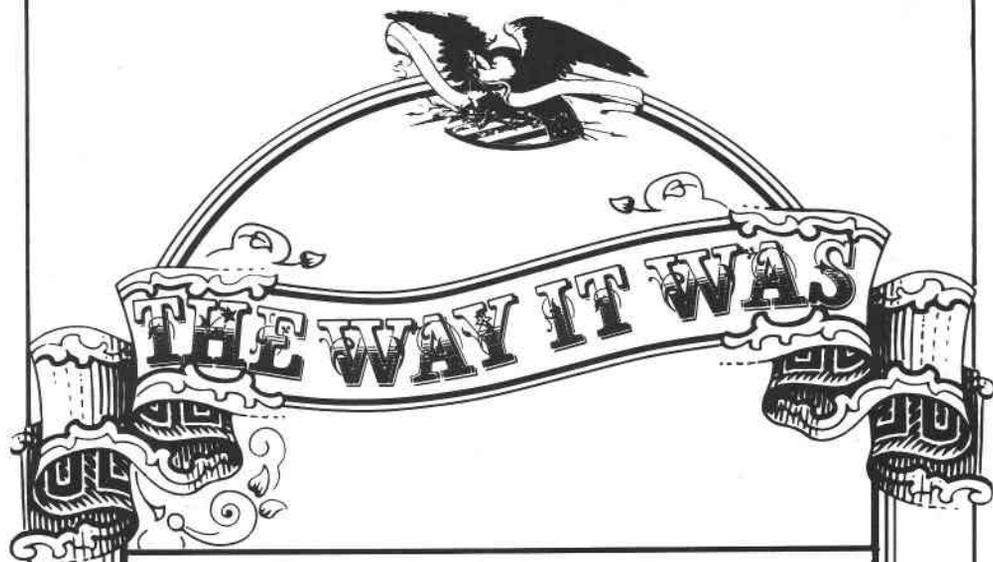


Lane County Historian



Jump Off Joe rock. Canady collection. Lane County Museum.

The Lane County Historical Society

VOL. XXVII, No. 2

Summer, 1982

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hallie Hills Huntington, President 89239 Old Coburg Road, Eugene, OR 97401
Mrs. Elizabeth Solberg, Membership Chairman, 2746 Ladarrah St., Eugene, OR 97404

Lane County Historian Vol. XXVII, No. 2 Summer, 1982

Lois Barton, Editor, 84889 Harry Taylor Road, Eugene, OR 97405

CONTENTS

TWO WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF A DRUMMER By F.T. Findtner	27
ESTHER MANSETH REMEMBERS by Lois Barton	35
TO OREGON BY OX TEAM by John G. Abbott	41
A GALA DAY IN EARLY EUGENE by Mary Skipworth Corum	45

CORRECTION:

Edna Michael taught at High Prairie school *one* year and Oakridge *three* years.
The statement in our last issue, page 9, doesn't make this clear.

TWO WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF A DRUMMER

by Frederick Talbot Findtner

continued from last issue:

Mr. Patrick was the only account I ever heard of who paid up all his debts after going bankrupt. After he had worked out his debt the bank set him up in the insurance business and gave him all their business. He was a very religious man and, as you see, strictly honest and truthful. He has been very successful. For years afterwards, when I was in Corvallis, he would come to the sample room for a visit and thank me for getting his credit extended when he was struggling to keep in business. He said his biggest thrill was when I sold Mrs. Abbey (Hotel Abbey, Newport) over \$500 worth of sheets, pillow cases, towels, and bath mats and he got his 20% cut.

I stayed the weekend in Newport, which at that time was the most popular vacation resort in Oregon except Seaside. People came from Spokane in Washington and from Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. Residents from the inland towns of Oregon and Eastern Oregon "came over" to get away from the summer heat.

Newport then was in three sections. There was Front Street facing the Yaquina Bay with about four blocks of stores, cafes, saloons and two fish canneries. Commercial fishermen and "locals" frequented this section with dozens of trawlers and crab boats tied up at the docks. Occasionally a big steamer came in for a cargo of lumber which was towed on barges from Toledo. During the first World War lots of steamers put in at Yaquina Bay and Siletz Bay to get spruce for making airplanes.

The second section was halfway to the ocean beach (called Nye Beach), and to-

day is the main business section with its city, county and state offices, school areas and highway junctions.

The third section was Nye Beach, composed mostly of beach cottages and stores catering to the tourists. Along the boardwalk one found these small businesses selling souvenirs, shells, agates, model ships, bathing suits, beach umbrellas, in addition to a pastry shop, candy and hot-dog stands, and popcorn vendors. Thomas's Agate & Jewelry store across from the boardwalk was a very popular place for tourists. It was always full of "lookers" and most of them got tempted and bought agate brooches, earrings stock pins, cuff links, etc. Some tourists preferred finding their own agates and unusual stones on Nye Beach and nearby Agate Beach at low tides and then had Mr. Thomas grind and polish them for a very small fee. The store owners had much to do with its popularity as they were so helpful and friendly to all who entered. (In the '30s a son of Mr. Thomas married one of the daughters of a find Eugene obstetrician, Dr. Hunt)

At the west end of the boardwalk was the beach and a natatorium, which was one of the highlights of going to Newport in those early days. "I'll meet you at the Nat" was a common slogan when friend met friend. At the north end of Nye Beach was a large rock called "Jump Off Joe" which had a tunnel through it and when the tide was out we all walked through it. It was like being inside of a cave. The children loved to climb to the top, but today this has all been washed and eroded away.

On the north side of Jump Off Joe was a beautiful beach which ran for about

five miles to Agate Beach, and the Yaquina Head lighthouse. Visitors were allowed in the lighthouse at certain times and were given a tour. We climbed the stairs to the top and were rewarded with a wonderful view up and down the coast. There was a big rock island at the foot of the cliff and thousands of gulls and terns nested there. During certain months whales and seals could be spotted.

Gathering rock oysters was a popular sport when the tide was out, as were surf fishing and fishing from the rocks at Yaquina Head for delicious kelp fish. In my opinion kelp fish is the finest pure white fish I ever tasted. You leave the fish in water all night and the next morning the water is a bright blue color. Very startling to those not accustomed to it, but when fried, it comes out pure white.

Fishing from boats on the bay was common, also. They caught large flounder and salmon when in season. The crab men caught crabs by putting their wire traps, called pots, in the

channel of the bay where the tide ran in and out, bringing in the crabs. In those days they used Razor clams for bait, but the government stopped this as that type of clam was being exterminated. Today they catch crab out in the ocean and the crabs are much larger.

