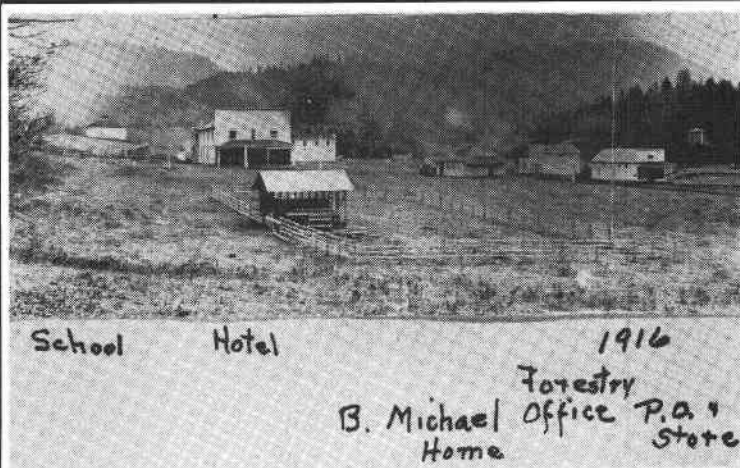
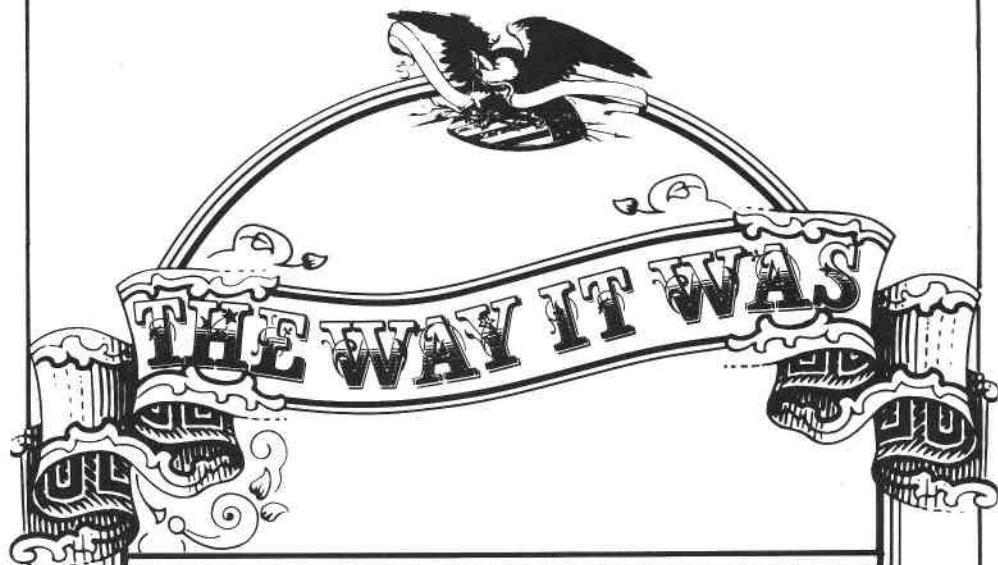


Lane County Historian



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The Lane County Historical Society

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LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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By F.T. Findtner

Cover photo: Oakridge in 1916. Edna Michael collection, Lane County Museum.

The following history of the Oakridge area schools in the early days was written by Edna Michael sometime before the October, 1981 interview mentioned on page 6, and she has consented to have them published in the *Historian*. We appreciate the careful research that went into their preparation and feel it a privilege to offer this "bit of county school history" to our readers.

—Ed.

EARLY OAKRIDGE AREA SCHOOLS

by Edna Michael

HAZELDELL SCHOOLS

Schools seemed to have started at Hazeldell about 1875. Two of the very early teachers were Elmira Reynolds and Ella Pengra who later became Ella Walker.

Mrs. Ollie Walker, a daughter-in-law of Ella Pengra Walker related a few of her memories of early school days. A crude building stood on the old road near the Sanford place. Bill Hebert, Daisy Hebert (Hamner), Daisy Gray (Hebert) were some of her school mates. Distances were so great that students camped near the school. Beside camp equipment they took a cow to supply milk.

Mrs. Walker also remembered that the only educational equipment in addition to their meager supply of books was a chart known as Physiology Chart. The students were well versed in bones, muscles and organs of the body. The chart was also used for reading and spelling.

Courthouse records were lost prior to 1906. In November, 1908, the Hazeldell census recorded twenty-five children between the ages of four and twenty years. At that time school was conducted in an old dwelling on Bert Hebert's land at the present site of Pope and Talbot offices. The partitions had been removed. Alice Pratton taught three months in 1906 at \$40 per month. In 1907 Inez Casebeer taught for four months for \$35.00 per month and Belle

Warner contracted to teach for four and a half months for \$30.00 per month.

In November, 1908, the Hazeldell school district census recorded twenty-five children. Because of the long distances the children had to travel and the very poor roads the district was divided. High Prairie, District 176, was formed with a census of 13—as follows: Carl Hamner, age 8; Ruby Hamner, age 5; Earl Hebert, age 14, Elgie Hebert, age 11, Martha Hebert, age 8; Hazel Hebert, age 5; Rose Wolfe, age 18; Arthur Wolf, age 15; Pearl Wolf, age 8; Alta Wolf, age 5; Ethel Hebert, age 10; Clarence Hebert, age 8; Ernest Hebert, age 6.

The thirteen children's names remaining on the Hazeldell census were Hallie Hills, age 12; Lawrence Hills, age 7, Raymond Dunning, age 11, Robert Dunning, age 4; Alice Hold, age 12; Flora Warner, age 14; LeRoy Hebert, age 16; Virgil Hebert, age 13; Harry Hebert, age 10; Claud Hebert, age 7; Darrell Hebert, age 4 and Louise Walker who was five years old.

People didn't seem to be very superstitious because both districts had thirteen school age children. In 1910 Wayne Walker in Oakridge and Amy Hamner in High Prairie became four years old, so each school had a census of fourteen.

