

SPRAGUE RIVER VALLEY - BLY 1974

# KLAMATH ECHOES



Sanctioned by

Klamath County Historical Society

NUMBER 12



The southwest side of Gearhart (Gayhart) Mountain as seen from the junction of Campbell Road and Highway 140, one mile east of Bly. The North and South Forks of Sprague River head on the slopes of Gearhart.

#### SOLITUDE

I think I shall climb to the woods today  
Where nobody's there to know;  
Only a hawk in the high, thin air  
And only the cattle below.

And no one shall hear my coming.  
And no one shall see me pass,  
Only the wind in the great ghost pines  
And the eyes in the still, green grass.

*Betty Cornwell*



The Mitchell monument some ten miles northeast of Bly on the Dairy Creek Road.

## DEDICATION

We dedicate this, the 12th issue of *Klamath Echoes*, to the memory of those innocent and uninvolved persons who perished here as the result of enemy action. The marker reads:

Dedicated  
to those  
who died here  
May 5, 1945  
BY  
Japanese  
Bomb Explosion

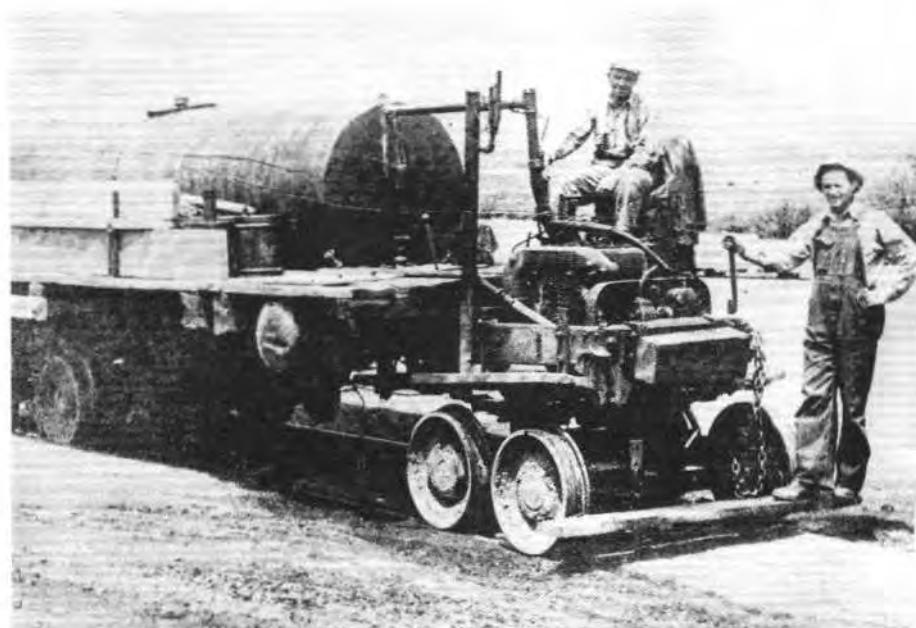
Elsie Mitchell	Age 26
Jay Gifford	Age 13
Edward Engen	Age 13
Dick Patzke	Age 14
Joan Patzke	Age 13
Sherman Shoemaker	Age 11

The only place  
on the  
American Continent  
where death resulted  
from enemy action  
during World War II

We deplore the inane stupidity of senseless vandals who have desecrated this marker. We suggest that some organization restore this marker to its former beautiful appearance.



The girls' dormitory at Yainax Sub Agency, with teachers and pupils, all unidentified.



The "Galloping Goose" used on the O.C. & E. railroad during construction days.



Written on the front of this picture was the caption "Crater Lake Lumber Company".  
On the back: "Pete Lorenz Sprague River logging", presumably on the Whiskey Creek timber sale.



The old Bly Cemetery several miles west of town, situated in the edge of the timber.  
Dark stones in foreground and others mark some 20 unknown graves.

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THE COVER: The Upper Sprague River Valley and rail fence along the Campbell Road. As in all past issues of *Klamath Echoes* our cover for this year was drawn by Stephanie Bonoto Hakanson.

## EDITOR'S PAGE

This, the 12th issue of *Klamath Echoes*, continues our historical encirclement of the Klamath Country. The Upper Sprague River Valley, running from east to west, and including in this order the communities of Bly, Old Garner, Beatty, Old Yainax Sub Agency and the town of Sprague River, is hereafter described historically as far as we have material.

From the beginning, 1873, for the next 55 years, to 1928, this territory was strictly range and stock country. Then following the approach of the Oregon, California & Eastern Railroad, and the advent of the lumbering industry, the latter has been in the ascendancy, although the cattle industry is still of major importance.

All of the original pioneers have long since passed on and only grandchildren for the most part were available for interviews and to point out locations, etc.

However, intensive research in old newspaper files and county history have enabled us to unearth stories actually left by the pioneers, which we have repeated, feeling that these stories are unknown to, and unavailable to most present day readers.

Only after setting down all of this information in chronological order has a true history developed. Stories such as that of Yainax, the first post offices, the first settlements, and the land grants for roads have resolved some of the mysteries of the various communities.

Old time pictures have been the most difficult item to obtain. Surely there are more in existence - but where? Probably after this book is printed some will be unearthed.

We wish to especially thank the following people: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Bell, Owen Watts, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Patzke, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Cornell, Olive Hall, Frank Obenchain, Jr., Dibbon Cook, Mrs. Mary L. Heidenreich, Mrs. Vernetia M. Hadley, Dibbon Cook and Mrs. Louella Anderson.

We wish especially to thank the *Herald and News* newspaper for the continued use of their files of the *Republican*, *Evening Herald* and *Klamath News*.



Crane Mills  
Bly, Ore.

Crane Mills at Bly with part of the Upper Sprague River Valley in background.  
Courtesy Riley Harris

# PRE-SETTLEMENT

Upper Sprague River Valley with its communities of Old Yainax, Sprague River, Beatty and Bly, is the subject of the 1974, or 12th issue of Klamath Echoes.

This valley is enriched with expansive meadows, watered by the North and South Forks of Sprague River, Sycan River and numerous creeks, the largest perhaps being Fishhole.

The Indian name for Sprague River was *Plai*, or *Plaikni Koke*. *Koke* was the general word for river, and *Plai* indicated the stream came from the upper or higher country. The two forks of Sprague River head on the slopes of Gearhart Mountain sitting astride the north-south line between Klamath and Lake Counties.

For untold centuries the Upper Sprague River Valley was the home of several wandering bands of Snake Indians. Then came the white man with his herds of cattle, horses, mules and sheep and ever increasing lust for more of the Indian's land. Lastly, beginning in the 1920's, the lumber industry arrived and with it railroads, improved highways and farm roads.

Who the first white men were to see or enter the Upper Sprague River Valley is unknown. However, documented history records many near misses by exploring and trapping parties, some of whose members probably did enter the valley, but if so it is unknown. Following is a brief chronology of some of these parties:

The Hudson's Bay Company party led by Finan McDonald and Thomas McKay who penetrated south from the Columbia River in the early fall of 1826, as far as the neighborhood of present day Chiloquin on Williamson River where Sprague River unites with the former.

The Hudson's Bay Company Fur Brigade of Peter Skene Ogden, who late in 1826 also traveled south from the Columbia River to arrive near present Chiloquin on December 6th (5th). He continued

southward into the main Klamath Basin, across the mountains, via the Klamath River Canyon, to again return in early spring and leave the vicinity southward from Tule Lake early in May, 1827. Undoubtedly some of his trappers explored or trapped up Sprague River.

Sixteen years later, Captain John C. Fremont with his exploring expedition passed eastward across Klamath Marsh to Summer Lake in December, 1843.

A William T. Hamilton claims to have camped on some unknown stream that flowed into Klamath Lake during the winter of 1843-44. He was supposed to have been a member of a party of 43 trappers led by Old Bill Williams, the Mountain Man. If so, he would have been near Klamath Lake when Fremont passed through only a few miles to the north. This story was first printed in 1905. In 1960 it was printed by the Oklahoma Press under the title, "My Sixty Years On the Plains, Trapping, Trading and Indian Fighting." This portion of the story smacks too much of the Ned Buntline type of history according to this writer's opinion, and is just another "yarn", not to be considered as authentic Klamath Country history.

During early May of 1846, Capt. John C. Fremont, with Kit Carson as guide, once more entered the Klamath Country to circle Upper Klamath Lake, entering and leaving the basin via Tule Lake. During his stay here he had a battle with the Indians on Williamson River, near the present U.S. Highway 97 crossing.

Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon, according to his *Pocket Diary* of 1854, traveled up the Deschutes River from the Warm Springs Indian Reservation into the Klamath Country in mid-August of that year. How long he remained or where he went is unknown at present.

Lt. R.S. Williamson, who was attached to the Pacific Railroad party, accompanied by Lt. Phillip H. Sheridan, traveled through the Klamath Country from south to north in 1855, by a route approximating present U.S. Highway 97.

G.H. Abbott, Indian Agent for Oregon, paid a visit to the Klamath Country, probably in 1857, when it is told he concluded treaties with the Klamaths and Modocs. If so, he may have traveled up Sprague River as far as Council Butte. This, however, is highly speculative.

According to the *History of Central Oregon*, 1905, " \* \* \* considerable travel to the John Day country mines crossed Sprague River Valley toward Sycan and Silver Lake in both 1861 and 1862.

There is documented evidence that a party of miners traveling from Shasta Valley, via Sheep Rock, to Canyon City under the leadership of John W. King passed across Sprague River, then known as Martin's River, in the spring of 1863 (*Yreka Union*, April 13, 1864).

In 1864 a General R.M. Martin trailed some 300 head of cattle and seven wagons from Shasta Valley to Canyon City and beyond. He left Table Rock May 19th, arriving at Canyon City July 1st, crossing "Martin's River", (now Sprague River) enroute. One wonders if "Martin's River" was named for this man on this or some previously unrecorded trip--?

Shortly thereafter Col. C.S. Drew started on an expedition from Fort Klamath to the Owyhee River country near the Idaho line. The *Sacramento Daily Union* of July 6, 1864 in part records this trip: "A letter from Fort Klamath, dated June 28th says: An expedition under Col. Drew were exploring a route to Owyhee, and started from that place that morning. The expedition numbers from 80 to 100 men.

"Another letter dated June 30th, 28 miles from the fort, says: W.J. Allen, just arrived, reports John Richardson's train from Shasta Valley, numbering 23 men, 8 or 10 women and 7 wagons, was attacked by Indians near Silver Lake, 85 miles from here. Lt. Davis from Fort Creek, with 10 men, fell in with them just before the attack. The fight ensued.

Two citizens and one soldier were wounded. After the fight, Lt. Davis with his party returned forty miles to Allen's camp. Col. Drew sent a guard and ambulance after the wounded. Considerable trouble is anticipated."

Next, as previously printed in *Klamath Echoes* No. 9 for 1971, "Col. Drew opened up a new line of travel from Fort Klamath, via Sprague River, Drew's Valley (named for Col. Drew) and around the northern end of Goose Lake to the Applegate Trail which crossed over the Warner Mountains at Fandango Pass. He was at the time conducting a train of seven wagons (Richardson's) from Shasta Valley who were headed for the John Day mines. The entire group made its way across Southeastern Oregon south of Steen's Mountain to Ft. Boise, where the Oregon Trail was intercepted. Drew and his men then retraced their steps but by-passed their route through Fandango Pass to reach their outward bound route at the north end of Goose Lake (near present Lakeview, Oregon). On rejoining their old trail, they found it traveled by the 1864 emigrants bound for Rogue River Valley. Thus another by-pass of the Applegate Trail was inaugurated."

The following is from the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, March, 1959: "The Oregon Central Military Road Company was organized in Eugene in April, 1864 for the purpose of constructing a road southeast from Eugene by way of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River and the most feasible pass in the Cascade Mountains near Diamond Peak, and from there to the eastern boundary of Oregon near the southeastern corner of the state. The road was to be suitable for pack trains, wagons and other conveyances, and for military transportation. If deemed necessary by the incorporators, a railroad could be constructed along the same route.

"Part of the route of the military road up the canyon of the Middle Fork of the Willamette had been surveyed in 1864 and construction work was in progress by June, 1865.

"Byron J. Pengra, superintendent of construction on the Oregon Central Mili-

tary Road, \* \* \* B.J. Pengra, the chief of the surveying party, \* \* \*

Lt. John M. McCall was in charge of the military escort of 48 men, 19 citizens and 75 pack horses which left Eugene on July 17, 1865. Sprague River (written by that name in McCall's journal while encamped at Spring Creek on August 7th) was reached the next day, August 8th. Camp was established probably at Council Butte on the 9th, where Pengra signed a treaty with Pelina (Paulina --- Editor) on the 13th. On the 20th the escort was divided, McCall with Pengra following up the North Fork of Sprague River and the Sycan River toward Silver Lake, Summer Lake and onward to Alvord east of Steen's Mountain. Surveyor Odell with Capt. Kelly proceeded along Drew's return route of the year before, easterly up the South Fork of Sprague River and one of its tributaries, Ish Tish Creek.

On his return from Steen's Mountain, McCall reached present Round Grove on State Highway 140 east of Bly on September 7th. After laying over one day they continued westward, finding a new, less rocky, road than the old Drew route across Devil's Garden, crossing the South Fork of Sprague River one mile above the present Sprague River Recreation area camp ground.

On September 11th, McCall's party left Sprague River after crossing the Sycan River, and took a new route to the northwest, toward Klamath Marsh that later approximated the Oregon Central Military Road. From Klamath Marsh, McCall made his way to Fort Klamath, arriving there September 17th.

During the years of 1864 and 1865 traffic became so heavy over the various routes through Sprague River Valley that it would become monotonous to repeat the numerous comings and goings of the many wayfarers.

Sprague River Valley as it appeared in 1873 is well described by Samuel A. Clarke in his Chapter 17, "Yainax", written while covering the Modoc War as correspondent for the *New York Times*. Clark was a newspaper man, poet, business man and historian. (See Klamath County Museum Research Paper No. 2, by B.K. Swartz, Jr.)

\* \* \* \* Not many days since I mounted a tough Indian pony early one morning and started for Yainax. Our road lay at first over graceful ridges peopled with lordly pines and soon came down to the banks of Williamson River which we crossed where the valley was narrow and surmounted another pine clad ridge that formed a narrow divide between it and the waters of Sprague River. Then for miles, at a slow pace, we traversed a rocky canyon by a rough Indian trail, past bluffs at one place where the cliff is pierced by great, hollow caves, high up, and under the shadow of it in one place the hanging wall made a cavernous shelter whose smoke stained roof told that it had been for all known time an Indian camping place. All along this canyon we went past rocks piled up and made into walls and I learned that these were fortifications, antecedents of those made by the Modocs in their defense of the stronghold in the lava beds. At this place the rapids and eddies of the river made an eligible site for a fishery, and in old times the Klamaths would be camped on the north side pursuing their vocation and the hostile Snakes would creep down through the rocks and timbers on the south and attack them. These walls and redoubts were put there many years ago to serve the purpose of defense and many a savage battle scene must have been enacted there since those rocks were piled. There has been no one to pull them down and time moves them very slowly; they will stand there as long as the generations of the Klamaths last to point to the actions of the past, and today Klamaths and Snakes dwell together on the same reserve and pass them by in peace.

"Farther up Sprague River, and fair meadows encamp upon its borders and their arms reach around the hill points and clasp the pine groves in a green embrace. Here and there springs of cold clear water bubble up out of the hillsides and flow off to make more vivid the emerald of the meads they wander through. We come to a higher ridge that reaches back from shore to mountain, named 'Mahogany' for it is covered with the mountain mahogany so much used for

fancy work in California, a dwarfed and scraggly but valuable wood, nearly as dense as ebony. Beyond that lies the Yainax portion of the Sprague River valley, broadened and beautiful in comparison with any region we have yet seen in all Modoc and Klamath land. Opposite us, across the river to the south, is a saddle shaped mountain, the highest portion of the divide between Great Klamath Lake and Sprague River on the north and Lost River and the cluster of lakes to the south, also the divide between the country heretofore occupied by Modocs and Klamaths. This mountain is viewed with reverence and stands on the boundary line as one of the favorite resorts of the Supreme Being to whom those who speak the Modoc language offer prayers. It is the belief of all of them that if any man shall go to that summit and do some sacriligious or defiling act that he will be stricken dead.

"Before us in the distance the valley is much wider and on its surface several buttes, independent mountains that stand by themselves disconnected. One of them we reach first is crested with volcanic ledges that jut out like huge excrescences from some giant head; beyond that again we have toward the river another such, and then Yainax is a mountain that seems to have risen amid the valley meadows and stands there a monument to tell legends of the past, of the time when no Indian farms were fenced in at its base and before John Littlejohn, the Yahooskin, had built his cabin on the western slope. We stop at the agency buildings by the lukewarm spring and watch Yainax from a distance and while the sun is setting in the clouded west we listen to the legend of the past.

"The word Yainax means 'The Mountain.' All around are mountains as far as eye can see; this is but a valley butte, a mere hill that lends its clearcut ridge to be a foreground to snowy ranges a hundred miles away, but in the past there were associations that made Yainax *the* historic mountain of all the lake region. Here, in this valley around the base of Yainax was a great meeting place of many tribes and the rugged butte has often

looked down upon great gatherings held in times when peace dwelt all along the eastern border of the Cascade range. From the Columbia River southward to the head waters of the Sacramento, the tribes seem to generally have maintained peaceful relations. Sometimes the Snakes were friendly also but the Klamaths and Modocs raided into the Pitt River and the Shasta and Rogue River country and sometimes warred on the Snakes and made captives that were traded off, many of them, to northern tribes, and they received from them many things in exchange of civilized manufacture that had not yet found their way into the lake regions. The tribes met under the shadows of Yainax to barter and trade and chase the hours away in the recital of their deeds and to exhibit the scalps and spoils taken on the war path. The Warm Springs Indians came down to the lake country to buy slaves, to purchase skins and furs and trade horses. The Pitt Rivers were the armorers of those days and such bows and arrows as they made of yew and sinew no English bow ever rivalled, not even those wielded by bold Robin Hood and his merry archer men. Modocs came and Snakes and Klamaths were there and Indians came from the Columbia River with all the airs of experienced foreign traders. The glory of Yainax is gone, but its legends are preserved in Indian annals.

"Gambling and feasting are events that invariably accompany an aboriginal gathering. They have a passion for games of chance that equals the infatuation of more civilized men. The manipulation of a small piece of hardwood was a frequent subject of betting. One performer takes the stick in hand, chants the while a sing-song tone in which the circle joins, and throws it from hand to hand with great dexterity. The better watches the game until both hands are held up to let him choose. At that instant the chant ceases and the gambler indicates which hand holds the wood and opens either to show that he has lost or won. Then the chant recommences with a derisive burst at the expense of the loser and the little joker flies again from hand to hand. The game

is more honest than some modern ones the Indians have learned since they have got an insight into the history of the Kings but it was one some were peculiarly adept at and throve upon as successfully as enlightened congressmen do on poker and faro.

"At Yainax they met and gambled with such ardor that it was nothing wonderful if some fervent devotee was reduced to a breech clout and went home footsore. Horses were freely lost and won and when the excitement of the game grew high it might be that a favorite slave or captive was put up as a stake to win all back or leave him love-lorn at her loss as well as otherwise impecunious. They were like other gamblers and the drum beat and chant would be heard until morning sometimes. Captain Jack states that his boy had been gambling all night before the battle of November 28 on Lost River. Some Modocs of old Sconchis' band, at Yainax, had been over to Lost River on the gambling bout and made a night of it.

"And at Yainax in the olden times they held great dances and made great medicine. At night fires would gleam on the sides of the butte and light up the valley at its base. Other fires would glow in the center of the circling dancers and their gay trappings would seem barbaric and savage beyond description. Deer skin cloaks trimmed with quills and beads, war plumes waving from fur head pieces and faces made hideous with all the elaboration of paint. Sometimes one tribe would dance and the rest look on, and there would be one grand carnival when all would join and make the valley of Yainax echo to the chorus of a thousand chanting voices and the thousands of stamping feet, and medicine drums would make a dinning accompaniment to the grand performance. At these united dances willows would be planted to encircle half an acre and the dance would go on within. In the center the chief warriors mimicked the scenes of the war path, crept upon the victim, or lay in ambush to hurl swift arrows and then use the scalping knife. Other warriors occupied the nearer circle, old men and boys be-

yond and the women and children watched the performance from without. All were circling and dancing with might and main and the scene was wild and savage beyond description. Here were toilets, too, that displayed all the ability of the Indians for elaboration and ornament. On the outside of the great circle the chiefs occupied elevated booths where they superintended the revels and occasionally made speeches. When a chief would rise to speak the great clamour would hush and all would listen while he poured forth the similes and figurative passages that make Indian oratory so eloquent and forcible, and when he would close, a great yell of approbation would rise on the evening air and the dances would go on with renewed vigor.

"And there was much matchmaking going on at Yainax during the times that these great gatherings were being held. Coy damsels and young warriors met there for the first time and ogled each other through ever so many coats of paint, and belles were introduced to society at their first season with as much solicitude as mammas are afflicted with elsewhere. The tribes that met at Yainax intermarried frequently and it was a great stroke of policy for the families of chiefs to form such alliances as would strengthen the family pride and increase its prestige. Many a romance of Indian story has Yainax witnessed and if the secrets that are treasured and hid in its safe breast were but at my hand to write I could indite a more romantic Indian history than has been written since the days of the Incas.

At times too, ill blood would be aroused at Yainax. Gambling quarrels sometimes arose, for barbarous nations are no better than the rest of us and there have been instances where the differences that arose there had to be submitted to the arbitrament of war, settled by the bow and arrow and the scalping knife. These quarrels were half the time, no doubt, caused by some woman, for there never yet was much trouble in this world without a woman at the bottom of it.

"Such was Yainax in the olden time and I have broken off the thread of my narrative for awhile to describe the place, rich with historic associations to which the old Chief Sconchis wished to win his erring tribe."



Yainax Sub Agency, looking west: Left, Matron's house, Yainax school, office and barn. Right, in foreground, the jail which served Spink as his first store and post

## YAINAX

As early as 1849 certain citizens of the Willamette Valley of Oregon proposed to treat with the Indians and purchase lands from them in the Klamath Country. Therefore during the ensuing years many complaints were raised against the "thieving propensities" of the Klamath Country Indians. Finally in August, 1854, Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon made his visit, previously mentioned, into the Klamath Country. He departed feeling "that the Agent for the Southeastern District of Oregon should reside in the vicinity of Klamath Lake, and that should the reservation he envisaged come into being, a cavalry detachment should be posted there."

