Those we knew came over from the Siletz Agency, sixteen miles north of Newport, every time they would wangle

passes from the Superintendent. They enjoyed coming for a change of scene, much as today we like to spend our vacations at a favorite summer resort. Can you blame them? Fishing was good, clams were plentiful and they could sell enough of both to the campers from the Willamette Valley to buy the other items that made them a comfortable living.

The first that comes to mind was Old Mary, the one who was holding Mrs. Abbey's little girl on her lap that first day we arrived in Newport, and my mother was sure she intended to kidnap her. In another week she was washing for my mother and holding me on her lap in odd moments.

She wasn't so very old when we first knew her, but was called so to distinguish her from the wife No. 2 of Lazy Charlie who was so much younger but not so industrious. But why, indeed, should Mr. L. Charles do any work when he had two wives to support him?

Then there was California Jack, brought up the coast when they were condensing the Agencies. An uglier, fiercer face you never saw, but he was always good-natured and kind, especially to children.

He would spend his last dime for the jet bead dress trimmings

that were so fashionable at that period, and trim up his dance costumes with them. For some years they held many dances at the camp up the beach between town and Olsens'. They were solemn affairs, having a sort of religious meaning for those who participated. Sometimes a few of us young folks from town would be allowed to watch for a few minutes, but did not dare let a smile crack our faces while there.

The men, very gaudily arrayed, did most of the dancing, in the center of the rather large tent they had pieced together for the purpose, and the women stood in a line at the sides and rear of the place, behind the dancing men.

In the feather dance, so-called because of the women held in each hand a small bunch of feathers, or "Tipso," at about the waist line, they raised the Tipso a little higher, alternately and seemed to be addressing them in a low murmur, while at the same time their feet were moving them two or three feet from right to left and back again, but never advancing. It was done with a beautiful gliding motion, but their dresses were long, and we could not see how they did it.

California Jack and his adornments started this train of remin-

iscence in my visions of olden Newport. One summer morning Jack went outside (over the Bar) and did not start home quite soon enough, and his frail old "canim" overturned as he was crossing in, and that was the last of good old Jack.

Then there was Citizen John Hill, a fine old fellow, very trustworthy, who for some favor that he did for the State was aided by Mr. Bensell to get citizenship papers, and was allowed to vote. Everyone liked Citizen John, who always seemed to be going about some important business here and there.

George Harney was always a caller at our house when he was over from the Agency. He was said to be hereditary chief of the Yaquinas, but for some reason was sent to the Grand Ronde Reservation when a boy, and the French Fathers there gave him a good education, hoping to make a priest of him. That did not work out, however.

About 1873 or '74, Harney with his pretty little wife, Maggie, were sent with another Indian couple to Washington to describe the needs of the coast Indians (I believe). It was a political move of some sort, but disastrous for Mrs. Harney, for she came home with a severe cold which later developed into T. B. Knowing Washington cli-



mate as I do now, I can see what a tragic mistake it was to send them there in the winter season. I am not positive, but I think they lost their baby, too, because of the trip.

One Indian woman named Charlotte was said to be tricky about paying bills if trusted at a store and my mother was warned, but trusted her anyway, and Charlotte came through promptly when she said she would.

One day Mother said to the woman, "How is it, Charlotte, people say you lie about paying your bills, but you have always paid me, all right." Charlotte looked straight at my mother and said, "You no lie to me, I no lie to you. spouse you lie to me, I He-e-e-p lie to you." Logical, eh?

And there was Lucy Brown, who came to see us at least once a year, and always said to me, with evident delight, "Aie, you Lucy, me Lucy, he, he!" She kept house and culled oysters for "Whispering Jimmy Brown" the latter another character no true history of those days should be without.

Again it was the red liquor that was the cause of his troubles, for he worked diligently at his oystering and could have saved for his old age if temptation had not always been thrown

across his path. He was always ashamed of his sprees, and the story was that after a particularly "large" one he attempted to cut his throat, but only succeeded in injuring his vocal chords so that his voice became a hoarse, horrible whisper.

He would come sailing down the Bay in an old, very large canoe, with a small sail, after an oyster schooner had made a visit, with all of his pay in his pockets. First, he would go and buy his supplies to last till the next boat came in, then usually head for a saloon with the balance in his purse or probably a buckskin bag, and lose no more time in getting most gloriously drunk.

