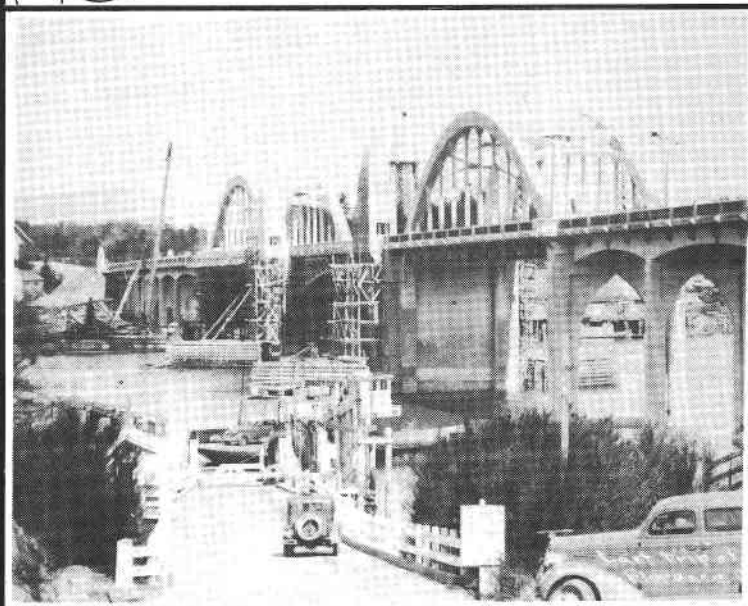
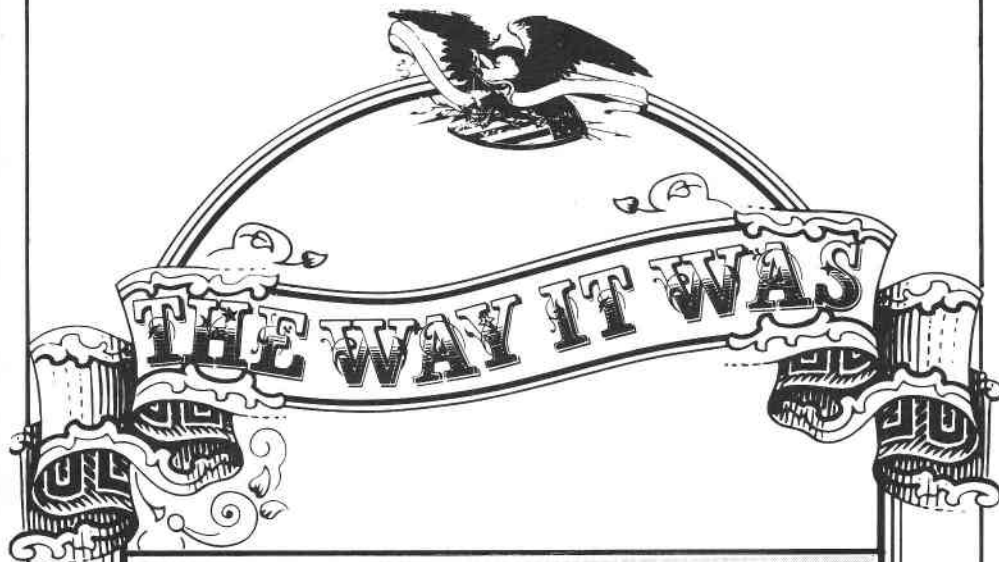


Lane County Historian



Last trip of the ferry across the Siuslaw before the opening of the new Bridge, March 31, 1936. Siuslaw Museum photo

The Lane County Historical Society
Vol. XXIX, No. 3

Fall, 1984

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Lane County Historian, Vol. XXIX, No. 3 Fall, 1984

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

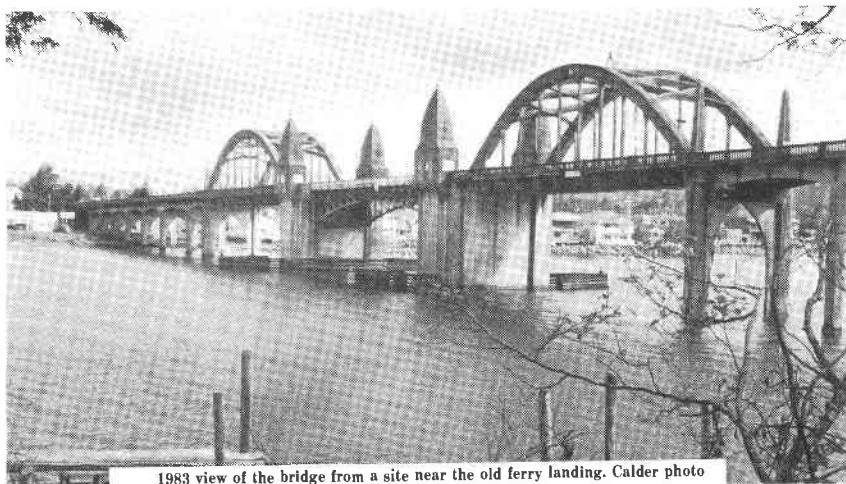
Bill Calder is a free lance writer, interested in historic preservation who owns the Wind Works on Bay Street in Florence. His articles have appeared recently in *Lane County Living* and *Oregon Coast* magazines.

Kim Stafford, then a doctoral candidate at the U of O, lived in Florence for more than a year, traveling the back roads of the area collecting on film and tape the story of the early settlers of the Siuslaw Valley under the auspices of the American Bicentennial Comm., the Suislaw Pioneer Museum and the Florence Public Library board of trustees. His collection of interviews and hundreds of photos is housed at the Museum and Florence library. — from *A Suislaw Sampler*, November, 1976.

Mary Louise Skinner is a retired free lance writer, living in Florence. She has credits in the magazine sections of most of the large newspapers on the Pacific Coast, usually writing early Oregon history. She was a feature writer on the Medford Mail Tribune for several years and was commissioned to write a history of the Rogue River Valley. She recently had two short stories published as well as an article in *Oregon Coast* magazine.

A WALKING TOUR OF OLD TOWN FLORENCE

by Bill Calder



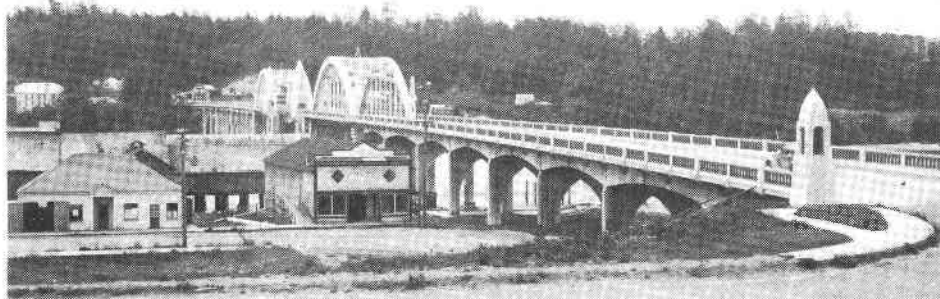
1983 view of the bridge from a site near the old ferry landing. Calder photo

I. THE SIUSLAW RIVER BRIDGE

The bridge over the Siuslaw river is one of five major bridges designed by master bridge builder Conde McCollough and constructed in the 1930s as part of the Works Progress Administration. Funds were allocated to build the Siuslaw bridge in 1934 under a federal emergency jobs program. Workers were paid between 50 cents and \$1.20 an hour, and the bridge was completed in 1936.

This beautiful bridge is supported by huge Gothic piers with metal finials at the tops. Each archway features etched designs in the concrete. When the bridge opened for traffic on March 31, 1936, the *Siuslaw Oar* reported that "...thousands of pounds of steel, millions of cement, and oodles of lumber" had been used for its construction. The steel span in the middle separates and opens up for large vessels coming into the port. The bascules (each side of the raised roadbed) are raised from the control room on the upper deck and settle on huge springs below. All wires, switches and machinery are hidden under the arches.