In December 1908 Nellie Holt contracted for six months. She was followed by Grace Hills and Belle

Warner who taught two month terms. These three teachers were local girls. In 1911 Ernest Mathews taught for six months, beginning January 2nd. During that year the Gus Ryker family moved into the area with Clarence, Lillian and Edna who were of school age.

The school year of 1911-1912 was a memorable one. Dora Hyland was the teacher for a six month term. With a school census of seventeen children it became necessary to find larger quarters. Arch wood was building a new hotel. The kitchen area was nearly enough completed to house the school children who have memories of the noise of saws and hammers, as well as the crude desks and seats which were moved in. In the fall of 1912 Hazeldell became Oakridge and likewise the schools name was changed.

In the fall of 1912 the Oakridge school building on the hillside was ready for occupancy. It was a two room building but was used as one large room until September 1919. The large jacketed

stove was in the back of the room and needless to say, the front of the room was generally cold in winter. Effa Fenton was the first teacher in the new building.

The school census doubled from twenty-one to fifty children in 1912. The main road from Salmon Creek Bridge to the center of Oakridge was graded that year. The Woods Hotel was opened by Arch and Anna Wood. Mr. and Mrs. Eldon Templeton opened a grocery store across the road from the newly constructed railroad station. The community really prospered with the coming of the railroad.

C.H. Zevely taught the first nine month school term in 1913-14. The teacher's salary was \$65 per month. In 1914-15 Gladys Smith and in 1915-16 Hattie Van Vleet were the teachers.

After 1912 the school census decreased slightly. During the years between 1912 and the development of the lumber industry the people of Oakridge found work with the forest service, the fish hatchery, hunting, fishing, trapping



Oakridge School. 1916. Edna Michael Collection, Lane County Museum

ing and guide and pack service into the mountains and on small farms. Tourists came to visit Kitson and McCreadie Springs and to fish and hunt in the mountain areas.

Edna Stephens-Michael taught three nine-month terms from 1916 to 1919. The enrollment began to increase. In June 1919 several students completed the first eight grades so in the fall of 1919 the ninth grade was included and two teachers, Lena Tilton and Vera Senseny were hired. The partition was put in the building to make two rooms.

The next year Grace Dragoo and Otillia Bartlain taught the elementary grades and Vera Senseny Hills taught

the high school students in the Jones building, which had previously been used as a private dwelling and by the Forest Service and for storage.

In 1922-23 the high school had seven students: Louise Walker and Eula Clark were graduated in June. Vera Hills taught the high school and Mr. and Mrs. M.E. Edwards taught the first eight grades.

This ended the era of small schools for Hazeldell-Oakridge because as industry developed the school census again increased rapidly and larger school buildings and more teachers became a necessity.

HIGH PRAIRIE SCHOOL

by Edna Michael

The High Prairie School didn't grow as rapidly as Hazeldell. In November 1914 three names were added to the school census. They were Thelma Chenowith, Leo Blanton and Clair Hamner. In that latter part of November 1915 the school moved from the old Patrick house.

Teachers in the old Patrick place taught terms ranging from thirty-one days to twelve weeks. The teachers in the order of their services were Mr. Hiett, eight weeks; Nellie Holt, twelve weeks; Frank Hutchins, who taught for thirty-one days in the fall of 1910 and sixteen weeks in the spring of 1911. Veda Barbre taught in the fall of 1911 and Nellie Holt Hebert taught in the spring. Malena Momb taught eight

weeks in the fall of 1912.

C.H. Zevely, R. Laura Ruth, Kathleen Russell and Mrs. C.H. Zeveley were the teachers in 1913 and 1914. Edna Stephens was the first teacher to teach eight months. It isn't surprising that the students don't remember the names of their teachers during those first years.

Fanny Stewart taught in the fall and spring of 1916-1917 and in the fall of 1917. She resigned and Clara Inwin finished the year.

Clara Prokop and Hazel Leith taught in 1918-1919. Candace Dillard taught two years and was followed by Alice McBee.

High Prairie consolidated with Oakridge in 1934.

THE CRUZETTE SCHOOL

Mrs. Lester Martin
945 Fearn Ave.
Cuesta by the Sea
San Luis Obispo, Calif. 93401

Dear Edna,

The Cruzette School was only held for seven years. My years from September, 1934 to June, 1937, were the last three years.

Our school house was a box car on a railroad siding. It was nearly up to the summit some 12 or 15 miles above Mc-Creadie Springs, which was the mailing address.

The school was first opened to care for children whose fathers worked on the railroad. Most of the men had been on the engine crews but had been laid off so they were working on keeping up the track, snow sheds and tunnels.

A Miss Susan Broadbent was the teacher that I followed.

The largest number of pupils that were there during my years was 14. Sometimes only as many as 9 or 10.

Among the names that come to my mind are Harford, Hebert, Lueck, Martinez, Pettis and Kinney.

My pay included a two room apartment, fuel and transportation of groceries from Eugene. (Salaries ranged

from \$85 to \$105) The afternoon passenger train slowed down enough each day to put off mail, papers and fresh milk.

The winter of 1934-35 we had snow from late October until late May. The deepest snow was 120 inches of undrifted snow measured by the railroad.

There was no way to get above Oakridge by road in the winter but in the fall and summer you could make it up on the old Willamette Territorial road.

Of course my name was Stephens when I taught in Oakridge as well as Cruzette. In Oakridge Mr. Stephens and I were the only high school teachers. Our school house was the old wooden building on the hill and the road to Eugene was nearly impassable much of the time. Mrs. William Fort (Opal Clark) was in high school then.

Lawrence Moffit was County School Superintendent while Cruzette School was open and visited us at least once.

If you can use any of this information I'll be happy and if you need or want some more I'll try and supply it.

Sincerely,
Joyce E. Martin

EDNA STEPHENS MICHAEL — TEACHER

This report on Edna Michael's 45 years of teaching in Lane County schools was prepared from a taped interview made October 20, 1981 by Lois Barton.