The big event on the bay front in those days was the coming of the boat with its passengers. For an hour before the boat arrived a crowd would gather and sit around the docks or in the lobby of the Abbey Hotel. Everyone, it seemed, came to see if anyone they knew was aboard. Fathers and beaux were coming for the weekends, and there were screams and yells for joy when waiting persons recognized them. Then came the rush to get their baggage sorted out, while the wagon and bus men were calling out their hotels, boarding houses and resorts. The Abbey Hotel on Front Street, the Agate Beach Inn, Back Beach (Nye) Hotel and Damons were the main ones.

I had a grandstand view of all this as my room, which Mrs. Abbey always re-



Main Street, Newport, Ore., ca. 1910. Courtesy Lane County Museum.

served for me (I always sent her a room request in advance) was on the second floor with a door leading on to the balcony which extended the whole length of the hotel and gave a nice view of Yaquina Bay. I'll never forget the sunrises I saw looking out across that bay.

Mrs. Abbey was a fine motherly lady and a wonderful hostess. Everyone loved her. Her sons Ed and Mort attended to the desk and ran the bar and pool room, which were always crowded. Both sons had been in Alaska as gamblers, I think, and not miners, but Mrs. Abbey would not allow them to touch a card in the hotel. She ran the dining room and bedrooms. Her dining room was famous and served the best food in Oregon. To start with she placed big platters of crab on each table — free. They were fresh cooked every day and were delicious. In fact, her fish dinners could not be beat. Her pastries were not only pretty but exceedingly tasty. If you could not eat them after your big dinner she would give you a bag and you could take them away and eat them later — like our present day doggie bags.

JOE PATTERSON

Here I met a character named Joe Patterson, who was accompanied by a former tutor and was now his companion. It seems he was the son of a wealthy banker in Philadelphia, and after graduation from the University, refused to take up banking and wanted to do something for himself. He came west and I think it was his mother's idea to send the companion along to watch over him and report to her the doings of her son. He was set on being a newspaper reporter. He was hired, after some waiting, as the Oregonian report in Newport.

Joe, his companion and I became good friends and we ate together and discussed the topics of the day. Both were very well educated men. They both showed an interest in my native land,

Australia, and loved to hear me talk of my youth. Joe said he was going to see Australia before he died for sure. Sunday afternoon we walked over the hill to Nye Beach and watched the swimmers in the Nat as it was too cold that day to go in the ocean. The water was warmed salt water in the pool, which was great for buoyancy and beginning swimmers.

WALDPOR

The next day I was to go by wagon down the beach to Waldport on the Alsea Bay. The wagon was made especially with wide steel wheels for use over sand. I went to bed early as I had to be ferried across the bay to South Beach by 4 a.m. to catch the low tide for the trip South. I had just fallen asleep when I was awakened by someone banging at my door. It was Joe Patterson. He wanted to know if he could go along with me to Waldport. Word had come to him that both the ships Mirene and Ahweneda were wrecked trying to get over the bar into Alsea Bay. He was all excited. This was his chance to get a column, perhaps two, and the biggest break he had had. He said he would pay half the expenses.

I agreed to his coming along but I told him to be on time or else, as he was a notorious late sleeper, and to put on heavy underwear, two or three sweaters, an overcoat and a slicker. He did not own a slicker so I lent him my sample and a lap robe.

I took just one trunk on this trip with mostly men's items such as Mackinaws, flannel shirts, blue melton loggers shirts, etc., such as the fishermen use. It was "All aboard" in the dark the next morning and no Joe. Captain Jacobson said, "What do you want to take that dude with you for. He'll freeze to death." Joe was a handsome man but still dressed Eastern style.

When the Captain tooted the fog horn Joe came on the run, half-dressed. The Captain took one look at him and said,

"Son, you forgot to part your hair", and his big frame shook with laughter. Joe wanted to know about getting a cup of coffee, but "Cap" answered him with, "Hell, son, coffee is no good on a beach schooner. You should have brought a bottle of whisky and a hunk of smoked salmon. Ha, Ha."

We crossed the bay to South Beach and were met by Sven Jergenson, the man who owned and drove the team and beach wagon. Sven said, "Fred, the wife has breakfast all ready. You go and eat while I hitch up the team and get your trunk loaded. We must be on the beach in half an hour." Mrs. Jergenson was a good cook like all pioneer women in those days. She gave us six pancakes apiece and bacon and eggs. You don't know how good that tastes at 4 a.m. on a cold, beach morning.

We reached the beach as a stiff wind was blowing and big rolling waves were still booming in, up to the debris line of logs, trees, etc. (The logs on the beaches of Oregon are unique due to being washed down the rivers into the ocean and then washed back up in the beaches). At Newport and all other resorts along the coast, this beach wood makes excellent campfires for roasting hot dogs and marshmallows, and for beach parties. Also, the summer tourists used the logs laying East and West as windbreaks. They would spread their beach robes on the south side of a log and be out of the north wind that comes during the summer months. In later years, a Portland firm has been very successful in gathering odd-shaped, bleached limbs of trees found on the beaches, and with the aid of a little cement, selling them to stores for window trims and to nurseries to decorate flower gardens.

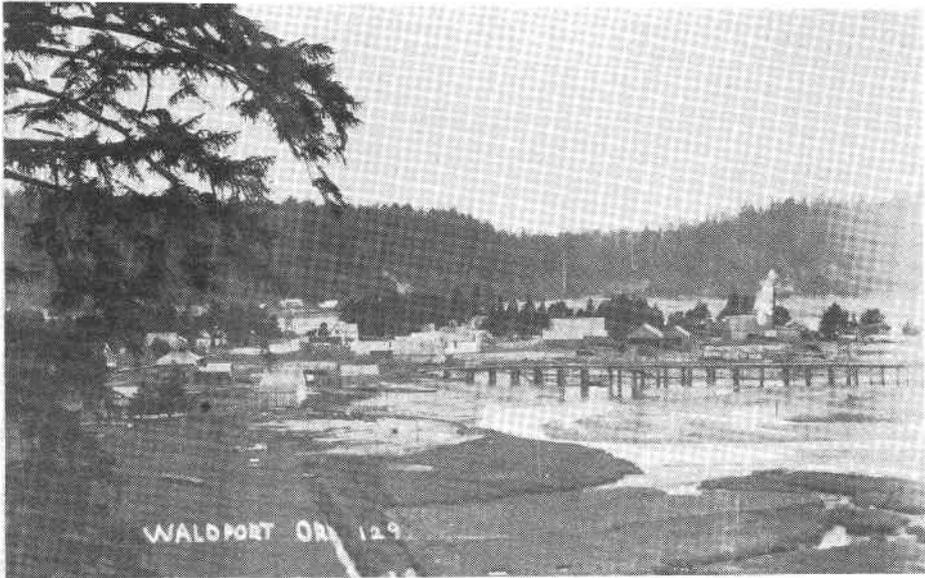
We had to wait about half an hour before we could get on to the hard sand. Poor Joe was nearly frozen. His underwear was too light. He only had one sweater and his topcoat was a dress af-

fair that one would wear over a dress suit. I gave him the heaviest lap robe, which was a grey color, thick with a fringe. He pulled it over his head, as I was doing, to keep the cold wind off his face. I particularly needed it as I have a long nose and it always ran when exposed to cold.