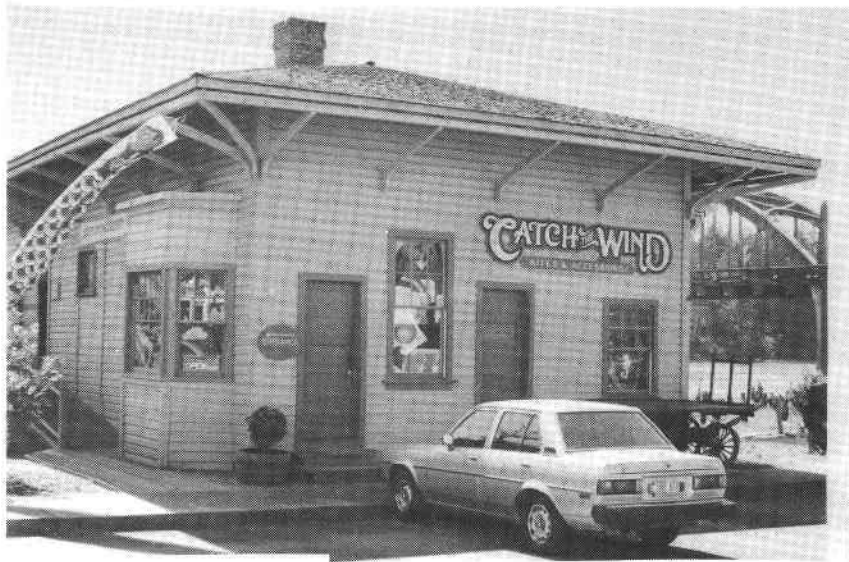
As part of the magnificent coast chain of bridges designed by McCollough, the Siuslaw bridge is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.



Circa 1936 perspective of the newly opened bridge. The old Florence City Hall (far left) and the theater are visible at left. Oregon Historical Society photo.

II. GLENADA FERRY LANDING

Long before adequate roads were built into Florence, the river was the main highway. It remained an important transportation link until March 31, 1936, the day the last ferry made a crossing before the opening of the new bridge over the Siuslaw. Florence resident Brian Adkins carved a trail to the Glenada landing as part of an Eagle scout project in 1982. Just south of the bridge is a turn off (or you can walk from Bay Street) there is a sign that states "historical trail". A short path leads you to the old road bed that was the approach to the ferry. From the river's edge there is a good view of the bridge and several waterfront buildings on the Florence side. (see front cover photo. Ed.)



III. THE MAPLETON DEPOT

1983 view of the 1913 Southern Pacific Railway Depot. Calder photo

The Mapleton Depot was first constructed for use as a warehouse in Mapleton in 1913. It was later sold to the Southern Pacific Railway and served as the main depot in Mapleton for several years. In 1976, a highway project threatened the old building and it was scheduled to be demolished. A Florence contractor by the name of Mike Johnson negotiated with the railroad and the highway department and was finally granted permission to remove the structure, but he had to remove it within five days.

Working quickly with chain saws, Johnson and his crew cut the building into five pieces and trucked it to Johnson's lot south of Florence. It remained there, in pieces, until Johnson found an opportunity to reconstruct it.

Two men from Wisconsin who had recently moved to Florence provided that opportunity. Ron Hogeland and Charles Bruske purchased the building (still in pieces) from Johnson and had it reconstructed on their lot near the Siuslaw river. Jim Alexander, a local builder, was chosen to reconstruct the building. Alexander

solved a dry rot problem by cutting nine inches off the bottom, and making the building that much shorter in height. A bay window was added to take advantage of a spectacular river view. Aside from the bay window, the building remains virtually as it was in 1913, complete with the large sliding cargo door on the east side.



Circa 1915 view of the Kyle Building from the public dock. The Bay View Hotel at left served many years as the town's main hotel. It was demolished in 1969. Siuslaw Museum photo

IV. THE KYLE BUILDING

For more than eighty years, the Kyle building has occupied a prominent position on Bay Street in Florence. It was originally constructed in 1901 by a pair of enterprising businessmen engaged in the general merchandise business. Today the building stands as one of the finest remaining examples of early commercial architecture on the Oregon Coast.

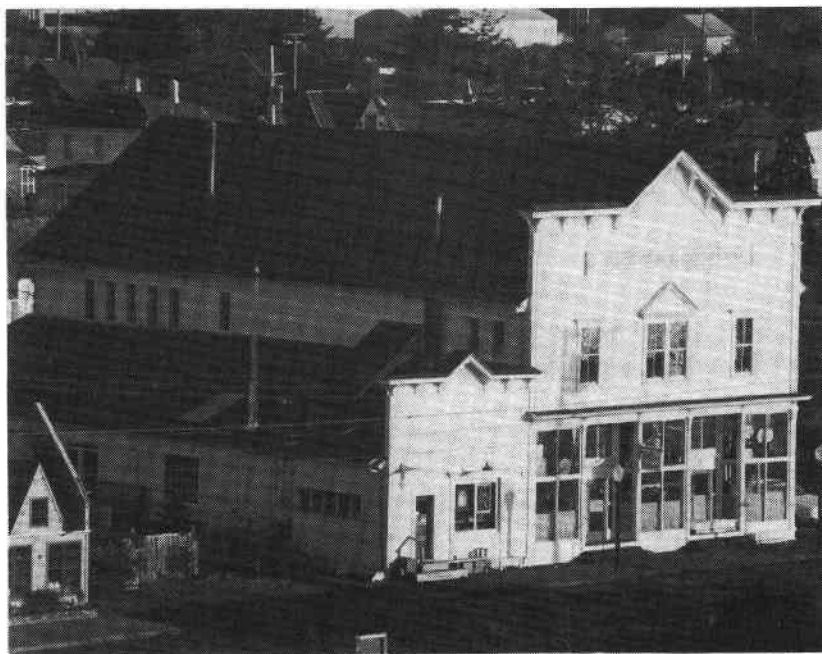
William Kyle and Michael Meyer had this huge building constructed to house their expanding business, which included bulk dry goods, ladies' hats, farm implements, shoes, confections, medicines, and many other necessities of the rough coastal life. Not long after the new store was completed, Meyer sold his share to Kyle, who continued to operate the store with his three sons until 1941. Even after 1941, the building continued to serve as a general merchandise store under the name of Cooper through 1960.

Throughout the years the building served a variety of other purposes as well. Weddings were held on the second floor, dances were a frequent Saturday night activity, and the upper floor once was converted for use as a roller rink. In the main store, people would sit in the back near a big stove and tell stories; perhaps

discuss the latest arrival of a schooner loaded with winter supplies. The general store was also the Post Office for Florence until 1913.

Reportedly constructed with wood milled at Kyle's Spruce Point mill, this building is a massive structure. It is ninety feet long and 50 feet wide, with ten foot high windows in the front facade. Solid fir posts support the fourteen foot high ceiling. Two champhered girders run the entire length of the building and are spliced together with hand-made dowels. The warehouse addition is a smaller replica of the main building, complete with its own false front and decorative cornice brackets.

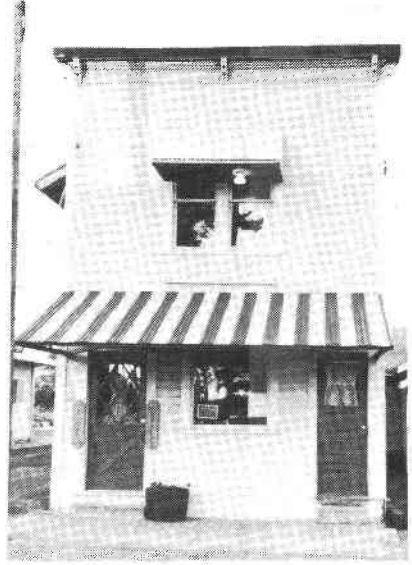
The restoration of this Florence landmark began in the early seventies and culminated with the building being listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. It remains very close to original condition and has served as a focal point for the restoration of the entire waterfront area in Florence. It is most certainly an important Lane County landmark, and it will always occupy an important place in Florence history.