Edna Stephens was born at Central (formerly Lewellyn) west of Eugene in 1895. Her mother was a Rebman, and her Grandfather Stephens came to the Applegate Trail area "about 1860-something". Edna got her first teaching certificate at age 17. That was in 1912. She

said, "Mr. Moore was a friend of mine. I had known him when I took my eighth grade examination. I got real good grades on that examination — everything above 90. Mr. Moore took a little interest in me. He was the school superintendent then. So when they couldn't



District 183. 1912. Front row, l to r: Elbert Gaines, Kenneth Stone, Earl Butler, Willie Gaines, Chester McMillin. Second row, r to l: Harry Stone, Edna Butler, Tessie Hill, Berenice Stone, Viola Turpin, Edna Turpin, Allen Gaines, Bessie Hill and (one eye visible) Roland Stone. Back row, l to r: Irving Butler, Dora Turpin, Birdie Stone, Reginald Stone. Courtesy Edna Michael

find a teacher *anyplace* to take this school up on the hill above Franklin he called me in the office and asked me if I would go out there. I had told him I wanted to teach. He said if I would go up there and try it he would issue a permit. Well, he issued the permit and I went out in January, and then in the spring I took the examination.

The district was called Beautiful Grove. It is about four or five miles up the hill from Smithfield, now Franklin. It was district #183. I was 17 and I had two pupils as old as I was. There were 30-some all together.

The families there were mostly just living there. There was a sawmill up there, but most of them just lived on the land. I suppose they'd pick up a little work here, there and yonder.

I was out there one time, years later, with one of my ex-students. My, it's so changed. They've cut down so many trees and opened it up. When I was up there we were just surrounded by trees.

We just had a little stump patch where the school stood. I taught that first two years there.

Then I taught the Fern Ridge school in 1913-14. It was on the road that would be east of the lake. And then I went to Lone Pine for 1914-15. I went to the most remote districts. Fern Ridge was District #47 and Lone Pine was #50. The people at Lone Pine were very proud of their school. I went back to Lone Pine again for a year in 1931-32.

When I was teaching at Lone Pine I thought I had enough money saved to go to Monmouth for a year. But after I went down for the summer I found that I didn't have near enough. So I came back again. I didn't know what I would do. It was late. I went down to the woolen mill. I got a job. I had worked at the woolen mill in the summer, off and on — weaving blankets and cloth. I thought I would spend that winter at home. My mother lived in Eugene and worked down there. But Mr. Moore



District 183 outing at Smithfield, 1913. Courtesy Edna Michael

called me again. He said, "I've got a school that needs a teacher." I want you to know this was the school where I went (see picture). It was pretty close to this condition. That was some school. We had a door and they had some windows in there. I think there were twelve children. That was one of the most interesting schools I ever taught in my life. I had practically all the grades. They never had had a teacher up there

before that stayed over about three months. You know they used to hire them for three months at a time. Teachers never got acquainted with the kids. I don't know how I happened to, but I think I had a six month contract. I stayed all winter. I got acquainted with the youngsters in their homes and with their way of living. I boarded with the families. We lived on venison — not much variety.



Lone Pine School. Courtesy Edna Michael



Oakridge School on Sanford place, first school in Oakridge 1875-1902. Courtesy Lane County Museum

They were mostly homesteaders. I boarded with Frank Chenoweth's family. They had one little girl in school, and then I boarded with Bill Hebert and his wife Nell. She had taught down at Hazeldell when they had the school down there before they called it Oakridge. She was always a nice person, good friend. There was another Hebert family and a family by the name of Hamner. Mrs. Hamner was a sister of the Heberts. And then a family by the name of Wolf. Mrs. Wolf was a widow and she had some grown children, but she also had three left in school.

I really don't know how they existed, even if I lived with them for a while. A couple of boys did some trapping. When there was a little work available with the government, building trails or planting trees, they'd have a little income. And of course, where I lived they had my board money which helped. I had four of Bill Walker's children in school.

It was a very interesting winter. We had snow when we were holding school in this old building. I don't think it was over a couple of months we met there before the new building was ready.

It was the fall of 1915 I went up to High Prairie out of Oakridge. I taught there in '16, '17, '18, and '19. And when I came away they hired two teachers the next year. The reason they did that was because several of the children, four or five of them, had finished the eighth grade and they brought in a teacher who could teach high school too. So they had two teachers. And then the next year, why it grew so fast that they established the high school. We came back to Eugene before Oakridge began to grow. I married Bill Michael while I was up there. He worked for the forester, Mr. Jones, at that time but he had his own business as well — a livery stable. He did packing for hunters, and took supplies out to camps in the mountains. I've gone over that country pretty much on horseback.



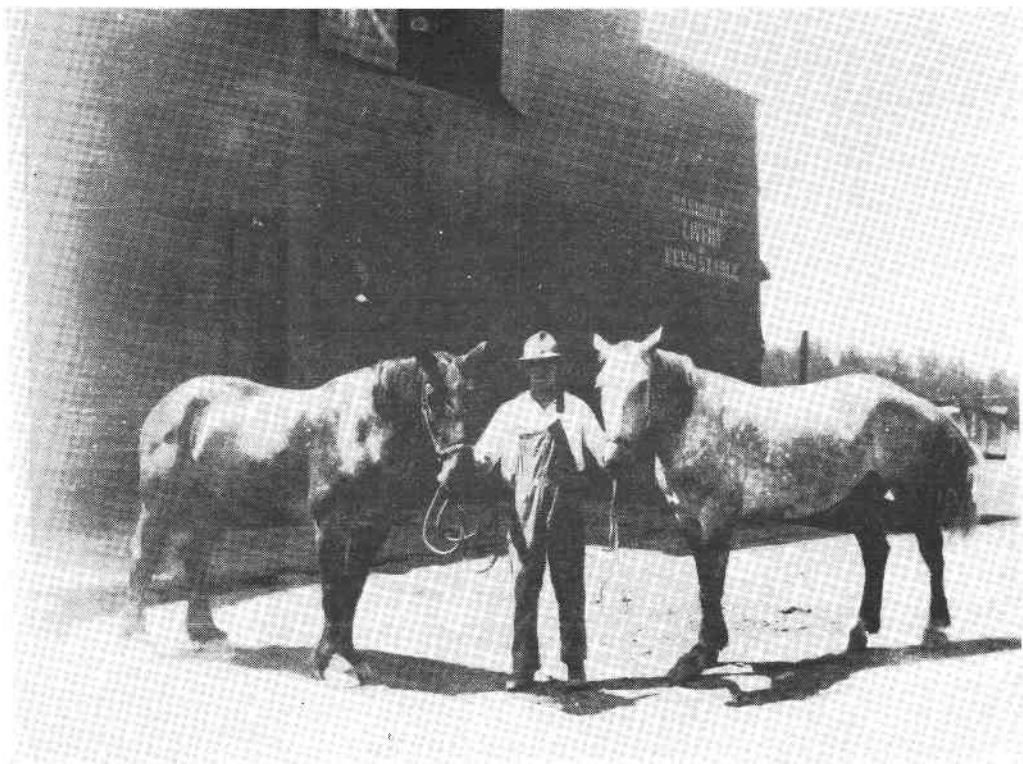
High Prairie students, 1915. Courtesy Edna Michael