Each year brought new requests and efforts to put some such plan into effect. At last definite plans to establish a military base in this area were announced. However, instead of building a post along the Applegate Trail emigrant route, it was erected in Wood River Valley, north of Upper Klamath Lake, where Fort Klamath was established in the fall of 1863.

Following the founding of Fort Klamath it was nearly a year, on October 14, 1864 in fact, before a treaty was signed between J.W. P. Huntington, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon, and the Klamath, Modoc and Yahooskin Snake Indians. As a result these tribes agreed to relinquish their claims to a large portion of Southeastern Oregon and some of Northern California, and enter upon a much smaller reservation for which act the U.S. Government would furnish them certain supplies and services. In addition certain boundaries were supposedly agreed upon as described to both parties through interpreters, one of whom was Lindsay Applegate. Probably due to a great extent to these interpretations many misunderstandings and disputes arose in later years, and were not settled until well into the 1900's and often times not satisfactorily even then.

The final terms of the 1864 Treaty "reached the Interior Department on February 24, 1865, too late for Senate



office, the new girls' dormitory which later became the Day school.

action during the winter session. The treaty, along with verbal amendments of July 2, 1866—supposedly agreed to by the Indians over Captain Jack's objections—was not ratified until December, 1869. Not until February 17, 1870 was the treaty formally proclaimed by Washington. And, incredibly, not until March 14, 1871—more than six and a half years after the Council Grove pow wow—did President U.S. Grant, by Executive Order, reserve the 768,000-acre tract for the treaty Indians \* \* \*

In the meantime, the Indians asked that Lindsay Applegate, interpreter at the treaty negotiations, be appointed their agent, which appointment was not made until June 28, 1865, but it was October before instructions and funds arrived when Lindsay Applegate and son O.C. (Oliver) set out for Fort Klamath, the temporary headquarters where they arrived later that month. However, the treaty not yet being ratified, but little could be done. They left, to return to their home in the Rogue River Valley, on December 31st, and it was spring before they were ready to return to the Reservation to assume their duties.

Leaving Ashland about May 1st, with a four-yoke ox-team and wagonload of supplies—including seeds, a breaking

plow, axes, wedges and other tools—the Applegate party arrived at the north end of the Upper Klamath Lake on May 12, 1866. An agency was then established at nearby Kowasta, where it remained until the spring of 1868. It was then transferred to its permanent site on Agency Creek near its junction with Crooked Creek.

Due to dissension among the various Indian tribes on the newly established reservation, the defection of the Modocs under Capt. Jack, and for the benefit of the many Indians residing in the Valley of Upper Sprague River, a sub-agency was established at Yainax in 1869.

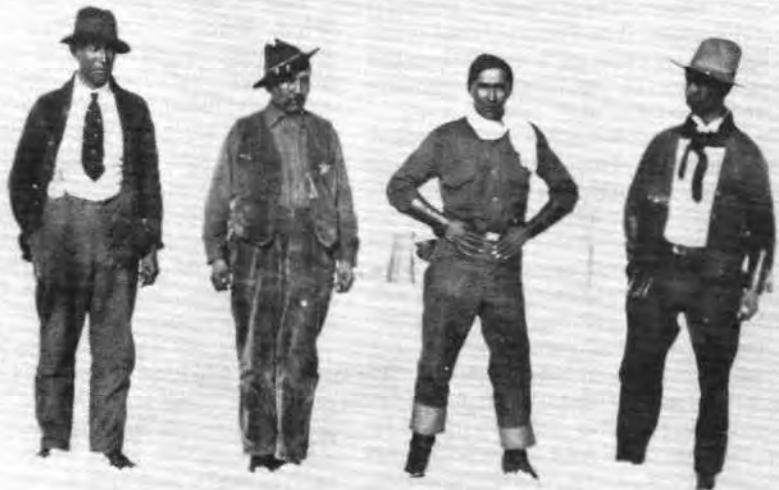
"To keep the peace, Superintendent A.B. Meacham drew a boundary between the Snakes and the Klamaths, and appointed the commissary at Yainax, Ivan D. Applegate, in charge of the Snakes and the remaining Modocs."

Whether the above events took place earlier in 1869, or at the time of Meacham's visit, is unknown. We do know that, according to his book *Wigwam and Warpath*, he and his party probably arrived at "Yai-nax" about mid-November, where he recorded: "A lone hut marks the spot, \* \* \* The next morning's sun finds a busy camp; every able-bodied man is ordered to work; trees are falling, axes plying, and log cabins rise in rows, and



Yainax post office in the Wolford and Wann store at the Yainax Sub Agency before 1923.

Courtesy Ester Wilson



Erskine Beal, Indian Policeman; Watson Tupper Duffy, Indian Policeman; Jasper Turner Jackson and John George Smith.

Courtesy Dibbon Cook

the new home of the Snake Indians begins to appear to the eye a real, tangible thing.

"Six days pass, and the smokes from thirteen Indian houses join in procession and move off eastward, borne by the breeze that sings and sighs, or howls in anger among the trees around Yainax. \* \* \*

Ivan Applegate, the newly appointed Sub-Agent, gives a slightly different version of the founding which is probably the correct one. In a letter (National Archives Microfilm) to a brother, dated Klamath Agency, Ag. December 15, 1869 he in part wrote: "I am back again Came in a week ago - built 5 houses at YaiNax, left ----- Reub and Alex McKay in charge, while I go with the Supt as far as Ashland. \* \* \*

In writing up the biography of Ivan Applegate, the *History of Klamath County*, by Rachael Applegate Good in 1941, in part states: " \* \* \* Captain Applegate returned to his occupation as a stockman, and with his brother, Lucien, with whom he was associated, removed to the Swan Lake Valley in the Klamath country, establishing their homes and business there in 1869. In the same year, Captain I.D. Applegate became assistant to A.B. Meacham, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Oregon, and with him negotiated a satisfactory peace with some of the bands of Paiute Indians who had terrorized Northeastern Oregon for many years, and conducted Chief Ocheho, one of the best known of the Paiute war chiefs, with his band, to the Yainax sub agency on the Klamath Reservation, a station which Captain Applegate had established and where, until near the time of the Modoc outbreak, he conducted the affairs of the Sprague River Klamaths, Paiutes, and a large division of the Modoc tribe under the loyal Chief Schonchin. \* \* \*

Although the office of Indian Affairs once wrote on May 10, 1940: "The first school established on the Klamath Reservation was at Yainax in 1865," the statement is quite obviously a mistake. We have now shown the sub-agency was not established until late 1869, and fol-

lowing information indicates the probable date of a school being founded was sometime in late 1871.

The *History of Klamath County* further informs us that under date of June 8, 1871, Ivan D. Applegate, Commissary in Charge at Yainax Sub-agency, wrote to A.B. Meacham, in response to an inquiry as to how much "subsistence" would be required by his post during the year:

"I have estimated for subsisting at least a portion of the school children and those Indians assisting in carrying on the schools. My plan would be, first to establish some order and discipline among the young Indians, to have them spend a portion of each day reciting English language, practicing before the blackboard, using the 'picture charts'; then a certain time at work, the girls in making up garments, knitting, etc. All the houses can be built with little cost and kept in repair, furnished with wood, etc., by the scholars. I think the school house ought to be quite large and well ventilated, and during the winter season, as the children advance, the older Indians should be required to attend a certain number of days each week. By this plan I would hope not only to educate the rising generation, but, by a very gradual process, greatly to improve the present pitiable condition of the parents. In this connection I would say that one year ago I selected four Indian boys and kept them about the Agency in order to teach them our language, teach them the use and value of domestic animals, tools, etc.: this project has been crowned with the most flattering results. All the boys understand and speak our language very well, milk the cows, drive teams, cut wood, and in fact have a very correct idea about all kinds of work, and will be of great value as assistants in the school." [And no doubt would be of great assistance to the Sub-agent, himself-Editor.]

The above mentioned communication from the Indian office also stated that the Yainax Boarding School opened in 1882 with 31 pupils; and that the attendance increased until in 1897, for instance, when there were 110 pupils enrolled.

*Ninety Years of Klamath Schools* records that Laura Alice Alvord taught there in the '80's later marrying Judge Levi F. Willets of Klamath Falls.

In the reservation schools, the children were fed, clothed, schooled, and trained in manual arts for ten months of each year without cost to their parents. Holidays were observed with progress, parties, or picnics, as the season suggested; Christmas was always a big occasion, with a tree and gifts for everyone. The course of instruction corresponded to about the first six grades of our public schools; promising pupils were sent to more advanced government boarding schools, such as those at Chemawa, Phoenix and Carlisle. Attendance at the reservation boarding schools was compulsory, and those pupils who were not voluntarily brought in by their parents the first of September were "rounded up" by Indian policemen. Subsequently the policy of the department changed, and during the period from 1908 to 1910 five day schools (the term used to indicate they were not boarding schools) were opened in Sprague River Valley:

Day School No. 1, was probably that located at Yainax after the boarding school ceased to operate.

Day School No. 2, was located exactly two miles due west of present Beatty, but was later moved to Beatty at a cost to the county of about \$1,500. It was then located about one fourth mile due north of the Beatty Store. It was later sold to Frank Schmidt. It was not known as a day school after being moved to Beatty.

Day School No. 3, was located four miles due north of Beatty at Piute Camp. It may have run up to the 1932-34 period.

Yainax Boarding School closed in 1907, but the Yainax Day School is remembered by Mrs. Anne Horton who finished the term for a teacher who resigned Christmas, 1922. The Crume family lived in half the building. Mrs. Horton thinks she was the last teacher, as children went to Beatty after that. By 1928 even the day schools were a thing of the past and the Indians now, like other citizens, sent their children to the public schools.

Regarding Yainax, the *History of Central Oregon*, 1905, tells us that "Ivan Applegate was in charge of this sub-agency until the summer of 1871. With one white assistant he built a few log buildings, organized an Indian police force, fenced some land and raised a crop of grain the summer of 1870, with the aid of the Indians. During the summer of 1871 about twenty log cabins were erected at the sub-agency for the Indians, and other improvements were made. O.C. Applegate then took charge."

In a recent (1971) book, *Modoc War* by Erwin F. Thompson, the following is recorded; "Ivan and his brother, Oliver, had assisted their father, Lindsay Applegate, when he was agent for the reservation. Ivan knew the Indians and their problems well and, possessing the characteristic abilities of his prominent family, proved to be a capable administrator of the eastern Indians. Acting almost as an independent agent, he was to maintain his special position at Yainax through the administrations of Knapp, John Meacham, High, and Dyar (All Indian Agents at Klamath Agency—Editor). Alfred Meacham (A.B.), assuming the Modocs would trust Ivan, hoped this reorganization would encourage Captain Jack to return to the reservation. But Jack was far too disenchanted to live again near the Klamaths.

"A few writers have mistakenly concluded that Oliver Applegate was the special commissary in charge at Yainax. Oliver did help the various agents from time to time and at the outbreak of the war was in charge of the Modocs on the reservation. Ivan Applegate lost Captain Jack's favor in 1871 when he caused a warrant to be issued for Jack's arrest in connection with the killing of a medicine man."

There remains one more source of information, the U.S. Postal records, which are probably the most authentic of any. These records show that Ivan Applegate was appointed postmaster of Yainax on December 11, 1871, and remained in that position until September 17, 1873, when succeeded by James Harer. Therefore, it would seem that Ivan

Applegate did not depart from Yainax officially at least, until this latter date. We do know, however, that during the Modoc War, he was away from his post at Yainax a great deal and may have been replaced at times by an acting postmaster.

## Yainax Post Office

When Fort Klamath was established in 1863, and the treaty with the Indians signed in 1864, the Klamath Country lay in Wasco County. Then on December 18, 1865 most of present day Lake and Klamath Counties was attached to Jackson County. Thereafter the Klamath Country began to settle with Klamath Agency established in 1866, Linkville in 1867 and Yainax Sub-agency in 1869. By 1871 mail delivery routes as far east as Goose Lake and Surprise Valleys were being requested.

On December 11, 1871 three post offices in present Klamath County were authorized, Linkville, Langell's Valley and "Yanax." Ivan D. Applegate was appointed postmaster of "Yanax." The name "Yanax" was changed to "Yainax" on August 29, 1872.

Although the above three post offices were authorized, no mail route was established until July 1, 1872. At that time a mail route was laid out from Linkville through Alkali (Yonna) Valley, and the later Hildebrand country, over the summit just west of Round Mountain, and down the north slope on much the same route as that followed by the present day Oregon, California & Eastern Railroad.

Then about the 1880 period, while the Yainax post office was closed for nearly 14 years, the mail seems to have been rerouted over Bly Mountain approximating a route closely followed by present State Highway 140.

Several changes seem to have taken place by January 31, 1883 when the Bly post office came into existence at locations in what is now the present town.

The mail route was changed to pass through Bonanza, Keno Springs and Royston, to enter Bly from the southwest, perhaps the shortest of the three routes.

Yainax post office was re-established in 1890 but was served at different times by mail routes from both Bonanza and Dairy until closed finally on September 14, 1923.

Ivan Applegate was succeeded by James Harer on December 17, 1873 as the postmaster at Yainax, who in turn was followed by Oliver C. Applegate on December 11, 1876, Oliver was followed by Enoch Loper on January 22, 1877 who remained in office but five months before James H. Clark took over on June 26, 1877.

Yainax post office was discontinued sometime during Clark's term of office but exactly when is unknown. It is known however, that James H. Clark became postmaster at Bly on August 25, 1881. Therefore, the Yainax office would have probably been closed some time prior to that date. It was not until April 16, 1894 that Yainax post office was re-established, and of course by that time it was located in Klamath County, which was created out of Lake on October 17, 1882. Frank Terry was the new postmaster.

Later that same year, on November 5, 1894 Eugene S. Clark became postmaster to be succeeded by W.S. Johnson on June 3, 1897; Caleb W. Chevington July 28, 1897; Frederick Snyder April 17, 1902; and Lida F. Williams October 25, 1902; who continued as postmaster until July 18, 1905 when the office was again discontinued.

Yainax post office was re-established November 9, 1905 with Lida F. Williams re-appointed as postmaster. The office was discontinued a third time on November 30, 1907. Then on July 16, 1910 it was re-established with B.E. Wolford as postmaster, who remained in that position until September 14, 1923 when the office at Yainax was discontinued a fourth and last time. This time however, it was transferred a few miles away to the new railroad and lumbering town of Sprague River.

## Lumbering Around Yainax

The lumbering history of the Yainax vicinity is quite meagre. Most that we

know is derived from W.E. Lamm's  
*Lumbering in Klamath, 1944*

The second, or 1870 sawmill built at Fort Klamath was "moved to Yainax in 1893, where it operated until 1899, when it burned." The exact location of this sawmill is unknown. However, according to Dibbon Cook, there was once evidence of a sawdust pile near the old Jackson Cemetery on the hill back of Yainax.

Exclusive of the sawmill at Klamath Agency, "two other steam driven circular mills were provided by the Government for the use of the Indians. One was built in 1905, some miles from Beatty on the old Klamath Falls road, then moved in 1910 to the 'Piute Camp' and again in 1924 to Five Mile Creek where it operated until 1929." The first location of this mill was on present State Highway 140 about three miles southwest of the junction of the Sprague River-Chiloquin paved road and 140. Another was constructed in 1914 at Trout Creek [south of the old Skeen Ranch--Editor] and operated until 1920, when it burned. Even though provided with the mills, sawyers, tools, supplies and repairs, the Indians had little interest in sawing their own timber, especially after 1918, when private concerns started buying Reservation timber heavily, which provided them with substantial funds."

One other early day sawmill may have furnished limited amounts of lumber to Yainax and vicinity, the old Colahan mill at the summit of Bly Mountain. The oldest location of this mill seems to have been near the Colahan Station just north over the summit about one half mile. Another location of this mill is about two miles south of the summit and to the west of the present highway. A small reservoir still marks the location.

## The Time Of My Life

by Claudia Lorenz

[This paper, printed by the Klamath County Museum as *Research Paper No. 4* tells of Mrs. Lorenz's memories while a small girl living at Yainax 'Sub-agency around the 1903-1910 period. It was published January 14, 1969. Mrs. Lorenz was the daughter of Robert and Alice Spink.]

Excerpts from the Chapter on Yainax, in five parts, pages 27 to 47 inclusive, follow:

"Part 1. When we first moved to Yainax, and while the store building and our living quarters were being constructed father opened his store and carried on



Old Yainax, looking west on the main street or road, whichever. Left to right: Doctor's house, Matron's house, Yainax School, office and barn. Dark building in right foreground, the jail, at one time Spink's first store and at another the home of Dibbon Cook.

Courtesy Ester Wilson

business in the government jail. We lived in a large upstairs room of the old boarding school building. This was convenient as mother was employed at the school for a time as teacher and the little boy's matron. Later we transferred to a two family government house which we shared with a young couple [Hamilton—Editor], the Industrial teacher and his wife.\*\*\*

"Part 2. Yainax was stretched out along the main thoroughfare from Klamath Agency. A passage of bottomless mud in winter and a repletion of dust in summer, from one rounding hillock across a half mile depression covered by sagebrush, greasewood and scrub pine, to another. The hillocks nestled against higher rocky hills surmounted by an ascending forest. The main buildings, office and most of the dwellings were on the upper or forest side of the road. A residence or two, the barns, jail and later the new day school were on the lower or field side. Water was furnished from wells on top of each of the two hills and a large spring down by the barn. The settlement had a stark appearance as it faced barren Yainax Butte, overlooking gray sagebrush flats beyond the fields. A small clover lawn graced the front of the school buildings with a flag pole in the center, around which the school children played. The only time that there was a general semblance of softness and beauty was when the grain and hay fields were growing and ripening.

"On the first day of school, in early September of 1901, Father opened his new venture in a small building across the main road from the boarding school. It had been built and used as a jail but since it was empty most of the time the government rented it to him as a temporary accommodation for a store until the permanent building being erected on the opposite hillock, entering town from the west was completed.

"On opening day the small building was crowded with as much stock as it could hold. It consisted of flour, sugar, bacon, beans, lard, some canned goods, dried fruit, crackers, yard goods, bright calicos, outing flannel for underwear,

muslin, hair ribbons, cheep childrens' shoes, bright silk bandana scarfs for women, neck-kerchiefs for buckaroos, hard candy, gum drops, a couple of grab bags, a few overalls, cotton shirts, stockings, socks, and certainly coffee and tea. All for \$300. A dollar went an awfully long way in those days.

"The entire stock was sold by mid-afternoon and he was out of business. Father hired two wagons and two heavy teams from Joe Coburn and Tom Barkley, brothers-in-law. He took out for Klamath Falls that evening to freight back more merchandise. Fred Schallock and Claude Daggett furnished him this emergency order and others as well so that he could continue in business until the store was finished and his original order from the wholesale house in Portland and Sacramento arrived.

"Our living apartment of four rooms and outside plumbing was built beside and connected to the store. No sooner had we moved in, gotten straightened around, open for business, successfully drilled and brought in a deep cold well provided with a convenient water bucket and a watering trough for stock, when almost overnight, a town mushroomed up outside our fence. These teepee, shacks and sod huts housed the families of school children of those that yearned for more urban surroundings. Within a year there must have been twenty five dwellings spotted among the sagebrush and scrub pines. A gate in the fence and a path to our well solved the problem of a water supply for drinking and sanitation for the growing population.

"Some of the children lived with their parents in the make shift village and were pupils at the school. \* \* \*

\* \* \* Knott Egbert, the sub-agent \* \*

"Mr. Egbert was absorbed in his work and sincerely concerned as to the ultimate destiny of the Indians on the Klamath reservation; but as he was a man with strong convictions about pursuing certain policies, he met with some opposition and was eventually transferred to a reservation on the Coast. \* \* \*

"Mother substituted as teacher and matron several times, taught a Sunday School Class and played the organ for church as she had done at Klamath Agency. By substituting, she kept her seniority rights in the Service in effect. Father did the same thing after the store was established. He hired Frank Applegate for his clerk and manager. During the next few years he was away from time to time, filling appointments as Chief clerk or assistant superintendent.

"Lyda Williams was the daughter of the agricultural director, or Farmer to the Indians. He advised and demonstrated how to cultivate their farms and improve the quality of their livestock. \* \* \*

"In driving to Bonanza for the day or on our way to Klamath Falls, we always stopped at the Whiskey Creek Saw Mill to eat lunch with Dad Kimbrough. He was the sawyer, a lean, tall Texan whose castle was a two room rough lumber shack beside the mill. \* \* \*

"Father was swayed between two ambitions. First, to stay in the Indian Service, making it his career and trying to advance as far as possible. So far he had done quite well, as his last appointments had been Assistant Superintendent and prospects of obtaining a full Superintendency were in the near future. But after that, what? As an Inspector, he would be required to do a lot of travelling away from home and family, with the remote possibility that some day he might be promoted to a supervisory position in the Regional Office or in Washington D.C. at a comparative low salary. Then there was always the inter-department politics. The higher one advanced in the Indian Service the more vulnerable he became. Second, to continue on with the store in Yainax. The store was successful to date and probably would be until such time as when the school would be discontinued. Then the business would no doubt move elsewhere. Back to Klamath Agency perhaps, where he had been considering another enterprise. The reservation was

gradually opening up to the white people in various ways; leasing Indian lands, buying Indian cattle, some small sales of Indian timber, improvements being built on Indian farms, better housing, barns, a higher scale of living for the Indian people requiring more of the white man's merchandise. The railroads were surveying for the best location to build their lines to bring out and process the vast timber resources of the country. All augered for a great era of prosperity. No doubt a new town would spring up some where on the reservation. A large mill town and he would transfer there. That is exactly what happened in 1915.

"Yainax moved to Sprague River but it was Wolford and Wann who moved the store there, having bought father out in 1910. Ben Wolford platted the town of Sprague River, and the partners built the first building. Thus father vacillated from one career to another for six years. \* \* \*

"A primitive telephone service from Klamath Agency to Yainax and various other points on the reservation including the Whiskey Creek Sawmill, was constructed by stringing and attaching wire to the trees in the timber and on spindling lode poles across clearings. This was an exclusive inter-reservation system, with the exception of one or two individuals being allowed to connect up to it. William Crawford, at his Big Springs Ranch about half way between the Agency and Yainax, was one of these. This was as much for the convenience of the reservation employees, fire wardens, policemen, doctor, or field matron; whomever might be in that area, as it was for their own personal use.