1983 view of the Kyle building taken from the Siuslaw Bridge. Calder photo

V. FLORENCE TELEPHONE COMPANY BUILDING

The first telephones came to Florence between 1903 and 1904. This building on Maple Street was reportedly the first telephone company office. Switchboards were downstairs and operator quarters were on the second floor. The long and narrow wood building is another good example of early commercial architecture. Scrolled cornice brackets are visible along the false front.



Florence Telephone Company. Calder photo

VI. FLORENCE ROOMS

This building is a two story wooden structure with bay windows and a recessed entry. Very little information is available on this building but it appears in several historic photographs taken before 1910. It was reportedly used as a boarding house originally and it continues to be used today as an apartment building.



Florence Rooms on Maple Street. Calder photo



1930s photo from the old water tower looking toward the river and the lumber mill. The Johnson House, the David home, and the schoolhouse are visible from right to left in the foreground. Siuslaw Museum photo.



Current photo of Johnson House. Calder photo

VII. THE JOHNSON HOUSE

The Johnson house was originally constructed by Dr. O.F. Kennedy in 1892. It is thought that he used his home as a small hospital, but house calls were probably more appropriate since most of the town was within a few blocks of his home.

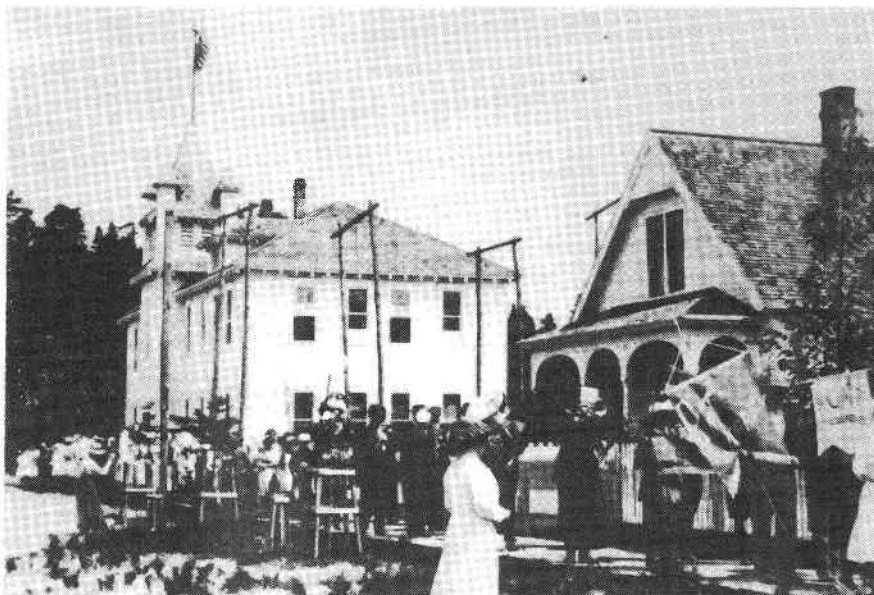
Dr. Kennedy sold the home to Victor Laivo, the man who had reportedly built the home for Kennedy in 1892. After a wind storm damaged part of the house in 1907, Laive added on and enlarged the home to its present size.

In 1914, Laivo sold the home to Sarah Cassiday, at that time the manager of the hotel on Front Street (now Bay Street). Cassiday made the home a boarding house and then later sold it to Max Brodie in 1924. Brodie apparently had plans to turn the residence into a clam cannery but those plans never materialized. Brodie sold the home to the family of Milo and Cora Johnson, and it was kept in the Johnson family until 1981. Soon after, it was purchased by Ron and Jayne Fraese who restored the home for use as a Bed and Breakfast facility.

The house is similar to many homes that were built in the Northwest near the turn of the century. Its box shape and rectangular style was a Victorian influence that made its way west. It is supposedly the first home in Florence that had plastered walls and the milled lumber inside probably came in by boat from San Francisco. It is commonly referred to as a typical balloon frame (studs in the walls go from the ground floor to the roof) structure and there once were several other similar homes in the area.

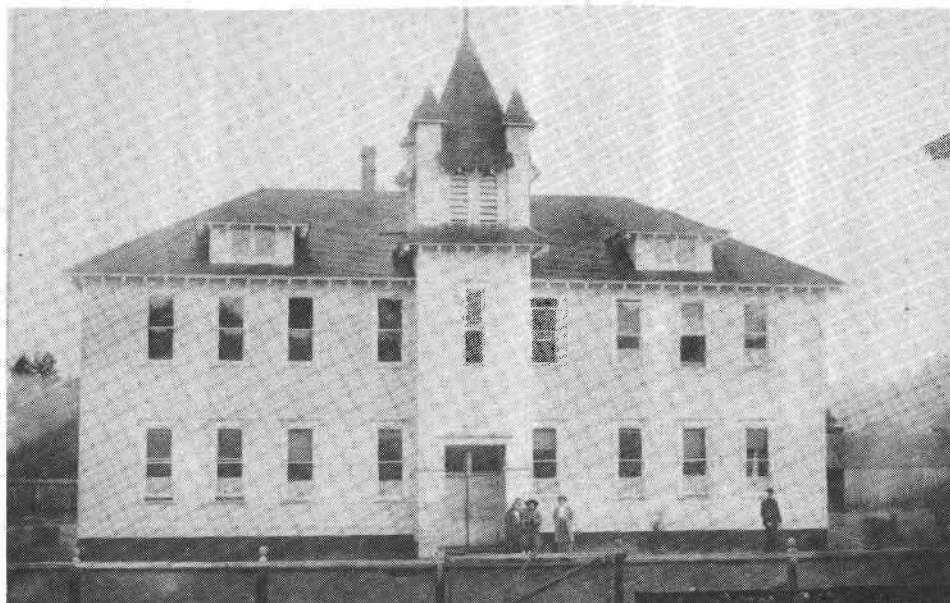
VIII. THE DAVID HOUSE

Little is known about the David house, just north of the Johnson House on Maple Street, but it is one of the oldest homes in Florence. It was built by a man named M. David, who worked in the mill at the end of the street. It has been owned by the Hoberg and Ziemer families of Florence and is currently owned by Helen



Early picture taken during the Rhododendron festival showing the David home and the schoolhouse. Note the curved arch supports on the porch of the home. Don Bowman Collection photo

Silva. Early photos show fancy turned posts and curvilinear arch supports on the front porch. These decorative items are now gone, but the turned posts on the back porch are still intact. The collar tie at the peak of the roof in front is one of the few remaining examples of such architectural detail in Florence.

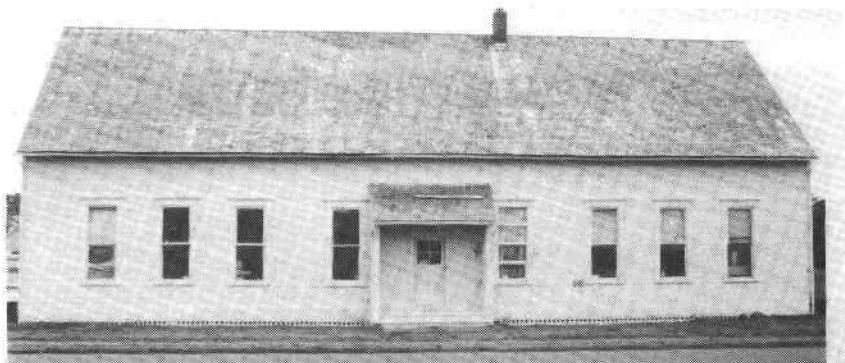


Circa 1910 picture of the schoolhouse, originally constructed in 1904 and 1905. Siuslaw Museum photo