The trip to Oakridge by train took all day at that time. We started early in the morning from Springfield and it was beginning to get dark when we got to Oakridge because they stopped at every mail — well, they didn't have boxes, but they had little forks and the mail was put on that little fork in a bag, and then the train stopped and picked up cream and left the cans and made deliveries. The road up there then was on the left hand side of the river going up. It wound around and over those hills. It was a bad one. The trains went up there and turned around. They had a turntable at Oakridge.

After we came back from Oakridge I

taught at Chase Gardens (Pruneville) for a year. Then I had a baby daughter and didn't teach for a while. After she got a little older they wanted me to go back so I went back to Chase Gardens and taught another year. That was in '22-'23. I took a couple of years off again '23 to '25. In the fall of '25 I went to Bailey Hill and stayed there for three years. Then I went to Bethel.

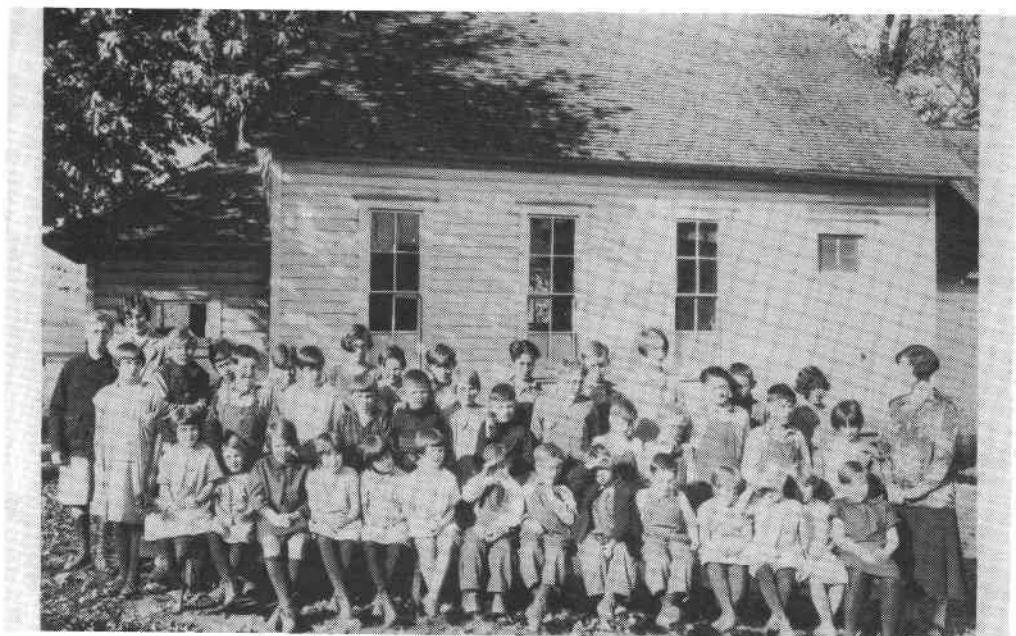
My husband worked in the nursery at Resthaven, and was manager up there for a few years. Then he went back to Quackenbushes and sold tractors for a while. They had Fordsons. Then we bought a farm up at Thurston. It was a dairy and he stayed home.



Bill Michael with horses, ca. 1915, Edna Michael collection, Lane County Museum.



Chase Garden students, 1919-20, Courtesy Edna Michael



Bailey Hill School. Courtesy Edna Michael

My first year at Bethel the depression hit. I had to drive so far and gasoline was hard to get. Chase Gardens offered me about \$5 more and that \$5 was awful big during the depression, so I went back to Chase Gardens for a couple of years. Then I went down to Lone Pine for the second time. Then I went back to Bethel and taught there for twenty years until 1949. Then it was

hard to get back and forth again. I was living at Thurston. So then I went over to Springfield and taught the rest of the time until I retired in 1961.

My husband died in 1952. After he was gone I finished the University and took a year's training in librarianship. The last few years I worked as Librarian at Thurston Jr. High. I've had a lot of experiences.



Bethel School ca. 1945, Courtesy Edna Michael

Lane County Historian

ANOTHER TALE OF THE PIONEERS

by Willard Morss



Albert Wiley Kime, M.D. Aug. 27, 1858 — April 1, 1944
Courtesy Cottage Grove Historical Museum

When my folks lived in Cottage Grove their family doctor was Dr. Kime. The Kime home was on east Main Street, not far from the old city park. One time when I was about ten years old, my Dad was helping to repair the phone line up Row River. Somewhere near Dorena, he had a bad fall and broke his leg. Some men got him on a handcar and brought

him home on the old "Slow and Easy" railroad. Dr. Kime came and set the leg and I remember seeing him rig up a weight, with one of mother's flat irons, to keep a constant pull on that leg. The good doctor was a frequent visitor in the weeks following that accident. When he came, there would be a coffee break and a story telling session before

he left on his rounds of the town and his other patients. I well remember him telling this one as it made a deep impression on me. Doctor, coffee cup in hand, looked at me and told this story he said took place about the time he was my age—some forty years before, in the 1870's. This may not be correct as to names and places but it is as I remember him telling it.