"Before starting on our journey we always considerably called Dad Kimbrough to warn him of our company at meal time and to ask him if there was anything he wanted us to bring him. I thought of him as an old man then but

as I look back I don't believe he was much over forty. As he lived a lonely bachelor's life and sometimes saw no one for days, he always seemed glad to have guests.

"When entering into the clearing and approaching the mill we could usually hear him singing at the top of his voice, smell the ham frying and knew that there was a big pan of biscuits baking in the oven.

"Besides conducting a Public Utility (water service) for Shack Town, the official post office was in the store for several years. Joe Coburn had the contract to carry the U.S. mail from Bonanza to Yainax. When the boarding school was abandoned the Post Office was vacated. Then it was up to some of the remaining employees to pick up the mail whenever they went to Bonanza and bring it back. As the alphabetical pigeon-hole section remained in the store the mail was brought there for distribution. People still called for it there and posted their out-going letters.

"Father also performed some of the services of an undertaker. Funeral caskets were standard merchandise in his stock and he became quite proficient and artistic in 'trimming' them. They were stored and displayed on the second floor of the building. Those for adults were polished walnut, mahogany and imitation ebony finish. The childrens' caskets were covered with a white or pale pink cloth resembling silk brocade. They were all padded with cotton batting, overlaid by imitation white satin or sateen. The pillow was of the same material. Upon special request, a long extra pad was made for the bottom of the casket. This was bound around the edge by a silk cord and decorated with corner tassels, as was the head pillow. Mother always made these and the shroud of heavy white china silk. Father embellished the exterior of the coffin with

metal plates, heavy handles and diamond and rosette shaped ornaments in silver finish.

"A funeral was a momentous event for an Indian family, as a vast amount of food was prepared and served to the large crowd, which always attended for most of the day. The cost generally amounted to several hundred dollars and for some of the more prosperous, nearer to two thousand. This was one time when credit might be extended on a long term basis. \*\*\*

"Frank Riddle, the white husband of Winema, seemed so much older than she, to me. As I remember him his hair and mustache were almost white and he was the distinct, spare, frontiersman type. They lived on the upper end of the reservation and came to Yainax store frequently.

"Winema, because of her fame for bravery and sagacity, quite over-shadowed her husband Frank. However he seemed content to remain in the background, proud of the respect and recognition that she received from her own people as well as from the whites. She possessed a kind, strong face and a friendly reserved demeanor. To us children she was a demigod and we regarded her with no little awe, whispering to each other when she passed or came near, 'Oh! there goes Winema!' \* \* \*

"Jeff Riddle, the son and I think the only child of Frank and Winema Riddle, was married to an Indian woman whom I do not remember. However, she could have been a Schonchin, as many of the Schonchins claim Winema as their direct ancestor. Jeff Riddle's children were handsome progeny. The girls as I remember were: May, Birdie and Minerva. Of the boys, I recall Simeon and Bidwell. May was married to Ralph Jackson, the neer-do-well son of Henry Jackson, a former Pitt River slave who at this time was considered the wealthiest Indian on the reservation. Ralph also died of tuber-

culosis, which took a high toll of the Indian people for many years. This was while they were making the transition from their snug sod and skin covered air tight houses to the ones like white people; built of thin, warped and green lumber, that shrank and left large cracks in the walls and floor. The icy winds and snow blew through, chilling the inhabitants and causing them to catch colds and pneumonia which they seldom, if ever, had before. Then contracting the dreaded and fatal 'consumption'. \* \* \*

"The vocation of freighting was a good source of income for many of the Indian teamsters who hauled freight for the stores at 1% per pound in the outlying towns and trading posts, as well as for firms in Klamath Falls. These freighters were, as a whole, dependable and careful of their cargo. They usually drove four horses pulling two wagons. Sometimes six horses were used if the roads were difficult and the trip an extra long one or the wagons over loaded. Some wagons were covered with heavy canvas, but not as a rule. They hauled from Hornbrook, Medford, Ashland, and from the ever changing terminals of Pokegama, Ager and Thrall. It was a long hard trip and sometimes perilous over Topsy Grade. It was an anxious, heart thumping time at best, when vehicles and teams met and had to pass on this high narrow road.

"Johnny and Homer Hutchinson were two good freighters; energetic, as a rule steady, good natured, but somewhat garrulous. I was always right on the spot when they brought their wagons in and unloaded them, for they had lots to tell us about 'The Falls' and where ever else they had been.

"Another freighter was Dick Brown. He, too, was a good conversationalist and he often brought Gertie, his daughter, with him. We would have a long time to play while Dick was unloading his goods. Mama would ask her to eat lunch with me. Rarely she accepted, for I think she preferred canned sardines or salmon, soda crackers, wedges of cheese and peaches speared on a pocket knife, to our hot fare. For many of the Indian people,

especially the women, to come to the store to lay in supplies was a social event as well as a business trip. They arrived early in the morning, situated themselves near the stove if the weather was unpleasant, or sat on the store porch in the sunshine and visited with friends whom they hadn't seen for months. They never brought any lunch or goods with them but indulged in a repast similar to the one listed above. The women, when they shopped, bought their individual purchases one item at a time and paid for it. Then after a half an hour's conversation would pick out and buy something else. This way they prolonged their pleasure and since they had plenty of time to spend, they might as well spend it in this way. On a chilly day the store would get pretty crowded at times and the air pretty pungent as well. \* \* \*

" \* \* \* In 1906, when he was assistant superintendent under Mr. Chalcraft at Chemawa he received word that his father had died in Georgia and Uncle Bernard must return to assist grandmother. This left the Yainax store without a responsible manager. Mother said she would manage the Yainax store for the time being. Now was the time for father to decide on opening up another store in Klamath Agency and going back there to operate it as he had planned to many times.

"He made a clean break. He resigned permanently from the Indian Services thereby relinquishing all seniority rights and he returned to the Agency establishing a mercantile business there and settling in Klamath. \* \* \*

"Father had already decided to open a second store at Klamath Agency. This would require his full time as well as mothers; for it was decided that she would operate the Yainax store for a while. He turned in his final resignation at Chemawa Training School, where he was assistant superintendent. They left me in the Sacred Heart Academy in Salem and he and mother turned back to Klamath for the last time, never to leave it again. They proceeded to build the new store at Klamath Agency.

“ \* \* \* One summer day around 1907-1908, as was inevitable, an automobile appeared in Yainax, containing two passengers. One was an executive of the J.J. Hill Railroads and his driver. \* \* \*

“The so called highway through Yainax was a main road from Klamath Falls, around the east side of the Upper Lake through Klamath Agency across the reservation to Yainax, veering to Bonanza and Bly, then on to Lakeview and Alturas, California. A 'Trail of Bitterness' for the reluctant Modocs, as was shown by their subsequent revolt; over which they travelled to despair and resentment when they were transported from their expansive homelands in the fertile Lost River Valley and familiar hunting and fishing grounds of the Lava Beds near Tule Lake, in Northern California to be isolated in the forbidding forests and rocky hills of Yainax and the Sycan. \* \* \*

“The first reservation telephone lines were built about 1907 and 1908 under the supervision of an Indian Service employee by the name of Clark Terry. His position was an itinerant one, for he moved from one reservation to another to install or revise telephone systems. \* \*

“When he returned to the Klamath reservation in 1918 to make extension and revisions to the system he resided here for some time, meanwhile marrying a local young teacher who was part Klamath. Then twin daughters were born in 1920 but one died soon after birth and is buried in the Henry Jackson Cemetery on the hill behind the Sub-agency and school. However, there was just a day school functioning here at that time.”  
(The End.)

The above described "Yainax Butte" is situated exactly five miles due east of the town of Sprague River and according to *Oregon Geographic Names*, (1952), is described as follows:

“COUNCIL BUTTE. This butte is near Sprague River about two miles from Yainax. The United States Board of Geographical Names adopted the name Council Butte in 1927, thus bringing to an end a controversy of many years standing.

Gatschet, in *Dictionary of the Klamath Language* (1890), uses the name *Yainaga* for the butte. *Yainaga* is the diminutive of *yaina*, meaning hill or mountain. For many years the butte has been officially known as Council Butte, and the Yainax Butte became transferred to a mountain with an elevation of 7226 feet, about 12 miles to the southeast. The name Council Butte had its origin in the council held at the little butte when a treaty was signed between the whites and certain Snake Indians on August 12, 1865. Government surveyors used the name Council Butte in 1866 when they surveyed the township. During the past few years efforts have been made by some of the older residents of the county to have the name Yainax returned to the little butte near Yainax community, but it was not considered practicable to do so because the name Council Butte had been so long in use by some of the government bureaus.”

It would seem to this writer that this is another flagrant example of a government agency arbitrarily disregarding and setting aside an ages old, sacred Indian name and substituting one of their own, the choosing of which had but little significance.

The council and treaty of August 12, 1865 referred to, was between J.W. Perit Huntington, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon, 1863 to 1869, and one "Pelina (Paulina—Editor) representing, as of August 10th, 1865 "23 all told in, some more yet to come" Snake Indians who had not signed the October 14, 1864 Council Grove treaty near Fort Klamath.

Furthermore the "Government surveyors" of 1866 probably knew little of Indian tradition and custom, and cared less. All they knew was to use the white man's new name supplied by the big-wigs at Fort Klamath.

This writer, personally, feels that the name Yainax should be restored to this little butte standing out by itself in the Sprague River Valley.



Looking north in Bly from the old Forest Service tower about May 14, 1934. The old Reed hall at left, once the entertainment center of Bly.

## BLY

Who the first white settler in the Upper Sprague River Valley, or Bly vicinity was, cannot be ascertained positively. It seems reasonable to assume that no settlement was made prior to 1870, and probably not for another year or so.

The reason for this seems to be quite obvious. The *History of Central Oregon*, 1905, page 937, records: "At the period the original treaty with the Klamath Indians was made the reservation had not been surveyed, the boundaries being described by what were supposed to be well defined topographical features. This treaty was signed in 1864, accepted by the Indians and ratified by the government. But when a survey of the reservation was made it was found to be a difficult task to locate the boundaries; this led to complications which were not settled for many years after.

"In 1870 the described line was sur-

veyed by Mr. Mercer, of Corvallis. He submitted his map to the Indians at that time. They then claimed that he had not included all the land which they had supposed was reserved to them in the treaty. His survey cut off a portion of Sican [Sycan—Editor] valley and the whole upper portion of Sprague river valley. The Indians declared that all this country had been included in the tract reserved as they had agreed upon in making the treaty; but Mr. Mercer could not find it so in the treaty. The Indians then insisted that it was not written as they understood it; but the Mercer survey was accepted and ratified by the government. Thus the whole land business and settlement of Klamath County conformed to the survey as placed upon the records. The difference between Mercer's reading of the treaty and the version of the Indians is the question as to what point was to be considered the junction of 'Ash-tish' creek and Sprague river. The



Bly Hotel and Pastime Tavern can be seen.

Courtesy U.S.F.S.



From the Forest Service tower, looking east at the extreme southeastern section of Bly and the Pelican Bay Lumber Company railroad extension to their logging camp.

Courtesy U.S.F.S.



**From the Forest Service tower, looking west, the old Bly grade and high school building, still standing but now unused.**

Courtesy U.S.F.S.

treaty provided that from a point near the head of Klamath marsh the line should run to 'the point where Sprague river is intersected by 'Ash-tish', or Wax creek. Now this creek after emerging from its upper and mountainous course, spreads out, somewhat after the fashion of Lost river, over a wide nearly level, marshy plain, which is called upper Sprague river valley, but does not intersect any other water course until it reaches what is called the middle ford of Sprague river. The surveyor ran a line to this, the first point of intersection with another stream that he could find, and maintained that he could not follow the directions and do otherwise. [Therefore the east boundary of the Klamath Indian Reservation became located one mile west of the old Ivory Pine Road, or what is now known as the Camp Six Road-Editor.] The Indians said they considered 'Ash-tish' creek as ended where it reached the valley or plain, and that the stream thence onward was Sprague river; and they had intended to keep the whole of upper Sprague river valley. The treaty was written by Agent Huntington and the boundaries were described to him by

the Indians through an interpreter. Neither he nor the witnesses to the treaty went over the line, and it is not surprising that opportunity was left for future disagreement. The description in the treaty was vague and indefinite, and the surveyor, Mercer, undoubtedly interpreted it conscientiously and properly. [One wonders, did he?--Editor.]

"Thus the matter rested for many years. The Indians were dissatisfied with the survey of 1870 and believed that they were entitled to the whole of Upper Sprague river valley, as they understood the treaty of 1864. The government having accepted the Mercer survey of 1870, leaving out of the reservation the rich lands of upper Sprague river valley, this land was settled upon by whites and patents to the lands were issued by the government.

"At last efforts were made to affect a settlement of the perplexing question. As the representative of the Indians, Mr. Ivan Applegate went to Washington, D.C., where he succeeded in having action taken. It was during the second administration of Grover Cleveland that congress authorized the appointment of a commis-

sion to investigate and report the claims of the Indians. This commission was composed of William C. Coleman, of Missouri, Richard R.P. Hammond, of California and Ivan Applegate, of Oregon.

"Upon investigating the case in all its details the commission found that the treaty provided for the whole of Sprague river valley to be included in the reservation; that according to the later surveys a large portion of that valley had been left out and had been settled by whites; that between 500,000 and 600,000 acres of land had thus been denied the rightful owners, the Indians. The commission fixed a value of about 78 cents per acre on the land and recommended that an appropriation be granted the Indians in payment. The report was accepted, but up to the present time [1905---Editor] the appropriation has not been granted by congress, although attempts to pass such a bill are made at nearly every session."

The *History of Central Oregon*, page 941, further states that during the three years proceeding the Modoc War, 1870-71-72, "settlement was quite vigorous" in the Klamath Country. However, in their list of arrivals during these years, not one name of a later known Sprague River Valley resident was given. Neither does the *History of Klamath County*, 1941, contribute any information as to who the first settler might have been.

If there were a few scattered squatters in the valley before the Modoc War, they probably reacted much the same as these in nearby Langell Valley, moving to either Linkville (Klamath Falls), or the Rogue River Valley. In support of this latter part referring to Rogue River Valley, Edwin J. Casebeer, long time resident of the Bly area once wrote: "I think nearly all of the early settlers of the valley came from the Rogue River Valley." These people would have left the vicinity at the outbreak of the war to return as soon as the Modoc Indians were subdued. Of these first settlers, two names stand out as being perhaps the earliest to move to this territory, the Gearhart family, John W., William H., James Polk, and Isaac, or a German, Jacob Fritz (Fred)

Munz (Muntz) of more or less questionable character. The Gearharts probably first settled some two to three miles east of present Bly on what is now the 7C Ranch, once owned by the Bell family. Munz settled on what later became the Bloomingcamp Ranch, now known as the BK Ranch.

## Gearhart Biography

John W. and Catherine (Brown) Gearhart lived in Howard County, Missouri. Their son James Polk Gearhart was born October 14, 1844. Another son, William H. was born February 12, 1847. Possibly another son, Isaac, was born sometime between this latter date, and the date of the mother's death in 1851.

The father, with the remaining members of his family came west across the plains by ox-team in 1852 to Benton County, Oregon. There they remained until 1858 when they removed to Josephine County.

It is recorded (*History of Baker, Grant, Malheur and Harney County*, 1902) that the father moved to California in 1861, and James Polk to Grant County in 1862, later moving to Humboldt, where it is assumed, the remainder of the family then resided, all seemingly engaged in the cattle business.

It is further recorded that William H. came to Klamath County in 1872, and James Polk in 1873, where they soon after went into partnership in the cattle business, driving in a band from the Humboldt country of Northwestern California.

If this information is correct, then William H. Gearhart may well have been the first settler in the Upper Sprague River Valley.

The Gearharts remained in Klamath County until 1882 when they again moved, this time to Harney County, settling on the North Fork of the Malheur River, James Polk twenty-two miles, and William H. fourteen and one half miles west of Drewsey (once known as Gouge-Eye) Harney County, Oregon. William H's house was the first built west of Drewsey and was constructed of juniper

logs, James Polk assisting in the erection.

James Polk Gearhart married Margaret A. Davis in 1873 and they became the parents of five children.

William H. married Agness Durkee on May 6, 1883 and they were the parents of two children. William H. married a second time, Mrs. Eliza E. (Davis) Metcalf becoming his wife October 29, 1894. She was the mother of five children by a first marriage.

John W. seems to have lived on a part of the present 7C Ranch, James Polk at or very near present Bly on Fishhole Creek, and William H. immediately east of the present Campbell Road and north of the Weyerhaeuser logging road leading northeasterly toward Gearhart Mountain, or north across the Weyerhaeuser Road from the Everett Bell home. An old skeleton of a barn stood there until recently. Oddly enough, Klamath County Deed Record books show a Gearhart name but once and that on August 9, 1882 when the State of Oregon deeded this tract, probably School Land, to William H. Seemingly the Gearharts had not completed their claims, if any, to the lands upon which they lived or squatted. Therefore they simply relinquished any rights to whoever followed them and that person when title was completed, would become the first owner of record. No further information concerning John W. and Isaac Gearhart has been located except that small amount which will be given in the following pages.

## Munz Biography

The other possible "earliest settler", Jacob Fritz Munz, a German, is known to have been in or around Linkville (Klamath Falls) at the time the Modoc Indian War commenced. A friend of Munz, Wendelin Nus, another German, and the first white settler of the Klamath Basin, was killed that first day, November 29, 1872 while approaching the Lost River battle.

Several days later the Hot Creek band of Modocs, who did not wish to take the war trail, led by John Fairchild, started on their way to the Klamath Agency. While encamped at Whittle's Ferry (Keno)

they were met by eight or ten white men led by "Fritz" (Munz - Editor). Well fortified by whiskey, they left Linkville, with the avowed intention of avenging Nus' death by seizing the Indians and bringing them back to town for hanging. It was immaterial whether they were guilty of any crime, they were Indians and that was enough.

The Indians overheard talk, became frightened, sneaked out of camp and fled to the hills south of their home at Hot Creek. Forty-five Indians, of whom at least fourteen were warriors, thus joined Jack and his band holed up in the Lava Beds, who might otherwise have remained peacefully situated on Klamath Agency, far from the scene of hostilities.

Probably soon after Captain Jack was captured, Munz made his way to the Upper Sprague River country and founded his cattle ranch now known as the BK Ranch. Nearby Fritz Creek was named for him.

One of the favored "yarns" told by old-timers concerned Munz and one of his escapades. Recorded by E.B. Loosley and printed in the *Evening Herald* of August 17, 1941 one of the versions follows:

"The BK ranch at Bly is one of the well known spots in Klamath county and like most old locations there is attached to it many stories; perhaps one might say the different personalities have left their imprint. Some of these tales it is easy to believe as living was a struggle in those days. At first there was either no law or its center was so far distant that men were forced to take matters into their own hands.

"The BK was in 1873 owned and operated by a bachelor, Fritz Muntz (Munz - Editor), who had a large herd of cattle. The Indians, not yet used to white man's occupation and vast herds consuming the range felt 'put upon.'

"It is a fact the present reservation was laid out by natural boundaries such as rivers, streams, meadows and marshes rather than metes and bound. Later this was all corrected. The Indians met and requested Preston, McKay and Lindsay Applegate to speak, as they were present

at the treaty of 1864 at Crooked creek. Through the medium of these men the tribe later received a fixed price on some 500,000 acres.

"But a certain Indian was disgruntled; felt Muntz was crowding in and he and Muntz quarreled. This is the story that was told at that time: Muntz ordered the native away; some time after he was seen by Muntz sneaking about. In a fit of temper Muntz, who was not an expert shot, grabbed his 44, intending only to take a pot shot to scare the tar out of the man. To Muntz' amazement he shot the Indian through the jugular vein while he was running at 520 steps. It was incredible.

"Astounded and realizing his position Muntz gave himself up and was placed under \$9,000.00 cash bail. The longer Muntz thought the more alarmed he became and he departed not to be seen or heard of to this day.

"And that \$9,000.00—which was a lot of money in those days—was the nucleus for the first courthouse in Klamath county. This building was the old wooden one that predated the 'three courthouses' we had. [It was one of the three, and still exists as the Walnut Apartments in Klamath Falls--Editor].

"Its location was the exact site of the present courthouse. [It was located east of the present courthouse, where the present Memorial Shaft is located--Editor].

"The BK ranch was then acquired by three brothers, Henry, Ed and George Bloomingcamp, who were the first to give it its name, BK, being their brand. Henry was digging a ditch at North Fork; he was 300 yards away under a tree when the blast went off. A rock no bigger than a turkey egg came that distance; hit him on the head and killed him. The two other brothers ran the place for some time in conjunction with other holdings in Klamath.

"Later the place was bought by J.C. Mitchell (Big J. he was called to distinguish him from Old J.C.), who built a large ranch house on the property. It was Big J. who put on the Bly rodeo. This became an incorporated show and was brought to Klamath Falls, being the first

rodeo staged here on a large scale.

"The ranch now belongs to the Connor estate and is leased to the Yamsey Land and Cattle company. D.O. (Buck) Williams is the head of the Yamsay company. [Ted Hyde, a nephew of Williams later operated this ranch, but the present residents are the Hill family--Editor]."

Recent research in Klamath County Deed Records has uncovered some facts that seem closely related to the above story: Munz did not receive a deed to some of his property until the years 1880, 1882 and 1883. He sold his property to Alexander Martin, Sr., on April 25, 1887 and September 22, 1887 for \$11,000. The old two story Klamath County Court house, still standing as the Walnut Apartments was completed July 2, 1888 for \$3,500.00 by W.S. Moore & Co. Martin sold part at least of the Munz property to A.A. Frink on September 30, 1887 for \$4,500.00 and Frink in turn, sold back to Munz on April 12, 1888 for the same amount, \$4,500.00.

Finally, through his attorney, Frank S. Moore, Munz sold to John F. Bloomingcamp on September 3, 1890 for \$7,000. Whether or not funds from Munz went to pay the then new court house is questionable. It would seem that first they would have gone into some sort of General Fund, or, whatever then existed.

