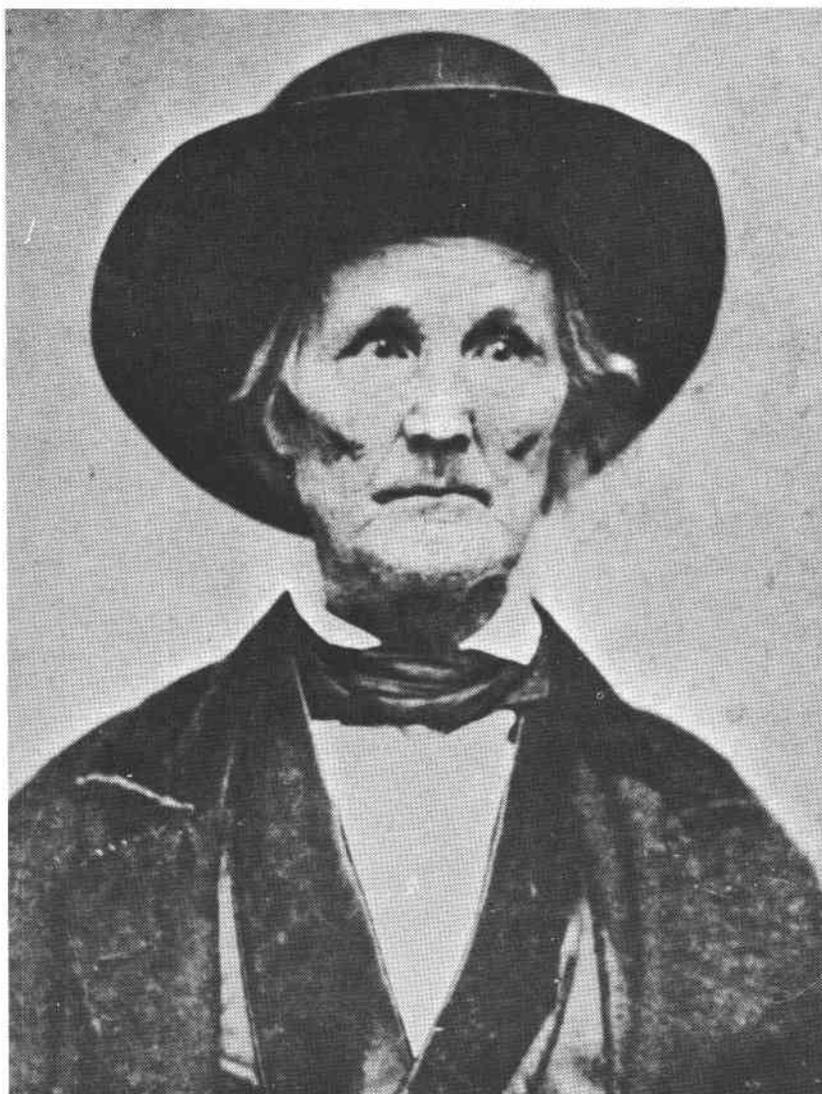


Lane County Historian



Elijah Bristow

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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A Short Historical Sketch of a Part of the Bristow Family

By Fannie Leggett*

In writing this sketch of a part of the Bristow pioneer family of Lane County, Oregon, it is not my intention to give all minor details of the work done by these people, but to help preserve the history for future generations, and to leave the thought with you of how anxious civilization of the West.

they were to do their part in the

Mr. James Bristow, who was of English descent, came to the United States when a small boy. Some years later he married Miss Delilah Elkins. They had three children born to them, all in Taswell County, Virginia.

The mother of these children died, and James Bristow took for his second wife Miss Betsy Clevenger. They became the parents of a large family. Some of the children of their son, Wesley, became residents of Oregon.

Elijah Bristow, the oldest child of James and Delilah Elkins Bristow, was born in Taswell County, Virginia, on the 28th of April, 1788. His boyhood days were spent in the mountainous regions of Virginia, where his early training accustomed him to the woodman's ways and to the use of fire arms. Here he rapidly became noted as an expert marksman and hunter. His surroundings and early training caused him to have a restless spirit of adventure, and upon arriving at manhood, he turned his face westward, and emigrated to Kentucky. Here he commenced the improvement of a home, acquiring in the meantime, the different trades of hatter, blacksmith, and gunsmith. He followed the two

latter trades, as they were his favorites, together with the occupation of a farmer, until old age palsied his arm and he was unable to do further work.

He was the first in his locality to volunteer his services to his country when war was declared. He was in the war of 1812 and was an active participant in the battle of Taladega with the Creek nation. His accurate marksmanship soon brought him under the special notice of General Jackson, who took occasion to put him frequently on special duty and in other places of honor.

On November 7, 1812, he was married in Overton County, Tennessee, to Miss Susanna Gabbert. She was born August 23, 1791, in the same county. They moved from Tennessee to Cumberland County, Kentucky, in about 1819 or 1820. From here they moved to McCoupin County, Illinois, in about 1827. Later on they moved to McDonough County, where they lived for about twenty-three years.

During the Black Hawk war, his neighbors, becoming alarmed, built a fort in which to place their families for safety. In order to quiet their fears, Mr. Bristow volunteered to go to the front and ascertain if any immediate danger was pending; in doing this he went alone from his home to Kock Island and back, a distance of over a hundred miles. The country through which he traveled was very peaceful. He returned to his neighbors, quieted their fears, and caused the little settlement to

*Fannie Leggett of Ashland is the oldest daughter of Alice and Lewis Cornelius.

again resume its round of daily occupations.

Elijah left his home and family at Blandensville, Illinois, in the spring of 1845, for the Pacific coast. He crossed the plains by ox team. The winter of 1845 was spent at Sutter Fort, California. The outlook here was not satisfactory. It was that summer that he, with other home-seekers, rode ponies from California to Oregon on an Indian trail, as there were no wagon roads.

Elijah Bristow, in the spring of 1846, travelling on the old territorial road which passed through the Siuslaw Valley where Lorane now stands, passed the present sites of Crow, Elmira, and Monroe, on down the west side of the valley to Rickreall.

Sometime in June, 1846, he left the home of James Howard, on the Rickreall River, in what is now Polk County, in company with William Dodson, Felix Scott, and Eugene Skinner, to come up the valley to locate near where Salem now stands.