When the waves receded we drove for miles on hard, wet sand that was smoother than any modern road. We soon came to Beaver Creek — the place of quicksand and trouble to those unfortunates who did not understand the method of successfully crossing it. (Years afterward I saw a motor car buried to within a foot of the top. It was completely ruined as the sand and salt water got into the bearings.) The method used was to drive along the north bank of the creek until there was no sand, only rocks. Sven then drove the team through the creek where the water was shallow and down the south bank back to the beach again.

Two Englishmen ran a lodge at Beaver Creek for sportsmen who fished and those who hunted up on Table Mountain for deer, bears, cougars and bob cats. They met us when we crossed the creek as Sven had some supplies for them. Joe was interested in the two men. He always had his nose sniffing for a story and told them he would be down to see them sometime later.

The next obstacle in our progress was crossing Seal Rocks, where we left the beach to get around the rocky shoreline. The road, such as it was, was lined with rhododendrons, up to 20 feet high, and huckleberry bushes. The road was just a track and very rough. There was a small village there composed of one store and mostly people from Salem. We bought some crackers and sardines, and Joe and I sat on top of the cliff while Sven watered and attended to the horses. Off shore a dozen pinnacles of rock jutted out of the ocean and we were fascinated watching the sea birds nesting on them.



Waldport ca. 1910. Canady collection. Lane County Museum.

Back to the beach again in the wagon and in due time we came to the sand dunes which we had to cross to get to the North shore of Alsea Bay. Here we could see the steamer *Mirene* stuck in the sand on the south side of the bay entrance but no sign of the *Ahweneda*. We started over the plank road, called a Wash Board road, which was built over the sand, and came to a place where the sand had blown over it like a snow drift. The wind was still strong and the top of the dunes looked like a lot of small volcanoes smoking, as the fine sand was blowing off the top. Sven had two long-handled shovels attached to the side of the wagon for use in this situation. The trick was to shovel the sand from the side of the trestle and the wind would blow the rest of it away. It took us about half an hour to clear it enough for us to get by. Thank heaven it was the only such delay. Sven drove the wagon along the edge of the bay, half in the water, for about half a mile to a landing where the ferrying boat was waiting to take us across the Alsea Bay to Waldport.

Mrs. Wakefield, who ran the hotel at Waldsport, had a fine dinner ready for us. She was famous for clam fritters and I have never tasted anything like them since. Her husband was a Merchant Marine Captain and lost his life in a storm in the South Seas. On returning from one of his voyages he brought back a South Sea Island native, who had been s ship's steward for him, and a big, colorful talking parrot. When Capt. Wakefield would go to sea he left both with his wife. The man helped her run the hotel and the parrot would amuse the patrons.

BASKETBALL GAME

After supper I went to the Walker store where my trunk was ready to be opened, but no dice. Mr. Walker's daughter was going to play basketball for the local girls' team against an all Indian girls' team, and Mr. Walker and his son Johnny invited me to go along saying that we would work after the game was over. I sent Sven over to the saloon across the street to round up Joe but he had already left for the game.

(By the way, the druggist also ran the saloon — a good combination.)

The game was well worth seeing and one that anybody seeing will never forget. The Indian center was a fat girl, but the other team members were wiry and slim and fast and light on their feet. Miss Walker was tall and slim and the best player in the gym. She was the center and always got the tip-off. (In those days after every basket the ball was tossed up in center circle again). For a while no one made a basket, but the Indian girls were a scream. When they missed a shot for the basket they laughed and laughed and sat down on the floor. Then their fat center evidently told them to feed her the ball and she made three quick baskets. The Indians, players and non-players, went wild and yelled their heads off. Then Miss Walker took over for the white team and she began scoring. Back and forth these two girls did all the scoring. It was all tied near the end of the game and then Miss Walker stole the ball from the Indian center and ran for the basket. The Indian girl didn't like this so when Miss Walker went to make her shot, she charged into her and sent her flying. Miss Walker missed the shot, but the official called the foul and she sank the foul shot to win the game.

What a victory! All hell broke out. The Indians claimed that Johnny Walker, who was the referee and brother of the center of the local girls team, should not have given his sister the foul shot. They called him a cheat, crooked, etc., etc. and crowded around him. I thought for sure a war was going to start but Johnny never lost his head and explained to them that you can't knock one over when they are shooting for a basket. The Indian center finally agreed and quieted them down by saying it was all her fault.

I never enjoyed a game more than this one. I laughed till the tears rolled down my face. Five clowns could not have put

on a better show than those little Indian girls. They had more fun keeping the ball away from the white girls. They would jump up and down and sit on the floor laughing when they fooled their opponents.

I worked until midnight with the Walkers. The next morning Joe was up early and ready for our return trip, and was very happy with the story he got. It seemed the two steamers, both from Newport, heard about a freight shipment waiting at Waldport. The Mirene got there first after a race down the coast, but the heavy wind made them miss the channel and landed them on the sand south of the entrance. The Captain of the Ahweneda, seeing what had happened to the Mirene, headed for the north of the entrance. He also hit the sand, but the wind and tide later carried him into the channel and he got through. Later a tug pulled the Mirene out of the sand without much damage.

We returned without incident to Newport and Joe sent in his story. To his delight he got a full column. Later he wrote a story about the Indian basketball game and it was published all over the country. A few years after this Joe Patterson went to Europe as an Associated Press war correspondent in World War I. He became quite famous for his stories about the French and British troops and then when the U.S. entered the war he volunteered for service in our Army. After the war I met him in Corvallis and had a long visit with him. He said he met a lot of Australians in Paris and still was determined to visit Australia. I had a letter later from him postmarked Sydney, and he was not disappointed. He liked my home town, Melbourne, and was going on to India and South Africa before coming home. He was writing about his travels for his paper. He never married. I think he must have been jilted before he came west.

TOLEDO

The next day I left Newport for Toledo where I opened up my samples in the Odd Fellows Hall. Toledo is built around an inlet of the Yaquina River. Johnson Brothers Saw Mill is located in the center of it on filled in land with water surrounding it. This mill supports the town as almost every worker in Toledo works in the mill. During the first World War this mill supplied more spruce lumber to France, Britain and the U.S. than any other mill. For overseas shipment the lumber was floated down the Yaquina river from the mill on barges and loaded on vessels at Newport. During the first World War spruce was used to build airplanes, being a light but tough wood. This mill became notorious for importing Japanese labor, but the mill workers and citizens got so mad they ran all the Japanese out of town, and told them never to come back. The Japanese Consul in Portland took the matter up with the U.S. government and the labor unions took up the fight, although at that time there was no lumberworkers' union. Johnson was so mad! He thought he controlled Toledo and could do as he liked. He threatened the storekeepers with a boycott, but he lost out.