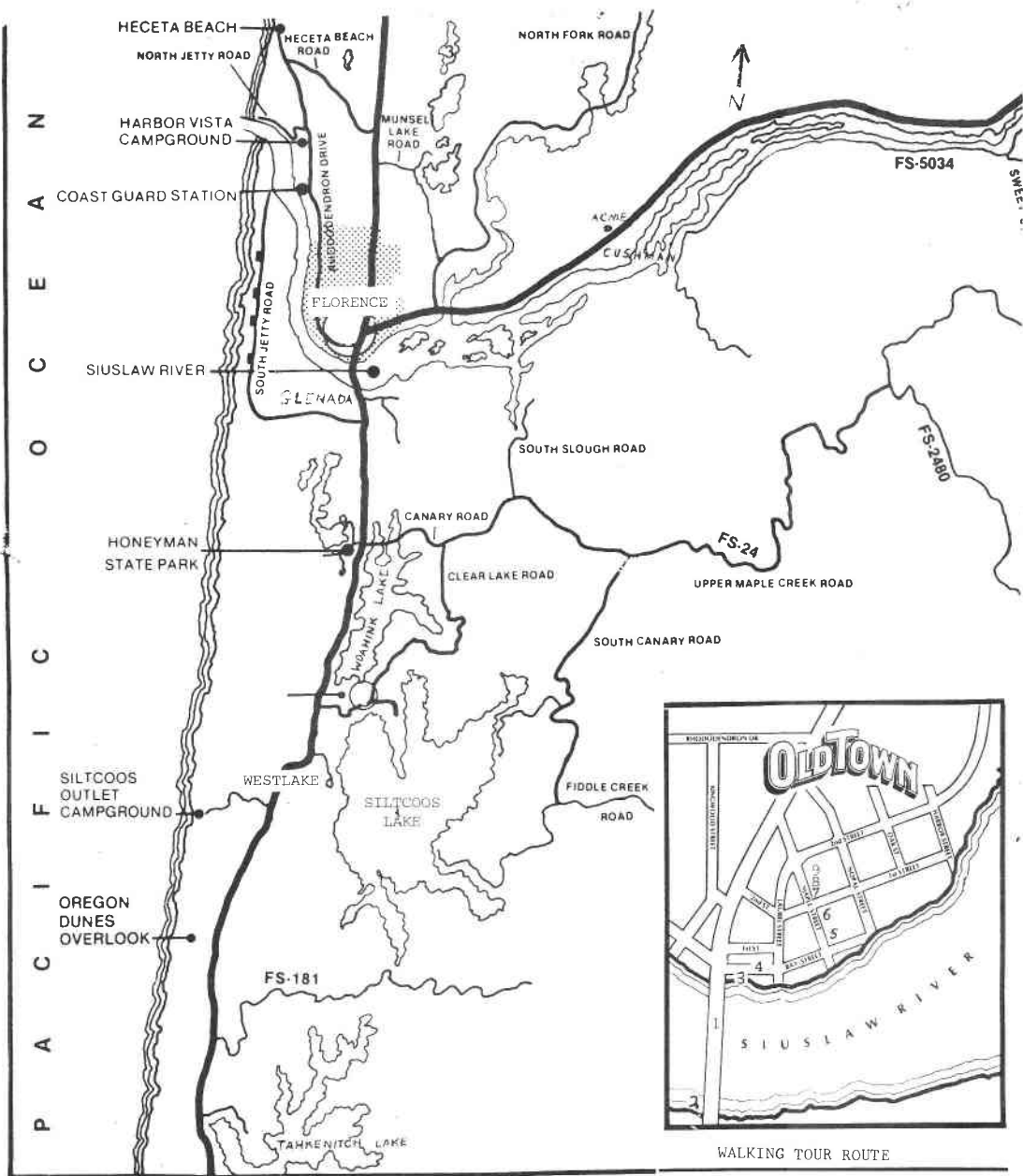
IX. THE CALLISON BUILDING/FLORENCE SCHOOLHOUSE

The Callison building, constructed in 1904 and 1905, was the Florence schoolhouse for many years. It was constructed to replace the smaller schoolhouse on Front Street and served as a classroom for all grades. In 1905, the Florence community boasted a "fine schoolhouse, costing \$4,000 to build".

A bell tower once graced the front of this institutional style building. A fire in 1910 damaged part of the top floor but it was later rebuilt. A much larger fire destroyed almost the entire top floor in 1953. Fast work by the Florence volunteer fire department saved the building from burning completely. It was after this fire that the building was remodeled to a single story with a loft; it remains this way today. It is currently being used as a home for Callisons wholesale greenery.



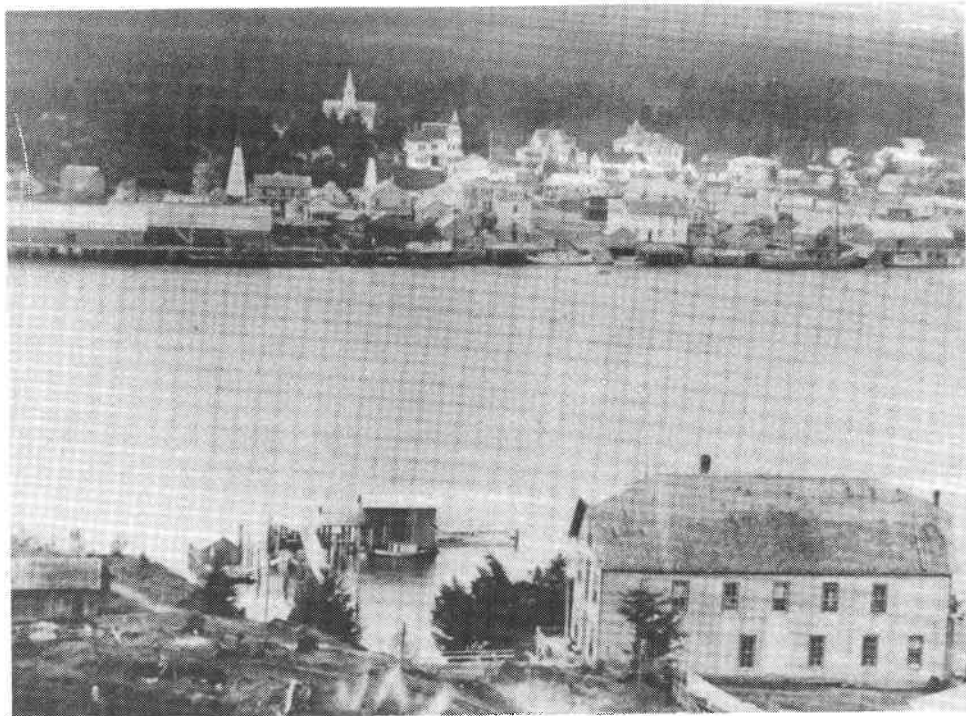
1983 view of the same building. The bell tower and the entire second floor were damaged in a fire in 1953. The building was remodeled to a single story structure. Calder photo



FLORENCE AREA MAP courtesy of Bill Calder

A BRIEF HISTORY OF GLENADA

compiled by Lois Barton



Glenada Hotel, ferry slip and the city of Florence across the Siuslaw river. Siuslaw Museum photo

"... Directly across the river from the city of Florence, George H. Colter purchased an unbroken mile of river frontage. On the land contained within the boundaries of this purchase he laid out and platted the town of Glenada, the name of which is a combination of the Christian names of his wife and daughter, in whose honor he has given to Oregon the town of Glenada. In the development of this new city Mr. Colter has been very successful, the town now having a population of two hundred inhabitants.

"He has built within the business district of Glenada a commodious and

well appointed hotel at the cost of four thousand dollars. This property he still owns and operates. In addition he has also constructed two wharves, both of which span the distance from the river's shore to its deep-water channel. One wharf is one hundred and fifty feet in length and one two hundred feet in length.

"Mr. Colter still owns four hundred and fifty city lots in Glenada and one hundred and sixty acres on Fiddle creek, and also one hundred and sixty acres within one mile of the town of Florence, and in addition to these extensive and valuable holdings he also

Fall, 1984

owns sixty-three acres of timber adjoining Glenada on the west ..."

The Centennial History of Oregon, J. Gaston, pub. 1912 pp 871-872.

THE NEW TOWN OF GLENADA

as told in THE WEST, Pioneer Weekly
from The Siuslaw Pioneer, 1949,
p 13, 14, 15

The new town of Glenada situated on the Coast, Lane Co., Or., may be found on the south side of Siuslaw Bay. Protected from winter winds — by its natural parks and groves of evergreen trees.