They came up the east side of the valley to where the village of Jasper is located, and finding the valley becoming quite narrow, they forded the middle work to the south side, coming out of the strip of timber along the Willamette river near what was at one time called Uncle John Shelley's home. There they saw in front of them a low ridge covered with scattering oak trees with timbered mountains rising above it. Mr. Bristow rising in his stirrups, turned to his companions, saying, "There I will take my claim; and I am going to name it Pleasant Hill. That ridge with the mountains in the background reminds me of my boyhood home in old Virginia."

At one glance of the eye you can behold the oak, ash, and maple trees. The earth here is covered

with a most beautiful, luxuriant green, while your vision is attracted on every hand by evergreens, firs, cedars, and pines, that raise their stately tops to mingle about in vapors that float above. All around in almost every direction can be seen different mountain peaks. Mr. Bristow gave appropriate and significant names to all these peaks. He staked his claim on the ridge ever since known as Pleasant Hill.

Many Lane County people are at present familiar with the Pleasant Hill spring and grove where the annual May Day picnic is held. It was near this spring in the beautiful fir grove, that the party of home seekers camped. His companions located in different parts of the valley. There are very few people who know that at Mr. Bristow's request, the first territorial legislature passed an act naming his donation claim of 640 acres, Pleasant Hill. That name stands on the statutes of Oregon today as one can see from the official records of the Territorial Government.

In the early spring of 1848 the settlers were frequently disturbed by Indians. A band of Klamath Indians came over the mountains on the old Indian trail leading down the middle fork of the Willamette river, creating a very uneasy feeling among the little band of settlers at Pleasant Hill. The first hostile act was shown by killing an ox belonging to Cornelius Hills. The settlers, five or six in number, headed by Elijah Bristow, armed themselves and started in pursuit. While on this search for the Indians, they came across a stream which was between them and the butte from which they expected to locate the Indians. As a result, this butte was named Butte Disappointment.

Later in the season one of the tribe came to the Bristow cabin

and made threats of what he and his people were going to do to the settlers. This was too much for Mr. Bristow, he quickly reached for his rifle but away ran the Indian who was followed by a shot from the gun. The marksman saw him tumble and crawl out of sight into the brush. Later, a Molalla living near the butte, came down to the settlement and told Mr. Bristow that the Klamath had died from the effect of the wound the day after he was shot. Mr. Bristow replied, "The whole tribe must go back east of the mountains or I shall exterminate every one of them."

In 1848 Pleasant Hill was visited by Klickitat Indians who were doing damage in the upper Willamette Valley. Five of this tribe visited the Pleasant Hill ranch, killed a fattened ox and carried away part of it. Later another tribe visited him. Elijah Bristow, to show courage, caught one of them and flogged him severely. The next day he was surrounded by thirteen braves who demanded pay for the whipping of their brother. This he refused and in the same instant seized a handspike and struck at the Indian nearest him. He missed the man and killed his horse. This was too much for the braves who turned and fled with old Grandpa Bristow after them armed with his handspike.

After selling the farm in Illinois, the family and some friends began the long toilsome journey across the plains to the new-found home. Captain Hale drove one of Mrs. Bristow's teams while "Uncle William" Bristow drove another. During the year immigration swelled the population of the country to more than double the former number. The family arrived in 1848 and located in this same vicinity where their descendants still reside. At this same time James and Caswell

Hendricks, Robert Callison, Michall and Harrison Shelley, and others came and settled on Pleasant Hill.

Some of the family have rendered important aid in the legislation of the state. Elijah Bristow served on the first jury ever held in Polk County. They also helped in the preparation for the common schools and colleges.

Mrs. Bristow was the mother of fifteen children. She lived a life of true devotion to her family, her church and her God. Although there were trials and hardships, joys and sorrow in the pioneer's life, she, by her patience, and Christian fortitude, did much towards making her husband's life happy and successful.

Mr. Bristow was lovingly called "Uncle Bristow" by his closest friends, for they all had a warm affection for him. Although uneducated, he had the natural qualities which made him a leader of men. He erected the first house in Lane County, located in the vicinity of Pleasant Hill. Although this property is now owned by other parties and the house has been destroyed, the rocks from the chimney have been made into a memorial fountain in his honor which today stands not far from the Pleasant Hill church.

From 1848 to the time when "Uncle Bristow" laid the foundation of the first log cabin until some time in the fifties, communication by letter with relatives in the "states" was limited. The early pioneer knew little of what was taking place in the outside world. Letters were generally sent across the plains by emigrants, and frequently failed to reach their destination. He wrote fifteen letters, one to each of his children, telling them of the country "Where rolls the Oregon." He told them to sell what they could not bring with them and come to him as there was room for

all. Those letters were carried back across the plains by George Jackson, who afterwards lived for many years in Clackamas County, Oregon. The letters arrived in Illinois in September. When the news spread that Elijah Bristow had written home about Oregon, people came from far and near to hear the letters read.

The mail reached Pleasant Hill, Oregon from the East coming around Cape Horn by water to Oregon City, then up to Salem, from there to Eugene. Here a man by the name of Smiley Carter carried it to Pleasant Hill, where Elijah Bristow acted as Postmaster.

Mr. Bristow gave the ground for the first school house which was built in the fall of 1849. It, of course, was made of logs, and a huge fireplace occupied or adorned the greater portion of one end of the building. It was built by Elijah Bristow assisted by his sons and two sons-in-law, Robert Callison and James Hendricks. Some grandsons lent a helping hand. The location of this school house is now inside the Pleasant Hill cemetery, at the southwest corner. In March of that year, William W. Bristow began the first term of school in the new far western settlement.

"Uncle Bristow" donated the ground for the grave yard. The first death was probably that of a traveler coming from California, who was stopping with "Uncle Bristow." This is the oldest cemetery in Lane County.

The children hunted game in the woods, gathered nuts and berries from the forest, romped and played on the commons, or angled for fish in the streams for an occupation. All was joy and promise to Elijah Bristow, who looked on the pleasing transformation with joy mingled with anxiety, realizing the effort for good or evil that this

little community would have on the state of his adoption. Believing that education and the religion of Jesus Christ was the hope of the new community, he gave from his homestead forty acres of suitable land for the use of school and church purposes.