Part of the above statements are further authenticated by the Journal maps of Major John Green, 1st Cavalry, commanding at Fort Klamath. Major Green left Fort Klamath on September 9, 1872 and traveled to Fort Bidwell in Surprise Valley, California, via the Applegate Trail. From there he continued on to Camp Warner, in Warner Valley, Oregon, returning from there to Fort Klamath via the Sprague River route. Passing down Sprague River Valley on October 3rd and 4th, his sketch map indicates three habitations, probably log cabins, at approximately the locations of the present 7C and BK Ranches, and a third presumably near present Bly, possibly the William H. Gearhart or even the James Polk Gearhart cabin.

As previously stated under the history of Yainax, three post offices in the Klamath Country, Linkville, Langell's

Valley and "Yanax" were authorized on December 11, 1871 with a mail route established through the Sprague River Valley from Ashland to Lake City in Surprise Valley, California on July 1, 1872.

Next comes our first bit of documented evidence concerning an original settler. According to U.S. postal records John W. Gearhart on September 30, 1873 made an application for a post office to be established at his place (now the 7C Ranch) called Sprague River. At the time, Gearhart's address was a post office called Hot Springs, a short distance south of present Lakeview, Oregon. His new office of Sprague River was situated 28 miles east of Yainax and 50 miles west of Hot Springs in the Southeast Quarter, Section 6, Township 37 South, Range 15 East Willamette Meridian. Further it lay two miles east of Fishhole Creek and 20 yards north of Sprague River. The nearest railroad was Eugene City, 200 miles distant. John W. wrote that there was "no village as yet" but the post office would serve a population of 100. It would be on Mail Route No. 15156, operated by James Kilgore. The application was signed, *John W. Gayhart*. (The microfilm copy of this application shows quite distinctly that Gearhart himself, signed his name as *Gayhart*—Editor.)

The post office of Sprague River was established in what was then Jackson County on November 12, 1873. Later, on October 24, 1874 it was transferred to Lake County when that county was created, and finally on October 17, 1882 to Klamath County when the latter was established.

The History of Central Oregon, page 967, records names of several early settlers, anyone of whom could have been first. It is a list of Lake County taxpayers who were residing in Sprague River Valley east of the Klamath Indian Reservation in 1875. Taken from the Lake County assessment roll for that year, it gives the gross value of all property owned by the various individuals. Here again indications are that the Gearharts (four in number) and Munz had accumulated the largest holdings, in fact Munz was the largest

with \$4,110. The entire list follows:

J.A. Stewart—\$800 (no further information); J.P. (James Polk) Gearhart (see ahead); Fred (Jacob Fritz) Munz—\$4110 (see ahead); W.D. Ferrill (Ferrell) (no further information); J. (John) W. Gearhart—\$1082 (see ahead); Isaac Gearhart—\$482 (see ahead); S. Gardner—\$1800 (no further information); W.M. Prine, Jr.—\$815 (no further information); R.W. Scoville—\$980 (no further information); J. Brown—\$270 (no further information); W.M. Prine, Sr.—\$1227 (no further information); J. (John) A. Smith—\$660 (According to U.S. Postal records John A. Smith, the postmaster following John W. Gearhart probably conducted the office from his home also. The buildings seem to have later served Walt Fair as his home and were about one mile northeast from the present Campbell Road bridge across Sprague River, or near the point of a low hill adjoining the main valley. In fact the original road, replaced by the Campbell Road, kept around the base of the hills to the east); W. (William) H. Gearhart—\$2269 (see ahead); J. Jones—\$3280 (no further information).

The biographies of several other early settlers of the Upper Sprague River Valley follow:

### Bloomingcamp

John F. and Adeline Bloomingcamp, both natives of Germany, came to California in the 1860's, settling in Siskiyou County on the old Yreka-Linkville stage and freight road, where they engaged in the stock business. In 1890 they expanded their holdings, purchasing what is now known as the BK Ranch from Fritz Munz. By 1905 the ranch included 1240 acres which were under the management of Bloomingcamp Brothers, Edward and George.

### Garrett

Thomas W. Garrett, born in Missouri, came to California in 1884, removed to Goose Lake Valley in 1886 and finally to Bly in 1895 where he managed the Pioneer Hotel for two years. He then purchased a ranch of 280 acres immediately north of Bly. His home, still standing, was the small shingled house on the left of the present Highway 140 heading

west from Bly, just before reaching the turn north of the present Weyerhaeuser sawmill. He served as constable of the Sprague River precinct for a number of terms.

## Owen

James and Susan F. (Tull) Owen were born in New York and Kentucky respectively. Coming west to California at an early date they remained there until 1878 when they came to the Sprague River Valley. Settling at Round Grove on the Bly-Lakeview stage road some eight or so miles southeast of Bly, Mr. Owen kept a stage stop and raised stock for many years. He passed away in 1901. Six children were born to this union, Caroline H. Watts, John S., Mary L. Kilgore, Margaret Long, James H., and George W. Caroline H. married S. Watts in 1879 to which union two sons were born, John S. and James O. Watts, both of whom became merchants of Bly. James O. was the father of Owen Watts presently employed by the U.S. Forest Service in Bly. Mr. Watts passed away and Caroline H.

married Edwin Casebeer in 1869.

## Casebeer

Edwin Casebeer, born in Ohio in 1849, moved to Kansas in 1867, to California in 1871, and to Rogue River Valley in 1872 where he ranched until 1879 when he came to the Sprague River Valley to engage in the cattle and mule raising business. He married Caroline (Owen) Watts in 1889 and to them two children were born, Edwin J. and Susie May. In late 1896 Casebeer purchased 320 acres of the James Barnes (this writer's great-great uncle) estate of which part was meadow adjoining Sprague River north of the Casebeer home and part was up Fish-hole Creek but north of the old Taylor place. In 1898 Edwin Casebeer headed overland to Alaska with a band of mules, but disposed of them upon reaching the Stikeene River in British Columbia. He made his way to the coast and returned to Seattle by boat. In 1900 he sold his cattle and by 1903 entered the sheep business.



Babe Bell and Barbara "Blit" Owen at Round Grove, right background.

Courtesy Doris Bell



The Obenchain Ranch on Meryl Creek north of Bly on the Camp 6 and 9 road.

## Obenchain

Madison and Minnie Obenchain came to the Sprague River Valley in 1881, settling on Meryl Creek about eight miles northwest of Bly. Mr. Obenchain came from Iowa to California where he remained one year before coming to southern Oregon. Mrs. Obenchain was a native of Germany. They had one child, Frank Obenchain, Sr., who was educated in the grade schools of Jacksonville. Frank Obenchain, Sr. was the father of four children, Marie, Madison (Matt), Frank, Jr., and Harry. The home ranch eventually grew to more than 2000 acres, while hundreds of white faced cattle roamed the neighboring area.

Frank, Sr. went to school each summer at Bly unless the money to pay the teacher "ran out." Teachers in those days were paid \$30 per month and "found", eating with the families of students, and frequently sharing a bed with one or two daughters in the household.

It took four days to drive to Jacksonville to trade and six days to return with a load of fruit, flour and other staples.

Frank, Sr. built his first home with lumber hauled from the old Al Fitch sawmill some distance west of Bly.

## Reed

George and Anna E. (Mitchell) Reed came from the province of New Brunswick, arriving in Massachusetts in 1865. In 1870 they moved to Iowa and from there to Colorado in 1872. From Colorado they went to Wyoming and in 1887 came to Oregon, settling in Ashland. Two years later they moved to Lake County, homesteading near Paisley. Three children were born to the Reeds, the second being Walter F. who attended school in Ashland. He purchased "the Bly Ranch" in 1903. By 1905 he owned the Pioneer hotel, which contained twenty rooms, had become the postmaster a year before,



At the old Parker Ranch some two and one half miles west of Bly, now the V.L. Rentles home. L. to R. Grandmother Mary Parker; Jesse Parker, in the hack; Glen Parker and John Capus on horseback.

Courtesy Doris Bell

was the proprietor of a large livery and feed stable and kept the stage station for the Klamath Falls-Lakeview Line. In addition he owned the town hall of Bly, a building 26 x 60 feet, known as Reed's Hall which stood one block south of the present Jack's Bar and was used for public entertainments and social gatherings. Walter F. and Mattie B. (Mulkey) Reed were the parents of five children.

## Parker

The old Jesse Parker place, about two and one half miles west of Bly on the south side of Highway 140 is now occupied by the V.L. Rentles, who its first settler was is unknown, but sometime between June, 1877 and August, 1881 James H. Clark, who had been the postmaster at Yainax previously for a short time, established the Sprague River Post Office at his ranch on August 25, 1881. Then on October 15, 1883 James H. and his wife L.L. sold to this writer's great-great uncle James Barnes for \$1000, who in turn sold to Jesse A. Parker for \$1600 on June 25, 1886.

Jesse Parker was the son of Wm. G. and Lucinda (Tetherow) Parker of Parker Station on the old Southern Oregon Wagon Road between Ashland and Linkville. In 1846 Wm. G. Parker had assisted in laying out the Applegate Trail.

James and Mary Parker were the parents of Bessie, who became the wife of James Bell, the mother and father of Everett Bell who has been of great help in preparing the history of Bly.

## Taylor

The present Diamond Newman ranch south of Bly some two or more miles up Fishhole Creek began as the Robert and Louisa Taylor ranch at some unknown time, but before November 16, 1876 when the State of Oregon deeded the property as Swamp Land to Taylor. As early as December 1, 1882, the *Jacksonville Democratic Times* reported: "Robert Taylor, who has been acting as foreman of Jesse D. Carr's stock ranch at Clear Lake, Cal., left for Arizona to seek a location, leaving his family at Ashland." Then in 1883, this writer's great-great uncle, James Barnes, bought the property,



**The Bell family, left to right: Waldo, Bert, James (father of Everett Bell), Middle Row: Grandfather Jeff, Aunt - - - - , Aunt Hulda, Front: Floyd and Angie, grandchildren.**

Courtesy Doris Bell

kept it about three years and sold it in 1886 to James Taylor, probably some relative of Robert Taylor. Scott Warren's parents once owned this property. The original ranch buildings (recently torn down) sat on the west side of the Fish-hole Creek meadows.

### **Finley**

William "Bill" Finley, the father of Ross Finley, and for whom Finley Corrals was named, originally settled on the later W.D. "Walter" Campbell ranch. This place is now the home of the Owens family, no relation to the Owen family who settled at Round Grove on Highway 140 near the Klamath-Lake County Line.

### **Bell**

The Bell family, originally from the Rogue River Valley, came to Bly in 1908 when Everett was about four years old. The father James Bell freighted for the Bill Smith store in Bly from both Montague and Ager over the old Topsy Grade,

James Bell bought the old John W. Gearhart (7C Ranch) in 1919. Everett thinks Albert Walker bought from Gearhart; John Wells, who had arrived in the Bly country by 1882, from Walker and Bell from Wells.

### **Anderson**

Quinn Anderson settled about one mile east of the present Frank Obenchain ranch on a meadow watered by Fritz Creek. He was the father of O.T. "Buck" Anderson who once lived at Beatty. Several Anderson descendants still make their home there, including "Buck's" widow, Louella Anderson.

### **Lundy**

Amos Lundy, the father of Garner Lundy for whom the Garner school of 1902-4 was named. Garner's sister Carrie Lundy married Frank J. Schmitz, long-time Beatty merchant after 1920.

### **Walker**

Albert Walker was born in Iowa on May 12, 1858 and in 1864 was brought west by his parents to Portland, Oregon,

later moving to Ashland, where he attended Ashland Academy. When Albert first came to the Sprague River country is unknown but it was probably by 1879 or before.

Albert's future wife, Sarah Adeline "Addie" Witt, was born in Roseburg on July 5, 1858 and came to the Sprague River country on November 3, 1879, where she spent two winters with sisters before marrying Albert Walker in 1881.

The Walkers lived one and a half miles west of Bly on the north side of Highway 140 (second house on the right past the turn), once known as the Dixon place. Three sons, Roy, Earl and Luke, were born to the Walkers.

Albert Walker became the owner of four fine ranches, stacking around 2500 tons of hay annually. Later, Mr. Walker helped organize and was one of the trustees of the First National Bank in Klamath Falls. It was a long day's drive in those early days from Bly to Klamath Falls, yet it is told that Albert Walker once made it in half a day with his fast team.

## Louis and Ida Gerber

The Gerber ranch was the first building on the north side of Highway 140, west past the turn north of Bly. They also owned a large ranch, now covered by the waters of Gerber Reservoir near Langell Valley.

## Miscellaneous

Other names showing up in early day records but of whom little is known are: Chas. W. Slade, 1882; Chas. K. and F. Klum, 1882; Bill Smith, early day store-keeper in Bly of whom slightly more has been learned; and Uncle Billie Robinson.

The *History of Central Oregon*, page 869, further states that on Lake County's first County Court meeting, February 1, 1875, the county was divided into nine precincts. No. 3 precinct was given the name Sprague River.

On June 7, 1875, the County Court appointed the first election judges of each precinct. Named for No. 3, Sprague River, were J.A. Smith, William Ferrell, and W.M. Prine, Sr., with the polling place to be held at the house of John Smith.

Lake County's first general election was held June 5, 1876 with the following officials for precinct No. 3, Sprague River: Judges: Enoch Loper (who served as postmaster at Yainax from January to June of 1877), J.A. Smith and William Prine; Clerks: B.B. Deming (perhaps Deming Creek was named for this man, who may have lived nearby), and Robert Scott, of whom nothing further is known.

These first settlers also had the use of thousands of acres lying adjacent to their ranches in the Sprague River Valley. Lying to the south is a high timbered country dotted by many lush meadows and small streams, stretching across some 28 miles of almost unsettled country to the California-Oregon State Line. Bisecting it from north to south is the Klamath-Lake County line. It has more or less figured in Bly history since early range days.

This territory was briefly touched upon in the *Klamath Echoes* issue No. 10 on Langell Valley-Bonanza, published in 1972, on pages 17-21, "Beyond Goodlow Rim".

First used by Capt. James Barnes before the Modoc War and possibly others now unknown, it has witnessed considerable strife and a few range wars. It includes Barnes and Fishhole Valleys in southeastern Klamath County, and Yocum in extreme southwestern Lake County. Barnes and Fishhole settlers include the Tull, Bachelder, Pitry, McKendrie, Lapham, Owen, Kilgore, Dillard and Devaul families. Post office and school history was covered in *Klamath Echoes* No. 10 for the Fishhole, Gerber and Barnes Valley sectors. Yocum Valley was of considerably more recent years, and will be covered later.

Some of this territory witnessed extensive logging operations around the 1929-1939 period by the Pelican Bay Lumber Company which extended a railroad south from Bly during the very early '30's. At approximately the same time Ewauna Box Company built a railroad east from Bly over Quartz Mountain into the Quartz Valley timber area. Finally, present day Weyerhaeuser Timber Company logging operations centering at Camp 16, on the Klamath-Lake County

line, some 5-6 miles north of the California-Oregon State Line will bring renewed activities to the area and harvest timber well into Modoc County.

## Recollections of J. O. Hamaker

(We now come to the account, written about 1935, of an early day traveler through the Sprague River Country which follows—Editor):

On the third day of October, A.D. 1879, a 'tender foot' of the age of twenty-three years, who was born in Marion County, Iowa, on the 30th day of July, 1856, and attending common schools in Iowa, and Kansas, and having been left an orphan (partially), crossed the State line of Idaho and entered the Great State of Oregon, which is, and I hope always will be, my home.

During the year of 1873, my two older brothers, J.W. and J.D., had located in Linkville (Lake Co.), Oregon, and during the early Summer of 1875, my Mother and youngest Brother, S.C., had migrated to that same town of Linkville, Oregon, (now Klamath Falls). Of course, it is not necessary to say that this was my objective point for which I had crossed into the State of Oregon.

My conveyance was a four-horse wagon loaded with flour, in company with two large sixteen-mule teams and 'Prairie Schooners' loaded with a like product - flour, all billed for Camp McDermitt, Nevada. The tonnage of these three wagons was about forty thousand pounds. We loaded at Weiser, Idaho, about the first day of October, '79, and crossing Snake River on the 3 day of October. It was Oregon weather, - raining. Our route was southwesterly thru the Owyhe valley to near the Stein's Mountain; along about the middle of the month of October I stopped at the Devine-Todhunter "White Horse Ranch" where I became employed as Cook for nearly two months as near as I can remember; and during that time I was getting experience every day also trying to learn to talk Mexican or Spanish, at which I did not have very much success and I am not yet a real Mexican linguist.

Well, as December was getting along toward Holidays, I got the fever to eat some of Mother's good mince pies, and bought me a horse and saddle started for Linkville, Lake County, Oregon. My route lay (on account of the deep snow) via Willow creek, Catlow valley, Roaring springs, and the sink of Rock Creek, a Dodson and Zimmerman horse camp. I arrived at the latter place the fourth day out and had traveled about 120 miles to get 50. This Dodson and Zimmerman ranch was my undoing for the trip. My horse, who was rather of the Jack Dempsey nature, picked his last fight there in that corral, - his antagonist put him down and out, broke his leg, and I was compelled to borrow a Spencer carbine and finish the fight, which I did before breakfast the next morning. Thus left on foot. I expected to either buy a pony or hire the boy to take me the next lap of my journey toward Linkville, but no, "I reconed not with my host" for if he was only a boy I could not induce him to do anything of the sort for he told me he had no authority to do so and that I could walk to the Heart Ranch, only about 40 miles and that he would show me where the trail crossed thru the notch in the mountain. I took some sourdough bread and strips of bacon, made a sandwich, and started the 40 mile trek. Being young and healthy and with a ravenous appetite, I soon finished the sandwich and that I would get Breakfast at least at the Heart ranch. Again I had not figured correctly, for at dark that night I was at the foot of Heart mountain and not half way to the ranch, - did it snow? I am telling you it did, and it was then nearly three feet deep. Luckily I found some willow brush at a corral and made me a fire, carried some of the large pole bars, put them on the snow and spread my saddle blanket on the poles for a bed, not to sleep but to rest.

Funny ain't it? That fire would not stay on top of the snow and persisted in sinking down and by morning was about two and a half feet below my poles and bed.

The next morning it was still snowing and I took to the hills, climbing up, as

I did not know where the Notch in the mountain was all I could do was to get to the top of the mountain, and it was work I am telling you - if you don't think so, just try it.

About night it broke away and I reached the top just at sundown. Was I hungry? Don't ask such questions. I found a large old Juniper that was clothed with dry bark and proceeded to make a fire, but my old China Block of matches was at the last fire where I stayed the night before. I found one in the lining of my vest and proceeded to make a fire, using my bump of caution I made a teepee out of my blanket and guarded that match until I had the fire going good. Oh, Joy! it burned and sure was a good fire. The snow was level there and I spread some bark and my saddle blanket on the bark, laid down with my feet to the fire and I say I went to sleep.

I put in a fairly good night only my smooth snow did not last, the bed dropped between two large boulders and left the smoothness all out, but I was alive, and if could only have a sandwich - how I would have given all my money for a good meal, but what is money if you are where you cannot spend it? Once I can say I have tried it and tell the truth I had nearly Twenty Dollars and could not spend a cent, and Hoover had not declared a moratorium on money either then. One thing, I had down grade this morning and it was shure down too, part of the time I was head first and part of the time was rolling sideways then sat down and "slide Kelly slide" which I did, but if I had not got down I never could have written this tale, so it seems that I was destined to survive, for I am now nearly 54 years older but I don't want to try it over just to see how it seemed, for I believe I can recollect near enough how it was. When you drop more than 22 1/2 degrees you know just when you get to the bottom and there you stay as long as you can.

Well, on reaching the bottom of the mountain I was confronted with a road running at exact right angles to the way I had been going, and I did not know from where I was whether I wanted to go

"Right or Left," but having tried the right end of the road for about five miles, I found it was the left hand that I should have taken, for the right end ended in a hay corral where there had been camp sheds covered with old hay were in evidence, but no food except red Mexican beans, raw, and Chickorie coffee. The beans were not good and I can hardly eat them today - cooked, because I tried them raw. The coffee was rather palatable and I filled my overcoat pocket with it, thinking that it was in this modern time when we could get once in a while "Dry Ginn" - perhaps the name made it good.

Well, I retraced that five miles and another before I saw any signs of habitation, then I began to get hungry, there were evidence of human life around this place but no one to answer my loud "Ha-los". Horses and cattle were just lately fed new hay and I was sure there would be someone near. I tried the door of the house which was locked, but my ingenuity as a housebreaker led me to examine a sardine can nailed to the door jam. There I found the key. I, of course, unlocked the door and entered, looking for something to eat. I found a large dishpan inverted on the table, and it covered a milkpan full of wonderful homemade Doughnuts. I did not look to see if they were "optimistic doughnuts" or not but went to work eating, and looking for what I might find to go with them I opened the oven of the cook stove and discovered baked spare-ribs! Was that "Heaven" to a young man that had been at least forty hours without tasting food: I will always think that this was, if not actually the "Garden of Eden" it was not far from the gate!

I partook of a goodly share and then finding a good, warm bed, crawled into it and fell asleep, - during the night some time I awoke and decided there was more due me, so gettingup I took on some more food; and the next time I awoke it was Sun-up and a man was feeding the stock in the corral. I went out and pleaded guilty to housebreaking, telling the facts of my last three days. He told me to get some breakfast and then the Heart Ranch was only about 2 1/2 miles down the road.

and also, that he was merely feeding the stock for Mr. Anderson who was in Fort Bidwell spending the Holidays. After thanking him and eating some breakfast, I took the road for the Heart Ranch and the good old "Samariton" an Irish cook, took me in and said "Be Yea Warmed and Fed." All of which I surely was. I told the good Cook my story and he took care of my physical body and "bade me rest."

I tarried there for two days and while there met Bill Finley, who was my best friend for the next fifty years. I then moved across the Warner Valley to the Jones sheep camp where, I had been told, I could get transportation to Bidwell, which I did after about a week, at that trip riding a mule and a pack saddle with blankets across the saddle to make the seat and ropes tied to the front end for stirrups, - good saddle and comfortable - if you are in a hurry to get home some time, try it. We were part of two days making the trip and arrived in Bidwell in good shape, where we stopped at the hotel for the night. I there engaged transportation to Willow Ranch across the "Fandango Pass" where in former days the Indians slaughtered those innocent emigrants who were enroute to Goose Lake Valley to locate and settle this part of the State.