With bank gently sloping to the Bay, affording at all times a perfect drainage, safety from high water and displaying a grand view of the Pacific ocean.

Richness of soil and beauty of location, back of which are fertile farms, pleasant homes and beautiful lakes.

The future of Glenada is to be marked by a steady improvement, settlement and growth. We have already a new store, post-office, saw-mill, dwelling houses, wharves to deep water, hotel, and church commenced, and other buildings contemplated.

(From an advertisement October 9, 1891.)

* * *

Mrs. Fairweather, the genial proprietor of the Glenada Hotel, has arranged to give a party at the hotel on Monday evening of next week, May 23. As this will be the first party given since the hotel has been opened, it might be considered an "opening ball." (News item May, 1892).

* * *

Geo. H. Colter was the lowest bidder for the construction of the First M.E. church of Glenada — his figures being \$1200. He will commence work and according to contract is to have the structure ready for occupancy by November 1st. (July, 1892.)

* * *

The Glenada post-office has been moved to the Hotel Glenada, and is now a distributing office, sending all mail to Alene and Ada offices in Douglas county. (March, 1893.)

* * *

Glenada school report for the term March 16, 1896 to June 6, 1896; Days taught 59½, days attendance 1359, days absence 251½, boys enrolled 17, girls enrolled 17, number of visitors 27.

Those whose class records were 90 and over, Maggie Johnson, May Phelps, Viola Landis, Emma Stevens, Claus Stevens, Chester Chamberlin and Laura Johnson. Those not absent during the term, Frank Colles, Lubie King and Bessie Fisk. Neither absent nor tardy, Frank Colles and Bessie Fisk. Lillian Harwood, teacher.

* * *

In a letter describing progress of the Siuslaw region, George M. Miller wrote in October, 1897: An enterprise of much interest is a fruit and vegetable evaporator now being established at Glenada by Mr. J.H. Monteith of Santa Rosa, California. Mr. Monteith was attracted to this locality by the fine sporting afforded by the lakes and woods about Glenada, but being a thorough evaporator man, and impressed by the enormous crops of vegetables and fruits growing on the Siuslaw, decided to establish a plant here.

The regular meeting of the Audubon literary society will be held on Friday evening. Half an hour will be given to the debate and the rest of the time will be taken up by a literary program. (January, 1897.)

CITY OF GLENADA

With the prospect of the railroad entering Glenada and other promising development, the citizens of the town voted to incorporate August 31, 1912, "for the purpose of improving and beautifying the city and to promote the general welfare of the people."

George H. Colter Sr. was chosen mayor, Ed T. Maher recorder, S.E. Lowe treasurer and C.E. Harwood marshal with the following trustees: E.R. Mummey, N.B. Hull, C.H. Holden, R.A. Lowe, J.G. Wisdom and F.J. Monroe.

Meeting dates and items of business of the council for the first four months, as shown in the minutes, follow:

Sept. 11. Committee of two and the mayor empowered to draft a charter for the city.

Sept. 12. Charter submitted, read and discussed pro and con.

Sept. 13. Ordinance passed pertaining to place and time of meetings.

Sept. 16. City engineer appointed, F.E. Monroe. Chief of police star and recorder's set of books ordered.

Sept. 23. Bids received for Oak street dock slip and float. City engineer to file plat of Glenada. Ordinance passed to clear certain streets of logs and brush.

Sept. 30. Salary of \$100 yearly authorized for recorder. Advertising ordered for bids for clearing streets.

Oct. 7. Committee named to frame

order of business for council. Letter to be drafted to County Assessor Keeney to place tax of city on 1913 tax roll.

Oct. 14. Float and slip at Ash street dock reported completed. Ordinance No. 6 passed, prohibiting shooting on waterfront. Committee to select regular meeting place.

Oct. 15. Bids let for clearing lots and streets from Maple street to county road, and from Maple street to Oak street.

Oct. 28. City attorney employed with salary \$100 annually. Ed. T. and Mary A. Maher offer to build place for council meetings with five dollar monthly rental and council accepts offer.

Nov. 4. Street committee reported clearing streets and lots going along fine.

Nov. 11. Further street clearing discussed, with street committee to make study.

Nov. 18. Ordinance No. 7 passed, calling for election for vote on charter for the City of Glenada. Recorder to get seal for the city. Application for franchise by Florence Electric light company received.

Nov. 25. Bills for clearing work accepted and ordered paid. Two ordinances passed. Application for telephone franchise received.

Dec. 2. Ordinance No. 10 passed. Furniture and fixtures and a lease for the city hall to be procured by committee.

Dec. 9. Bill for eight chairs and stove for city hall accepted.

Dec. 16. Establishing street grades on Viola avenue, and Spruce, Colter, Oak and Maple streets considered. Ordinance No. 11 passed.

Dec. 23. Bill allowed for two ballot

boxes. Resolution adopted to levy ten mills tax for general expenses of the city.

Dec. 30. Bills for clearing streets accepted.

GLENADA'S RAILROAD

from Suislaw Pioneer, 1970,
next to last page (unnumbered)

By Edna Miles

Along about 1913 and 1914, Glenada had a very busy narrow gauged railroad. Some old pilings just below the Siuslaw bridge attest to the fact of a landing at the point, called Porter's Landing. Porter was a contractor and

hauled supplies for the railroad when the Southern Pacific built the line down through this country. A steam donkey sat at the top of the hill to pull the cars up the hill where a steam locomotive hauled the freight to Robinson's Landing on Woahink Lake. The supplies were then loaded on scows and across the lake to the railroad camps.

Robinson's Landing was named for Rev. Albert Robinson who at that time owned most of the land at this end of Woahink Lake including what is now Honeyman Park.

Adequate roads later took the place of a railroad and supplies were hauled by horses and freight wagons.



Ferry from Florence approaching Glenada. Siuslaw Museum photo

ACME
“the highest point of excellence” — Webster
by Mary Louise Skinner



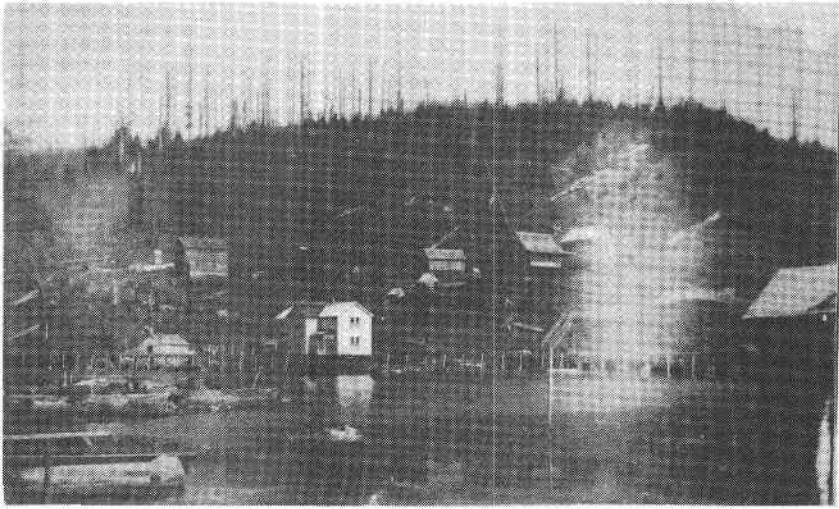
Acme Mill. Siuslaw Museum photo. Are the snags on the hill in the background some of those from the fire mentioned by Martin Christenson and Mary Louise Skinner?

(The pictures with this story were loaned by Eileen Waite of Florence whose grandmother was bookkeeper at Acme Commercial for twelve years. Ed.)

Dr. William Saubert and Captain William Cox had adventured together from San Francisco, California to Portland, Oregon on the boat “Great Republic”; and then traveled together overland to Roseburg. Finding they had much in common, they built a boat and called it “Escape”. The name meant something special to each of them.

They rowed “Escape” down the Umpqua river to the beach; built a wagon and loaded the boat upon it and hauled it up the coast. Reaching the Siuslaw they off-loaded the boat and packed it with all of their gear and rowed it upriver, past the entrance to the North Fork to a stretch of water that to them was the very best. They named the place “Acme” — the end of their searching — the beginning of their building.