On August 4, 1850, he organized the Christian Church with twenty-three members, in the old log school house. Mr. Bristow was the only elder in Pleasant Hill at that time. He remained an elder until his death. "Uncle Bristow" had been baptized in 1837 or 1838. It occurred in a little stream, a branch of Crooked Creek, two miles from the town of Blandinsville, McDonough County, Illinois, and only a quarter of a mile from his own house. Uncle Henry, his son, says that Crooked Creek is almost as large as the Coast Fork opposite Pleasant Hill! Two or three years after his baptism, he and several others cut and hewed trees and built a church about half a mile from the spot where he was baptized. He called it the Liberty Meeting House.

He was still a member of this church when he crossed the plains. He deeded four acres of the ground for the church. A cemetery is now where the church stood, and the membership of the church all transferred to Blandinsville. Mr. Bristow died in September 19, 1872, at the age of eighty-four years. He left a large family and circle of friends, the rich legacy of a long life of usefulness and untarnished honor. His wife quietly followed him in that better land on March 7, 1874, in her eighty-third year.

Abel Bristow was the second son of Elijah and Susanna Bristow. He was born in Cumberland County, Kentucky, Jan. 6, 1819, and was baptized two or three years after

his father, Elijah Bristow, in the same stream. The ice was two feet thick and a hole had to be cut through so that his ordinance could be performed. Before coming to Oregon he helped to build the "Liberty Meeting House."

"Uncle Abel" Bristow was married to Miss Almira Kelly Gooch, January 26, 1843, and they came to Oregon with his family and relatives, making the trip by ox team. They started from Wacomb, Illinois in April and reached Oregon on October 22, 1848. He took up a donation claim; the house in which they lived was built in the early fifties. It is still standing.

Mr. Bristow died May 29, 1881, at the age of sixty-two years, four months and twenty-three days. He was buried on the 30th of May, which was his wife's 56th birthday. Abel Bristow's wife was born May 30, 1825, in Illinois, where in later years, Beardstown was founded. She was the second white child born in those parts. She was the eldest of the two daughters of Samuel and Ruth Powers Gooch.

In her early days in Oregon Mrs. Abel Bristow devoted considerable time to the study of medicine, being called upon many times to alleviate the suffering of her neighbors, where she rode many miles on horse back. Her sister, Mrs. Malvina Willis died in Cottage Grove after she had reached her 103rd birthday.

Grandma enjoyed reading the Bible, having read the New Testament through forty times within her last eight years, and had read as far as the ninth chapter of Luke on the forty-first time, when she was stricken with paralysis. She lived a life of true devotion to her God and her church amid the joys and sorrow, the trials and hardships of pioneer life. She died on March 7, 1917, at the age of ninety-

one years, having lived in the state sixty-nine years. Mrs. Almira Bristow was the last one of the charter members of the Pleasant Hill church, which was organized in 1850. It is now the oldest Church of Christ west of the Rocky Mountains.

The funeral services were conducted at the Pleasant Hill Christian church, at one o'clock, Friday, March 9th, 1917, Bro. P. R. Burnett officiating. She was laid to rest by the side of her husband in the Pleasant Hill cemetery. To them were born seven children.

Alice Helena Bristow, Abel and Almira Bristow's second daughter, was born at Pleasant Hill and spent her girlhood days on the farm, with the exception of two or three winters that she lived with her grandparents, Elijah and Susanna Bristow, while she was attending the Pleasant Hill school. She was a careful student ready to use the dictionary at all times and was always exceptionally good in remembering dates. She was a lover of song books. Because of her blindness, for many months before her death she would sing and sing and put the rest of her family to shame. She was a good mother, very energetic, and always found herself busy in the duties of home life.

Alice Bristow was born August 10, 1852, at Pleasant Hill, Oregon, where she spent most of her life. She was a pioneer of the Christian church becoming a member at the age of fourteen years. At the time of her death she had been a member for sixty-eight years.

She was married to L. J. Cornelius at Pleasant Hill, March 14, 1878. P. R. Burnett performed the ceremony. They spent a few years of their early married life in the Pleasant Hill country.

From there they moved to Springfield, where Mr. Cornelius

was engaged in running a ferry boat for two years across the Willamette River. Leaving there, they moved into the Siuslaw country, to a homestead where they made their home for fourteen years. As their family of five children was growing and they saw the need of a better opportunity for school, they moved back to Pleasant Hill, April 12, 1896.

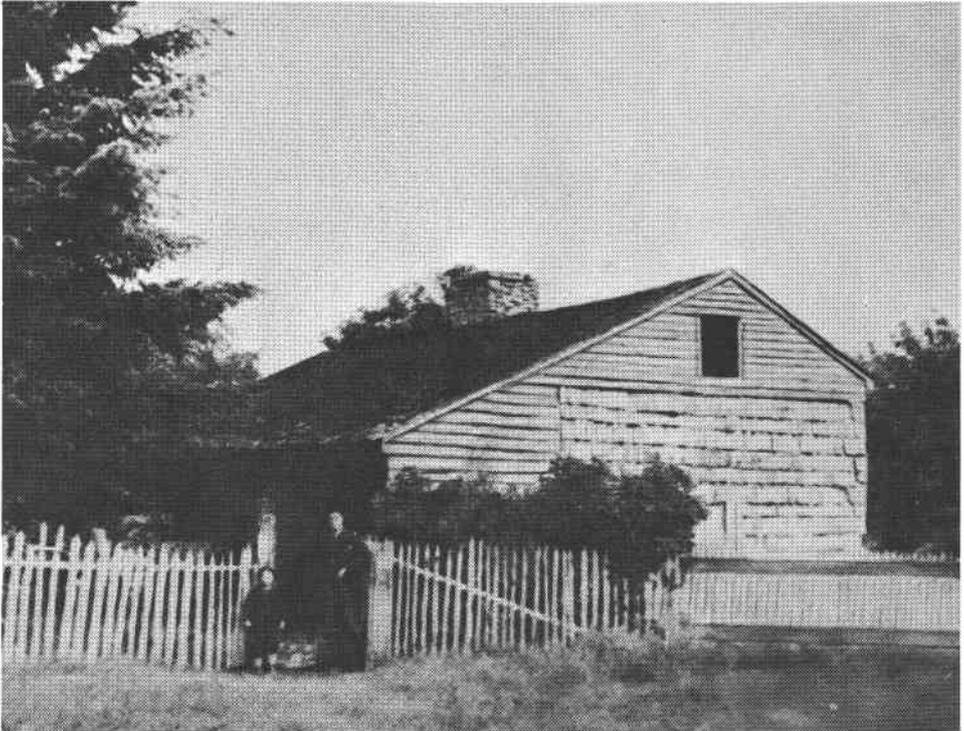
About this time the Abel Bristow land claim was divided and they moved on their part of the claim, consisting of about one hundred acres. They immediately began to improve the land and make a comfortable home.