His folks were living in a fine home; somewhere in Illinois or Indiana, when his Dad got the "fever" to come to Oregon over the old Oregon Trail, with other pioneers. He had friends in Salem who kept urging him to join them. He said his mother was a "city" girl and didn't like the idea of leaving her close friends to make the hazardous trip through Indian country. He said he sort of liked the idea of making the trip through the wild west; but he loved his sweet mother so that he sided with her. The time came when the reports of the dangers of the trip became less fearful, and as the urging of his friends in Oregon continued, the mother finally agreed to make the trip in the spring of 18---. Doctor said he and other members of the family went out of their way to make the trip as easy as they could for their dear mother. By the time the wagon train they were with reached Fort Laramie, she had become somewhat accustomed to the rigors of the trip, and was actually enjoying it to a certain degree. When they reached the Sweetwater area in Wyoming she became slightly ill—which tended to put a damper on the enthusiasm of all of them.

As the wagon train moved on toward the Idaho border, the other mothers in the train tried their home remedies on her; but her condition gradually became worse; and the family's anxiety increased to fear. The father was frantic to get her to a doctor; and even considered returning to the east, but now they

were closer to Oregon than Illinois, and he determined to get her there as soon as possible. He had heard stories about a shortcut across Central Oregon to the Salem country and he decided to go with a few others who planned to go that way. The mother made some feeble attempts to get him to stay with the main train, but when they reached the turn-off spot she was too ill to protest; in fact, she was not aware at the time they had left the main train, and were heading west with only four other wagons.

The doctor said at first the going was fairly good; but after they came to the long sandy stretches of desert it became a nightmare. The teams became weakened and two of the families chopped their wagons in half, converting them to two-wheeled carts, to carry only what food and clothing they had. He said he remembered they were in sight of the Cascade Mountains and by looking at his Dad's maps they could see where the Santiam Pass was, and each night it looked to be just as far away as the night before. He said he remembered sitting in the wagon whenever he could, trying to make it easier for the mother, by fanning her hot face and bathing her hands if they had any water. At long last one day in late afternoon, they came in sight of the Deschutes River and the five families went into camp near the present site of the city of Bend. The mother was in a coma; and failed to wake up when he bathed her face with the cold, clear water from the river. The father said they had only one more mountain pass to cross about 50 miles away and then the way would all be downhill—and they were going to make it! Just before darkness settled down on them that evening they were startled to see three mounted men approaching their camp. They turned out to be cattlemen from a ranch far to the north. The travelers asked the men to eat with

them, but they declined, saying they had to be on their way; but before leaving they dropped a bombshell. They warned the campers to be on the lookout for a small group of very bad renegade Cayuse Indians that were reported to be in the area. With that terse warning they rode away into the night.

After the riders had disappeared, the travelers arranged for two men to stand guard all night. The mother was in a coma, and seemed to be barely breathing. Doctor said he didn't remember sleeping that night; for fear of the Indians and that his dear mother might be dying. When morning came the mother was dead. When the father told the other campers they barely noticed him; as they were frantically getting ready to leave without any breakfast—they were so fearful of the Indians. Doctor

said his father was so broken hearted he could barely move about; but finally told them they would have to bury the mother—because they could not take her with them nor leave her body for the wolves. The father finally was able to roll the body in a blanket, and carry it to a gravel bank in a washout. There he scooped out a shallow grave and was able to get the bank broken down, so that a large amount of gravel slid down and covered the body. By that time the others were driving away, and the Kime family hurriedly broke camp and followed them. Doctor said he couldn't even cry, as he drove away from the spot where his dear mother lay in the gravel. Many years later Doctor Kime returned and tried to find the spot where the body lay, but could not find the place.

From Gaston's CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF OREGON, pages 85-86:

Albert W. Kime, M.D., who since 1904 has been a successful medical practitioner at Cottage Grove and one of the six physicians of that place, has an excellent professional and personal reputation in the community. He has worked up an excellent practice since settling in Cottage Grove, and was elected mayor of the city in 1910. He was born in Millersburg, Iowa, August 27, 1858, the son of James H. and Katherine (Zimmerman) Kime

In company with his monther, Albert W. Kime removed from Iowa to California when he was seven years of age and there they joined the father . . . The mother died at Vale in April 1885 . . .





Frederick Talbot Findtner, Courtesy Janice Findtner Taylor

TWO WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF A "DRUMMER" ***by Frederick Talbot Findtner***

Biographical note: Frederick Talbot Findtner was born of Australian pioneer parents in 1884. His grandfather had gone to Australia in 1848 and settled in the gold fields of Talbot, Victoria. His family moved from a small fruit farm to Melbourne when he was around 12 years old.

After he came to Eugene he continued selling dry goods at wholesale for 45 years. When Fleishner Mayer went out of business in Portland about 1930 he went to work for their competitor, Walton N. Moore of San Francisco. He continued to carry samples through the years. His daughter described the big family car from which he removed the back seat and installed special racks for carrying goods. The seat had to be replaced for Sunday afternoon outings. Mr. Findtner maintained a sample room in the Osburn Hotel till his retirement in 1957. He died in Eugene in 1976 at the age of 92 years. This story was prepared for the *Historian* by his daughter, Janice Findtner Taylor.

Frederick Talbot Findtner's account of his experiences selling Dry Goods in Oregon from the year 1912.

Two years before this story I had arrived from Australia to visit an aunt and cousins who had previously lived in Melbourne. I stopped off in Portland en route to England to see the new king crowned. I had eight years experience selling dry goods (called soft goods in Australia) in Melbourne and thought I would like to investigate American methods of selling. Two of my cousins were working for the Portland wholesale dry goods firm of Fleishner Mayer so I secured a six month temporary job with them with the result I was hired permanently in 1911 and have travelled this Willamette Valley to the coast ever since.