Sometimes he would come to see my father, who would try to start him off for home while he had something left. Finally he said, "Mr. Stevens, I am going to leave most of my money with you and just keep enough for a few drinks, and if I come and ask for it don't let me have it, no matter what I say."

So, many times have I awakened to hear that terrible, hoarse whispering, begging my father to let him have part of it, that the saloon-keeper had pushed him out when he had no more money. My father would say, "You may come in and lie down by the fireplace, till morning,

then you may have some breakfast and then I will start you for home." Sometimes he would agree, but more often he did not.

If he did, then my father would put him in a canoe after a cup or so of coffee, give him his money, and start him home. The great wonder was that he always made it safely in the old canoe.

Many years later, while visiting in Newport, I was told that when Jimmy was returning from Yaquina where he could get his liquor then, by walking down the track for it, he gave up, and laid his bald head on the R. R. track where an incoming freight took it neatly off, and that was the end of poor Whispering Jimmy Brown.

One day our men went outside, fishing, and they, too, stayed a little too long, or the wind rose too early while the fish were biting good, and the bar was too rough for them to take any chances on it, so my father ran down the coast to Seal Rock where he knew of a small cove on the south of the group where he could anchor the boat, bow and stern. This he did and they walked up the beach to the Lem Davis ferry and crossed the bay, coming home so we wouldn't be worried about them.

The very next morning came

Bennie Collins, in a great hurry to say that the stern line had parted, probably frayed on a sharp bit of ledge, and the boat had swung inshore, where it was pounding with the incoming tide. Fortunately an old Indian living near by had discovered it early in the morning and immediately sent a boy from his family to Mr. Collins, who lived still farther south, to tell him of the danger to the boat. Meanwhile, Tockysossin stayed right there in the water sometimes up to his waist keeping the craft away from the grinding shore where it would pound till the tide fell.

That very morning a call had come from Mr. Jessup to know if my father could come up and help him with some ranch work he wasn't able to do alone. Ben did not know the way to go, so I volunteered as guide and away we went up the beach to Olsen's, then the hill another half mile, and we two healthy young animals running almost every step. What a wonderful thing a telephone would have been that morning!

When we told my father, I expected him to start running, too, and said as much. He was always very deliberate in his movements, and when I urged haste, he simply said, "I have a long way yet to go." But Ben

had driven up with the mail team to take them down quickly, so as soon as they could pick up their tools and some repair material—Ben had said the boat was leaking badly—they got off and drove hard down the beach.

When they finally reached the boat there was Tockysossin still in the water keeping the boat pushed away from the grinding shore. When my father offered to pay him for his vigil, he said, "No want pay, no like see boat get holes in it." Then my father asked him what he would like to have, he said, "Maybe little sooka, mebbe little cawpee, sometime." You may be sure he got his sugar and coffee. Old Tockysossin had a white soul inside his dark skin, I am very sure.

### THE MILLERS—

Of the larger boys in my mother's private school were the four grandsons of Grandpa and Grandma Miller, who lived in a ranch just above McClain's Point in what was known as Miller's Bend. I imagine their son, Ira Miller, owned the next ranch above on the water front. I know it was near.

George Landreth was the oldest, and a full orphan but was well cared for by the old couple, as indeed they all were. There was Mr. Ford and his two boys,

Adrian and Billy (who just wouldn't wash behind his ears), then lastly John Priest and his son Frank, and dear little Grandma Miller mothered them all, sons-in-law and grandsons alike, and held the family together, seeing to it that the boys went to school whenever there was one to go to.

The boys were all good and I am sure they all appreciated their home and helped with all the work that such a family entailed. John Priest seemed to have the most money of them all, although I never knew him to do any sort of work, and indeed he was not able to work for the scourge of T. B. already had him in its grasp. (I understood that all Grandma's daughters had died with it.) But the four boys seemed quite immune.

George Landreth was a good worker, and later had accumulated quite a bit of property as well as a family. How his home was broken up is quite another story and doesn't belong here. Fortunately, his grandmother never knew it.

Frank Priest, being good-looking seemed to have the ability to collect well-to-do wives, so never was obliged to work much. The two Ford boys seemed to lead industrial uneventful lives there in Newport for many years—may still be there so far

as I know.