On September 7, 1925, Mr. L. J. Cornelius died at the Goshen Hospital. He was born in Randolph County, Missouri, September 22,

1847. After the father's death, the mother spent some time with her two sons, Millard at Pleasant Hill on the farm, and Archie at Anlauf, Oregon. Much more of her time she spent with her oldest daughter, Fannie, in Ashland, and for the last four years of her life made her home with her.

Mrs. Cornelius died on September 14, 1934, at the age of eighty two years, one month and four days. Though she is greatly missed, we know she has gone to her reward, trusting the God she loved and served all these years.

Her sister, Mrs. Genoa Robineet, preceded her in death sixteen days. The only survivor of Abel and Almira Bristow is Mrs. Delilah B. Todd, who makes her home with her son, Dr. E. B. Todd, in Concord, California.



Elijah Bristow home at Pleasant Hill

History and Routes of the Eugene to Mapleton Stage Run

By **Loris F. Inman**

The actual time of beginning of the mail route from Eugene to Mapleton has not been ascertained. There would be no mail route without a post office and vice versa. The dates of post offices are given in order from Eugene:

Long Tom established Sept. 3, 1853, first postmaster A. L. Humphrey. (This post office may have been on the Eugene to Crow route by this time.)

Elmira established March 4, 1884, first postmaster I. N. Duckworth.

Chesher (Noti) established April 1, 1875, first postmaster J. P. Chesher.

Hale established Aug. 4, 1886, first postmaster George Hale.

Walton established June 12, 1884, first postmaster J. J. Walton (later judge).

Glentena (Austa) established July 26, 1888, first postmaster A. C. Barbour.

Meadows established Aug. 30, 1887, first postmaster Levi Tallman.

Mapleton (Seaton) established Nov. 13, 1885, first postmaster W. W. Neeley.

Mapleton post office was served by boat from Florence before the stage route was started. After the stage route was started, mail, passengers, and freight were transferred from stage to boat for the trip on down the river to Florence.

Early post offices in the outlying areas of Lane County were served once a week by a rider on horseback. It was mostly a case of convenience for himself and an accommodation to his neighbors to have the mail delivered close at hand.

The postmaster's pay was the stamps he sold. The mail consisted mostly of letters and upon arrival of the mail, the postmaster took the mail pouch to the living room and dumped its contents on the floor. He then proceeded with the help of everyone present to sort the mail.

The route of the rider had few, if any bridges; the pony soon became adept at swimming streams. Horses used for stage horses were usually very spirited and they would often balk or run away.

Florence Curtis Inman, whose father carried mail on the Crow-Hadleyville-Panther-Alma-Mound route, remembers the pony he rode and swam it across the Siuslaw as a matter of course.

Elijah Bristow, the first settler in Lane County arrived in 1845 from California; his family arrived in 1848 from across the plains. Accompanying the family was Calvin T. Hale, 21, who returned to the states and led a wagon train west in 1852. An old Indian told him of a little valley on an upper tributary of the Long Tom. He sought it out and named it Elk Prairie. His claim took most of the valley, including the bottom ground along Elk Creek and spring watered hillside land, completely surrounded by high hills. He built his cabin on the old trail to the Wildcat and Siuslaw Rivers, some two miles west of present Noti. He had three sons and three daughters and spent the rest of his life on his claim.

As the Willamette Valley became settled and the good land taken,

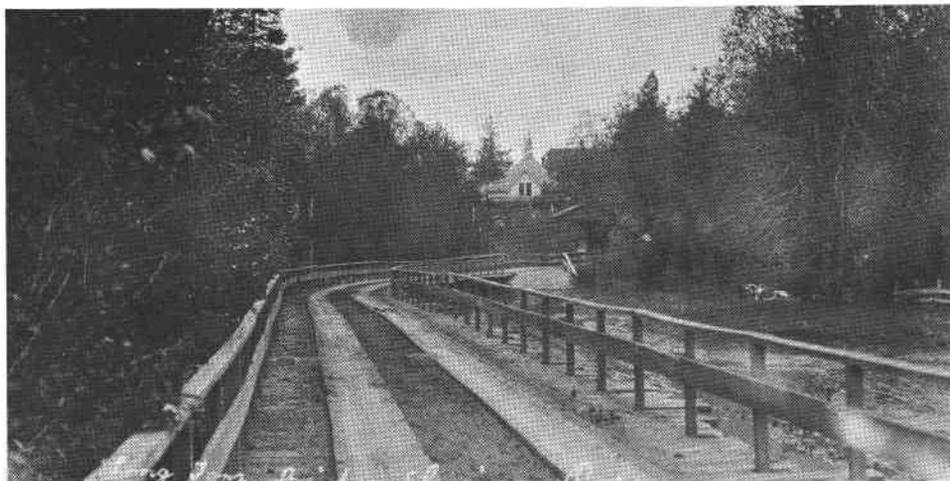
other settlers began to search out homesites across the divide and down the narrow valleys of the Wildcat and Siuslaw Rivers. Since Calvin Hale's claim was the last one west before the divide, it became the last stopping place before leaving the valley.

There were two trails leaving Elk Prairie for the Siuslaw: One trail led over Badger Mountain, down the Wildcat, using the river-bed part of the way. In winter and at flood time it was a dangerous trail, sometimes impossible even for pack animals. Florence Inman, who once lived near the pack animal trail over the mountains near the Mound P.O. on the Middle Siuslaw, says the old road to Eugene forded the river twenty-seven times.

The other trail led over Chickahominy Mountain, down to the headwaters of Chickahominy Creek, on over Nelson Mountain and down Nelson Creek to Lake Creek, which it forded and followed down to the Siuslaw. The reason for the trail over Chickahominy and Nelson Mountains to Lake Creek was a sort of "divide and conquer" technique: To go down

the north bank of the Siuslaw in winter was almost an impossibility. The most serious threat was the mouth of Lake Creek in flood. The best solution was to go down Nelson Creek and ford it before reaching Lake Creek, then take Lake Creek above the side streams of Deadwood Creek and Indian Creek, then each of those two streams on the way down the west side of Lake Creek. By taking them one at a time, the danger was not nearly as great as fording Lake Creek below the mouth of these and smaller streams. On this route the Siuslaw was not crossed at all.