I had sent Mrs. Fish an advance card (reservation) and she had saved me one of the two rooms above her millinery store that she rented to salesmen. The old hotel was a dump, built half over the water on the waterfront in the old town. This part of town catered to boat traffic from up river, and also farmers and fishermen. Oysterville was only a short distance from Toledo and grew the best oysters in the west, in my opinion. Salesmen, on the way "out", bought a quart to take home with them. They were like Olympias but fatter and more tasty. Delicious.

Two days later, when I was just ready to pack up, Mr. Robinson from Taft and the Hall brothers from Siletz came over

by wagon from Siletz, the Indian reservation, to see me. Mr. Robinson had stayed overnight with the Hall boys and persuaded them to come with him to Toledo to see my big line of goods. I did not know them and as they were buying heavily I asked how they were going to pay. Mr. Robinson, my customer from Taft who was very responsible and paid his bills promptly, said they will pay the same as I do. They were twins and one was the Indian agent in Siletz. I found out later they were cousins of the Batemans, my furniture account at Toledo, and Batemans would go bond for them.

At lunch the Hall twins told a good story about an Eastern specialty tobacco salesman, brought to Siletz by Tom Coleman, a grocery drummer. The Easterner became scared when two or three Indians came into the store to complain about something and gave him dirty looks. Coleman decided to really put some fear in the salesman and suggested to the Hall twins that they get some of the Indians to surround the hotel (a four room dump) that night and put on a war dance act. They did a good job yelling and screaming bloody murder. The man rushed into Tom's room scared to death and Tom told him to get under the bed and not to move. Tom then went outside and told the Indians they had done enough and to go home. Instead they got some firecrackers somewhere and celebrated for an hour or so. The Hall boys said Tom's joke sort of backfired and he became scared also.

Mr. Robinson, my customer from Taft, was a very worthy type of man and a great believer in his own destiny and yours. He owned all the land at the mouth of the Siletz River and laid out a township site with a main street for stores and residential streets, too. He built a good sized store near the river and did a good boat business with

farmers and settlers up the river. He carried his blueprint everywhere he went and tried to sell house lots for \$100 each. He said every big river had a town at its mouth and Taft would someday be a big town like Newport with hundreds of vacationers and tourists. Mr. Cruickshank, a meat salesman, was the only salesman I knew who bought a lot. There was no access to the place except down the river via Toledo. They tried once to put a washboard road North from Newport but the first big storm washed it away. Robinson offered me, as a special favor, a store sight next to his. I wish I had taken it now. Taft and nearby Nelscott have hundreds of houses and the main street consists of stores for about four blocks. Robby has retired now, rich, his destiny fulfilled. How right he was!

I packed up after Mr. Robinson and the Hall twins left and told the drayman to haul my trunks to the depot and check them to Eugene. That night I went to the Weaver Brothers tent show. It was a real Hillbilly outfit and very popular. The tent was crowded. The hero was a seemingly nit-wit farm boy who in the last act foils the villain and saves the mortgage on the old home, etc., etc.

That night I was awakened by George Cable, a Goodyear rubber salesman, who had a terrible cramp in his stomach. He was in the other room at Mrs. Fish's place. He wanted me to get

him some hot water to drink. I went downstairs, made a fire in the stove and brought him the water in my room. He said he hated to go back to his room as there was no heating stove in it. I told him he could sleep in my room and I would take his. I could not sleep thinking that maybe George was coming down with the flu, which was almost epidemic locally, and here I was in his bed. I went back to my room to get some Eucalyptus oil (an Australian cold cure) and found George sleeping like a baby. I spread the Eucalyptus all over the pillow and I swallowed a few drops to ward off any germs.

In the morning George would not eat but Mrs. Fish gave him a dose of some blackberry medicine which was hot and he said he felt fine. The drayman overslept and came with the trunks just as the train pulled in. We threw them into the baggage car, the conductor got the rate to Eugene from the agent, and we checked them on the train. The conductor pulled my script for the trunks and for my travel to the House (Fleishner Mayer) in Portland that night. The next day I attended the meeting with the heads of the different departments. That Saturday night it was back to Eugene and the Osburn Hotel where I lived as a bachelor.

Finis

P.S. How do you like two weeks in the life of a dry goods traveling salesman before autos, good roads and motels?

F.T.F.

ESTHER MANSETH REMEMBERS

by Lois Barton

This story about the Aldropp family and the Norwegian settlement on the McKenzie River is based on an interview with Esther Aldropp Manseth, taped December 18, 1980, and a **Reminiscence** she wrote for her sister some time earlier. See also LCH Vol. XXVI pp22-24.

I remember well as a very small child in far away Norway, our parents were getting ready to move their family to America: America, the magic land; America a land that flowed with milk and honey.

Strange I should remember Mother waving a large white handkerchief in farewell as the big boat was leaving her home land. Waving a fond farewell. A farewell forever.

Wonder what her thoughts were as she watched the coastline of Norway, with its mountains, crags and fjords, grow dim in the distance?

Was she glad her family would grow up in the land of golden opportunities? Was she thinking of the glowing stories her father had told her of his gold-mining days in the California gold rush?

If she could have looked into the future would she have wanted to turn back?

We can only guess.

The long trip to our destination—a small town in a lovely green valley in the far west—seems like a dream.

We came from Norway in 1909. There were six of us, my mother and father, a sister, two brothers and me. I was three years old. My two youngest sisters were born in this country.

My grandfather, mother's father, had come in 1850 with his brothers. He was 19 at the time. They did well. He went back to Norway and bought a large ranch, cattle and timber. He married and had children. My mother was the fifth of twelve children.

We bought a place on River Road, on Lone Pine, but mother didn't like it. She was used to the hills of Norway. Father wasn't well. He developed a bad cough soon after we got here. Since he was sick he thought we'd better find a place mother liked. So we moved to town and Dad started to look for a place. One night he dreamed about a place. He dreamed he came in on a small narrow road where there was hills on both sides. And the next day he had an appointment with a real estate man, some friends of his. They came along a road and he recognized the place he had dreamed about. And it was the most wonderful thing in the world for us when he was gone, because there mother was, a widow with six children, with everything she needed to carry on. There were twelve acres in the place at the time. The river has moved over and the place is much bigger now.

We bought the old Gorache place [on McKenzie View drive upstream from Armitage Park]. The Gorache family lives over by Monroe now.