My headquarters were in Eugene and I had a permanent sample room there. Eugene in those days had street cars that ran to Springfield and the suburbs of Eugene. From 13th and Willamette there were no sidewalks except planks called board walks, and on each side were grain fields with post and rail fences.

The Dry Goods merchants were Sam Friendly (Friendly Hall was named after him for his contributions to the U of O), Al Hampton and Dunn's Department Stores. George McMorran and Carl Wasburn were clerks in the Friendly store and later became partners and owners of Eugene's largest department store, McMorran's & Washburn's.

I was called a Drummer and carried twelve dry goods trunks when I travelled by train, but condensed it to two when taking a team and surrey. I will take you first on the Northwest portion of my territory on a Monday in May. I had shipped my trunks to Corvallis the last weekend by Southern Pacific and the Detroit & Yaquina from Albany, a branch railroad nicknamed the "slow and easy" which ran to the coast and Newport. On arrival at Albany I was told that, on account of the Willamette River flooding, the railroad bridge of the "slow and easy" was declared unsafe for train traffic. Consequently, I hired a rig and drove to Corvallis. The flood waters were over the road and just before we reached the bridge the water was up to the bottom of the buggy, but we got through. My trunks were in the hotel sample room (Hotel Benson) and ready for me to "open up". I sold my three accounts there: J.M. Nolan & Son, J.H. Harris and Kline's Department store — all out of business today.

The next day my trunks were shipped to Philomath where I opened up the sample trunks in a church and sold Sam

Moses, one of the old-school general merchandise stores of that period. His wife and daughters all came that night to buy and hear about the new fashions for spring — a very fine family. (Incidentally, the same Sam Moses was Chairman of Philomath's school board when my daughter Janice secured her first teaching position at Philomath High in 1941.)

ALSEA

The next day I shipped my trunks to Newport, keeping one trunk back that I had packed with items I thought suitable for the store at Alsea. I hired a rig and team at the livery barn and started out over the mountain for Alsea. The road passed East of Mary's Peak which still had snow on top like icing on a cake. The road was dirt and gravel, when there was a road. They were built by local farmers when they were through with their crops, and the county paid them a little for the work. Half-way up the mountain the heavy rains had washed out a curve in the road. The driver of the rig, Old Bill, never batted an eye. "I'll get you through", he said, and he did. He made me walk in the mud and he led the



Trip to Blodgett from Corvallis. 1913. Courtesy Janice Findtner Taylor

horses up a creek bottom along side where the road should be, until we were clear of the slide. I wore a Fish brand slicker which we all did in those days, particularly as April and May were always wet months and it had rained ever since I left Eugene.

We passed over the mountain and came to rolling countryside so that at the bottom of every little hill we had to drive through water and chuck holes, shaking us up a great deal. The trunk in the back of the rig tipped back and forth and I thought it would surely fall out. We came to a pretty alder-lined brook and Old Bill stopped to give the horses a breather and drinks of water, and we ate soda crackers topped by little canned sausages which were very popular in those days for lunch. The rain stopped and I sat on a log admiring the huge fir trees and the vine maple suspended just above our heads with the leaves fluttering and shiny from the rain. After a rain in the forests of

Oregon there is something so calm and peaceful it is hard to explain . . . the odor from the trees, so fresh and everything so clean. A blue jay was getting fits from some little birds who were doing their best to get rid of him by pecking at him and making as much noise as possible to drive him away from their nests.

We arrived at Alsea almost at sundown and found the store still open as they were expecting us. After unloading the trunk, I sent Old Bill to the hotel which you could hardly tell from the barn. I had supper with Mr. & Mrs. Houser, my dry goods account, and we worked at the store until almost midnight. Right here I want to mention the caliber of these old pioneers. They could not do enough for you and they were not illiterate. It astounded me to find such a fine class of people helping one another, and apparently happy with the little they had. I never heard a complaint about their hard lives, baking

their own bread with no luxury at all. Blackberries were plentiful and they made pies and lots of wine. The home-made blackberry wine almost ruined me, as Old Bill got tied up with a cowboy and an Indian in the barn that night and they tried to carry all they could inside themselves.

The hotel was the worst I have ever been in. The rooms were just the size of the bed. Toilets were at the end of a garden with blackberries growing all over it. You washed in a tin dish at a pump trough at the side of the building. There were no sheets, just blankets of cotton that once were white. The top blanket was very shoddy wool such as I sold as horse blankets. Breakfast consisted of hot cakes and bacon, but Old Bill was absent from the table. He apparently had not slept in the hotel. I found him asleep in the hay in the barn. I doused him with water and told him to eat and pick me up at the General Store of Don Longbottoms, my other Alsea customer. I had to start back as soon as soon as I could to get past that slide before dark. Don was a talker and it was almost noon before we left to return to Philomath. Old Bill was sick so I had to do the driving. The horses were small but tough and seemed just as anxious as I to get back. At one place we dropped into a big hole that was full of water, and the horses could not get us out. Old Bill was able to help me lift the trunk out of the surrey. We then threw some rocks, sticks and brush into the hole and by rocking the surrey we got out. We carried the trunk around the hole and put it back on the surrey and away we went. Worry, worry. It was pitch dark by the time we reached the slide but going downhill was much easier. Now it was really storming — wind blowing a gale and heavy rain falling.

PHILOMATH

We arrived at Philomath about midnight. The Hotel was an old rambling two-story house in which the owner had

raised a family of twelve. After they grew up and left home he turned it into the hotel. I was told that the father at one time organized a baseball team with his nine boys, the youngest being only twelve. It was said that they licked all the teams in the surrounding country, including Corvallis. I had a hard time waking the old boy up. He came to the door in his big flannelette nightgown and told me he had saved me his best room on the first floor. The reason was that I paid him \$3.00 a night and the other salesmen only \$2.00. My room had a basin and jug to wash in and he took the jug out and said he would build a fire and bring me some hot water to wash up in. I was very cold and muddy and thankful to get a sponge. When he brought the hot water he told me to come to the kitchen when I was through, for a cup of coffee and a snack.