The latter trail was the first to be used by wagons. This was the first mail route to Mapleton, first by pack horse. There are stories of a Dutchman who carried the mail by horse and two-wheeled cart. Next the Whisman brothers, Joe and John, got a contract to carry the mail. They improved the trail as much as they could with little or no equipment. By following the ridges they avoided grading, but the road was steep, so steep that there are tales of tying logs to the back of the wagon on some downhill slopes.



Long Tom Bridge — Elmira

As the Whismans grew accustomed to the road, they added two horses to make a four-horse team and began to haul passengers and freight. The drivers seemed to be afraid of nothing, but they sometimes terrified their passengers.

The following article was taken from the April 8, 1892 issue of *The West*, published in Florence by Alley and Blinton:

Joseph Whisman, stage driver, came near losing his life while attempting to cross Deadwood Creek Wednesday morning of last week. After having dispatched his passengers, mail sacks and baggage across by a log foot path, he started to cross. Midway of the stream where the current was the swiftest, his horses, four in number were thrown from their feet by the current and became tangled in the harness. To save himself, Joe jumped into the stream and was carried down stream about one quarter mile. His brother, John, and nine year old boy made good time in reaching a log canoe and paddled out to the rescue. They pulled in the apparently lifeless form of Joe and paddled to the shore and there at once began rolling on a log. This operation was continued for some time but no life was apparent, still they worked faithfully on and were finally awarded by signs of returning life. There is no question but that he was dead when taken from the water. The horses were all drowned. They were pulled into shallow water, unharnessed and allowed to float on down stream.

Joe Whisman's homestead was at the mouth of Nelson Creek on the west side of Lake Creek. His shortest route to the outside and to Eugene was to ford Lake Creek, then follow up Nelson Creek to Nelson Mountain, then cross the divide to Chickahominy Creek,

then cross Chickahominy Mountain and come down to Elk Prairie near Calvin Hale's place for a direct route to Eugene. He raised his family on the homestead, which had a sizeable amount of level ground along the river and made a good farm. When post offices of Seaton (later Mapleton), Deadwood, Hale, Cheshier, Elmira and Long Tom were established, this was then the only practical year-round route to serve them. Whether he and his brother, John, initiated the route or not has not been established.

Item from county surveyor's office: "Chickahominy road No. 573 across Chickahominy Mountain was relocated by County road superintendent C. E. Carlyle in 1905 and is now closed. The route was the same or followed near the one made by Whisman brothers."

We have no dates until 1879, when a survey was begun for a state road to go down the Wildcat and the main stem of the Siuslaw. Here is an article that appeared in the *Eugene Guard* April 16, 1879, in form of a letter:

Mr. H. C. Perkins, head of survey party and surveying party for the survey of the Siuslaw wagon road reached Mr. T. C. Hale's on Wed., April 9. Here they were met by the viewers Messers H. Hill, W. Hamilton and S. McConnell. Notwithstanding dame Nature's indisposition we punched out into the pelting rain and commence the work. We arrived at this camp on last Saturday evening, having surveyed 6½ miles of the road. This camp is located at the junction of the Chickahominy and Wildcat Creeks, and is 25 miles west and 2 miles south of Eugene City. Below the junction of the two creeks the stream is called Wildcat and it unites with the Siuslaw about 5 miles south and west of this place.

The camping equipage and provisions have been transported to this place by means of pack animals but for the remainder of the trip the viewer have concluded it can be more expeditiously done by taking a canoe down the Wildcat, thence down the Siuslaw to the terminus of the survey. The canoe has been constructed and will be ready to move the camp today. The trip thus far has been very disagreeable on account of the rain, but at present fair weather seems to be dawning upon us.

In reaching this point from the Willamette Valley Badger Hill on the east side is 1207 feet at the top of the hill which is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile distant from the bottom the height is 1475 feet above the sea, making an ascent of 366 feet per mile. The grade on this side of the hill is equally as gradual. The route from here to the coast is a gradual descent down the Siuslaw river. The route according to what is now known of it is by far the most favorable of any yet known for a wagon road across the coast mountains."

The letter continues the descriptions of the route, but this is enough for a date and information of the preparation for construction. In 1880 an article appeared in the same paper describing a public meeting in Eugene to begin construction on the road down the Siuslaw:

Eugene *Guard*, 1881: "Siuslaw road association meeting Eugene, Oregon 31st of May at the courthouse pursuant to public notice to consider the practicability of opening a wagon road from Elk Prairie in Cheshier precinct to tide water on the Siuslaw river on a route heretofore located by the county. The board met and appointed the following committees to canvas for subscriptions with the request they

canvas at once their respective precinct and report the results." The quote is longer than this, but this shows the date and motive. The effort to raise \$1000 was successful. This was a small amount for over 20 miles of road, and in 1887 it had only reached Beecher and Tilden Rocks above the mouth of Lake Creek. These rocks were a barrier at high water for many years. At low water the river bed could be used. A steep detour was found up and over the rocks; the drivers named it Hardscrabble.

Some time before 1900 Eli Bangs of Bangs Livery Stable of Eugene won the contract to carry the mail over the Eugene to Mapleton run. He held the contract until the railroad in 1914 replaced the stage route. At least three of the drivers of the old stage run are still living and bring alive for us some of the dangers and hardships of the road. Ern Duckworth, born 1879, began driving when 20 years of age and drove continuously until 1914. He had the run from Mapleton to Hale then back to Mapleton.

The stage schedule before Ern Duckworth was a driver is not certain. Ern remembers the schedule after he began to drive about 1900. It was as follows: Leave Eugene 6 o'clock each morning. Arrive Hale, noon if possible. Arrive Mapleton 6 o'clock if possible. Also in the opposite direction: Leave Mapleton 6 o'clock each morning. Arrive Hale noon if possible. Arrive Eugene 6 o'clock if possible.

Joe Fowler's and George Hale's were the places to stop for dinner.