In town, we lived on West Eighth Street. At that time it was open fields and there was a large wheat field. We even kept a cow, one that mother didn't

want to get rid of when we left Lone Pine. When we moved we had no way of hauling a cow, so my brother and I (I was seven and he was twelve) walked all the way from west 8th street over here with our cow. It was quite a walk and I know before we left mother said, "Now remember the cow will get tired. You must stop often and rest so the cow won't get tired or she won't give any milk." Along the way we sat down at a place to rest and some people came out and talked to us. My brother was the spokesman. All the neighbors knew each other at that time, and he told them we'd bought the Gorache place. They gave us bread and butter and jelly to eat. Gee, that tasted so good. It was at least eight miles. We started early in the morning. Brother had been here with Dad so he knew the way.

All too soon Father was gone. Mother was left alone with a large family in a strange land with strange customs. (My father was in the country only four years when he died of TB).

After father died mother bravely carried on. She managed the farm with the help of us children. We worked hard and learned the joy of accomplishment. And our brothers! Bless them. They worked all day in the fields in the hot sun with a mule team, tending the crops without a word of complaint. (We had mules because they were easier to keep. You could buy straw for them.)

I'm glad the years have been good to [my brothers].

There was fun on the farm too. There was space to play the games children play; a brook made for wading, where the protesting black cat had his daily bath. There were young farm

animals to care for and make pets of. We knew where the moss was thick and deep, where the blackberries hung dark and sweet. We picked wild flowers in the woodland where little creatures scurried and birds sang of new life in the treetops.

I remember the big kitchen in the rambling old farmhouse with the wood stove where we first learned to cook. I'll never forget the home-churned butter melting on thick crusts of brown bread just out of the oven.

The dread disease that stalked our family struck again. This time we lost our chestnut-haired sister — so still and white. But life went on. That year the garden brought forth its abundance. Cabbages like giant green roses, string beans higher than we could reach, carrots of deep gold and ruby red beets.

At night we sat around the big table with the kerosene lamp, sewing a fine seam while mother would read to us, often from the Good Book that teaches right from wrong. We learned that truth and honor are the watchwords never to be forgotten, for without them worldly gains are nothing.

We grew up in the days of long ago when boys should be men and girls should be ladies, not tomboys. A lady does not climb trees to count the eggs in the robin's nest. A lady walks, she does not run — be it uphill or downhill. A lady does not swing like Tarzan from long fir boughs down steep hillsides. And I, the rebel, could have climbed the highest mountain. Mother made butter. At that time you

could sell your homemade butter in the stores. That's how we got money to buy the things that we needed. And then the truck farm. Mother and the boys worked down in the field. They raised things like beets and carrots and turnips. Mother used to take them down to the slough where there was running water to wash and bunch them. She had a regular place. My brothers went to town, I think twice a week, and they had pretty much their regular customers.

And then later on when the cannery was started we bought a share and then we raised beans. We kids were picking beans at a very early age. My brothers were only 12 and 14 when Dad died. But they took over the farm.

They had to cross the ferry in the winter time. The road was so full of ruts it was almost knee deep to the horses. One man said you take your life in your hands to go across those hills during the muddy season. One time the Trapp girls, who used to ride horseback quite a bit, decided to ride across the hill to visit some friends down Coburg way. One of their horses started sinking in. She sunk clear to her belly and her rider was sitting there with mud all the way around her. The other sister got a big stick and hit the horse just right so she really went and got out, but that's the way it was.

One time my brothers came home. They'd gone across the ferry. The channel on that side was very swift at that time. As they got on the ferry it slipped away from the bank and the horses went down into the deep water. One of my brothers had to swim around — get in front of the horses to cut the harness and get 'em loose, or else the horses would have drowned. I remember that. It scared mother so. Those were the good old days, I guess.

We didn't have mail service along the

road in the muddy season. All the mailboxes were lined up along the road on the south side of the old Coburg bridge, a covered bridge which crossed the river about where the freeway goes across now. One time I walked down to get the mail because mother was expecting a check. Just as I got the letters out of the box a gust of wind jerked one letter from my hand and blew it into the river. I just knew it was mother's check, so I waded in to get that letter before it floated down stream. When I got home I was soaked to the waist and mother wanted to know what had happened. I told her. Of course the mail I retrieved was just some advertising.

When the road dried out in the spring we used to stand on the porch and watch the first car come across. It was a time for celebration. It would be April or May before a car could come down. The only way across was by the Deadmond ferry which came across over at Olaf Egge's place.

We didn't go anyplace much. In those days Booth Kelly had a mill in Coburg and they floated the logs down the river. There is a rock out there at the curve — a small cone-shaped rock surrounded by land now. The river was swift when it was high. It would float all the logs down and they would hang up on that rock. The men used to come with horses and pull the logs back in the mainstream to go on down. We stood up on the hill and watched them. This was recreation for us.

I didn't start to school until I was seven. We were a long way from school in Eugene and mother didn't want me to start earlier. I went to the Deadmond Ferry school. The lessons were in English, but I couldn't speak it when I started to school. There were so many Scandinavian kids there it didn't make much difference. We always spoke Norwegian at home and I am so glad we



The Norwegian congregation in their house of worship ca 1937. Some names of people in this picture: Louis & Anna Meyer. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jacobsen. Olaf & Thora Egge. Lorentina Johnson. Axel & Anna Thorsfeldt. Mrs. Thorsfeldt (Axel's mother). Mrs. Meyer (Louis' mother). Haftor & Hansina Johnson. Nils & Hanna Riishoy. Lulu Johnson. Aleta Jensen & son. John & Astrid Jeppesen & daughters. Mrs. Stevenson & children. Mr. Trap & son Joel. Olga Trapp. Esther & Mac Manseth & son. Neils & Elsie Egge and children David and Iris. Joseph Andrus. F. Jacobsen's brother. Karen & Dorr Huffman. Elsie Egge photo

did because I still speak it.

Some of our neighbors came to Eugene by way of Montana, but we came directly here. My father knew a man that had gone to the Norwegian settlement in Montana and didn't like it, so he came right here. The Trapps came through Montana, but Egges came here. It got to be a settlement. A lot of people couldn't speak the language. Coming here they would have friends and someone to talk to.

My husband's family — his sister came first in about 1916 or 17. She came over here with some friends of hers and they came here because the father had married into my mother's family in Norway and they kind of knew us. Later my husband came to visit his sister. He had been a sailor and he was going back to Norway to go to school, but somehow there was a strike and he never did go back until 1953 when he went for a visit.

The Trapps had a big ranch. Mr. Harbert owned all the land through here. He sold out to Trapp and his brother-in-law, Jacobson. Jacobson decided to subdivide and we bought six acres (Manseths) and Nels Egge bought eight and I think his brother-in-law Thorsfeldt bought below there.