I walked into the kitchen and there was Fred Miller, a shoe salesman, sipping coffee. He said he could not sleep as the house swayed with the gale that was blowing and he was scared it would blow over. He had an upstairs room. The old man laughed and said it had done that for thirty years and hadn't blown over yet. Fred Miller was one of the three brothers who started a wholesale dry goods firm in Portland years afterwards and eventually became the well-known chain of retail dry goods and department stores in Oregon and Washington called Miller's. George Miller was one of my competitors selling Wyman Partridge goods from St. Paul, Minn. The other brother sold groceries for a Portland house. They have been very successful.

The storm got worse so I told Fred he could sleep with me downstairs and I would have something soft to fall on. This tickled the old man as Fred was a big fat 220 lb. man. For years afterward Fred would tell this story and laugh when we met, which we did often as I sold Miller's Department Stores merchandise in later years.

I was lucky enough to see another "first" at Philomath — a rodeo. A Texas man named McClellan had a cattle ranch at Alsea. In the summer he ran his herd on Mary's Peak so he organized a rodeo or round-up at Philomath in a field near town. This field had just post and rail fences for boundaries. It was my first rodeo and I really enjoyed it. The bucking, jumping and riding was a scream. Two of the horses, when they could not throw the riders, jumped the fences and ran. With no bridles the riders just had to sit tight until the helpers caught up with them. "Mac" himself rode one and was the best of them all. This round-up was such a success they built a permanent lay-out. Later McClellan left the country in a hurry. He cancelled a gambling check he had lost at poker in a session at the Julian Hotel to Ed & Mort Abbey of Newport. Ed told me they made it so hot for him he sold his cattle and departed for Texas. That was the end of the Philomath round-ups.

BLODGETT

The next morning I drove to Blodgett. We tried the Strawberry Hill route but the road was washed out so we had to return to Wren and made it on the old, less traveled road along the railroad. We became stuck once where the water had washed the wheel tracks into two deep ruts. We lifted out the trunk again and the horses dragged the rig through. We stayed overnight at Jack Thompson's of Plunkett & Thompson's General Merchandise Store at Blodgett. The store catered to the settlers proving up on government land. The law allowed one section to each settler and they had to live on it for a year, build a house and do some clearing. This land was in a valley behind Mary's Peak. A big scandal developed in later years when the government land office found that some of the large lumber companies were financing some of the settlers on the heavily wooded sections

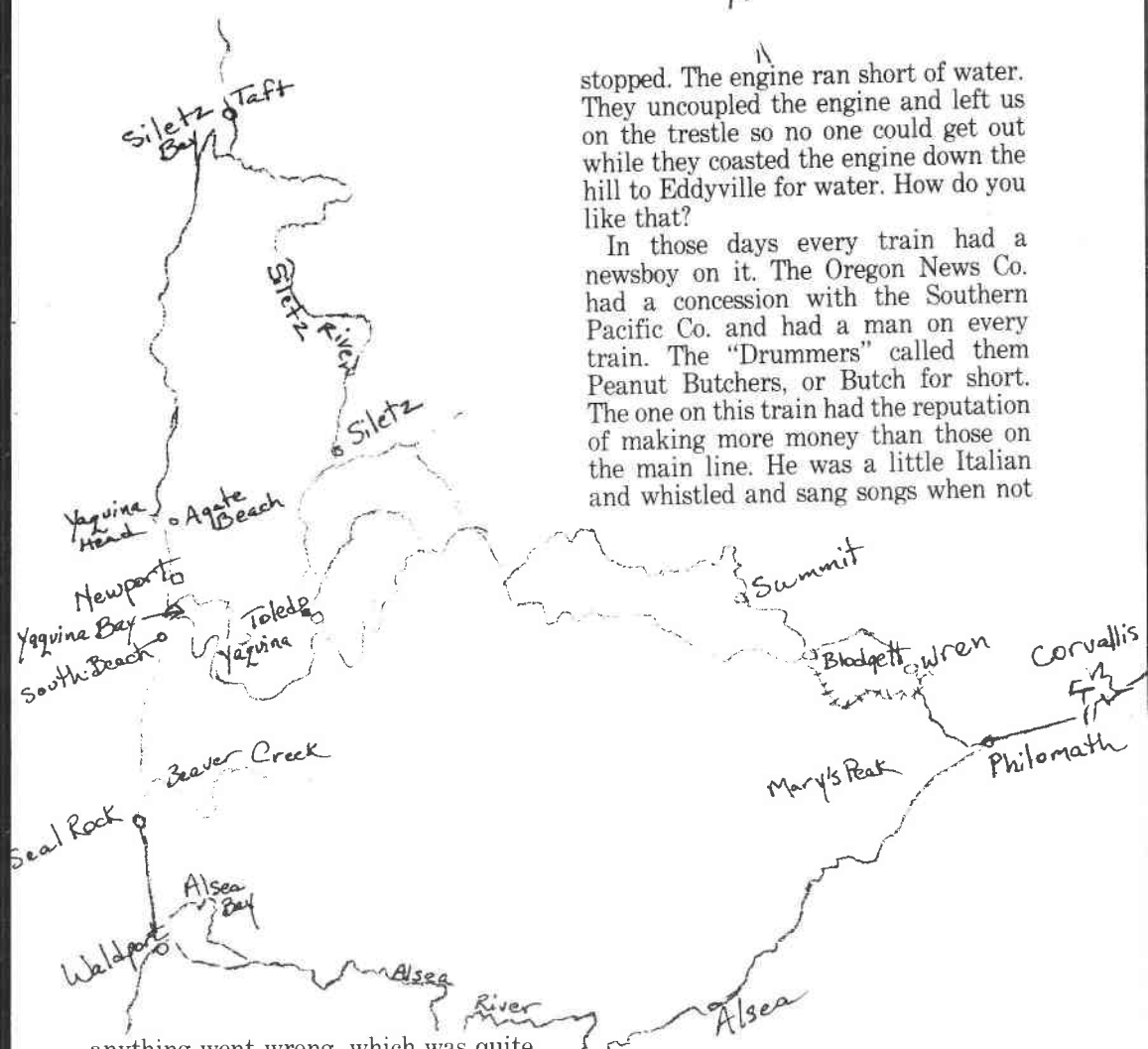
and buying the homesteads up for a song a year later. Most of these settlers were pioneers from Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska. They were land hungry citizens mostly from towns. One girl was a school teacher from Kansas and she just loved Oregon and its green trees. She carried a pistol, the first girl I had ever seen with one. She was not afraid and said everyone of her neighbors tried to help her. She came to the store in a buckboard as all the settlers did for supplies.