Grandma showed me a wonderful quilt one day that George's mother had made and quilted in a running vine pattern, and all in white cotton goods, but the quilting made the vine stand out boldly, because every leaf and bud had been cut open on the under side and an extra pinch of cotton stuffed in, and then the slit sewed up again. The whole lovely thing had the look of being embossed on the right side. It was George's greatest treasure.

We all loved Grandpa and Grandma Miller.

### **THE MEGGINSONS AND BRIGGS**

No recollections of early Newport would be complete without mention of George Megginson, a truly "old timer." He and his partner friend, Jos. Briggs, owned adjoining ranches just east of Cape Foulweather Lighthouse, but had selected their site for a home long before the lighthouse was even thought of.

They came there before there were any white women in the country except a very few who had braved the adventures of the west with their husbands, so these two men chose wives from the Indian women, married them properly, and built a wide, low house in a protected spot

behind the Foulweather hills, where they, in due time, raised families of three children each.

Mrs. Briggs died after the third girl was born, so Mrs. Megginson undertook the burden of caring for both households, and did it well.

George Megginson was of the picturesque Scout type as far as looks were concerned, wore his hair long, his hat brim turned back in front, and for many years an old coat "tattered and torn" till I don't see how it ever held together on him. It had to be a very stormy day indeed that kept him from coming to Newport on his roan pacer, that was as well known as his owner.

For many years the long buckskin purse that he drew forth from some mysterious recess in the old coat whenever needed, was the only bank available to needy inhabitants of Newport, and although he seemed to take long chances on some of his loans, I never heard of his losing any.

Mr. Briggs had a sleek span of mules which he drove to town once or twice a week, hitched to the skeleton of a wagon, himself sitting on a plank laid precariously from front seat to rear wheels. Why he never got a better rig for them, no one ever knew. They were amply able, financially, to buy buggies

or coats.

In 1886 or '7, Mr. Megginson concluded to open a meat market, as their livestock was overrunning their ranches. It was a welcome addition to the businesses of Newport. He also bought a new coat, probably at the insistence of his oldest son Jeff, who by that time had grown to be a handsome young man and a great help to his father in riding for cattle for the market.

A few years later, from an injury in this hazardous work, Jeff died, and the loss broke the old man's heart. One day he went down on the beach a little way from the market and quietly passed on and was found where he had fallen backward off the log where he was sitting. Thus one chapter of Newport's early days passed into history.

### THE WINANTS—

A very colorful figure in the early days of old Newport was Capt. Jimmy Winant, of San Francisco, but almost as much of Newport, for he was continuously going back and forth, bringing supplies for the population of Yaquina Bay, then loading up with our delicious native oysters for San Francisco appetites.

I have a very clear remem-

brance of him as he came along the street soon after dropping anchor, with his sailor's rolling gait, his rotund body topped by his round, happy face, and that, in turn, surrounded by a shock of black, very curly hair, and on top of that again for many summers the same old straw hat sat rakishly.

Captain Winant, I believe was one of the first to begin the oyster trade with San Francisco and was always deeply interested in the success of the enterprise.

I remember him ever since that first summer of 1873, when I was eight years old, for whenever his boat sailed into the harbor there would be a crate or two of oranges opened and distributed among his friends, and that meant just about the whole population at that time. Also some of the very scarce bananas went to the small fry.

That summer his first mate was Charlie Hageman, younger and almost as rotund as Captain Jimmy and I being eight years old was much elated when he danced with me several times in the square dances at the parties Newport always tried to give when the oyster boats were there. Girls were scarce, so that was really why I was in demand.

Later, when we returned to

the bay in 1876, Captain Winant had as first mate one Captain Shaw, a much older man, hook-nosed and one-eyed, and whom for years I suspected of being the original of Robert Louis Stevenson's old sailor in Treasure Island (except for a discrepancy in dates).

Charlie had earned his Captain's papers then and was sailing into the Northern waters; still later was engaged in hunting seal poachers, so we seldom saw him.

Then came the bad news that after a typhoon his boat was found bottom up, and never any trace of Captain or crew. Captain Hageman was married just a month before that last voyage.

Captain Winant always had good faith in the future of Yaquina Bay and did all in his power to help it along. I cannot recall if he ever lost a vessel on that bar, or not, but when we went there in 1876, the "Caroline Medau" of San Francisco was bleaching her ribs on the sands of South Beach, and think she had been making the run for some length of time.