Now, did it ever occur to you that the first settlers of a new country are really the bone and sinew of the land which they, by their early pioneer hardships and privations, have made it possible for the latter residents to live there?

I arrived at Willow Ranch in California about dark. I remember it was on Saturday evening. I paid for my supper and bed. This took all my ready cash. I was about to leave for up the Goose Lake Valley when the landlord said "Why don't you eat your breakfast?" I told him I had a headache, and he said "Are you broke?" "Yes," I said. He made me go into the dining room and eat breakfast. I then took the trek for the Lakeview country, traveling about 5 or 6 miles I came to a farm house that looked prosperous, went in and asked for work for my board until I could write home for some money. "Where is home?" I was

asked. "Linkville, Oregon," was my answer. "What is your name?" was the next question. "Hamaker," I told them. "Are you any relation to Squire Hamaker?" "Only a brother," was the reply. "I thought so," was my interrogator's answer. "I have just been over as a witness in his Court not long ago and I can see you are his brother by your resemblance to him." Mr. Henry Sites, who had been the man I was talking with said "You can go home with me and stay for the time until you can hear from the folks." I went home with him in the evening. He lived about one half mile from the Pine Creek Post Office. I think it was just across the California line. Well, I borrowed stationery and stamp and wrote to J.W. (Squire) Hamaker, my brother, who responded with an answer and some little cash. Not in the automobile days was this but it took actual time of three days for a letter to get to Linkville if it did not snow too hard and the weather would permit, otherwise it got through some time. This was a tri-weekly mail that was plying between Ashland and Lakeview, and some time you were lucky to get any mail at all.

In due time the mail brought me orders and I took another start on the long trek home to see if it would be possible for me to reach that Goal.

The journey for the first day was to Lakeview, this being February 26, 1880. February 27, I started for Drews Valley and what was then the Lofton Ranch where the mailman stayed all night after fighting snow all day trying to get from Lakeview to Bly an all day's ride and I will say a cold one.

Of course, I had letters of introduction to all these people from Brother, J.W. who as the times were then, knew everyone and they were all friends and neighbors from the California line to the coast, as this was a wild Pioneer Country at that time and "the open door" was always ready to swing open, when anyone was in want or distress there were no reservations (in any house that would be opened to the rich and the poor alike), in fact, the whole country were one large Fraternal Family, and the "Law of Uni-

versal Brotherhood" prevailed the country over.

The genial host, Thos. Lofton, was a real entertainer, and the long winter evening passed quickly. A good meal of "Sourdough" bread and Venison, was surely the thing to make you sleep, but the cold morning of the 28th of that cold February came too soon, and at the peep of day I was feeding myself some more of that Good Old Ranch Grub and preparing for the hard journey over the mountain to Bly.

Leaving Drews Valley at what at that time was known as the Tom Lofton Ranch, on the morning of the 28th of February, with my trusty roadster (a splendid Saddle horse), I turned my face to the Northwest for the town of Bly, Oregon, which at that time consisted of a ranch house and post office belonging to one Polk Gearheart, who was then landlord of the Bly Hotel and Postmaster of the Bly Post Office, also ran the Livery Barn. The distance between points was from Lofton's to Gearhearts, about 22 miles.

In conversation with the Mailman at Lofton's, I learned that the snow at Quartz Valley was about seven feet deep, and the information I also gleaned from the said mail carrier was that when he came over the day before the wind was blowing the snow in whirls, when his horse put its foot down to make a track in that seven feet of snow, ready to fill said track as soon as the horse's foot was raised, so as to smooth the surface.

After getting all the information as to trail and bidding my host good-bye, I mounted my saddle mare and started to explore the mountain between Drews Valley and Bly, via Round Grove, and (don't forget Quartz Valley) the summit of the mountain. The snow as said was seven feet deep at that point and I was willing to take their word for it as it was snowing and blowing at that time and about 16 degrees below zero. Fortunately the heavy pine timber kept this snow from drifting badly and the marks of the trail of the horses that had traveled it the day before were plainly in evidence so you could see the next step of the horses;

also on that trip the famous "Devil's Garden", for some years the blackeye to that trip from Drews Valley to Bly, was covered with snow and the mud was frozen so it was fairly good traveling.

Well, having had some experience in the snow on the East side of Warner Valley I was not entirely bluffed out. In due time I arrived at Bly, Oregon, and after introducing myself to Mr. Gearheart, the proprietor, he saw that I was well taken care of for the night. This was my first advent into the town of Bly, which has been near me ever since.

It is sufficient to say that it was a long and all day ride to cover that 22 miles, as it was impossible to travel faster than a horse could walk on account of the deep snow and the trail having been made at that gait and each day filling up at night so that the only guide one had was the little bunches of snow thrown on top by the horse's feet the day before - the travel on this road consisted of one trip each day by the mail carrier.

However, I arrived at Bly in the evening, about 4:30 P.M., and was taken care of by the genial landlord in typical Western Style, i.e. "One of the family."

February 29th. After having spent a good, comfortable night with the Bly people I mounted my horse for the continuation of my journey toward Linkville, which was to be my future stopping place "for a while at least." The road from Bly was then through Yainax, and like the day before was deep snow and a "ride-in-a-walk road all the way." I arrived at the Yainax Indian School about noon and this being Sunday, I stopped to obtain some information regarding the trip over the mountain from there to Dairy. Mr. W.C. Clark was the Sub-Agent at Yainax and insisted that I put my horse in the barn and have dinner (he being well acquainted with my people in Linkville whom I had not seen for seven years). I accepted his kind offer and did justice to the good meal set before me.

After having been "warmed and fed" I again took up my journey toward its "last lap." Now, by losing the time at Yainax and the short days I was over-

taken by night before I had passed thru Buckmaster Flat (which still bears that name to this day), it having been named for a family of that name who had ventured there to make a home and had to be moved out that winter on a hand sled on account of the deep snow. Herbert Dyer afterwards preempted the place and it is now a part of what has been known for the last twenty years as the Colahan place in Buckmaster Flat, also the Strahorn R.R. traverses the entire length of the flat. I plodded along until about 8 o'clock P.M. before I discovered a small light a little off to the side of the road and went to it, where I was taken in and kept all night by Mr. T. Jefferson.

Mr. Jefferson told me he had some wheat hay that he had raised near Rattle Snake Field and hauled it down to his house on a hand sled, he traveling on snowshoes. Well, right here I want to say that better people never lived anywhere than the people of those days - they were all human and generous to a fault and a man was a man "rich or poor" - the people were one large family.

Well, I was well and handsomely cared for all through the trip.

The morning of March the first, I mounted my steed and traveled about four and one-half miles to Dairy, where I was invited to a good warm fire, and as the thermometer was rather down below zero, I was not at all adverse to accepting an invitation to a good warm fire. I spent some little time there in getting warm and then to the Shook ranch where I asked the venerable John S. Shook about the trail over the hill to the Horton Ranch where I expected to find my Mother, and did find her, well and hearty.

The next day I with Mr. Horton rode to the town of Bonanza, which (I was then ignorant of the fact) was to become my future home. \* \* \* \* \*

End

## Recollections of Mrs. Addie Walker

[As written in 1940 for *Klamath County History*, by Rachael Applegate Good-Editor.]

On my arrival in Sprague River Valley on November 3, 1879, my first impression was very unfavorable. There were no fences, no houses in sight. The wild rye grass grew so high that the low log cabins were hidden from view until one was within a few yards of them. Big haystacks were in sight over the valley, standing out without shelter in the rain and snow. I wondered what made people stay in such a desolate looking place. Little did I think I would make my home there and raise a family and be happy and contented for 30 years; but on June 23, 1881, I was married to Albert Walker, a stockman who was among the earlier settlers.

The Sprague River Valley was one of the most prosperous localities this side of the mountains (Cascades). Cattle and horses from the range, which was covered with bunch grass two or three feet high, were rolling fat when gathered for market but the task of driving stock to Montague, California, our nearest shipping point, was an arduous one, hard on both man and beast. Stockmen from near and far gathered stock for each other and mailed postcards to one another with information that strays were being cared for until such time as they could be driven home, or sold, in which case a check would be sent to the owner. Stock strayed from Sprague River to Yonna Valley, Langell Valley, Fort Klamath, Silver Lake, etc., and there were no fences to stop them. Stock on the feed yards drank from the holes cut in the ice on the river banks, and many a fine beef steer ventured on the ice, broke through and was drowned. Under these primitive conditions, however, more money was made than later, when the range became limited and pasture had to be rented. The hard winter of 1879-80, that caused such heavy losses in stock, was a lesson to the ranchers, who now learned to keep their herds reduced through the winter to make sure the hay would last until spring.

Weather conditions in the eighties and early nineties were very severe in winter. I have seen the largest haystacks and high stake and rider fences buried out of sight under huge snowdrifts, the snow being packed so hard and the rise from the

level being so gradual that one could easily have driven a team and wagon over them. Our thermometer registered 40° below zero, and I have seen the mercury congeal in the bulb and stay there for weeks, and weren't we glad when the mercury rose and snow began falling; it seemed so warm. Imagine, ladies, you who have never pioneered, having to wear woolen 'undies'—sleeves to the wrists, pants to the ankles—under cashmere hose, underskirts crocheted from heavy Germantown yarn, heavy woolen dress, heavy sweater, heavy overshoes (not galoshes but three-buckle overshoes) over house shoes. I wore all this load of clothing about my work for weeks, and was I comfortable? I should say not! All through the freezing weather it took an hour to thaw steaks, milk and sour dough before cooking breakfast. When the morning work was done and I finally got back to the fireplace, I stood on the hearth and kept on turning, for while one side was freezing the other side was burning.

Living as we did absolutely isolated from the outside world in winter, it was a rare treat after the haying was done and the horses and cattle marketed to go after supplies for winter, and many times I have driven a two-horse buggy over these rocky mountain roads and enjoyed it, too, keeping in sight of the freight teams. There was no scarcity of food at our ranch; we had a haying crew of twenty-five to thirty men for six weeks or more every summer and it took a lot of good eats to make them happy. Flour, salt, coffee, and sugar were bought by the thousand pounds and everything else in proportion, and in addition to the loads of staples we would go to Father Walker's fruit farm near Ashland and get a wagon-load of canned fruit of all kinds—jams, jellies, pickles, preserves, etc., enough to last a year. In addition to all this there was an abundance of wild game for sport and profit; our men hunted bear, panther, and coyotes. For a change of diet they brought home wild ducks, geese, and sage chickens, and when one was lucky enough to bag a brood of young mallards just before they were able to fly, or a brood of young sage chickens following their mother, let me

tell you we had delicacies unknown to any but pioneers. Fish—small speckled trout—were almost at our doors; Sprague River ran through our meadow not half a mile from our home, and our little boys could run down and catch a string of these speckled beauties any time in summer. In winter the Indians brought us the large salmon trout from springs along the river on the reservation. It was a convenience to have them come and bring fish or game or come and do the week's washing, and they were glad to come, as it meant a little money and a 'big eat.'

Peddlers came in summer with green vegetables, berries, melons, etc. One lone peddler came selling bed springs in gunny sacks. Of course we bought everything we could make use of, and the bedsprings fitted very nicely into our scheme of rude improvements. Our home was a log cabin of four rooms; our furniture was all made of pine boards—bedsteads, tables, benches for the dining table, etc. I made a dressing table of a big goods box, put in shelves, papered it inside with white paper, covered it with a pretty flounce of print, put an embroidered piece on the top, hung a mirror over it, and when my washbowl and pitcher and toilet articles were placed it was quite attractive and added—the feminine touch to my bedroom. I also made a couch for the living room, with a little help, and those gunny sack springs were used in that creation. It did not take my Indian maid and me long to make rag carpet enough to cover our living and bedroom floors, and all the neighbors loved to come to our house and visit, 'we had things so nice.'

We had no theaters, no church, no places of amusement except those of our own making. Before the stork arrived with his loads of love, Husband and I played cards, the winner to light the morning fires for a week. When I fell heir to the job, I didn't mind, for I had the kindling prepared; and when I won, and he had to get the breakfast, he was game. Thus we made our fun in many ways. There was no Red Cross, no Community Chest to raise funds for the poor. All were ready and willing to help each other as the need arose—sitting long nights

through, giving medicine and nursing in the back room of Bill Smith's store at Bly and lined, covered, and trimmed the diamond shaped coffin. There was no beautiful hearse filled with flowers---only a handful of neighbors who read from the scripture, sang a hymn, and offered a prayer at the graveside. All stood steady to rejoice with those that did rejoice and weep with those that wept. I remember very well when Bill Finley's cabin home burned to the ground, all the neighbors rushed to the smoke and saved as much of the household furniture as possible, and Albert Walker came home bringing the Finley family of three to remain at our cabin home for weeks, until the neighboring men had gone to the woods with tools and built them a larger log cabin. Thus the pioneers on the frontier grew very near to each other--much nearer than acquaintances met under more favorable circumstances, who do not feel so keenly the need of comradeship and the helping hand. And in after years, when the family ties of our little neighborhood were broken, one felt a lack of something that had left an emptiness and taken a certain measure of sweetness out of life.

End

Found in the *Ashland Tidings* of November 24, 1881: "A rodeo will be held in the Sikan valley and all the cattle in the valley will be gathered up and driven to winter range on the desert. This will most likely end the rodeos in this county for the present season."

*Ashland Tidings* of March 21, 1884: "Measles and land jumpers about equal in Klamath County."

## Bly Post Office

In the beginning a post office named Sprague River was established November 12, 1873 in what was then Jackson County, with John W. Gayhart (Gearhart) as first postmaster. The office was in his home situated in the Southeast Quarter of Section 6--Range 37 South--

Township 15 East (the present 7C Ranch) twenty yards from Sprague River on the north side and two miles from Fishhole Creek.

For a short time before this, September 30th to October, 1873 Gayhart's (Gearhart's) mail was addressed to the Postmaster at Hot Springs, 50 miles eastward, a few miles south of present Lakeview. On October 24, 1874 Lake County was created out of the eastern portion of Jackson County in which Sprague River was then located.

Postal receipts up to September 30, 1875 amounted to \$11.10.

Next, on March 24, 1876, John A. Smith became the Postmaster. The office was probably moved to Smith's home which seems to have been in the Southeast Quarter of Section 24--36--14, or about one mile northeast of the present Campbell Road bridge across Sprague River, near the point of a low hill adjoining the main valley. Walt Fair many years later lived at this location. Nothing seems to remain there today.

Postal receipts for 91 days, up to September 30, 1877 amounted to \$4.50.

The office was discontinued April 4, 1878.

Less than a year later it was re-established on February 28, 1879 with James P. (Polk) Gayhart (Gearhart) as postmaster. No location has been obtained, but according to J.O. Hamaker the office was located in Gayhart's (Gearhart's) home which seems to have been at or very near present Bly when Hamaker passed there on February 29, 1879. This office lasted only until June 9, 1879 when it was discontinued.

The office was officially re-established March 16, 1880 when John V. (Vestal) Kuhn became postmaster. Penciled notes, however, on the application indicate there was a post office in operation from January 21, to February 11, 1880 before Kuhn became the postmaster, but who ran it is unknown. The location of Kuhn's office was described as being 1/4 mile west of Fishhole Creek and 2 1/2 miles south of Sprague River in the NE1/4 of the NE1/4 of Section 3--17--14, which would place it in present Bly. This may indicate that



The present Bly post office

the office was in the original hotel once run by J.P. Gayhart (Gearhart). All Bly hotels have been located in the same place and all have burned at one time or another. The office was further described as being 27 miles west of Drew's Valley post office, probably run by Thomas Lofton who also ran a stopping place and stage station on Drew's Creek, where it first enters the valley. This location was pointed out to this writer by John Yaden whose father was once mail contractor on the Klamath Falls to Lakeview run. The mail contractor during Kuhn's term of office was S.E. Huntly, sub-contractor for John McCurdy. Mail was then being delivered six times per week. 70-75 people were being served by the Sprague River post office.

The road in those days seems to be the one now used by Weyerhaeuser Logging trucks entering Bly from the east, past the old Casebeer Ranch.

Up to July 1, 1881, Kuhn took in \$35.87 in postal receipts.

James H. Clark became the next postmaster on August 25, 1881. The office was moved to Clark's home (the old

Jesse Parker ranch where the V.L. Rentles now live) which was according to his application, 1/2 mile south of Sprague River, and 2 1/4 miles west of Fishhole Creek. It was to be in the Southwest 1/4 of Section 28--26--14, with mail delivered three times per week by mail contractors Ferree & Worden. The office was to serve 18 families.

On January 31, 1881 four events took place: Elizabeth Lofton became postmaster; the office was moved back to or near its former location in present Bly; the office was now listed on the newly formed Klamath County records, after that county was created out of Lake County on October 17, 1882; and lastly, the name was changed from Sprague River to Bly, a name thought by some to have been proposed by Elizabeth Lofton. However, on February 19, 1883 James H. Clark made a report stating the name "of my office is Bly, its local name is Sprague River \* \* \* " Signed March 7, 1883. The reader can draw his own conclusions as to what actually transpired.

Marcus D. Childers followed on May 19th, 1883 as the next postmaster, turn-

ing in a second quarter report of \$20.62 for postal receipts.

By October 22, 1883 Riley Hamersley, (another distant relative of this writer) had become postmaster to be succeeded by James F. Mansfield on April 15, 1884 who on July 1, 1885 turned in his biennial report of \$75.97 for postal receipts.

James H. Lindsay became the next postmaster on February 26, 1886 to be followed later the same year by Walter C. Johnson as postmaster on December 11, 1886.

Johnson during his eight years plus term, turned in three biennial postal receipts returns: July 1, 1887 for \$125.06; July 1, 1889 for \$147.96; and July 1, 1891 for \$160.96. No report for 1893 has been located.

The location of the post office under any of the above short termed postmasters, Lofton 3 1/2 months, Childers 5, Hamersley 6, Mansfield 22 and Lindsay 9, is unknown. Although Johnson served for slightly over eight years, his office location is also unknown. It is possible the post office during this entire time was in the hotel or a building attached thereto.

On February 4, 1895 William W. "Bill" Smith became postmaster, the post office presumably being located in his store, the building still standing and occupied by Jack's Place (also considered the oldest building in Bly). Smith turned in a biennial report on July 1, 1895 for \$143.01 postal receipts. Four years later, in 1899 Smith constructed a new store building, across the street west. Today it serves as part of Patzke's Shell Service.

On March 30, 1899 Mary L. Kilgore became postmaster with the office located in one or the other of the Smith store buildings, probably both at times. Her husband, E.G. Kilgore is reported to have once carried mail on the Klamath Falls-Lakeview run, but when is unknown. Mrs. Kilgore made a biennial report on postal receipts of \$110.94 for July 1, 1899 and of \$197.17 for July 1, 1901.

On July 2, 1901 Mary L. Kilgore petitioned for a change of location for the post office. She described the new site as being on route 73362 between Ager and Lakeview, daily. "1 mile from the river

(Sprague, we suppose) on the west (south?) side of it and will be a quarter mile from the nearest creek (Fishhole?) on the east side of it. A country post office, population to be served 60. Present site Southeast Quarter, Section 34-36-14, and the proposed site Northeast Quarter, Section 2-37-14. Signed September 20, 1901, Mary L. Kilgore, proposed Postmaster.

From the above description given by Mrs. Kilgore it seems the old office site would have been located on the north side of present Highway 140, or Main Street. The newer location would have been at the Casebeer Ranch where Owen Watts now lives. According to Mr. Watts, a hotel once stood where his residence now stands and the post office was in a building across the present road, to the west, on a site now occupied by a trailer house. This information corresponds to Mrs. Kilgore's description.

Charles V. Pattee became postmaster on March 4, 1903. The *Klamath Republican* of April 28, 1904 records the following: "Charles Pattee, the postmaster at Bly has sold his store to J.S. and J.D. Watts and will probably resign the postmastership as he contemplates going east." This and the following *Republican* article places the Watts Brothers store and Pattee's post office at the Casebeer location.

On September 1, 1904, Walter F. Reed became postmaster. He issued a biennial report on July 1, 1905 recording \$217.74 in postal receipts.

*Klamath Republican*, September 8, 1904: "Walter Reed was appointed Postmaster at Bly on September 1st, since Charles R. Pattee has resigned."

*Klamath Republican*, October 13, 1904: "Walter Reed of Bly, reports that since the removal of the Bly post office to old Bly, the Watts Bros., who had a store at New Bly, where they kept the post office, have bought out the Smith store at the old site, and the Casebeer hotel at New Bly has been closed, and hereafter all business will be done at the old Bly site (present Bly—Editor)." Reed's site for the post office would have been the pioneer Hotel site, location of former post offices.

Seneca C. Hamaker, a brother of H.O. Hamaker, became the next postmaster on October 9, 1905 with the office remaining in the hotel location.

*Klamath Republican*, August 31, 1905: "W.F. Reed and family and Miss Sadie Mulkey, of Bly, were in town Tuesday on their way to Portland and other points. Mr. Reed has leased his hotel at Bly to S.C. Hamaker for one year and he will probably not return to Klamath County until the lease expires."

The following year, on August 24, 1906 Walter F. Reed again became post master. However, the post office seems to have moved to the south side of Main Street sometime in early March of 1907 as reported by the *Klamath Republican* of March 7th: "Bly is still growing. One of the stage drivers could not find the post office, which has been moved to the new building across from the Pioneer hotel."

Less than nine months later, on May 11, 1907 Miss Ada Erb took over as postmaster. On July 1, 1907 she filed a biennial report of \$258.00 for postal receipts. The *Klamath Republican*, of July 9, 1908 reported: "Miss Ada Erb, postmistress at Bly, returned on Thursday from Portland, where she has been a witness in the Ragan case before the Federal Court." This was the post office robbery at Royston between Bly and Bonanza by Nellie Ragan, as written up in *Klamath Echoes* No. 10, pages 20-21.

However, Government records show Elvina Connolly followed as the next postmaster on June 20, 1908. It may be that she served only during Miss Erb's absence, as we have Della G. Anderson becoming postmaster on October 26, 1908. She filed a biennial report on July 1, 1909 of \$278.00 for postal receipts.

Iona James became the next postmaster on February 15, 1911. She turned in a biennial report on July 1, 1911 for \$260.00 postal receipts, the last that has been made available to us.