Mrs. Thompson, a huge woman, was a wonderful cook and I always enjoyed eating with them. She loved this Kansas school teacher and told me that twice a week she brought vegetables to sell to the store to trade for groceries and very seldom did she have to use any cash. Jack was a wonderful shot with scatter gun and rifle. He attended shoots, national meets all over the country in later years and won the big prize at Reno, Nevada one year.

I checked my trunk to Newport via the train with Jack, who was the postmaster and station master at the little depot. He would not pull any of my script and said I was allowed 150 lbs. free. Script, I want to explain, was what the traveling salesman used for transportation money in those days. For \$500, which the wholesale company (The House) paid, the railroad supplied the script books and an All Lines pass. I wore a button on my coat and received the finest service from all conductors, even to holding up the train to put my trunk aboard when the drayman was late.

SUMMIT

After saying goodbye to my friends and customers, the Thompsons, I walked along the railway ties to Summit, about two miles up the mountain. I sold Mr. Petit, and his wife had fixed a fine lunch for me. Summit was a place where the railroad kept a few families to repair the roadbed when



stopped. The engine ran short of water. They uncoupled the engine and left us on the trestle so no one could get out while they coasted the engine down the hill to Eddyville for water. How do you like that?

In those days every train had a newsboy on it. The Oregon News Co. had a concession with the Southern Pacific Co. and had a man on every train. The "Drummers" called them Peanut Butchers, or Butch for short. The one on this train had the reputation of making more money than those on the main line. He was a little Italian and whistled and sang songs when not

anything went wrong, which was quite often. To look at the rails you would wonder how the train ever kept on them. It was obvious that if old "slow & easy" ever ran fast they would have a wreck at every turn. This branch line ran from Detroit, in the Cascade Mountains, to Yaquina across the bay (of the same name) from Newport. It was the roughest riding train in the U.S.A.!

I hopped the "rattler" (another name for old Slow and Easy) that p.m. as there was only one train a day each way. Just before we were to enter a tunnel and on a wooden trestle the train

talking, which wasn't very often. The train, being always late, was his harvest. First he would bring forth ham sandwiches at 50¢ apiece, then soda pop, then biscuits (Australian name for crackers), then peanuts, popcorn, and candy, the finally the folders of "mountains, lakes, rivers, beaches, and views of Oregon at only 25¢" which he left on the seats for the passengers to look over. He later came around with post cards at 10¢ apiece and told the passengers what a bargain they were getting buying a folder with 24 views of Oregon. He

would make a spiel that the reason they were so cheap was because his company bought them by the million. The out-of-state passengers all bought them. A bargain is a bargain!

"Butch" didn't stop there. He brought around apples and oranges, and here he got a laugh by calling out "5¢ each or 2 for 15¢". After this offer he would produce a basket of blackberries which he bought from Jack Thompson at Blodgett for 10¢ and tell them as a special favor they could have a box for 25¢. Now the ham sandwiches and blackberries were his own idea, they were not company items, so he made an additional profit for himself by eliminating the middle man.

"Drummers" in those days all smoked cigars. I bought them by the box and always had a box open in my sample room for customers. Card games were common on the trains and attracted many traveling salesmen. There were four of us on the train and they talked me into joining them (this was the only time I played with fellow salesmen, and was persuaded to join them by a Mr. Chapman, a Swift's salesman, and a fellow golfer at the Eugene club). Now "Butch" let up on the passengers and watched us playing poker. I had good cards and won most of the money. "Butch" saw the Van Dyke label on my cigar and said, "That's a bum cigar you are smoking. Why don't you buy my stinkaroos." We all laughed as the cigars sold by his company were putrid and he knew it. See what made him a good salesman? He was always clowning but never overlooked a sale. He told me he averaged \$2.00 a customer, and 25 to 50 passengers bought from him a day. One of the reasons was that the train was too small for a dining car and passengers had to get something to eat, especially if they had children with them.

YAQUINA

We eventually arrived at Yaquina

hours late as usual. Mr. Castleman, the engineer, came to see me and said his wife wanted to talk to me.

The Castlemans had a store across from the depot and she gave me a list of things she needed. I told her she had better come over to Newport the next day and select the goods herself. (She and her daughter came the next day and picked out twice as much as she had listed). I had told Captain Jacobson, the bay ferry boat captain, to wait for me while I went to the Castleman's store and to please whistle his tooter when he was ready to go. He and I became good friends and he always had me up in the wheelhouse when crossing the bay to Newport. He was a fine, honest Swede and very proud of his ship. (Little did I know that in 1916 I would marry the daughter of the same kind of Swede and an engineer on the Southern Pacific ferry boats in S.F. Bay). Capt. Jacobson told me all the gossip and said my trunks were all in the sample room and ready for me at the Abbey Hotel. He charged me \$1.00 per trunk delivered to the sample room, so I did not have to pay for drayage. He and his wife liked to come to the sample room and buy items the store keeper could not afford to stock.

NEWPORT

Mr. Patrick, the store keeper in Newport, had me add 20% to the wholesale price of the items the Jacobsons purchased. They were still good buys even so, as the freight was high to Newport from Portland on account of two railroads, transfer charges at Albany and finally boat charges. Mr. Patrick had to have 50% profit to keep in business. He eventually went broke, but went to work in the bank at Corvallis to whom he owed the most money.

To be continued in the next issue

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Eugene Telephone office, 1904. Edna Michael collection, Lane County Museum. Edna's mother is the girl at the switchboard 5th from left.