As the Government work progressed and the Railroad became a reality, and people were moving in faster and faster, one day came the great news that Captain Jimmy had taken himself a wife and was coming to New-

port to live. Which they did, and also there was a round, small replica of the Captain, named Anita—the same round, happy face topped by the same black curls—the only difference being always a nibbled doughnut in one hand (I think she was weaned on them) and no straw hat.

Several of the jolly Captain's relatives came also (but not all at once). Capt. Sam Winant settled for a time at Oysterville, his son Charles and daughter Nellie remaining in Newport. Charlie operated a restaurant, together with Tommy Marsh, another newcomer, and we all acquired the habit of dropping into their place evenings for a plate of their delicious fried oysters, much as young people nowadays "drop in" to a cocktail bar, for drinks. Another relative, a brother-in-law, Captain Dessoway, with his very interesting family also came and stayed for awhile at Oysterville.

All these friends and relatives coming meant that Captain Winant was about to carry out a project that had long been forming in his mind, namely: to form a company and build a vessel and fit it for steam power. So the keel was laid in the small shipyard at Oneatta, and we all watched eagerly for the launching.

When she was almost ready to leave the "ways" they hadn't been able to decide on a name for her. One evening, the members of the company had all gathered in Captain Winant's cosy living room, and made many suggestions, none quite acceptable to all. At last Amy (Mrs. Winant), rather tired of the subject, said, "Oh, the mischief! Why don't you decide on something?" Captain Dessoway jumped up and said, "You've said it, Amy! It shall be 'The Mischief.'"

And so it was named and launched, and ran in and out of Yaquina in a coasting freight and passenger trade for a number of years, and I don't know her finish, but I do know the gallant Captain moved back to Alameda where his wife died a few years later.

Capt. Jimmy Winant was one seafaring man who could command his ship and crew without using profanity—never needed it, he said.

His strongest language would be something like this: Going into Siuslaw Harbor for a load of lumber and shingles (it was a tricky place to enter) they arrived just too late to make it in on the tide. He said to his mate Larson, "Do you think we can make it now, Lahson?" "We must wait for the flood (tide),"

said Larson. "Oh, shah, shah now, Lahson, too bad, too bad, Shah - h!"

My husband was making the trip with them and repeated this to me afterward, with great glee. "You see now, he just never learned to swear."

### THE LUTJENS—

Another well-known seaman there in these days was Capt. Charlie Lutjens, who was of German origin, I think. He sailed other people's schooners for some time, quite successfully, then persuaded two elderly sisters to come all the way from the old country, a very great and hazardous adventure for them in those old times (they thought) and made their home in Waldport, where another brother had a small country store at that time on the northern shore of Alsea Bay.

The sisters had brought with them all their possessions, and Captain Charlie persuaded them to go in with him as partners in building a small schooner of his own, and when it was built (also at Oneatta) it quite resembled its owner—rather short and stubby.

He put the steam in her and ran her up and down the coast for a year or two, but finally concluded to cut her in two and insert a section in the middle

so as to carry more freight. Some there were who suggested that he cut her in two —and throw both ends away! But finally the "operation" was concluded successfully and a year or two later he drifted into the sealing trade and we saw little of him.

I should have mentioned that the sisters' names were Kate and Anne, so that was the name of the schooner, and any very old-timer will remember the "Kate and Anne."

#### HOAG AND HOGG

And now we were in the 80's and looking forward so hopefully to the future with all its bright promises. More appropriations from Washington, and more generous ones, too. The railroad under the optimism of Uncle Billy (Wm. M.) Hoag looked as if it might make New York its eastern terminus, and there was plenty of work for all who could stand up to the ten or eleven hours a day.

To digress: Did I tell you how it was that Col. T. Egerton Hogg and Wm. M. Hoag wore different names, although they were full brothers?

When William as a boy, full of the spirit of adventure, found life in an old well-regulated Eastern state too tame for him, he simply rubbed out the lower

half of the first "g" in his surname, and started for that wonderful Golden West he was always dreaming about.

According to rumor he had many exciting adventures in California, which I would not care to recount, as I am sure most of them were, to speak mildly, far from authentic.