Then followed Clara Taylor on December 21, 1911; Thomas E. Wallis on February 19, 1921; Della G. Walker on June 26, 1933; and Mrs. Georgia Casebeer on

December 18, 1933 according to the Post Office Department; January 4, 1934 according to the General Services Department.

At some unknown time the office seems to have been moved back to the north side of the Highway 140 (at one time known as 66). Agreeing with this statement, we find that on October 22, 1940 Mrs. Casebeer sent in a report, giving the location of the post office as being in the Southeast Quarter of Section 34-36-14, facing Highway 66, south of the office 10 feet. Further the railroad station of the O.C. & E. lay 1/4 mile to the east.

Finally Mrs. Vernetia M. Hadley became the postmaster on March 31, 1959. The *Klamath Herald & News* of June 3, 1960 wrote: "The Senate has officially confirmed the President's nomination of Vernetia M. Hadley for postmaster here (Bly). Mrs. Hadley has been acting postmaster since April 1, last year, when the former postmaster, Mrs. Georgia Casebeer, retired. Mrs. Casebeer had served in that capacity for more than 20 years. Mrs. Hadley is the mother of Mrs. Gerald Dilavou of Bly and the wife of Herbert Hadley, fire control officer for the Bly Ranger District of the Fremont National Forest."

Actually we find that Mrs. Casebeer served for a few months over 25 years; that the office she described above was at the site of the present Pastime, but later was moved to the building immediately south of the present post office building. This last building was erected about 15 years ago, at approximately the time Mrs. Hadley who is the present postmaster, took over the office.

## Bly

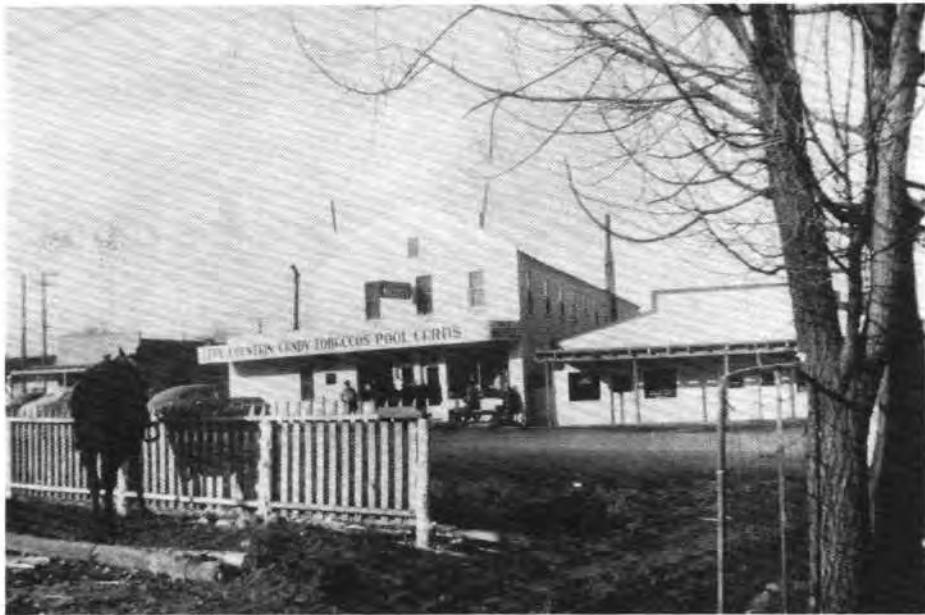
The actual founding of Bly is somewhat clouded. At first and for several years there was no town, village or trading post in Upper Sprague River Valley. The only center of the community was the school house and the post office. The first school house, a log building, was



Construction of the old "Bill" Smith store in Bly during 1899. This building is now the rear part of the Ed Patzke Shell Service Station. Courtesy Everett Bell



Pack train in front of the original "Bill" Smith store at an unknown date, but probably in the late 1920's when electricity first arrived. (Note the pole in the background.)



The Bly Hotel which burned a few years ago. It was once known as the Pioneer Hotel and at the last, Halfway House.

Courtesy Corky Smith



North of the Sycan Store. Al Swasey house, still standing (now painted green), barber shop, and the Green Lantern. Formerly a bakery, later, ice cream, notions, etc. George Campbell and Olive Protsman.

Courtesy Edward Patzke



Jack's Place in Bly, thought to be the oldest building in town. It once served as Bill Smith's general store before 1899, when his stone building (Patzke Shell Service) was constructed.



The present Ed Patzke Shell Service Station building, the back part of which is the old Bill Smith 1899 mercantile store.

built in present Bly, exact date unknown, just back or to the southwest of the old Logger's Club. The post office in those early days moved about from ranch to ranch, wherever the current postmaster might reside. It seems to have first moved to a site in present Bly, about 1879.

Later, in 1882, the office was moved to a point two plus miles west of present Bly, on the old Yainax-Linkville road (now the home of the V.L. Rentales family). The next move, on January 31, 1883 relocated the office at approximately its former location in later day Bly.

It must be remembered that prior to this last move the office was known as Sprague River. This move saw the elimination of that name and the assignment of a new, that of Bly, supposedly proposed by Elizabeth Lofton.

According to *Oregon Geographical Names*, page 59, "Bly was a word of the Klamath Indians meaning up or high. According to Captain O.C. Applegate of Klamath Falls, it meant the old village up Sprague River from Yainax. White people appropriated the name and applied it to a town east of the Klamath Indian Reservation. A.S. Gatschet in his *Dictionary of the Klamath Language* (U.S. Geographical and Geological Survey, Washington, D.C., 1890) gives the word as *plai*, and says that it meant among other things the Sprague River Valley and sometimes simply the Sprague River as distinguished from the lower country along the Williamson River. *Plaikni* were people living high up, or along the upper reaches of Sprague River. *P'laikni* was also used to mean heavenly, or the Christian God. Further, the *Klamath County History*, page 132, records, "Its name, said to have been given by Mrs. Lawton (Lofton-Editor) the first postmistress (of Bly--Editor), is short for Blydell, a Klamath Indian word meaning Heaven."

The growth of Bly was slow until 1928-29 when the O.C. & E. (Strahorn) Railroad reached the present town of Sprague River and began its extension toward the former place. Coincidental with the arrival of the railroad at Bly was the construction of two large logging operations, the Pelican Bay south of Bly

and Ewauna Box east of the summit of Quartz Mountain. Later, in 1931, a sawmill was built at Bly itself, which had much to do with the growth of the town.

It was claimed by John W. Gearhart in his 1873 application for a post office that the Upper Sprague River Valley had a population of 100 persons. This would seem to be an over estimate in light of subsequent statements. As late as January, 1880, John V. Kuhn applied for the post office and in his application estimated a population of 70 to 75.

Just prior to this, in 1879, H.O. Hamaker stated that Bly (buildings probably located where the old hotels have stood, on the north side of the Highway opposite Jack's Place, consisted of a ranch house which served as a hotel and post office belonging to James Polk Gearhart, who also ran a "Livery Barn."

The *History of Central Oregon* records that "in the summer of 1888 Bly consisted of one store and a hotel combined."

Next, according to the U.S. Census of 1890, the Sprague River (Bly) precinct had a population of 119, which had grown by 1900 to 145.

The *History of Central Oregon* further stated that in 1905 Bly had two general merchandise stores, two hotels and a saloon, (surely there would have been at least one or two livery barns --Editor); that the precinct at the last election cast 150 votes, which would indicate a population of about 750 in the entire precinct.

In describing the valley the history also stated: "The products of the valley consist of horses, cattle, mules and sheep, although the latter are few in number. At least 1,000 head of cattle, 100 head of horses and a like number of mules are sold annually from this valley. The soil products are oats, red clover, Alsike clover, timothy and natural meadow hay. At least 4,000 tons of hay are cut annually. The schools are good, there being two districts in the valley. J.O. and J.S. Watts under the name of Watts Brothers, are conducting a large merchandise business at Bly, dealing also in farm machinery and implements. W.F. Reed is postmaster, also proprietor of a hotel. J.W. Wells is a large property owner and a worker for the interests of Bly."



Pastime Tavern about 1929-30. Marvin Cross and Charlie Mason, builder.

Courtesy Madeline Keffler

Documented history regarding the growth of Bly during the next twenty three years has not been located to date. We do know, however, that early in 1928, when the Oregon, California and Eastern Railroad began its extension from Sprague River toward Bly, the latter place began to "boom." This "boom" was further accentuated by commencement of work on two large logging camps nearby, Ewauna Box to the east, and Pelican Bay to the south..

Anticipating the "boom," J.C. Edsall, May Edsall and T.M. Edsall secured land, then platted and filed the original town-site of Bly on June 25, 1928.

Later, during that year, on November 24th, the Oregon, California and Eastern Railroad tracks were finished into town. Following this event, the *Klamath Evening Herald* of December 1st wrote in part, " \* \* \* 2 stores, 2 hotels, a warehouse, Shell Oil Company distributing plant \* \* \*." Evidently the "boom" was just beginning.

On July 25, 1929 the *Klamath News* wrote: "Jumping from a place of a few houses into quite a prominent town of 300 people, Bly residents are anticipating still more rapid growth during the next two years.

"Building of the railroad now jointly operated by the Southern Pacific and Great Northern companies, the completion of the highway through here, the locating nearby of big logging camps, together with an already rich stock country, are the conditions responsible for the sudden development of this trading center.

"On the north side of the highway last September there were no buildings. Now there is a row of frame business houses. New commercial places have been added to the older ones on the south side, giving the town quite a prosperous aspect.

"Among the thriving enterprises in the town now are: Williams Lumber Company, with the main branch in Chil-



Inside the Green Lantern, slot machines, confectionery, notions, bakery, soft drinks, etc. George Campbell and Olive Protsman.

Courtesy Edward Patzke



Inside the Pastime Tavern, Carl Chase, Doris Bell and John Bellman about 1940. Courtesy Mrs. Everett Bell



Former home of M.L. Johnson, Insurance salesman for Lyle Kellstrom of Klamath Falls. Left portion had been a garage, right the home. Courtesy Madeline Keffler



The Bly Hotel after a face lifting and name change to Halfway House about 1960. Pastime Tavern in background.

Courtesy Edward Patzke



**Fishing was fine near Bly in 1939. L. to R. Edward Patzke, John Taylor, Clay Thomas and Tuffy Jacobs.**

oquin; Shell and Standard Oil Companies, Keffler cleaners; Bly Mercantile, under Marvin Cross, and Walker's restaurant and confectionery.

"Shafer's hotel, managed by Jack House; Harbin & Maust garage, Stanley & Wimer's garage, Bly Inn, kept by Jack Snyder; Pioneer Meat Market, under O.R. Stewart; Bill Bloom's Lunch, Davis Restaurant, the Bly garage and Bly pool hall.

"The Bly Drug company, Theodore Snyder, proprietor; the Van Jones store, a fine new depot and a new well providing the purest of cold drinking water, is transforming Bly into a community of considerable importance.

"With the Ewauna and the Pelican Bay Lumber companies locating their logging camps near here, large payrolls will give impetus to local trade and the town will thrive accordingly, local business men believe.

"Near Bly is one of the largest cattle ranches in Oregon, owned by C.C. Conners, over whose vast acreage nearly 2,000 head of cattle graze.

"On Mr. Conners' ranch is one of the largest known hayfields, comprising nearly 2,000 acres of fine hay, which is now being cut and stacked. Walter Campbell and other prominent stock men have ranches near Bly."

Again on September 1, 1929 the Klamath News wrote: "During the past month several new buildings have gone up in this city, others are being planned while a number of newcomers have started business enterprises here.

"The K.K.K. store of Klamath Falls now have a branch clothing store handling merchandise here with O.M. Hector as manager. They are located in the Marvin Cross building. Mr. Cross is in a temporary location but plans on putting up a new building, starting work within a few days.

"In a nice new but modest size building Julia Hixon has opened a restaurant while a building is nearing completion designed for a soft drink parlor to be operated by Mrs. T.E. Teeg of Klamath Falls.



A fine buck bagged by Edward Patzke near Bly in 1959.

Courtesy Edward Patzke



A good day's hunt near Bly in 1959. L. to R. Neil Griffin, Howard McGreer, Hank Hall, Barbara Rentle, and V.L. Rentle. In doorway, John Dillavou. Picture taken on the loading platform of the Sycan Store.

Courtesy Edward Patzke

"Lorenz Hardware and Plumbing Company of Klamath Falls have the contract for installing the new water system. A good water supply is available from a city well and the work of piping the town is now under way. A four-inch main leads to the Ewauna Lumber yards and the railroad buildings, although the tubing has not all been put in.

"The three-room school in Bly will be taxed to capacity this year in order to accommodate all the students. The teachers are Miss Esther Moore and Miss M. Grimes.

"Van Jones is building three fine new homes here and a number of other residences are contemplated by the progressive citizens of this city."

*Klamath County History* (1941) wrote that "\*\*\*\* with the coming of the Crane Lumber Company in 1931, a new growth started. The mill plant now employs 140 men and produced in 1939 more than nineteen million feet of lumber. A survey by the high school newspaper in 1940

found three grocery stores, five service stations, two beauty parlors, three barber shops, one drug store, two garages, one variety and hardware store, six eating places, one hotel, one telephone office, one liquor store, one photo studio, one postoffice, and one church (Methodist) with a membership of about fifty. The combined grade and high school has nine rooms and gymnasium, with a faculty of 11."

It was estimated around 1935-36 that Bly had a population of 910, but after the two logging camps were abandoned, the town went downhill.

### Bly Schools

There is evidence that a school was established in present Bly during the summer or fall of 1873 called Sprague River. This was due to the influx of settlers during the summer of 1873 immediately following the conclusion of



The Bly school sometime during the 1890's. Back row, unidentified. Second row: Lola Parker (Driscoll, Everett Bell's aunt and Pete Driscoll's mother), Cora Finley, teacher, Clara Taylor, Roy Walker, Ross Finley, unknown. Third row: Clarence Taylor, unknown, unknown, Earl Walker, Bertha Parker (Bell, Everett Bell's mother), unknown, unknown, unknown. Front row: Fourth from left, Luke Walker, others unknown.

Courtesy Everett Bell

the Modoc War. Probably most of the people whose names appear on the 1875 tax and precinct lists arrived at that time. Where most settled is unknown but some can and have been described previously.

According to the *History of Central Oregon*, Page 877, "No school was held in the boundaries of what is now (1905-Editor) Lake county prior to 1873 \* \* \*". During the fall of 1873, however, a school was established in Goose Lake valley some five or six miles south of present Lakeview. A second school, located at Kelly Creek was commenced in 1874.

It is definitely known that Linkville (Klamath Falls) was first, consequently it was designated District No. 1. The second school was not far behind and was established near the present town of Bonanza, in the Lost River settlement. Therefore Bonanza became District No. 2 of Lake County.

According to the *Ashland Tidings* of June 24, 1876, a report issued by Lake County School Superintendent Quincy A. Brooks, "Sprague River became District No. 3, Pine Creek No. 4 and Antler No. 6. Incidentally only six schools were taught in Lake County during 1875.

It therefore follows that since the Goose Lake schools were commenced in late 1873 and early 1874, Sprague River (Bly) No. 3 must have been organized at a prior date, possibly in late summer or early fall of 1873. Because of the weather encountered and distances to be traveled, most of those early day schools could be held during the summer months only--and then for only a three months term. Further, the University of Oregon has information that lists a Sprague River School for 1873.

Exactly when that first little log school was built is unknown (there is evidence that those first schools may have been held at different settlers' homes from time to time, the teacher boarding at that place as well as some of the children). It is known, however, that the log school was located approximately behind the present Sycan Store about south of the old Loggers' Club. A later school, established around the 1885-1890 period, but long since passed into oblivion, stood

farther back on the hill, southwest of the log school. Pinpointed further, it stood northerly from the present gymnasium building, near the new trailer park being constructed.

On October 10, 1910 according to the *Klamath Republican*, " \* \* \* a handsome new school at Bly has just been completed by D.E. Burrell. It will be heated by a Waterbury heater, and has lights on one side and the rear, and will have an oiled floor." This school burned on June 27, 1932 at 7:30 in the evening. Valued at \$10,000, it was covered by \$4,700 insurance. The burned school was immediately replaced by another which was to open by September 12th, but the date was delayed until the end of the month. This latter school with additions still stands but is unused. In 1928 a gymnasium, still standing, and a teacher's house were constructed.

*Ninety Years of Klamath Schools*, (1960), states that "In 1887 there were three pupils in attendance; Lola Parker, her cousin Roy Walker and Frank Oben-chain. Their teacher was Al Hudkins of Dairy. Other pupils were Carrie and O.T. Anderson.

"Other early teachers were Mr. (E.G.?) Kilgore and Katy Wight. It was during the term of the latter that home-made desks were replaced by "store-bought" desks. She had the boys remove the buckles from their overalls, so the fine new desks would not be scratched.

"The 1930 list shows two teachers and 44 pupils.

"In 1960 there were 11 teachers in elementary and high school."

When the Bly school was established on Klamath County school lists in 1883, it became District No. 9. The Chairman was Wm. Robinson, with Mart Childers, Jas. Clark and Albert Walker, board members. At that time the post office address was given as Sprague River according to Klamath County School records.

A 1921 directory lists Mrs. Jo D. Givan as teacher.

Finally, the present brick grade school was constructed and occupied in 1962.

High school classes were probably taught as early as the 1933-34 school



The old Bly grade and high school as it looks today.



The new and present Bly grade school.

year, or even before, since it is definitely known that the 9th and 10th grades were being taught during the 1934-35 term. Before and at this latter time, students who desired further education attended other high schools, Ashland, Klamath Falls and perhaps Lakeview.

Next we know that all four grades of high school were being taught at Bly by 1938 at least, as Mr. George Elliott taught in the high school at Bly during the years from 1938 to 1943.

Lastly, Bly high school was closed in June, 1968 with students being given their choice of attending either Bonanza or Lakeview.

## Lumbering and Logging at Bly

Early day ranch buildings in the Upper Sprague River (Bly) country were probably of log and shake construction. There may even have been some whip-sawing done to help in home buildng. For a few years after the Modoc War there was but one sawmill in existance east of Linkville the old Shook sawmill at Bonanza.

Practically nothing is known of the second sawmill, just the mere mention by

the *Ashland Tidings*, September 14, 1887 which under Bonanza Items stated there was a "sawmill between Langell Valley and Sprague River."

There are two vague locations possible where this sawmill may have operated. The most likely, and especially if the community of Sprague River (before it became known as Bly) was meant, would have been somewhere in the Keno Springs-Royston vicinity.

If the Sprague River Valley was meant, the sawmill could have been located on the approach to Bly Mountain as now crossed by the present Highway 140. *Lumbering in Klamath* by W.E. Lamm records that Colahan had a portable, steam driven, circular mill on Bly Mountain by 1885. Also that it was moved to the White Ranch (Royston) by 1889 where it was operated by A.A. Fitch and his brother.

Other information as told to this writer by Sykes Hamaker is to the effect that Wells, Walker and other Bly people, at a very early date, had a sawmill on the Bonanza road about half way between that place and Bly. Further, Frank Oben-



Ewauna Box Company moving a tent house from the Ish Tish Creek vicinity toward Quartz Mountain about 1929.

Courtesy Carl Proebstel



**Pelican Bay Lumber Company jammer at Squaw Flat above Robinson Spring, 12 miles south of Bly. Carl Proebstel on cat, Ray Chase running jammer and Joe Tuchon on logs. 1930 period.**

Courtesy Carl Proebstel

chain, Sr., once stated that he hauled lumber from the old Al Fitch sawmill to build his first house for his new bride.

At an early day, Jesse Parker had a mill some three or more miles west of Bly and just east of the old Klamath Indian Reservation. It is possible that this mill and the Wells, Walker, etc., mill were the same but at different locations or even the same. Sykes Hamaker also told of a shingle mill, and perhaps even a sawmill, once located up Ish Tish Creek just inside Lake County. He further thought there may have at one time been a small mill located near the Obenchain ranch on Meryl Creek.

It also seems that at times the Reservation sawmills near Old Yainax and Beatty may have supplied lumber to the valley ranchers near Bly, which might or might not have been "boot-legged."

After reaching the present town of Sprague River in 1923, the O.C. & E. Railroad suspended extension for nearly five years. Then on May 5, 1928 it was

announced that the Strahorn line would be extended to Bly. Shortly after May 20th, work actually commenced on the 26 mile extension.

By June 26th it was stated that the Pelican Bay Lumber Company would soon build a logging railroad to a point some 12 miles south of Bly where they would establish a large logging camp, and move their present operations from the area just northeast of Crater Lake.

Next, on August 31st, it was reported that the Ewauna Lumber Company had purchased the 37,000 acre Booth-Kelly tract of timber east of Bly and would build a railroad into it within a year.

The O.C. & E. Railroad reached Bly on November 24, 1928. On January 11, 1929 the Pelican Bay logging road was under construction and by March 1st, seven miles had been completed.

On April 4, 1929 the Ewauna Box Lumber Company commenced buying right-of-way to the Booth-Kelly tract at Quartz Mountain. Nine days later, on



Ewauna Box Company saddle tank, rod engine at Quartz Mountain camp.

Courtesy A.S. Clawson, Jr.

April 13th, Pelican Bay Lumber Company made their first shipment of logs to Klamath Falls.

By June 21st, switching tracks for Ewauna had been installed at Bly, where two steam shovels and a number of "cats" were shipped in. On July 14th, Ewauna had extended their railroad bed  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of Bly. At the same time Pelican Bay stated that their railroad would soon be completed 15 miles south of Bly.

The *Klamath News* of September 22, 1929 reported: "Pelican Bay Camp on Fishhole.

"When fully completed and all the necessary cabins erected, the Pelican Bay Lumber company will have one of the largest logging camps in southern Oregon not far from here.

"The company recently moved their logging headquarters from Diamond Lake to this section for a permanent location. There is timber enough in sight to keep the outfit cutting for many years.

The camp site is located at Robertson (Robinson) Springs, 11 miles southeast of Bly. Here seven springs of clear water gush from the sands, providing pure water for the crews and stock.

"On a natural park site the bunk and cook houses are pitched and the result is that the employees and their families enjoy pleasant living conditions.

"New cabins are being erected continually. Large barns for the horses have been put up, giving the camp the appearance of a busy building center.

"A building to be used for school purposes is to be set up in a few days and a teacher employed to instruct about 20 children of school age, now living with their parents in the camp.