Trapps were on what you knew as the Peterman farm. They had cattle and a big filbert orchard. They owned some of the hill land too, up to the Seavey place which Jaqua has now. The Strattons were up on the hill near us. Gorache built the house my folks lived in. Strattons built their home. The only other house in the area then was the Harbert house. Petermans lived there later. Trapps lived in the old Harbert house for a while, then tore it down and built a big house on that place. Nels Egge put in the dairy. (Mr. Harbert told your editor the old house visible at the right background in the Egge's Dairy picture



Neils Egge with the Egge's Dairy truck and the milkhouse, first building to be constructed at the dairy. Elsie Egge photo

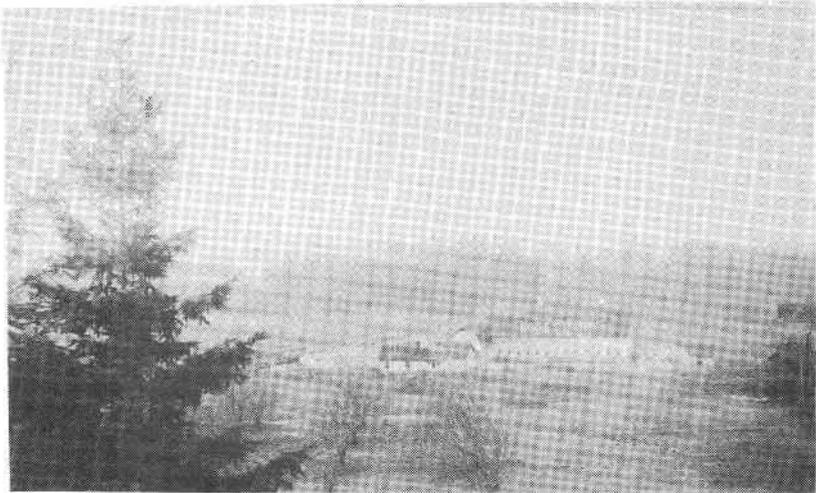
was Deadmond's home at one time. Ed.)

I've always been grateful that our pioneering parents brought us to America. Not early pioneers, it's true — for the echo of the last Indian whoop had long since fallen off the cliff

and the tipi had disappeared from the landscape.

To us it was a new land with new hopes. No milk and honey, to be sure, but it's a good land. It's my land and I'm grateful.

Esther Aldropp Manseth



Overview of Egge's Dairy. Thorsfeldts once lived in former Deadmond house in right background, according to Elsie Egge. Barton photo.



Brothers and sisters of the Abbott family who came to Oregon by ox team in 1852. All were living in 1911. Top row: John G. Abbott, Portland; S.V. Abbott, Eugene; W.S. Abbott, Eugene. Bottom Row: Sarah E. Canady (Mrs. Madison), Eugene; Mary Holland (Mrs. T.J.), Crow. Canaday photo.

The following article was written and published in The Oregon Journal in Portland in 1911.

TO OREGON BY OX TEAM 59 YEARS AGO
Remarkable Trip Across "Great American Desert"
Six Decades Ago of Which Five Brothers and Sisters
of Abbott Family Are Survivors

TO OREGON BY OX TEAM

by John G. Abbott

"It is 59 years ago this month since John G. Abbott of 312 East Forty-eighth Street and his four brothers and sisters, all of whom are enjoying life in Oregon, arrived in Portland from Osage County, Missouri. And they didn't travel in standard Pulman cars. They came by ox team and walked a good share of the distance at that, in traversing the then "Great American Desert", on which dwelt no white persons between what is now Nebraska and Oregon, save a few settlers at Salt Lake and a few nomadic trappers.

This instance of five brothers and sisters who as children "crossed the plains" together is unusual and the members of the Abbott family who enjoy this unique distinction as shown in the accompanying picture are Mrs. Sarah Canady, Eugene; Mrs. T.J. Holland, Crow, Lane County; W.S. Abbott, Eugene, and S.Y. Abbott, Eugene. The ages of these pioneers now range between 63 and 72 years. The other surviving members of the same party are Mrs. James Trimble, Red Bluff, California; Mrs. W.L. Higgins Crescent City, California; H.C. Perkins, Grants Pass, and Lewis Crisman of Alaska.

John G. Abbott tells of their coming in the following words:

I was only a lad of 11 years in 1852, but incidents of those days are more vivid to my mind than many things which have happened in later years.

Friends and neighbors of my parents had emigrated to the Oregon country in 1846, among them James Heatherly, Dan Waldo and R.K. Payne. They gave highly colored descriptions of the Oregon country, stating that the climate was unexcelled and that the soil would produce all crops that could be grown in Missouri. They added that stock of all kinds could "winter" on the range and come off fat in the spring. These flattering accounts of the Oregon country excited my parents and grandparents and they decided to make the trip. Accordingly they sold their homes and belongings at great sacrifices and outfitted themselves for the journey. They were advised to use ox teams as there was a great danger that the Indians would steal horses. Several other families in the neighborhood also sold out and prepared to emigrate. There were 10 families in all and each started in covered wagons with two teams of four oxen. All being ready, we met at my Grandfather Abbott's place on April 11, 1852. As we took final leave of our home in Osage County, Missouri, the neighbors from miles around congregated to bid us farewell. The old

country minister was on hand to offer prayer to Almighty God for our safe deliverance in the promised land. At 10 o'clock in the morning we waved good-bye to all and the caravan moved westward.

The train had about 40 head of loose horses and cattle, and so it fell to my lot to help drive the loose stock and it suited me very much, for I was fond of horseback riding, and the reports from the drivers' whips and chimes from the cowbells were music to my boyish ears. Everybody enjoyed themselves at first; they would gather around the campfires in the evening, sing, tell stories and talk of the promised land. We crossed the western boundary of Missouri at a small trading post called West Point. Here we entered the Indian country. There was not a single permanent white settler between here in The Dalles, Oregon, except a few Mormons at Salt Lake. This vast extent of country was known as the "Great American Desert".

CAPTAIN IS SELECTED

Our train was increased by other emigrants joining us until we had 40 wagons and 60 able bodied men, all well armed. The men called a mass meeting to consider their protection and organized by electing my maternal grandfather, John Geabhart, Captain. He was a veteran of the war of 1812, and had fought Indians on the frontiers under General Jackson, and knew all the tactics of war. He was cool and considerate and a man of good judgment.

We then resumed our journey over the prairies and rolling hills covered with luxuriant grass. We met many bands of Indians. They were on the most friendly terms, the main objects of their visits being to trade dressed buffalo robes and beaded moccasins for loaves of bread. They were great marksmen, taking great pride in how accurately

they could shoot their bows and arrows. They were expert riders and had fat horses. Nothing happened worth mentioning until we reached the Little Blue River which now is Nebraska. One day we saw a man approaching on horseback as fast as his horse could carry him. He was much excited and told us that a band of Indians had attacked a train of emigrants a mile ahead of us and had stampeded the stock and crippled several women and children. Our captain called a halt and ordered a corral formed at once. A circle of all the wagons was made and the women and children were placed inside.