They built the first sawmill on the river. A store was planned and stocked



Early Acme showing boardwalk along the water front. Blackened forest in background was the remains of the Coastal Fire of 1836.

by Saubert-Cox. Sometimes one did the dreaming and sometimes the other; but both cooperated to see that the dream became a reality.

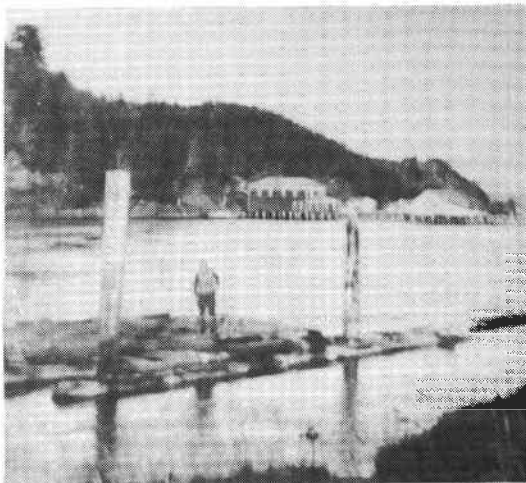
The site of Acme was chosen because of the tide flow. It was always deep enough to dock any boat without dangerous currents. There was plenty of water for transportation down to the growing village of Florence; and up to the busy farm town of Mapleton. So much river water, in fact, that they found it necessary to build a boardwalk ten feet high so they could walk between the sawmill and the red store, called Acme Commercial. The Cox home was constructed on the point of land at the east end of Acme; and a salmon cannery added to the profitable business section of the community. These were connected by wider and more serviceable docking.

As people came to work in the community, they built their houses back on the hills; especially up the small ravine named by the Indians

Skunk Hollow. These homes were all connected by raised wood planking.

They found a free flowing spring up on the mountain and brought the water down by flume. It flowed in a V shaped trough built five feet above and along side the wooden walkways with short runs to several of the larger houses. A school was built on top of a steep hill east of town. It was a growing prosperous town and in 1916 when the railroad finally ran from Eugene to Marshfield, a railroad station was established at the north end of the railroad bridge.

It was from this depot in February of 1920 that Bea Williams, who had the previous week graduated from 3½ years of high school in Florence, caught the train for Eugene to take the examinations to be certified as a teacher. She would teach the first four grades in Acme as Eva Brattain was in charge of grades five through eight. There were about forty children in the school, with the oldest not much younger than their



Acme Commercial, housing a complete store, was the center of news and gossip for the community.

new teacher, who was just twenty-two years old.

Bea lived at Portage, a farming community eight miles up the North Fork, where the river makes a circle to the north and surrounding four hundred acres of prime farm land, and returns, flowing south and then east again. Later when the path became a wagon road, two covered bridges would span the river within a half mile of each other.

But when Bea started her teaching career on that Monday morning, she took the trail down the east side of the river through a small valley, and up and over the mountain to Acme.

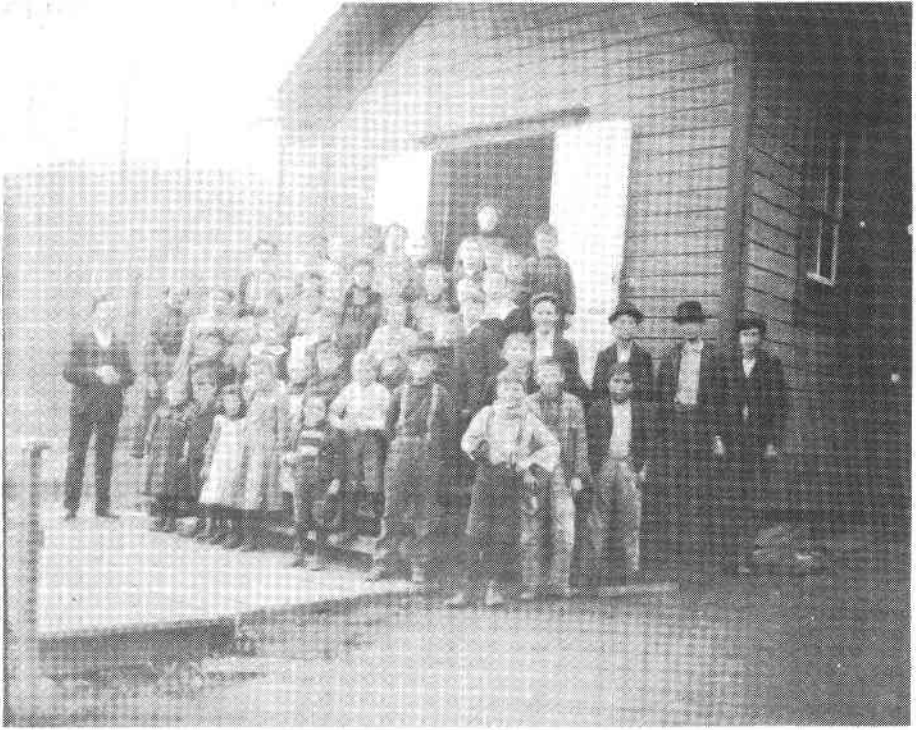
She carried all that she owned in a suitcase and a flour sack slung over her shoulder. She wore her only pair of high shoes; a skirt and middie blouse dressed up with a bright tie knotted under the collar. She would earn \$75 a month in her new job, and could buy a new coat before the winter was out.

She had been assigned to stay with Alta Wilson in Skunk Hollow, and she could not have been happier. It was a big house with four bedrooms, a radio and a piano. Alta was an artist, and a lovely gentle person who understood that living always with the smell of sawdust from the mills; the many children riding bicycles on the limited boardwalks; and teaching twenty youngsters for the first time could be a frightening challenge.

When school was out that first summer, Bea swore that she would arrange her life so she would be a better teacher. She got a job in a cookhouse in Reedsport, washing dishes. She saved enough money to enroll in Monmouth Teacher's College the following summer. She also brought home from Reedsport a fox terrier puppy which the children loved; and a .22 calibre rifle which she had learned to shoot with astounding accuracy. She walked home to Portage on the North Fork every weekend to help her mother with the younger children.

Bea learned to love the river that had made Acme a prosperous town.

Now it is called Cushman. The schoolhouse has disappeared. The fish packing house is gone. The post office has been transferred. The old box factory has burned down and Acme Commercial is just a memory. There are still some lovely houses up Skunk Hollow and a few old timers still live there, but in the winter the tide flows over the road and swarms into the marsh at the foot of the hill. The black trees are forgotten and a strong green forest tops the surrounding hills. There are no boardwalks left to walk upon, and no spring water flows



Acme school in early 1900s. Elmer Jorday, teacher at left.

down the center of town for the people to enjoy. In fact, few people even remember that there was a town on the

Siuslaw River, just above the North Fork, named Acme.

MARTIN CHRISTENSEN RECALLS EARLY DAYS ON SILTCOOS LAKE

The following excerpts are from an interview conducted February 18, 1976 when Kim Stafford talked with Mr. Christensen at his home on Siltcoos Lake south of Florence, Oregon. We are indebted to the Pioneer Museum in Glenada for the transcript of this interview. I have changed the order of words now and then, and combined sentences to get away from the awkward and space-consuming Q & A structure of such a transcript. Ed.

"I was born up here. My folks came up from California. I think they came in June the year before I was born. That was in 1893.

"They were from Denmark, my folks. My dad, he was a sailor for a long time. Run away from home when he was 14 years old. He got in a shipwreck the first time and he rode a spar ashore — all sailing ships you know. He said if his dad told him to stay home he would, but he stayed about a year and then run off again and he was gone for seven years. When he went back home he was 21 or 22. At that time, over in Denmark, when they got of age they took them in the army, so he knew they was going to take him into the army, so he left. At first he worked in Connecticut for an old Yankee and he got the big sum of \$12 a month and his board but he never collected. Him and the old Yankee got into a row. He couldn't talk much English at that time but he could understand a few words and the old Yankee cussed him one morning when he was milking. He threw the bucket of milk in the old fellow's face. He had an uncle or a cousin living nearby. He went over there and told him about it. He said, 'Well I never collected my wages.' The relative said, 'Well I'll

collect them and send it to you.' If he collected dad never got it. He came out to California. I think he had a brother living there and he worked on the farms down there until after he got married and then they moved up here.