"With nearly 200 men employed and several locomotives, many "cats" and jammers in action, the virgin wilds have been transformed into life and activity little dreamed of before the company moved here.

"Over a good logging road the timber is transported to Bly and by rail again from there to the mill at Pelican City.

"Among those directing operations at the Bly Pelican Bay camp are J.C. (Cruel Jimmy) Johnson, superintendent; J.P. Baker, camp foreman; C.J. Hagen, clerk; A.L. Thalafer, time-keeper.

"John Couman, falling boss; Sam



**Heisler No. 1, used on the run from Quartz Mountain to Bly about 1938 or 1939. At the Sprague River Recreation Area road crossing.**

Courtesy A.S. Clawson, Jr.

Kelby, barn boss; E.J. Smallfield, caterpillar mechanic; A.H. McKeen, Bert Mason, George Owen, J.P. Breman and C.V. Montgomery comprise the five scalers.

“W.W. Kyniston and H.E. Williams are the filers. Al Dubbs is the chef, while James Vickery is second cook. Excellent food is served to the men. Well-cooked and served in enormous quantities, the items on the bill of fare are an alluring attraction to appetites made keen by rugged work.

“The Pelican Bay outfit is celebrated throughout the west for having the champion log loading crew. In May they broke the record by loading 71 cars ready for the mill in one day. A jump of nearly 20 cars over their own previous championship record.”

As reported On November 3, 1929 Pelican Bay was in full swing and by using two jammers was loading out 35 cars per day to ship to Klamath Falls.

At the same time it was announced that Ewauna Camp, one mile east of Quartz Mountain (in Lake County) was just moving in and would start with 28 sets of fallers with 30 to 40 car loads of logs per day shipped to Klamath Falls.

Marvin Cross was completing a new service station at Quartz Mountain and Redfield Brothers would soon start on a camp ground and service station near the railroad crossing. In addition the company had just completed installation of a water system to half the residences and were working on the balance.

Finally on December 14, 1929 it was reported Robert Sloan was installing a service station at Quartz Mountain.

On November 24, 1930 a post office by the name of Quartz Mountain was established on Highway 140 a short distance southeast of the pass. Mrs. Vera A. Real was the only postmaster. The office was closed to Lakeview, August 31, 1943.

The first mention of the Crane sawmill in Bly was reported in the *Klamath News* of May 31, 1931 when they wrote: “\* \* \* the Crane mill pond construction is under way.”

The Crane sawmill, a semi-portable band mill, employing about 25 men was owned by Harold Crane and Walter Beane. Its actual starting date was about June 20, 1931. By October 22nd, “\* \* \* the Crane mill became the electric



Inside the old Crane Mill in 1940. Sawyer, Ivan Courtwright.

Courtesy Edward Patzke

band saw type." Crane managed the mill which some years later added a planning mill. Logs were obtained from a number of small purchases of timber within trucking distance.

"In 1934," according to *Lumbering in Klamath*, "this company built a circular mill about ten miles northwest of Bly, which was managed by Mr. Beane until 1936, when the mill was sold to the Ivory Pine Company, Ed Ivory being manager. In 1937 Ivory Pine Company installed a band mill; in 1938 it built a planning mill, and in 1940 the plant was electrified. Logs for the mill have been obtained from small purchases of private and Reservation timber in the vicinity.

"On October 22, 1948 the last log went through the Ivory Pine mill at 11:50 A.M. It took three or four months to ship out the remaining lumber. During the 15 years the mill ran it cut 250,000,000 feet of lumber. Pat Ivory, George Butler, Jim McMillan, Al J. Jones, Jim Michaelson, Jim Ivory and Al Coke were the officials. The plant was dismantled and moved to Dinuba, California where it started running in April or May of 1949.

In the meantime the Crane Mill in Bly was sold to Spangler during the mid-

1940's (1945), who was operating it in 1948 at least. Then in 1952 the ownership and name was changed to Bly Lumber Company with Gil Lilly as manager, and Ralph Webber, mill wright.

About 1956 Dan and Roberta McGee bought the mill and in turn sold or leased to E.H. and A.H. Loveness.

The mill burned once during Spangler's ownership and once during the Lilly-McGee regime. On November 6, 1966 fire destroyed the dry kiln at the Loveness mill.

After this the Modoc Lumber Company took over from Loveness to themselves sell on July 7, 1970 to Weyerhaeuser Timber Company for \$400,000. June 11, 1973 saw the beginning of construction on the new \$12,000,000 project. John McCalgin, Modoc's manager, remained to work for Weyerhaeuser.

Finally, November 5, 1973 was set as the target date for the present new Weyerhaeuser plant to open, which seems to have been the approximate date it began operating on a small scale.

Two other sawmills have operated in Bly at different times. One, the Bly Timber Company, a subsidiary of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, ran for a year or



Ewauna Box Company log train at inspection point, midway between Quartz Mountain and Bly, where Sprague River Recreation Area road now crosses old railroad bed. 1938.

Courtesy A.S. Clawson, Jr.



Bachelor cabins being moved from Quartz Mountain to a new camp northeast of town of Sprague River in 1940. Art Messner, engineer, inspecting the engine.

Courtesy A.S. Clawson, Jr.

two around 1930, supposedly cutting timbers for construction at the main mill at Klamath Falls. The other mill, owned and operated by a man named Woodcock, stood south of Highway 140 about two hundred yards and west of the railroad, where some cabins are now located. It ran around the 1934-35 or even later period and cut logs from the South Bly burn.

The Williams Company once had a retail lumber yard at Bly beginning about 1929 or 1930.

When Ewauna and Pelican Bay logging camps were dismantled around the 1937 to 1940 period, the economy of the Sprague River country suffered a severe setback. However, to a somewhat smaller degree this was offset by the establishment of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company's Camp Six and the logging road that eventually led to Camp Nine, on the Summer Lake Rim, and later Camps 11 and 14 on the Klamath Falls-Silver Lake road.

## Roads

As we have seen, the first road to enter the Sprague River Valley was in the 1863-64 period when miners and others passed through on their way from California points, via the Lost River country, to the John Day mines.

At about the same time, a road was laid out from Fort Klamath to the Goose Lake country and beyond. Most of it through the Upper Sprague River Valley also became the Oregon Central Military Road of 1865-67. This road approximates present Oregon State Highway 140 from Beatty to Lakeview.

In 1872, when the first mail route was established between Ashland and Lake City, a combination of these two roads became the line of travel. The John Day road to Yainax and the Military road to Goose Lake Valley.

At about this last date, or as soon as the Upper Sprague River Valley east of the Klamath Indian Reservation began to be settled, two new and shorter routes came into use.

First probably was that over Bly Mountain approximating present 140. Traffic including supplies for the Goose Lake country from Rogue River Valley passed this way. Colahan Station, at the summit of Bly Mountain, probably opened up by 1880 or very soon thereafter.

Secondly, the Keno Springs route probably developed at about the same time, as a much shorter route between fast growing Bonanza and the country around present Bly. How much freight passed over this route is unknown, but it did become the mail route for many years with Royston a way-stop.

Next, when the first railroad was constructed into Klamath County in 1903, stopping at Pokegama, considerable freight for the Lakeview and Paisley country began to be transported through the Bly country. In 1904 a road, at considerable expense to both Lake and Klamath counties, was built northeasterly from Bly, north of Gearhart Mountain and down the Chewaucan River to Paisley, with the road to Lakeview receiving some improvement.

By the late teens and early twenties, considerable agitation arose for better roads between the Klamath Basin and Goose Lake Valley (The S.P. Railroad had reached Klamath Falls from Weed in May, 1909). Up to that time the two roads were little better than cow trails, being almost impassable after early fall rains and winter snows, until quite late in the spring when the mud holes had dried up. Competition grew keen between the supporters of the Keno Springs road and those favoring Bly Mountain.

The *Klamath News* of March 13, 1923 reported that the Bonanza, via Keno Springs, to Bly route had been chosen by the State of Oregon as the best route for an improved highway.

Seen thereafter several things transpired to change the picture; the O.C. & E. Railroad to Sprague River, the founding of Beatty and the amount of pressure brought by certain citizens of those communities turned the tide.

In addition, there is a story current around Bonanza, that the engineer in

charge of the survey crews investigating the two routes had a sudden change of heart. At first, favoring the Keno Springs route, he suddenly changed in favor of the Bly Mountain or present 140 route. It seems that he had a dog, of which he was quite fond, and some thoughtless soul in Bonanza, becoming incensed at some action of the dog, killed him, which caused the engineer to turn against the Bonanza people. (At least this is the story told this writer.) Of course the official version given was that there was much more wayside business to accommodate on the Bly Mountain-Beatty route. This statistic was quite true in light of more recent developments.

Improving roads approximating present 140 was begun in the summer of that year with the U.S. Forest Service adding some improvements in the Fremont National Forest to the east of Bly. Bonanza, however, kept the fight going and it was not until 1927 that it was officially announced that Bly Mountain would be the route of the new Klamath Falls-Lakeview Highway.

The *Klamath Republican* of October 24, 1907 recorded a bit of history well worth reprinting: "The first auto to reach Bly arrived there Monday afternoon about two o'clock, making the run from this city to Bly in six hours. The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. E.J. Murray, D.B. Kendall and Harry Peltz, owner of the machine. The route followed was through the reservation and Sprague River valley. Nothing marred the pleasure of the trip until within three miles of Bly, when one of the springs broke, and notwithstanding the fact that it was repaired at Bly it was the source of a great deal of trouble afterwards. The start for this city was made Tuesday evening, and when a short distance out the spring broke again. Its interference with the steering gear necessitated the running of the machine at low speed the rest of the trip. An insufficient supply of gasoline necessitated the abandoning of the machine at Jack Horton's.

When the news reached Bly that an

automobile was coming, it was telephoned throughout that section, and quite a delegation of ranchers rode into town to get their first sight of the "devil wagon." Nearly the entire population had the pleasure of a ride before Mr. Peltz left. One thing the trip demonstrated was the impossibility of establishing an automobile line between this city and Lakeview. The condition of the roads is such that no machine could stand more than one trip, unless in the hands of an expert and then driven with the utmost care."

(As told to this writer by Everett Bell.) A man by the name of Clapp drove the first auto stage through Bly on the Klamath Falls-Lakeview run. According to Mr. Bell, the kids would climb on top of the fences to watch for his coming. They could see the dust for some time as he approached. Later he was involved in some sort of car parts theft ring in San Francisco.

## Telephone

Telephone service was inaugurated in Bly on Monday, August 22, 1904 by the Midway Telephone and Telegraph Company of Klamath Falls; H.V. Gates, owner, O.B. Gates, Superintendent.

## Electricity

Electricity reached Bonanza late in 1908, or early in 1909, but it was not until September 1929 that the California-Oregon Power Company began extending the line to Sprague River, Beatty and Bly. The Bly electric light plant was installed about January 3, 1930. Exactly when electricity arrived is unknown.

## Water

On November 3, 1929 the *Klamath News* printed the following information: "The Bly Water Company, John Boyle president; R.C. Groesbeck, vice-president; and Ed Kendall, secretary and general manager, started development of the water system in town about one month



Cook House at Ewauna Camp on Quartz Mountain during winter 1930.

Courtesy Carl Proebstel



Everett Bell pulling an automobile out of the Devil's Garden mud on the old Bly-Lakeview road.

Courtesy Doris Bell



A broken axle near the 7C ranch on the Bly-Lakeview Highway. Left to right: Unknown, Everett Bell, Vern Meyers, the owner and an unknown.

Courtesy Doris Bell



Everett Bell working on the Bly-Lakeview Highway near the 7C ranch east of Bly.

Courtesy Doris Bell

ago. Water was secured from a 300' well. The company purchased the original system from A.J. Hannon. A reservoir, of 50,000 gallon capacity has been constructed. Water has been delivered to Ewauna Camp since July 1st, and to the O.C. & E. yards since September 1st. The system just completed consists of 700' of 4" main, and 3,500' of 2" main, with two fire hydrants just installed. The installation crew is now employed hooking up private homes to the main, service to four now being delivered."

## Theatre

A community hall, dance hall, or general meeting place, known as Reed's Hall, once stood on the northeast corner of Edler and Edsall Streets (one block south of Main). Here perhaps were shown the first movies to be seen in Bly. Then sometime in the 1950's a theatre, the Arch, still in use occasionally, was built by George Fullerton.

## Cemetery

There was once an old graveyard across the street (Highway 140) and a little north of the present post office. In other words, about where the U.S. Forestry residence now stands. There were some seven or eight graves in evidence. Only one had a tombstone, which "was loose and kicked around by the kids." Only the name "Cruickshank" is remembered on this stone. It appears this man worked for the Bloomingcamps, got drunk, fell off the saloon steps and was killed.

Later a cemetery came into use which is situated some 3 1/2 miles west of Bly, in Section 30-36-14, 1/2 mile south and 1/2 mile west of the junction of Highway 140 and the old Ivory Pine or Camp Six Road. It lies about 1/2 mile east of the old Klamath Indian Reservation line. It was in use from about 1901 to about 1943, according to dates on tombstones located

there. However, there are about twenty graves with headstones of slab lava rock upon which at some distant date names, or initials and dates were inscribed. These are now indecipherable, so, to whom the graves belong and when the individual was buried there must forever remain unknown.

## Race Track

Bly once had a race track and rodeo grounds where celebrations were held yearly. It was situated on the southeast corner of the intersection of Campbell and Weyerhaeuser Roads. Further, it was situated on the unfenced land slightly over one mile east of Bly and immediately west of the Everett Bell ranch.

The *Klamath News* of May 11, 1930 advertised a "Racing Meet" to be held May 16, 17 and 18, with a dance to be held each night. How long before this celebration had been held there is unknown or whether held at other times of the year.

## Range Wars

There have been several range wars in the Bly area, a few of which were mentioned in *Klamath Echoes No. 10, "Langell Valley - Bonanza"* Issue. We will mention but one here, a more recent and famous case in its day.

It concerns two sheepmen, Way and Morgan, who met in the Devil's Garden vicinity during August, 1925, quarreled and fought over a black sheep. Morgan was killed, Way was found guilty and sentenced to 15 years in the State Prison in Salem.

By January, 1926, after five months there, he was out on \$5,000 bail.

Retried in June, 1927 he was again found guilty, but this time received a sentence of one to seven years.

On April 15, 1930 the *Klamath News* reported that Way had died in prison, thus ending the county's last sheep-cattle war, small though it was.

# Stock History

## From the Klamath News,

### May 10, 1928

It is a far cry from the livestock industry of today in Klamath county, with shipping facilities at Chiloquin, Klamath Falls, Midland, and Texum to the years from 1870 to 1909, when the big outfits drove from here to Red Bluff, and later to Montague or Gazelle. Weeks and months were required for the drive; in the "eighties" the Walkers, Barkers, Taylors, Wells, Finleys, from the Bly district, the Melhases and others from Fort Klamath and stock from the Carr ranch (now Dalton ranch) were trailed to Red Bluff. Eight to nine weeks sufficed for the trip. Perhaps the cattle were in a field no more than three times in the entire distance; the rest of the time, the "buckaroos," or vaqueros, or cowboys, or whatever one chooses to call them, had to "sing to 'em at night."

From 20,000 to 30,000 head of prime beef steers were moved out annually in this manner. They were taken, as a rule, in herds of from 1500 to 2000. As a rule, one big rancher or perhaps two would take their beef through. Then a number of smaller fry would pool together and drive theirs down the long trail to the railroad.

It was a wild country, in those days. All would go well on the beef drive as a rule, until the last night. The cattle would be held in pasture a few miles out of town. Then the buckaroos would decide that the drive was nearly over. Whether the town was Red Bluff, Yreka, Montague or Gazelle, there would be bars and bars, dance halls, all of the lures of civilization, relatively speaking.

The hardy horseman had been back in the mountains for a solid year, drawing their wages a dollar or two at a time. They never thought of resisting temptation. No one expected them to. The next morning, it was a lucky buckaroo boss who had more than three or four old

heads to help him get the wild white faces loaded on the cars. Then the three or four old timers would decide that it was their time to howl, and show the effete citizens of northern California how the real hairy-shapped he-men of the great open spaces really "put it on," when the beef-drive was over.

The owners and foremen usually returned as soon as the beef were loaded and the check received from the buyers. Some of the buckaroos stayed a month, some a few days. For a whole month after the long trail had been covered with long, slowly moving, dust encrusted men and animals, the former unsteady in the saddle, all of them with hanging heads, might be seen slowly retracing the road to the old home ranch. Sometimes it was 150 miles; if the buckaroo happened to have come from Summer Lake, Harney or Malheur counties, it would be as high as 300 miles. Then the year would start over again, with its round of riding, branding, etc.

In the eighties and nineties, horses and mules were more profitable than cattle. At one time, about 1900, Albert Walker had a yearly contract calling for 150 yearling mules at \$100 per head. In addition to a herd of 2000 cattle, he ran 1000 horses. A man who did not own at least 2000 cattle in those days was not considered a stockman at all.

The traditional sheep and cattle warfare has had its usual run of trouble in this country. Its first manifestation was in 1890 to 1895, when the Bloomingcamp brothers had sheep in the Bly country. There was much playful poisoning of sheep, filing of lawsuits, shootings threatened and more or less actual between factions of early pioneer settlers. This has all blown over now, and the contesting parties are now the best of friends. Other sheep and cattle rows in other parts of the county were not settled so amicably.

No mention of early stock raising in Klamath county would be complete without mention of the Goodlows. There is a mountain east of Langell valley which still bears their name, and the memory of some of their escapades will never be erased from the minds of the old time

stockmen. They are said to have carried on a wholesale business in cattle stealing and all kinds of banditry. They were "tough hombres," it is said (and gloried in the fact). The entire family finally died out, with considerable help from the more accurate marksmen of Klamath county.

In 1870 the now closely populated Sprague River valley in the neighborhood of Bly was a wilderness. Jim Taylor and Albert Walker built the first fence in the section. Neither of them ever used their homestead rights. With so many thousand acres of wild meadow land open, neither thought that the country would ever be settled. They finally bought land that others had homesteaded.

For those who are always deplored the hurry, bustle and worry of modern life those days, in some ways, must seem a Nirvanah. Bills were paid once a year. Who wouldn't have liked to live then?

In the fall of the year, when the men had returned from the Montague beef drive, the entire household of the more well-to-do families of this section prepared for their annual shopping tour. Ashland was then the metropolis of southern Oregon. A four or six horse team, drawing a freight wagon and trailer would head the procession, winding down the steep mountains out of the Bly sections, across the Klamath basin, and on over the Green Springs mountains to the city of Ashland. After the wagon, riding in what for that day was luxury, would come the women and children of the family — in a hack — or, in cases of rare opulence, a surrey. At Ashland, the freight wagons would be loaded with provisions for the maintenance of a ranch for a year. And the women and children would have the time of their lives, buying such finery and knick-knacks as the city of Ashland could furnish.

Ashland merchants carried the stockmen of Lake and Klamath counties on their backs for a year at a time. A man paid his bills, and his buckaroos, once a year — when the beef was sold.

For this shopping trip, a month was taken as a rule, although the trip could be made by rushing matters, in 18 days.

The winters of 1878-1879 and 1889-1890 will live long in the memories of Klamath stockmen. Old timers still talk of their severity, the depth of the snow, the extreme cold. In both years, the holdings of Klamath stockmen were in some cases entirely wiped out, and hardly a man escaped losing half his herd. In March of 1890, the Shook brothers gave half of their remaining herd to Albert Walker, Jim Taylor, and other Bly ranchers. They could not feed them enough to keep them alive. There was snow on the ground to a depth of from six to eight feet. And in March, the thermometer was below zero. The Carr herd was practically wiped out. From the Steele swamp and 101 ranch, Carr was then running from 6000 to 7000 cattle. In the spring, all but 200 or 300 had died of starvation and cold. The winter had been so unusually severe that every bit of hay which the country could muster was not sufficient to keep the stock from starving to death.

In the nineties, Henry Jackson was the most influential Indian on the reservation. He ran as high as 2000 head of cattle, and was looked upon by the Indians as their guiding light, their "major domo." The lesser Indians depended upon him for work, advice, help, both financial and otherwise. Jackson later lost most of his fortune.

Charlie Horton was one of the most influential cattlemen in this country in the period 1895 to 1905. Horton, besides operating his ranches in this section, made regular trips through Lake, Malheur and Harney counties in the spring, buying beef to be marketed in the fall. These cattle would be trailed as far as Sprague River valley, where they would be held in pasture until fall. Then, after a second long drive, they would be loaded on the cars at Montague.

Stockmen differ greatly in their estimates of the number of cattle and sheep shipped from here now as compared to those shipped in the early days. Most of the old timers believe that the number was vastly greater then. However, it is pointed out by those in close touch with the industry now, the entire output of Lake and Harney counties came through

here before the railroad came to Lakeview. Where there was one shipper for 1500 cattle in those days, there are now 15 with 100 or even 100 with 15. Then, too, dairying was unheard of in those days. Ranchers with thousands of head of cattle bought wagon loads of canned milk. They disliked "dairying," as they called the milking of a cow for home consumption.

It is believed by those who have seen the old times, and are still in close touch with the situation, that there are perhaps

not more actual cattle shipped now than the old days, yet prior to 1895 sheep were unknown. Butter, cheese, even cream and milk is now shipped out. The total value is vastly increased, it is believed.

[And, be it remembered, the above described drives and railroad shipments have undergone further changes during the past several years, being replaced by huge trucks that load at the ranches and haul the entire distance to the big city markets.--Editor]

## GARNER

Due north of Bly, some 3 1/2 airline miles, there once stood a school named Garner. Approximately at the same time and about 1/4 mile farther north there was a post office of the same name.

To reach the site of this former school, travel east from Bly on Highway 140, one and a half miles to Campbell Road; follow that road north for three miles, turn west one mile, and again north approximately one half mile to Fritz Creek, approximately the site of the Garner school. It stood on the east side of the road, and the location is now a salt ground for cattle.

The post office was approximately one fourth mile farther north at the old

George Boyd ranch home.

The school and post office are said to have been named for the first pupil, Garner Lundy. Exactly when the school commenced or ended is unknown. *Ninety Years of Klamath Schools* tells us that "Ida Grimes taught a 2-month school there in the fall of 1903. Then the school funds ran out, and school was closed as was customary. Nett Drew Peterson taught her first school there in 1904-5.

The post office was established June 7, 1902 and discontinued June 3, 1903. The first and only postmaster was Jessie M. Boyd. A few old-timers still remember the school.