Thus a driver left both Mapleton and Eugene each morning. The drivers traded stage coaches at Hale at noon if possible. Fresh horses were hitched to each stage then the drivers each took his new outfit on to its destination. Horses were changed at Elmira, one-

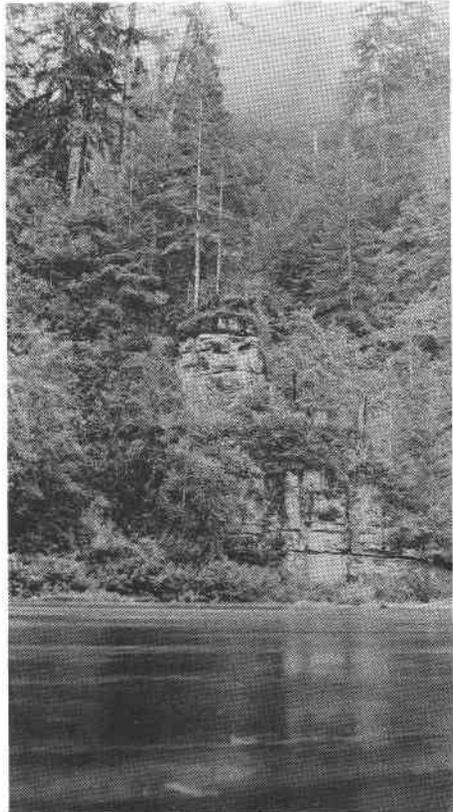
fourth the total distance, Hale, one-half to total distance, Meadows, three-fourths the total distance. They always greased the wagon in the covered bridge across the mouth of Lake Creek and at Lyons.

At each post office along the route the driver rested the horses while the mail was being sorted and sacked. Each patron had a separate canvas sack with his number and name on it and a strap across the top. At each home there was a post with a hook at the top that the driver could reach from the stage coach seat. Thus the driver made the mail deliveries at each home on his way out and picked up the sacks on his way back.

No matter what time at night the stage arrived at Eugene or Mapleton it had to start the return at 6 o'clock the next morning. The day that Lester Ogden had a horse killed on Hardscrabble, the stage arrived at 4 o'clock the next morning, but the driver met the deadline and started back at 6 o'clock on schedule.

In 1899 Mrs. Ellis (Dena) Richardson remembers that she, her mother and sister rode to Seaton from Mapleton where they stayed all night. Indian Jeff had shot another Indian at Florence. Mrs. Richardson knew the Indian. She was so scared she wouldn't go to bed, so they told her Indian Jeff was down in the barn and she went to bed, but the next day she learned that the Indian had slept in the bedroom next to hers.

Mrs. Richardson also remembers December 21, 1911, on her honeymoon, that they rode the stage to Eugene from Mapleton. There were 13 passengers. Reece Zumwalt was driving from Hale to Eugene. The road was very bad and the stage was overloaded. Mrs. Richardson remembers they left Mapleton, 6



The Old Man of the Siuslaw, visible from old stage road below Swisshome.

o'clock, December 20 or 21 and continued to Hale at 9 o'clock in the evening. They changed horses at Elmira. Another man had to get to Eugene, but Zumwalt refused to take him, so the passengers helped him climb on the mail sack on the back of the stage. He rode to Eugene and slid off at Blair Street without paying fare. On the way they got stuck in the mud at present Elveta. It took some time to get the horses out of the mire, and it arrived in Eugene at 3 o'clock the next morning.

An open top stage was used on this route as a covered stage would not go under Tilden Rock. The rock hung completely over the

road and could be reached by riders on the stage.

Ira Jeffers drove the stage for a short time in about 1910. It was winter and very disagreeable. They put the meanest horses on the stage to work the meanness out of them. On one trip down river the storm had blown a tree across the road near Tilden Rock, and he had to camp overnight under the rock. He decided there must be better jobs than that!

When the route over Chickahominy and Nelson Mountains was abandoned and the route over Badger Mountain and down the Wildcat and Siuslaw was begun, the stage missed Deadwood P.O. Annie Whisman, daughter of Joe Whisman, carried the mail on horseback from Swisshome to Deadwood. One day, horse and rider unexpectedly met a bear on the road. The horse reared, threw Annie off, and ran away. Supposedly the bear ran, too. When Annie fell, she hit her head so hard she was in a daze and couldn't remember whether she was headed toward Swisshome or towards Deadwood.

The reader will be interested in several other memories of the route to Mapleton:

Ern Duckworth remembers on the trip downriver in winter that lanterns were lighted and hung on the outside hame of each horse at Meadows, fifteen miles from Mapleton. The rest of the way was in darkness. Mr. Duckworth also remembers that one morning when the stable hand hitched his horses to the stage at Mapleton, he forgot to undo the lines from the hames. When Ern climbed into the seat the horses started and he had no lines to control them. He decided to ride it out, and the horses kept to the road. They ran two miles to the Neely place and stopped at their regular stop.

Ern remembers that Charlie Taylor started across the bridge at Meadows with the stage and the covering caved in. Fortunately, he escaped unharmed.

Darwin Hale remembers that Lester Ogden was driving the year after the Green Gay slide, one to one-and-a-half miles below Walton, and while he was climbing Hardscrabble, the steep climb across Beecher and Tilden Rocks, in a bad windstorm, a falling tree killed a horse. He had a young female invalid as a passenger whom he carried onto the George Kirk place—the nearest house. He later married the girl.

Farmer Hale remembers the death of Sheriff Withers. The Sheriff had gone over Badger Mountain to get Elliot Lyons for stealing a horse. Lyons shot the Sheriff and he was brought back to Hale, bleeding badly. The following is taken from a transcript of a conversation between the writer and Farmer Hale:

Yes, he shot him along after dark. Then in the night the Lyons brothers—two of his brothers—put him in a wagon and brought him over here to our place and he was here at our house . . . I was just a small kid and I can remember that they had him on a pretty high bed, and I can remember my dad lifted me up and I could see where the bullet struck him, right here where they stick a hog with a knife. There was more people here than there was in Eugene the few days after that. I think they were about all out here. There wasn't a place to hitch a horse. . . . They convicted him for shooting Withers and he was hung right there on the jail yard, right there in Eugene. Fred Fisk was sheriff.