By this time the Indians, 300 strong, were approaching, waving their blankets and buffalo robes and yelling like coyotes. They were all smeared with war paint and well supplied with bows and arrows. The women began to scream and pray, but our captain soon silenced them. He drew the men in line and gave them explicit orders to keep cool and not to fire until he gave the word. On the red devils came. When they got within a few rods of us, our captain stepped out front of them and beckoned with his hand for them to move on. They were puzzled at the bold appearance of our men and proceeded without attack.

We moved on up the Little Blue River about a mile and came to the train that had been stampeded by the Indians. We assisted the emigrants in getting their wagons in shape and they traveled under the protection of our train.

DEATH OVERTAKES THE PARTY

Shortly after this our train was attacked by the dreaded disease, cholera. My father was the first victim. He lived only a few hours. We laid him to rest where the Old Emigrant road left the Little Blue River and passed on. The next day we arrived at Fort Kearney.

The banks of the Platte River were lined with tents and the cholera was raging at a fearful rate, people dying on every hand. One of our companions, a young man by the name of Shockley, died that night. We buried him the next morning and journeyed on for many miles up the Platte River. The cholera claimed able bodied men, women and children by the score. panic prevailed for several days. You could see men and women on their bended knees asking God to show mercy on their loved ones. The road was lined with dead cattle and horses. Many emigrants were compelled to lighten their loads. You could see all kinds of wagons from a prairie schooner to one horse buggies standing by the roadside. These frantic travelers cast away carpenter and blacksmith tools, bedding and wearing apparel and valuable books in their mad scramble to reach the Oregon country. We lost about 30 percent of our train. After getting out of the cholera belt we left the main road and moved up a creek about 10 miles for the purpose of resting our stock. Here was the home of the buffalo. You could see them in every direction and I can truthfully say that I saw 10,000 at one time. It afforded great sport for our men to kill them; besides it supplied us with an abundance of fresh meat. We resumed our journey and passed Fort Laramie without mishap. Game was very plentiful, including buffalo, black tailed deer, mountain sheep, etc.

At Green River the men had to fix up the wagon boxes to keep the water from coming in.

Near Salt Lake there was a Mormon who had established a trading post and our people bought many articles of him. He was anxious to exchange silver for gold, and by way of accommodation they let him have 50 or 60 dollars in gold. Two days later they discovered

that the silver they got from him was bogus. Four young men in the party returned to interview the trader and in two days they overtook us again and had the gold. A few days after this we had six or seven of our best horses stolen. Thefts of this kind were common enough through this section of the country in those days. Some laid it to the Indians, but others thought that the thieves were white men. When we arrived at the forks of the road leading to California, about one-fourth of our train left us, among them our highly esteemed Dr. Schnell, who located in San Francisco, and for many years was one of the leading physicians of that city.

OREGON COUNTRY IS REACHED

We finally arrived at the Snake River. Our stock was tired out, grass was short and many families were compelled to walk on account of the loss of teams.

On Snake River my mother was taken ill with the mountain fever, a disease that prevailed at that time among the emigrants. She died and was buried on the banks of the Powder River, a few miles below where Baker City now stands. My brothers and sisters and myself were left in the care of our grandparents.

The next day we reached the Grand Ronde valley. There was not a house in the valley at that time. A man by the name of Lot Whitcomb, from the Willamette Valley was stationed there in a large tent with a stock of provisions, selling them to the emigrants. We procured such articles as we needed and crossed the Blue Mountains and arrived at the Umatilla River, where Pendleton now stands. There was a half-breed Indian there butchering fat cattle and selling them to the emigrants, and our people pronounced it the best beef they ever tasted.

He tried to persuade our train to change course on account of our stock being so weak, and go to the Walla Walla country where, he said, the soil was good and the climate excellent.

He told us of Dr. Whitman raising wheat, potatoes and everything in abundance. We no doubt would have taken his advice had it not been that many of our train were sick and were anxious to reach civilization and procure medical aid. So we journeyed on. My father had started with two teams with four yoke of oxen to the team, and my maternal grandparents with one wagon of four yoke. By this time the stock had dwindled to two yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows. We had eight or ten head of loose cattle and one horse. We finally reached the John Day River, where there was a man stationed buying cattle.

My grandfather, John Geabhart, was confined to his bed with mountain sickness, so he sold the entire outfit with the understanding that the man would take fresh oxen and haul us to The Dalles.

There was one log house in The Dalles at that time. There were no steamboats on the Columbia River above the cascades. Everything was transported in large scows. We took passage on one, called the North America, of which the captain was named Barns. At night the scow would be pulled into shore and tied.

The first night out there was a young man delirious with fever, who walked into the river and drowned. The screams of his mother awakened the entire camp. The men procured torch lights and searched for the body until daylight. The next day my Grandfather Geabhart died. He was buried on the north side of the river a few miles above the falls.

At the falls there was a wooden railroad for portage purposes and the car was hauled by one old mule.

In a few more days we arrived in Portland, a little muddy village of 300 people. This was in October, 1852. W.S. Ladd was the principal merchant and I can say truthfully that he extended many acts of charity to the needy emigrants. There were three steamboats on the river at that time. The Lot Whitcomb, the Multnomah, and the Eagle. Above the falls at Oregon City were the Shoalwater, the Hoosier, and the Beaver.

Most of the emigrants of that year landed in Portland without money, but they found friends.

I will mention one friend in particular — A.J. Hembree of Yamhill County. He assisted many by locating them on government land free of charge and helped them in many ways. He was a prominent man in those days, representing Yamhill County in the Territorial Legislature of 1854 and being elected captain of a volunteer company at the outbreak of the Indian war in the fall of 1855. He was killed by the Yakima Indians near the present site of North Yakima April 10, 1856.

He was a personal friend of Judge Deady, Delazon Smith, Asahel Bush, David Logan, and many more leading men of the country. There were about as many Indians in the Willamette Valley at that time as there were whites. My paternal grandfather, Samuel Abbott, located a donation land claim in Lane County. he had been well to do in Missouri and when he left for the Oregon country, his outfit included several blooded brood mares. We arrived at the Dalles with about half the livestock we started with and there he arranged to have it wintered. The winter was severe, however, and before

spring all the stock had died. My grandfather passed that winter in Salem and in the spring of 1853 joined the fight against the Rogue River Indians, taking part in the battle of Table Rock and others.

Grandfather Abbott enjoyed the distinction of having been the first man to suggest John Whitaker as governor

of Oregon and worked for his successful nomination and election. He died in 1880 greatly respected by all who knew him.

The pioneers had to face many difficulties and endure untold hardships in building up an empire where those of later generations may live in peace and plenty.