"They stopped at my uncle's who had a homestead over here on this side of where the junction is with the Canary road. Stayed there with them until he bought the fellow's rights on a homestead and then he proved up on it. He had about 120 acres in the place. It was brush country. There was a big fire went through here about 150 years ago and this was all virgin timber. The fire killed all this old growth timber. When I was a kid I can remember when all those dead snags was standing around yet and when there were big wind storms you could hear one fall.

"We had an ox team and we logged it, burnt it and plowed it. A lot of hard work. We cut up the logs. At first we had an auger 1½ inches, six feet long, and we'd bore a hole down through the log, halfway through and then we'd go in from the side to connect with it in there, see. Then we'd take some pine knots, fir knots, cut them up and make a fire on top of this hole, and while the coals burnt they dropped down and

made a fire down there right where the two holes come together. And at night when it first started to blow it looked like black [blast?] furnaces out there, that fire coming up there like that. They burned off, then we'd take the ox team and roll them all up in big piles and burn them. We dug some of the stumps out and some we just left. There were stumps six feet across, you know.

"I started to milk cows when I was seven years old. We had maybe 14 and later we got some goats and some sheep.

"Dad used to fish on the Siuslaw. There was no money to be made, you know. There was a mill over here at Cushman. It used to be called Acme. I hardly remember when he worked there. I think it was in '98 they started that mill up — 10 to 12 hours a day, \$1 a day. He would stay over there to work, then he went to commercial fishing in the fall. At first he rented a place, then he had rooms overhead in the salt house. The season would open about the first of August and went to November and there was a lot of fish them days. A chinook salmon over 25 pounds, you'd get two bits apiece for them and under twenty-five pounds, two for a quarter. The silversides, at first they was about 3¢ a pound. We thought we was making pretty good money if it weighed ten pounds.

"Dad built that building up there at Cushman where the marina is now. And he took care of his own salmon. He bought three big 1,000-gallon redwood tanks and he would catch these fish and salt them in these tanks. Then in the fall he'd get hogsheds — they took in about 150 gallons. He would repack the fish in them and ship to San Francisco.



Martin Christenson, holding a "beaver board" on which to stretch beaver pelts, Siuslaw Museum photo.

He was packing just his own fish. There was several fellows doing that for they could make more money you know. The canneries were going at the same time but he could make more, lots more money salting fish than in cans.

"We used to smoke a lot of fish here on the lake, years ago, and sell them for two bits apiece. We set nets down there

near the outlet. A lot of people got the idea. People now think if you put one net across the creek you catch every salmon that comes in. I've seen forty nets across down there. Some of them would be staked up above the water that high. You'd catch fish out of the water and you'd have more fish in the upper net than the lower one. There was thousands of fish.

"To smoke them we'd split them open, just like we salted them, take the backbone out. Take the head off. Then put them in salt brine — make a brine that would float an egg or a potato and put them in there overnight. In the morning take them out and put them in fresh water and scrape them all off. Then we would make some sticks, to kind of hold them apart and hang them up in the smoke house. Dig a hole in the ground and put a tent over it for the smoke house. We smoked them for seven days. We burned alder wood. We always got up once in the night and maybe twice to go out there and build up the fire.

"There was probably some forty people fishing on the river at that time. Two people to a boat, pulling the net in. They would sell fish to the canneries. I've been over there in the canneries where the fish room would be bigger than this room here and be piled up with fish like that. And they had Chinamen there canning them.

"The canner had houses the Chinamen stayed in. The Chinamen had the house all boarded up underneath. They put the ducks and the pigs underneath the house. They were big rice eaters, you know. Dad, sometimes in the fall before they left, bought 50 pounds of rice. It was regular China rice, big kernels, like.

"Mr. Kyle had a cannery and the Hurds had a cannery. Hurd's burnt down, but Kyle he would go up to Astoria and bring the Chinamen down from up there, bring the same ones pretty near every year. They'd be here about three months. You'd get so you would know them from year to year. It was always funny. They all wore pig-tails at the time and they'd be going down the street and it sounded like a bunch of geese. There'd be one crew at Kyle's cannery and a separate one at Hurd's. They'd visit back and forth. Rosehill Cannery was up above Glenada, up at the old piling. Some of that old piling is sticking there yet. I think that burnt too, but I can't remember when. Then they had one up there at Cushman, just on the Florence side of the mill. There was a creamery there too.

"There was two sawmills at Acme as it was called. There was boarding houses for the crew of the mills. Two of the Sauberts had a mill and Cushmans had a mill. Sauberts was on this side of the marina. They had a store there too. Sauberts had their own schooner. I can remember when those schooners used to come in and take lumber out. They would tow them down to the bar. Hurd, he had a tug too that was called the "El Roscoe," these old three masted ships.

"Up on the ranch we had a lot of land. We had more land than anyone around the country. We had two big barns and raised red clover, and there was only one mowing machine in the country. We had to take our turn. We used to cut it by hand, then they got this mowing machine over. They figured it was never safe to cut hay before July 4th. But this time our turn came about a week or 10

days before the 4th. We got it all cut down, raked it up by hand. Shocked it by hand. We got it all shocked up, about maybe an acre. Rain! It rained for 10 days. Had to turn every bit of it.

"About 1914 the railroad started. Oh, a year before they was doing surveying through here. They had one bunch come down the west over here and the SP over there and then they all went together, I guess, and made one. They came in '13 or '14. So us five boys we had six gas boats. Then there was a stage line, the Barrett boys had a stage line up at the beach and we started a stage line through here. We had one boat on Woahink, one on Tahkenitch and we had four over here on Siltcoos. We run passengers through here. We wouldn't make the trip on the three lakes for less than \$5. Two could go for \$5. After that it was \$2.25 apiece. When the railroads started we worked people back and forth, see. The Porter Brothers had the railroad contract over here. I worked for Porter Brothers on Woahink for about two months, a big scow over there. They had one here, one there and one on Tahkenitch. It was 20 by 60 with side wheelers on it, and from Glenada out to Woahink they had, out to where Moneyman Park is, they had a narrow gauge railroad, 2 feet wide, and they hauled all this stuff out here. All the pilings, all the railroad timbers, all the supplies would come out and we would tow them across the lake. The Porter Brothers was pretty good. Old Joe. They had their own boat here. They

had one of those big, round-bottom, Columbia river fish boats. My older brother run that for them. He'd be down here and Old Joe would come along and hire us to take him across the lake. We had about a year and a half of that here, no competition.

"When we had our stage here people would come up to Tahkenitch Lake and then they would have to walk across. Sometimes they'd have Reed bring them out in the wagon and then we'd meet them down there, over to Tahkentich and walk across between the two lakes and we'd take them across this lake and over to Woahink. They didn't have to walk much farther than they did on the beach. They had to walk across the sand from Glenada out to the beach and walk across the sand down there again (at Gardiner) if they used the Barrett stage.

"We had that stage line for about a year and a half until all the railroad work was done."

Mr. Christensen told of his employment over the years, including logging, mill work and carpentry. Then he said,

"But in the wintertime I trapped. When the trapping season opened I always quit work." At one time he caught 50 beaver, a pick-up truck load, and the bottom dropped out of the price, so he put them in cold storage for four years. Then he had a chance to sell them at a greatly improved price, more than double what they had sold for at the time he stored them, and the buyer never knew they'd been frozen all that time.

MUSCRAT MOLLY AND CIVET CAT SUE

as told to

Mary Louise Skinner



Berneice Prescott Steuven, 1925.

Neicy's father called them Muskrat Molly and Civet Cat Sue because, like the mountain men before them, they trapped for a living. They didn't know they were pushing ahead into the gender gap that would galvanize the 1980s.