Lois Inman Baker, whose Uncle Jesse Inman was once a stage driver, remembers the bells on the

hames of the horses. The purpose was to alert anyone ahead of the coming of the stage. The postmaster was alerted, too. Their chief purpose, however, was on the long stretches of single-width road along the river, so that approaching vehicles could wait at a passing place and not meet them where one or the other would have to back up to pass.

APPENDIX I

DRIVERS

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.? | 14. Jesse Inman |
| 2. Dutchman
with cart | 15. Elza Pickard |
| 3. John Whisman | 16. Frank Taylor |
| 4. Joe Whisman | 17. Bill Taylor |
| 5. Lester Ogden | 18. Pearl Cartwright |
| 6. Plas Bailey | 19. Ed Walker |
| 7. Tom Murphy | 20. Ray Walker |
| 8. Bert Gates | 21. Joe Fowler |
| 9. Reese Zumwalt | 22. Oscar Richie |
| 10. Earl McNutt | 23. Ernest Mabe |
| 11. Darwin Hale | 24. Billy Wells |
| 12. Ern Duckworth | 25. Bill Hamilton |
| 13. Charles Taylor | 26. Ira Jeffers |

APPENDIX II

FROM COUNTY COURT RECORDS

In the county records, the following were found concerning Siuslaw road:

May 7, 1875 C. T. Hale petitioned for a county road across Elk Prairie. Petition was granted and survey began May 24, 1875.

July 1879 the county court declared the Siuslaw road to be a public highway. September 1882 R. B. Hayes, supervisor, was instructed to open as much of the Siuslaw road between T. C. Hale's and tidewater as possible. He was allowed \$1500.00 for the project.

April 29, 1886 contract let to John Brown to complete Siuslaw road. Contract price \$1150.44. \$600 payable when road around Plymouth Rock completed. \$550 payable when rest is approved by Superintendent.

July 29, 1887 contract let to L. N. Roney to build a bridge across the mouth of Lake Creek. Bid price \$3875.00. Bridge to be open for travel by Oct. 15, 1887. This is the Swisshome bridge which opened the road for year around traffic. There was a road already in use from Swisshome at the mouth of Lake Creek to the head of tide.



Stage Coach on Eugene to Mapleton Run

The Lure of Gold

By Leah C. Menefee

A great deal has been written about the various "gold rushes" in the United States, with the chief emphasis on the discovery at Sutter's Mill in California. Oregon, however, had its gold too and perhaps the most famous of her discoveries is known as the Blue Bucket. It was and still is usually called a "mine" but mine it never was for it was never worked. It was merely discovered.

The story is that in 1845 an emigrant train guided by Stephen H. L. Meek attempted a cut-off from the Oregon Trail at the Malheur river to the upper Willamette valley. There were about two hundred and fifty wagons and over one thousand people. Someone—stories differ as to who—picked up some stones in a dry stream bed and placed them in a blue bucket. Hence the name of the "find." It was not until sometime later that it occurred to Meek train people that this was gold—or so the stories run.

Gold meant nothing to people who lacked food, were ill, distrusted their guide and wished only to get out of the predicament into which they had allowed him to lead them. They revolted, turned north and came out on the Oregon Trail again at the Columbia river, blue bucket, nuggets and all.

It was when gold was discovered in California that the eastern Oregon discovery began to be talked about. Meek, himself, looked for the spot where the nuggets were picked up. Some parties slipped away from the Willamette valley to look for the dry stream bed somewhere north, or was it south of Harney and Malheur lakes? Or was it east or west of them? It is

a vast dry basin and there are numbers of streams that are dry by fall. These parties came back as silently as they had left, empty-handed. The adventurous still look for it today with jeep and trail bike replacing the pack horses and mules of another century.

It will never be known how many parties actually looked for Blue Bucket gold in the years after the Meek train crossed eastern Oregon. Some gathered large parties—for the area was inhabited by hostile northern Paiutes. The newspapers of the day often reported on these parties. One left Lane county in 1858 and included A. S. McClure and Henry Harlow, one keeping a diary and the other telling many tales of the journey.

The 1858 party, from all accounts, was bent partly at least on finding gold but also on having a trip. It was well-supplied with whatever was needed and was out some weeks. They covered a good deal of eastern Oregon, saw no Indians, found no gold and at least one account makes the journey sound like a fall jaunt of bachelors who wanted to get away from the home chores.

In 1859 Capt. Henry D. Wallen led troops into the eastern Oregon country from the army post at The Dalles. He was seeking a route for a new cross-Oregon road. There is no indication in Wallen's official report that gold was looked for en route to the Oregon Trail at old Fort Boise on Snake river. However, among the 184 enlisted men with Wallen it would be strange if someone did not have an eye for each dry stream bed which the command crossed. It was a large party, 319 persons in all with 154

horses, 344 mules, 121 oxen, 30 wagons, an ambulance, a traveling forge, and 60 head of beef cattle to furnish meat for the assemblage. What a treat to the grasshopper-eating Indians of the basin this must have been. Wallen did name Harney lake for his commander, General Harney.

In May and June 1860, knowing that another army detachment was coming south from Fort Dalles, and that Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon, E. R. Geary was planning to be in the Harney country to make a treaty with the Snakes, as the northern Paiutes were more popularly known, another civilian Blue Bucket junket was arranged. A group of men from Linn, Lane and Benton counties, decided to make an attempt to find the location where the 1845 nuggets had been picked up. Their captain was G. W. Bunch. This was probably George M. Bunch, of Linn county, born in 1816 in Clay County, Kentucky. Bunch had moved to Macon County, Missouri where he married in 1843. He moved to Oregon in 1852.

A newspaper, the *Democratic Herald* existed in Eugene, Lane county, Oregon in 1860. Alex Blakely was editor. From J. B. Roberts, Blakeley secured names of the party. One Henry Martin is named a "pilot." Martin was much interested in the Blue Bucket and his name appears in other parties which searched for it.

The experiences of the 1860 group under Mr. Bunch were far different from those of 1858. They managed to reach a point, apparently in the southern end of the Blue mountains above Harney valley, before the Indians struck. They were attacked twice, lost the majority of their horses, and many of them walked home to the Willamette valley.

An account of his life, and incidentally of this adventure, was written by Robert Millican, of Lane County. His daughter, Mrs. Ada Millican Brewbaker, of Eugene, had kindly allowed us to use this narrative, the original of which is in Millican's own hand-writing.