A GALA DAY IN EARLY EUGENE

by Mary Skipworth Corum

July 11, 1899 was a gala day for Eugene. It was the day members of the National Editorial Association visited Eugene while touring the Western States and attending their National Convention in Portland. They travelled in two sections of a chartered train and Eugene was asked by the Association's trip manager to be host for a 7:00 o'clock breakfast.

The request came in late June and there wasn't much time to prepare for feeding at least six-hundred people. Those early Eugene residents had a lot of civic pride and, I might say, quite a bit of jealousy toward the other small, growing western Oregon towns, especially Roseburg, Albany, Corvallis and Salem.

The plan of the trip was for short stop-overs up the Willamette Valley after the official congress in Portland. They would leave Portland at 7:00 a.m. on July 9th, travel as far as Roseburg, where they would have supper and then proceed to Medford and Ashland. July 10th was to be spent in the southern cities and on the return trip to Eugene, where they would arrive at midnight, rest through the night, and have breakfast at 7:00 leaving Eugene at 9 a.m., having lunch at 11:30 in Salem and arriving back in Portland at 7:00 p.m.

Eugene had to work fast to be ready. But the thrill of entertaining and the publicity Eugene would get from the big newspapers was a challenge that no citizen of Eugene could pass up.

Planning for the breakfast was left almost completely in the hands of the ladies. The churches, lodges, society groups and clubs appointed ladies to the committee which would have responsibility for planning, ordering, preparing and serving the breakfast for at least 600 editors, reporters and wives.

One lady in Eugene was a natural-born organizer; Mrs. Prentice, wife of a prominent physician. She masterminded the whole breakfast. The first step undertaken by Mayor T.W. Harris, with Mrs. Prentice's help, was formation of an executive committee. They named heads of smaller committees to do decorations, music, grounds, reception and food. I remember my parents were head of the reception committee and my father, E.R. Skipworth, went with several members of that committee to Portland to accompany the editors to Eugene.

The first important problem was where to find a place large enough to seat that many people at tables. At first the city park was mentioned. At that time it had so many large fir trees that

there was little space for tables.

Finally someone suggested, "Why not have it on the Butte?" There was room at the top and they could enjoy the view. All agreed that was a fine idea, but the work it entailed was something to think about, because our old Butte was, in 1899, very different from the beautiful hill it is today. At that time there was absolutely not a tree on it except down by the river on the north slope. That side was heavily timbered with big fir and a few scraggly oaks along the upper rim on the north side. All the rest was hard, bare, rocky ground with deep cow tracks all over. It was completely surrounded by a rough, four-foot board fence. At that time over half the residents of Eugene kept a milk cow, and the Butte had for many years been Eugene's cow pasture. Early each morning a boy would go to each barn, let out the cow to join the herd, drive the herd to the butte and put them inside the fence. In the evening after school he collected the cows and drove them home. His herd usually had thirty or more cows in it when he passed our house and by the time he got to the Butte he had twice that many.

Along the lower east edge of the Butte Pearl Street was open, with a rough dirt road and a board sidewalk on both sides of the street extending up the low incline on Pearl for about three blocks across the railroad tracks. At the end of the sidewalk there was a big gate, making it possible to drive up a steep, rocky road to the top of the Butte. Pedestrians could get there by crossing the railroad track at the north end of Willamette Street and over the fence on a wooden stile.

In spite of the difficulties and hard work the committee decided that the Butte was the place to serve our guests. The next thing was to decide on the breakfast menu. We wanted it to be

representative of our western products. At that time the McKenzie river was teeming with large trout. But some people don't like fish, so they decided to serve fried trout, and ham for those who didn't like fish. The rest of the menu consisted of boiled potatoes, radishes, steamed prunes, applesauce, fresh raspberries and cream, hot rolls and honey, tea, coffee and milk. The trout were caught by Mr. Wilkins and one of the Seavey brothers the day before and kept on ice so that they were deliciously fresh. Members of the food committee got the tables up there and the men dug long trenches for the fires and fried the trout on the Butte.

Someone on the decorating committee had tied branches of ripe cherries on the lower limbs of the oak trees and the editors thought that was a clever way to advertise Oregon.

After breakfast there was a short time left before their train was to leave, and as the weather was perfect and there was no smoke or fog in those days, the view up the Willamette Valley and to the mountains in the distance provided entertainment for our guests.

Although their train was to leave at 9:00 a.m. and the carriages provided by nearly everybody that owned a horse and buggy or a team and carriage came to take them to the depot, they got a pretty good idea of western hospitality. During the short hour or two before the train came, Eugene people made themselves available to answer questions about the climate, crops and industries of Oregon. They really sold Oregon to those editors, for they realized that it was a "once in a lifetime" opportunity to advertise Oregon, and it surely worked, for Oregon began to grow. People with money came from southern, eastern and midwestern states because they liked the climate and the friendly hospitality of the Oregon people.

News of the gala event had spread to farms around and everybody that could get here was here to see the editors off. They came in farm wagons, hacks, carriages, buggies and on horseback. Eugene suddenly burst into a city. The band played, the old G.A.R.s marched down Willamette St., flags waved from every pole and building. Eugene had never seen such a crowd. After the train pulled out it was a good day for Eugene merchants.

A delegation had arrived from Salem to accompany the editors to their town for lunch. One of the Salem delegates was heard to remark that he only hoped Salem could entertain them as well as Eugene had. Many of the guests had been heard saying that Eugene was the friendliest town they visited on the entire trip.

It was truly a gala day for Eugene.

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

Membership entitles you to receive THE HISTORIAN, published three times a year by the Society. Members are eligible to participate in periodic public interest meetings and in projects to preserve and collect Lane County History.

I would like to become a member of the Lane County Historical Society in the classification checked:

- Participating Annual Member (includes subscription to Lane County Historian) \$ 5.00
- Sustaining Annual Member \$25.00
- Affiliate Member Oregon State Historical Society (includes subscription to Oregon Historical Quarterly) \$ 7.50
- Contribution to Society's Preservation Projects \$ _____

Your Lane County Historical Society is entirely sustained by membership dues and contributions which are fully tax deductible. Hence, we earnestly encourage present gifts and contributions, devises and bequests under wills and other forms of deferred giving such as by use of trusts and life insurance policies. For such deferred giving, your attorney should be consulted.

"I devise and bequeath to the Lane County Historical Society the sum of \$ _____ to be used by the Society for the accumulation and preservation of Lane County history." [Specific uses can be designated.]

"I devise and bequeath to the Lane County Historical Society my _____ [specific item or items.] _____"

LANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
89239 OLD COBURG ROAD
EUGENE, OREGON 97401

Non-Profit .
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 96
Eugene, Oregon



Skinner Butte ca. 1904 showing the Shelton-McMurphy House and the former observatory on top. Lane County Museum photo.