He always had the manner of the Southern Gentleman he was born to be, and I can visualize him still, alert and vigorous, gestulating with his eyeglasses, and finally dropping them where the tortise-shell frames would break. The misfortune bothered him not at all for he always left San Francisco with a dozen extra pairs, and having worked in a jewelry store where they carried eyeglasses, he knew perfectly how to fit the lenses in.

#### YAQUINA CITY—

In 1879 or '80 my father and grandfather each filed on a quarter section of land lying just a mile east of where Yaquina City was to be laid out, and my grandparents moved up there, for they had to live on their claims at last six months of each year and make certain improvements. The other 6 months could be spent elsewhere earning money to live on while doing the improvements required.

In five years the homestead



was supposed to become self-supporting. So my father went back and forth, clearing and building a fairly good ranch house, for we expected to go there to live long before the five years had passed required by law.

One night when he was coming home, he had killed a sheep and was bringing the dressed mutton down for our use in the boarding house. (No light load to shoulder over that hill.)

His boat was moored, as usual, on the narrow beach below where the old combined church and schoolhouse was afterward built, oars hidden in the brush, of course. As the tide was still flooding he thought he might as well go up to the little new Custom House a short distance up the beach, first placing his oars in the boat, then on up to say a few neighborly words to Coll. Van Cleve, the first Customs officer for the Port. Mr. Van Cleve also issued a small weekly newspaper. As you may imagine, work connected with the Customs was not very pressing at that time.

Just at the turn of the tide father went to the beach to start down with the first of the ebb, but—no boat! No boat, no mutton, no oars, only a mark in the mud where the boat had been shoved off. Mysterious dis-

appearance, for nothing was ever seen or heard of it again.

In the latter part of August 1882 my mother was stricken with rheumatic fever which, after appearing in several different fingers, finally settled in her right leg, which was swollen to the size of two. There was only one physician in Newport at the time, a pleasant man and kind, but while he brought the fever under control could not seem to do anything about the leg, except use palliatives for temporary relief.

My father, of course, stayed with us and all boarders were sent to find new homes. Help was hard to get, no nurses available, so all my time was given to my mother, and such house-keeping as I had time for. My father soon commenced working on the South Beach jetty, where the pay was good for those days, and crossed over and back, morning and night, as did a number of others. By Thanksgiving we had begun to see some real improvement in my mother's condition although she would let no one but me touch that poor swollen leg, lying there so stiff and helpless. She could only move an inch or two at a time in the bed. Thanksgiving Day I had managed with my father's help to get something resembling a suitable din-

ner, but I can only remember the pan of roasted wild ducks that were really delicious, and that my mother enjoyed so very much. We were quite hilarious over her improvement and I set a table right up against her bed, so we could all be together, and it seemed quite like other years.

Full of hope for her recovery, time moved on, as time will, into December, with weather fair enough for the morning and night crossings to the work on South Beach. My father usually took two other men over with him, and sometimes three. The morning of December 12th was not different from any other except that the third extra man stayed home to do some necessary work on his unfinished new house. At quitting time it was beginning to darken earlier than usual, but with our good marine glasses (which had long taken the place of the old spyglass) I saw the boat starting from the Davis boat landing, making good progress, although with only one man rowing. By the time they left the south channel, a sudden heavy storm wind came sweeping in from the southwest, increasing in violence by the minute and meeting a strong ebb tide. In less time than it takes to record it, the channel was a wild swirling

mass of angry waves, darkness dropped like a curtain and nothing could be distinguished any longer in those churning waters. But I had such faith in my father's skill I felt sure he could make it. I kept my eyes on my dinner, cooking on the range, but going to the door every two minutes, straining my eyes to see the boat, only it was too dark. As I stood there bracing myself against the fury of the wind there came my father's voice, strong and unmistakable, calling, "Help, Help," and that was all. Men were gathering then, men that had seen the boat more than halfway across, and several of them tried to launch a boat, but the oars were snapped as fast as they tried to get them into the water; and they could do no more.

Only one body was ever recovered, (6) that of Mr. Simpson who had taken his big dog with him that morning, in place of Mr. Peterson who did not go.

I have always felt that in some way the presence of the dog caused the overturning of the boat.

I was seventeen then, and thus my girlhood ended.

(6) \*Only part of the body—to be exact, a foot, identified by the hand-knit sock upon it.

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