The Indian attack was far more serious than Mr. Millican's matter-of-fact account indicates. It was no small accomplishment that men escaped and managed to reach home at all. The attack took place June 7th, 1860 and 63 horses were run off in this surprise. A Mr. Leggett (or Liggett) had wounded himself in the foot June 2nd, and was therefore not ambulatory. Two other men were ill. It appears that the first Indian attack was after the horses and probably to stampede the men so that the Paiutes could gather in their possessions as well.

The Blue Bucket seekers decided there was nothing to do but start home with their remaining 37 horses. The Indians attacked them within two miles from the scene of the first affair. The valley men believed they killed some Indians but a Mr. "Phips" was wounded, according to an account of the trip by Nelson Cochran, which is in the Oregon Historical Society collections.

Knowing that Superintendent Geary was north of them, and wishing to warn him about the attack on their party, as well as obtain revenge on the Indians, the men drafted an appeal to the Hon. John Whiteaker, governor of Oregon. They sent two of their number, Archibald Rader and "Alecc" Vaughn to carry this to Mr. Geary and the commander of the troops operating out of The Dalles toward the Harney country. The appeal read as follows:

To His Excellency
Gov. Whiteaker

Dear Sir

We the undersigned citizens of Oregon pray your Hon. John Whiteaker Gov. of Oregon that you call upon Maj. Gen. Harney to send troops and chastise a band of Snake Indians that inhabit the region of country lying between the head of John Days river and Fort Boise. We being on an exploring and prospecting expedition peaceably travelling through to the Malheur were attacked and sixty-seven head of horses and mules were driven off and one man severely wounded.

In two engagements we had with them 5 Indians were killed and several wounded, we will raise a company of rangers to try and recapture our property if sanctioned by the Government authorities, which will act in concert with the Gov. troops now in this country, hoping that you will see justice done us we believe that no white man is or will be safe in travelling through this country until this band of Indians are subdued. We also believe that the emigration will be in danger of loosing their lives and property unless strongly guarded by Govt. troops. Yours with respect—

(signed)

G. W. Bunch, Capt.	Albert Hays
Laban C. Buoy	Washington Jewett
James W. Swank, Sgt.	A. A. Morgan
C. H. Paine	John P. Stevens
C. Roth	Samuel Warfield
Horace Lane	S. M. Long
A. H. Vaughn	Simeon Bartmess
R. Millican	J. L. Mulkey
James Pollock	Walter Haston
A. Rader	(Huston?)
John T. Craig	John M. Roach
A. P. Trimble	George Smiett
John Jewett	J. W. Carlin
Sam Bradford	Milton C. Harner
John Bradford	N. G. Cochran
J. C. Templeton	Robt. Hall
J. W. Miller	N. Gilmore
C. Clark	Doctor Jennings
J. Doan	James R. Roberts

J. P. Haley
W. J. Fox
G. Smelser
John Eaton
John Fox
Henry Marlin
(Martin)

Joseph Phipps
W. B. Smith
John Brown
D. Willard Barton
Elijah Liggett
Samuel Wren
Christian Martin

Nelson Cochran's letter to the late George Himes of the Oregon Historical Society, has a list somewhat different from the above. The *Democratic Herald* list also differs. Henry Martin is given as "pilot." J. B. Roberts as clerk. George "Smiet" is "Smidt." The following names are not on the petition list:

Samuel Brown, A. J. Fox, J. W. McCaslin, A. P. Trimble, O. P. Adams, R. L. Ferguson, James Democrat, F. G. Barger.

James W. Swank, of the expedition wrote Gov. Whiteaker June 25th, 1860 from Brownsville, Linn County, that : "The last of our ill-fated expedition will get home today."

According to the Cochran account the men had crossed the Cascade mountains over a difficult and unmarked route from the Deschutes river to the McKenzie river settlements in some six days. This is a feat unparalleled in those days of only Indian trails. In 1853 a party of men took this same journey from the Deschutes and wandered for weeks before coming out on the McKenzie.

Regular army troops did go down into the Harney basin and Captain Andrew Smith's reconnaissance party bound for the Owyhee was attacked the 23rd of June east of Malheur lake and was forced to return to the main body. It is probable that Smith's attackers were the same Indians who had just completed the route of the prospectors from the Willamette valley led by George Bunch and Henry Martin. No property lost by the Blue Bucket seekers was recovered as far as the records show.

Early Petition

To the Honorable Court and General Assembly
of the Territory of Oregon*

We, your Petitioners would respectfully request your honorable body to strike off township 24 S., Range 4 W. of the Willamette Meridian in Umpqua county from the said Umpqua county and attach the same to Lane county for the following reasons, first that by adding the said territory to Lane county it will straighten the line between the aforesaid county and secondly that it is inconvenient for the settlers in said township to school their children, whereby if the said township were added to Lane it would enable the settlers to school their children to a better advantage for which your petitioners in duty bound will ever pray.

Dan Locke	T. S. Knox
J. H. Butler	M. E. Anderson
J. N. Petty	Louis Lejoy
Lewis Martin	Nelson Swaggard
J. F. McBride	John Deyles (?)
Laban Buoy	John Wiles
Jacob Clinesmith	James Applegate
George Small	A. R. Mulveny
Andrew	John Hedrick
Wm. Currin	C. Snowdon
Jeremiah Despain	Philander C. Davis
Joseph Despain	John Applegate
John Cole	James Moore
Terrance McMurry	Wm. A. Mulvany
Guy Welby (?)	E. T. Esles
Gordon McCarty	Wm. J. J. Scott
Wm. Shields	Wm. Golden
Mr. John Paul	Wm. Haskins
C. C. McClure	Wm. Ward
John B. Beckner	Samuel Hall
John W. Martin	Samuel Holt

(Written beside names: "There is 4 settlers in this township but one is going to leave it in the spring which will leave one family and 2 bachelors, a part of this township which lies in lain [sic] another advantage to the publick by attaching the rest of the county to lain it will—quite a portion of the through road of lain on the road where there is no settlement to improve it or to help keep it up at present.") This was hard to read and not very clear in meaning. It was referred to committee, Jan. 7, 1857. Reported adversely, Jan. 15, 1857.

*Submitted to the *Historian* by Leah C. Menefee.



Elijah Bristow Fountain

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
740 West 13th Ave., Eugene, Oregon

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