Booth, where the girls lived, was located at the south end of Siltcoos Lake (spelled Tsiltcoos by the Indians) about two miles from the ocean, and seven miles south of Florence. The little town with its box wood mill, its com-

plete store, one room school and town hall has completely disappeared.

The mill was shut down for the season, and the only men left in camp were busy from "can see to can't see," logging in the woods. It was going to be a long winter for the two young wives Neicy Prescott Steuven and Rita Hansen. The year was 1942.

Let Neicy tell her story. "One Sunday Miles (Neicy's husband) pulled a box of traps out from under the porch of the cabin. It had about 60 traps juggled together in it — all sizes, all shapes. He and Rita's husband took us out in the boat to show us how to set the traps, which ones to use for muskrat, which ones for otter, and especially how to set mink traps. They told us how to position them, how to rig them. Some were stationed on a log under drooping trees, some in the thick toolies, some behind log booms (if we could get the boats over the large guard logs) and some in the lake itself. These were called 'drowning sets'. Mink would be the money crop; and we were told that under no circumstances were we to trap beaver for it was strictly against the law, and a fine, or a prison sentence or both was very possible.

"Miles gave us a heavy stick like a billy club and taught us how to use it; where to hit the little animals if they were still living. He explained to us that it was more humane to kill them before tearing them from the trap. He said also that we must always carry a .22 rifle

with us because there were few people around; and some that were there were in hiding from the military and might be dangerous. It was all very exciting and Rita and I could hardly wait to begin.

"We had not been trapping for more than a week when I caught a beaver in one of my water sets that I had rigged for otter. I was scared to death. I could almost see the noose hanging over my head. So I didn't take it home. I poled the boat up one of the long shallow arms of the lake and hid it under the ice by a half submerged log. When I got home and Miles saw my face, it didn't take him five minutes to ferret out the whole story ... and he hit the roof. He made me go directly to the police, and take them up the icy bay, poke around in the bushes and toolies and retrieve the body of the frozen beaver. That was my punishment and it was enough, believe me."

Neicy caught another beaver in a mink trap about a month later, but Rita managed to hold the head back so that the long sharp teeth couldn't gash them, and Neicy untangled the trap. When he was free, he just sat on the log and sadly watched them row away.

The first year they managed to skin 100 muskrat and sell them for \$4.50 to \$4.75 apiece depending on the condition of their skins.

Neicy continues her story: "Mostly we set mink traps. We would cover them and make them look natural, as though nothing had been there. That's how I caught my man. I had the trap on Jonnigan's Island on a log; and I had camouflaged it so well you couldn't possibly tell it was there. The man

couldn't anyway and he stepped right into it. It couldn't hurt him, but boy was he mad. But not half as angry as I was — I'd lost my mink, and mink was money in the bank. I got \$38 apiece for mink. One little mink we caught, they sent us a check for \$42. That was because I won a certificate and a \$5 award for having the nicest prime, and best prepared skin. They didn't know that our husbands did the skinning and stretching. They enjoyed doing it, and we enjoyed having them do it. We usually sent in eight skins at a time to Sears and Roebuck in Seattle; and we would almost always receive a check for \$100. That was a lot of money.

"One day I found a mink in a canyon up behind the main lake. I thought it was dead, but it came to life and began wiggling. I had it by the tail and I wouldn't let go. I wasn't about to lose \$40. I tried to drown it in the lake, but it pulled me right into the water, and I still hung on. Just as I was going under Rita hit him with an oar and we saved \$40. It sure was cold rowing home in wet icy clothes.

"It was always a gamble when you rowed up to a trap. Probably that was why it was so much fun. One of us always sat in the bow of the boat to release the varmint and reset the trap. One day we checked a trap in a culvert up Fiddle Creek. The trap was sprung, so I got a long pole and poked around trying to find the critter. I found him. It was a skunk and it covered me with oil. I went home and took my clothes off outside and did everything I had ever heard of to get rid of the odor. But when Miles came home, he began laughing about fifty feet from the door. 'You

caught a civet cat today,' he whooped, 'I wondered how long it would be before one nailed you.'

The two girls trapped for four seasons, and probably did almost as

well as trappers from the Hudson Bay Company who had been the last serious fur collectors to invade the Siuslaw Lake country before Muskrat Molly and Civet Cat Sue.

When Cream Separators Came to the Siuslaw

In the Westlets for April 21, 1899, it was stated that W. R. McCornack adds a separator to his dairy plant.

That must have seemed to his neighbors a reckless thing to do for at that time they were just beginning to be heard of in the Siuslaw.

Opinion was freely expressed that this was only a fad, and those foolish enough to put their money into such a contraption would soon find they had wasted their money on something that would not work.

Those were the days of wide, shallow tin pans and stone crocks into which the milk was strained, then left to stand in a clean cool room until the cream had risen to the top, when it was skimmed off with a large spoon, or skimmer of tin full of small holes for the

milk to drain away from the cream.

It was then slid off into a container and kept until there was enough for a churning. The cream was poured into a churn of the dasher type and someone, usually the children, stayed at the task of lifting the dasher which became more difficult to move as the cream became thicker.

Not long after the McCornack separator had proved its worth Amos Haring purchased one for his dairy, and, to quote Grandma Haring as she told it, "We didn't see how we had ever got along without it."

Others, seeing how much work was saved, and more important, how much more cream they saved, bought separators until every dairyman in the Siuslaw owned one.—Mrs. Nellie (H. M.) Petersen.

from Siuslaw Pioneer, 1949, P16

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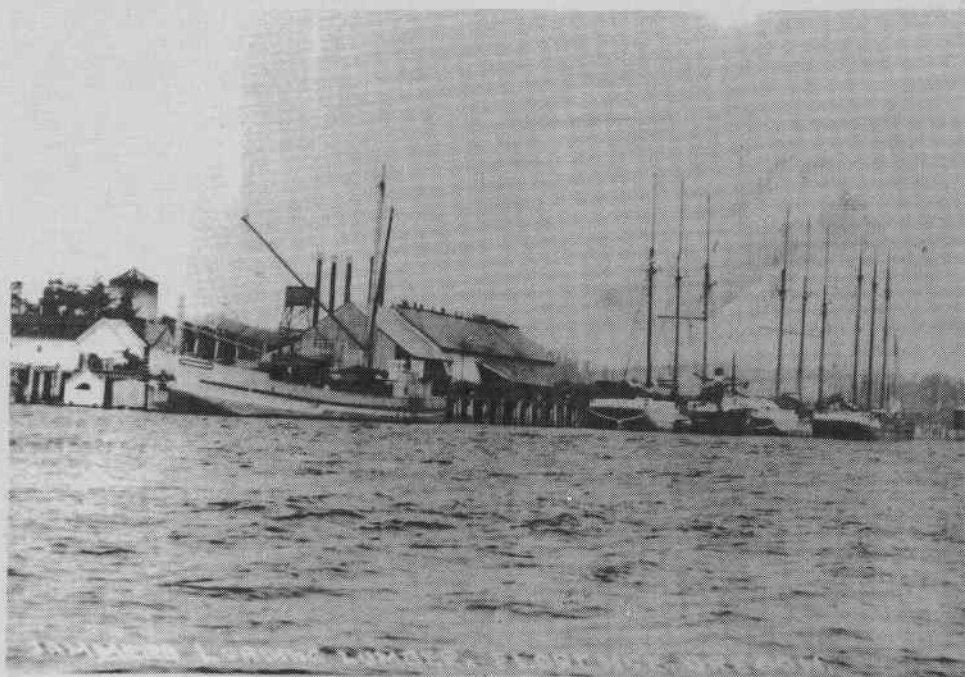
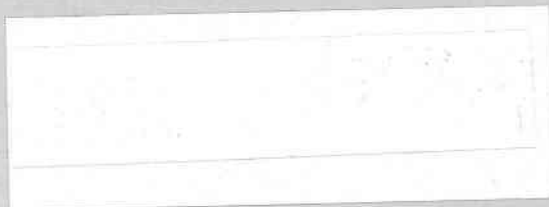
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Jammers loading lumber, Florence, Oregon. Siuslaw Museum photo