## YOCUM VALLEY

Written by Bertha Covert Sickels  
Tonopah, Nevada, March 15, 1957  
for Ruth King

In answer to the short piece wrote about the settling of Yocum Valley Lake county Oregon, sent in by Mr. A.M. Zevely of Lakeview Oregon, a few weeks ago. I'll try and state this correctly as I can. I was one of the Homesteaders with my husband Charlie B. Covert and my Daughter Pauline who was 10 year's of age at that time. We landed in Yocum on October 23rd, 1914 about 3:30 P.M. Henry Albertson had met us at Klamath

Falls, Oreg. with an iron wheeled wagon and a 3 horse team. We hitched the odd horse to the end of the wagon tongue at every hill going back to Yocum, as we picked up a ton of potatoes near Klamath Falls. We went thru Langell valley and to the Frank Gross Rim Rock Ranch and from there on into Yocum valley there had been but one wagon thru, and no road. Henry followed the one wagon track till it got dark, then Charlie held the team while Henry lit matches and hunted out the track. We had to make it to a small valley called Wild Horse. Henry

had never been there but he thot there was water there for the horses and for camp use. We got there finely Long after dark. It was swampy at a place near a large bunch of willows, so Henry took a small shovel he had on the wagon and dug a good sized hole, then he came in to camp and we all helped get our camp in order for the nite. October nites are pretty cold up in the hills near Yocum valley and we had shipped our bedding it had failed to arive in Klamath Falls, befor we were ready to leave so we only had 2 heavy robes and a heavy coat for bedding. When Henry went out to the hole he had dug it was full of water He filled 2 pails for camp use then watered and fed his horses. Next day we arived in Yocum valley. It was beautiful then all open and wild no fences. Henry and Clarence Albertson had their cabins about built and Henry had moved into his cabin with Henry was sister Pearl 19 years old and Brother Frank 15 years old and our mother Mary Counts Albertson, another sister and her two children had come to Yocum with my mother and Brothers Mrs. Mary Reizenstein, she later married Mr. Cy Be'Craft of Long valley, about 7 miles north of Yocum valley. They had one child Everette BeCraft.

these People, the Albertsons and the Pardue Family's and the Kernan Family and the Gober Family had all come in to settle in yocum valley as Homesteaders From Roseburg Oregon they had all I believe arived in yocum in late June, all come with wagon and team's. We came from The Dalles Oregon. none of us had ever lived where there was so much snow or cold weather so we froze our toes a Little that winter. and we learned to use skies. there was several other Familys Located in yocum valley at that time. the Kreigh's they Got a Postoffice in yocum the following year in 1915. called Kreigh, howEver, it was changed to yocum, later, I cant say for sure Just what year it was changed. There was a family named Dunnman lived on what is known as Alberts Homestead now. they had quite a house there at one time It had several rooms. some one used the lumber to Build their Homestead house after they moved away

and left thir claim, a family named Green had the same claim, they to couldent take the Hardship, and moved on Kreigh's stayed 3 years. the First winter we didnt have a school untill the Fall of 1915 when Miss May Bergoin of Portland, Oreg. was our First Teacher, she Boarded with sister Mary Be'craft, Mary lived in Brother Clarence Albertson's cabin near where the school was held, in Brother Henry's cabin. He had one corner of his cabin closed off with a canvas as he had his Belongings Piled behind it, so as to leave room for the school. Miss Bergoin was a very good teacher, the children that atended school From Each Family I'll do my Best to name, should I leave out any one Please dont be afended, there were 7 from the Gober family, Virgie, Lemual, Jack, Clarence Minnie, Elcie, Mary, Albert and Velma Reizenstein, Pauline Wieck, Ruth and Russel Pardue and Frank Albertson, corlas, Florn and Corvas Kreigh. and the little Myers girl. I dont remember her name. and the following year, our teacher was Miss Verna Weaver now Mrs. May. I believe of California, she taught school in the same cabin. Belonging to Henry Albertson. He was not a sheep hearder and He didnt go off on a toot at any time. he was working at the time I belive on the Old Howard Ranch in Drews valley. feeding cattle all winter, the cabin still had the same canvas up to hide what things that were stored behind it. there was no family Having 2 little girls of that age living in yocum at that time. Miss Verna Weaver Boarded and had a room of her own to her self at all times, with us, the Charlie Coverts, she had the same children in her school as of the year befor, then in 1917 the new school house was built the lumber was halled by wagon and 4 or 6 horse team from Klamath Falls, Oregon. a trip of about 75 miles. the school house was ready for use the fall of 1917. with Miss Aneta Kester of Poe Valley as teacher, the taylor family came in to the valley that fall and homesteaded. virgie Gober did not go to school that fall, there was 4 taylor children Bill-Lena-Hellen and Jessie went to school. Dreighs moved away that year and the Myer's family to

moved out but for the rest of us life went on not easy but Pleasant to us that by that time were use to hardship and cold winters and eating cured meat and dried fruit with plenty beans. Miss Kester boarded with sister Pearl and Brother Clarence, she taught the yocum school several years I believe, there was 3 older boys of Mr. and Mrs. Luther Pardue that had homesteads in yocum. Mr. Alex Pardue (who married Miss Pearl Albertson In 1918 and passed away, the following november of the same year,) and Marvin Pardue. we were a happy lot of people tho our houses were just cabins not warm or nice they were home and we had lots of fire wood to keep us warm yocum valley is realy beautiful its a good sized valley about 4 miles either way. with a high rock peak or hill in the center of it. called center peak. the land is a dark doby soil will grow any thing thats hardy enough to stand the frost if given plenty of water. Now the valley is owned by Henry Albertson and three sons and a california company that runs sheep in on thir holdings every year. and Mr. Everette Be'Craft and Mr. Jerry Ahern the Albertson's have built a large Resivore

and have it stocked with Rainbow trout, a Great place to camp and fish during the summer months. they also irrigate several hundred acres of meddow and grain land for hay and grain. Everette Be'craft also raises a couple hundred acres of grain to thresh these last years. there is two good roads coming into yocum from the east and one from the west. when we first homesteaded we had no road, we just drove over the hill over rock's and down a creek bed that was terriable going down into Dog Lake, the team could just pull the empty wagon up the creek bed, then we would carry all our load up on our backs to the wagon, then hall 1/2 of it to the top of the big hill. unload it, and go back and load up the other half of our load and when we reached the hill top we loaded on the Ballance of our load and went straight down the steep open hill side into the valley. we never tryed to use a wagon If it was wet on account of the sticky mud. but it was pardice in yocum those days to us. We loved it.

Wrote by Bertha B. Sickels, of  
Bonanza, Oregon  
P.O. Box 162



Present Beatty United Methodist Church on the northwest corner of Beatty.

# BEATTY

In 1908, as recorded by Klamath County History, 1941, Mr. and Mrs. Peffley came as Methodist missionaries to the southeast corner of the Klamath Indian Reservation. One faction wanted the Yainax church and parsonage built on Whiskey Creek, three miles from present Beatty, and another wanted both built at or near present Beatty, so they compromised by putting the two buildings three miles apart - the church on Whiskey Creek [north of present Highway 140 - Editor] and the parsonage on the low hill just west of the present church in Beatty. [Before or at about this time there was a very small building on the banks of Sprague River, northeast of present Beatty, that was used as a church - Editor]. It was inconvenient for the missionaries, who often had to ride horseback to and from the church in cold and muddy weather, but the Indians were satisfied and began to build their life around the church. The Reverend J.L. Beatty was the second pastor of the Yainax church and by securing a post office called Beatty on November 10, 1913, was honored by having the town (of one building) named for him.

The first store was started in the woodshed of the parsonage by John Simmons, who became postmaster December 31, 1914 when Reverend Beatty was placed elsewhere by his conference.

In the spring of 1915, J.L. Sparretorn of Bonanza built the first store in Beatty and called it "The Beatty Store." This was the first building in Beatty besides the parsonage. In light of following events of history related, this building was located on the south side of the present highway and west of the post office. John Simmons worked at clearing the land for the building, grubbing sagebrush from land yet untouched and where now a busy little village is located.

John Simmons first came to Klamath County on February 2, 1908, going to Bonanza where he took up a homestead. He stayed on the homestead, doing some outside work, working on the Clear Lake

dam in 1909, and proved up on his homestead in three years under the soldiers' exemption.

Mr. Simmons operated "The Beatty Store" for five years until 1920, when it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. (Annie E.) O.T. Anderson. He went to Bonanza for a year, then returned to Beatty. At that time, history tells us, he built, in partnership with J.L. Sparretorn, "The Sycan Store" on northeast corner of the intersection of Godowa Road and Highway 140, or the Harrison corner. During his many years at Beatty Simmons operated under an Indian traders' license.

In 1923, John Simmons was married to Mrs. Lois Eichhorn of Indianapolis and Mr. and Mrs. Simmons operated "The Sycan Store" until it burned to the ground on April 11, 1929. Mrs. Simmons and Helen Scott barely escaped with their lives. "The Beatty Store", across the street to the south, operated at the time by F.J. Schmitz did not burn. The post office, situated in "The Sycan Store" also burned. The total loss was estimated to be \$35-\$40,000.

Down through the years, fires have almost destroyed Beatty from time to time. The first recorded fire we have found was reported in the *Klamath News* of August 8, 1928 when the J.S. Taylor hotel and garage was destroyed. Many more followed and some will be mentioned.

In the meantime, Frank John Schmitz came to the Klamath Country in 1910, while working for the Southern Pacific Railroad. In 1911 he became associated with Big Basin Lumber Company, of which he later became superintendent of the plant.

The *History of Klamath County*, 1941 (page 526) tells us that Frank J. Schmitz and Carrie Anderson were married on November 29, 1915. She was the daughter of Quinton and Clara (Collins) Anderson, and the sister of O.T. "Buck" Anderson. Quinton Anderson came to the Klamath Country in 1887 where he settled northeast of Bly and "engaged in ranch-

ing. \* \* \* for several years he has been a deputy sheriff and looks after the interests of that office in his section of the county."

The same history also informs us that "in 1920 Mr. Schmitz quit the lumber business and bought a general merchandise business in Beatty [Undoubtedly "The Beatty Store" from his brother-in-law, O.T. Anderson]. In the passing of the years he has made many improvements, modernized the store and built up a very satisfactory trade in the surrounding country; also he has added a filling station, which when installed was the only one between Lakeview and Klamath Falls. His store was the only one of any size between those two points also. Mr. Schmitz was the prime mover in locating the highway where it now is and he donated the land for the present site of the Highway Garage, also the plot where the jail stands. He was instrumental in getting the school erected here, raised the money for the building, also took the lead in building the community hall, and he and the minister put up the local church. During the early 1920's he got out the material for the dam on Link River at the outlet of Upper Klamath Lake."

After the "Sycan Store" fire of April, 1929 the Sparretorn and Simmons partnership was dissolved, and Mr. and Mrs. Simmons erected the "John Simmons Store" (the store still standing) and the "Beatty Hotel" in 1938. The store was sold to Mr. and Mrs. William Phillipson of Los Angeles who operated it under the name of "Phillips Store."

The *Klamath News* of August 3, 1929 wrote: "Beatty Business Houses. One of the pleasant places to stop while en route over the Klamath Falls-Lakeview road is at the town of Beatty.

"The Florence rooms and boarding house, one of the cleanest and best places of its kind in the county, is at the disposal of travelers and the general public.

"It is a new location with Mr. and Mrs. D.G. Florence functioning as proprietors. The clean beds with cheerful rooms, supplemented by palatable food, makes a pleasant break in a long trip.

"John Simmons has recently completed a fine new store building at Beatty, and the building is large enough to provide living quarters as well. He is the pioneer business man of this community.

"Everything about the place is finished attractively. When the Golden Rule store in Klamath Falls moved into a new loca-



The present Beatty Store, built by Simmons about 1929, which has changed hands several times down through the years. The post office once occupied the room at the left of this building. It was in this location when robbed.



The present Beatty post office.

tion, Mr. Simmons purchased the glass cases, and now he is able to display his stock in a splendid manner. Mr. Simmons also has the post office.

"Ames Slack also has a store in Beatty with the building owned by J.L. Sparreton, of Bonanza. Mr. Slack keeps a well selected stock of general merchandise and is enjoying a good patronage. [This would have been the "Sycan Store", rebuilt.]

"The Beatty Store, another general merchandise concern is also a popular trading center. Frank Schmitz is the proprietor and John A. White runs the pool hall here in a building owned by John Hutchinson, who also has recently moved into a fine new home (still standing--Editor).

"Mr. Simmons was the first man to locate in Beatty and he says that the extensive farm and stock country round about provides a generous patronage for himself as well as the others who have recently located here."

By January 8, 1930 lumber was being delivered by the Williams Lumber Company of Bly for the new community hall. And, Mrs. Brymer was leasing the Beatty hotel.

By March 6, 1930 it was reported that Ida Howard was working in the Beatty [should be Sycan—Editor] store. That Dan Driscoll and Jack Harrison each owned one third interest in this store.

On July 3 and 4, 1932 the first Beatty Round-up was held. Bronc riding was won by J. Duffy, \$50.00, with Irvin Chocktoot second, winning \$20.00.

Next, the *Klamath County History* wrote: "The little town now (1941) has three general merchandise stores, a hotel, a garage, a blacksmith shop, the parsonage, and the church (a new structure having been built about 1922 during the incumbancy of the Reverend F.L. Belknap) as well as 'many nice homes of the Indians.' Most of the business of the town depends on the Indian trade. For the past 11 years the Reverend and Mrs. B.V.



Bill Duffy riding Specs at the July 3, 1955 Beatty Rodeo.

Photo by Devere



Benny Moore down on Pretty Boy at the July 3, 1955 Beatty Rodeo.

Photo by Devere

Bradshaw have had charge of the Indian missionary work, which means that they are at the center of the community life."

Following 1941 fires continued to ravage Beatty. The Beatty Store was destroyed on the south side of the highway, the Harrison Store on the north side, and a building just east of The Simmons store. This latter building belonged to O.T. Anderson. Some sixty feet in length it had a garage and workshop downstairs and rooms upstairs. The hotel and other buildings were destroyed at various times.

In 1961 it was reported that \$146,000 worth of new buildings had recently been constructed in Beatty: the six unit, \$35,000 Beatty Motel which was ready by July 4th for rodeo patrons; a new gas storage tank at the Red Top garage; Ja-Mikes Store owned by B.J. Crawford, repainted and remodeled; Cookie's Restaurant and Tavern renovated; and the Beatty Methodist Church, a new roof, foundation and enlarged dining room.

1962 witnessed the opening of a machine shop and service station by H.C. "Hap" Hughes at Ja-Mikes Store, recently reopened by Sylvester Hunt.

## Beatty Post Office

The Beatty post office was established November 10, 1913 at the parsonage atop the hill west of Beatty, with Joseph L. Beatty as postmaster.

John Simmons became the next postmaster, with the office in his store which seems to have been on the south side of the highway west of the present office.

Annie E. Anderson, the first wife of O.T. "Buck" Anderson became postmaster on March 5, 1914 with the office probably remaining in the "Beatty Store".

Herbert R. Bowman became acting postmaster on September 1, 1925.

Next, John Simmons became postmaster October 14, 1925 according to General Services records, December 2, according to Post Office Department records. The office was probably then moved to the Sycan Store building and was burned along with the store on April 11, 1929. By August 3rd, the post office

was located in the west end of the new "Simmons Store" which is still standing. Where the office was situated during the period between April 11 and August 3 is unknown.

On November 22, 1932 the Beatty post office was robbed, government checks between \$10 and \$50 for the Indians was all that was taken. The office, in the southeastern corner of the Simmons store, was reached through a small lobby kept open all the time. From there, access into the office was made by breaking open the bars to the back room.

On February 1, 1942 Veston H. Casey became the post master with the office located on the south side of the highway immediately west of the present office where a present gray house now stands.

Mr. Casey's sister, Mrs. Mary L. Heidenreich, became postmaster on May 1, 1950, located in the Casey house for about one year. Then in 1951 the post office was moved to its present location where Mrs. Heidenreich still presides.

It seems that when Veston Casey took over as postmaster, a dispute arose about the post office which caused it to be moved from the Simmons Store to the south side of the highway to a small garage size shed where it was for a few years before Casey moved it to his house to the east of the shed. Both of these buildings were burned a few years ago and the present building erected on their site.

## Beatty School

Day School No. 2 was located two miles due west of Beatty on the old Ike and Eva Mose ranch. When it was commenced is unknown at this time, but it was later moved to a site exactly one fourth mile due north of Beatty on the east side of Godowa Road. This school was in operation at least as early as 1913-14 if not before. It was probably replaced around the 1925 period. It cost the county, according to Frank Schmitz, about \$1,500 to move it. Schmitz purchased the building when the new school replaced it. Ground for this latter building and the community building which adjoined it were donated by Mrs. Louella

Anderson, O.T.'s last wife. These two combination buildings, school and recreation hall burned during the summer of 1959.

During 1930 the county list shows two teachers and 57 pupils.

A.C. Olson was the first teacher, and usually there was a man and wife team.

During World War II, when there was such a shortage of teachers, Beatty was consolidated with Bly. Then in 1962, Beatty school children were given a choice of attending Bly or Bonanza. At the time, the Bly school bus line extended to Paiute Road (three miles north of Beatty).

## Day School #3

From the Klamath News, November 22, 1932: Pretty Beatty teacher puts Invading Reds to quick Flight. McKinley George, Piute Indian, is in a local hospital recovering from gun wounds in his leg inflicted Monday (21st) morning by "two-gun" Miss Lenora Johnson, 23-year-old teacher of Piute camp school No. 3, eight miles from Beatty.

At 8:30 Monday morning George and Leonard Godowa, drunk, invaded the school building. Miss Johnson and Mrs. Edna Sweetman, her housekeeper, live in a compartment in the rear of the schoolhouse. The drunken Indians were ordered out by Miss Johnson when they entered the living quarters, according to reports of Sheriff Lloyd Low and Sergeant Davis of the state police, who investigated the case.

Intent on "tearing up" the place, the Indians continued their attack and were unstopped by three shots Miss Johnson fired into the floor at their feet from a gun in each hand.

Raising her sights, Miss Johnson fired three times at George's legs. Two of the bullets imbedded in the bone of the right leg and were removed at the local hospital. The third shot inflicted a flesh wound.

The Indians then became frightened and left the premises on a run and a bit sobered, officers said.

Putting her guns down, Miss Johnson rang her 9 o'clock school bell and promptly opened school as though nothing had happened.

Miss Johnson told officers when they arrived that she had been molested by catcalls and prowlers outside the building for about two weeks. Suspecting trouble, she had been given two automatic 32 caliber guns by officers at Beatty with the instructions "shoot at the legs to prevent escape."

Sheriff Low said Miss Johnson was a bit uncertain whether she had done the right thing. He refilled her gun and informed her she had a perfect right to protect her home.

George was brought to the hospital by friends near Beatty who had bandaged his leg to prevent bleeding. Officers had not located Godowa Monday evening.

Three other Indians were lodged in the county jail for drunkenness. Later in the day Miss Johnson noticed a group of drunken Indians approaching the school building on horseback. She phoned officers at Beatty. Two state policemen on regular patrol duty drove out toward the school. When the Indians noticed the officers approach, Royce Chocktoot, Horace Chocktoot and Joseph Godowa straddled one horse and with a gallon jug of liquor swinging in the air turned and raced down the road.

The officers easily overtook the stumbling mount and opened their siren. The excited and overtaxed horse fell, throwing itself, two Indians and gallon jug against the car. The other Indian fell under the horse. The Indians and jug were loaded in and brought to the county jail.

The "two gun" teacher came to Klamath Falls a year ago and applied for an Indian school. She was not particular about living conditions. She had attended Bellingham normal school in Washington and had nurses training in a Centralia, Washington hospital.

She taught at the same school last year and had taught in Indian schools before coming here.

Sheriff Low said the two bullets taken from the Indian's leg were from different guns as one shot a copper jacketed shell and the other a lead jacket. A small bone in George's leg was fractured in two places, x-ray pictures revealed.

Charges will be brought against the Indians, Sheriff Low stated.

*Klamath News* Editorial, by Malcolm Epley, November 23, 1932: Our Two-Gun School Ma'am. When a Klamath county school ma'am draws her trusty guns and starts shooting at the legs of threatening Indian bucks, that is a news story. It is the sort of a yarn that the press services carry on their wires all over the country, and we can imagine how it is received by some of the readers of the east.

Even years of tourist travel that have brought hundreds of thousands of easterners into the west to visit, has not entirely removed the belief among many easterners that the west is still infested with wild Indians, gun-toting whites and wild animals.

It was only a few days ago that the wires carried a story about a Florida woman who wanted to know if it would be safe to drive through Oklahoma and if there were any white men between villages. When that woman reads the story of Klamath's two-gun school ma'am even the reassuring letter sent her by the Oklahoma chamber of commerce may not be sufficient to induce her to venture west of Tallahassee. To the Atlantic seaboard resident, Oklahoma and Oregon are in the same category.

Meanwhile, we in the peaceful west have learned to look to the east for most of our stories of gunplay. Such episodes as that at the Piute camp Monday morning are so infrequent they make news. Gun battles in our western cities have become so common they are hardly put on the wires any more.

*Klamath News*, November 27th, 1932: Two-gun School Ma'am Still Likes Work in Indian Area. Miss Lenora Johnson still likes the Indians, despite the fact that she was called upon to take up arms to defend herself and her pupils last Monday morning, when McKinley George, Modoc Indian, whose leg was the target for two revolver bullets, and Ossie Brown, a California Indian, both drunk, invaded her living quarters.

"If I had not driven them out the others might think that they could get

drunk and come around," Miss Johnson, who is 23 and an average-sized blonde with large steel-blue eyes, declared.

The "two-gun school ma'am", during the interview, related that in addition to teaching, she is also called upon to give medical assistance to not only her pupils, but many of the older Indians who reside nearby. But, she likes her work and being of service and helping those who need help is her life's ambition.

Incidentally, she stated that last Monday was the first time she ever shot a revolver, and in true Western fashion, she used two, and a bullet from each of the guns struck George's leg.

She plans to visit George at the Klamath Valley hospital before she returns to her school Monday.

Miss Johnson, who is visiting her brother Phillip Johnson and uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Christy, over the week-end, stated at the Christy home Friday that it was last Monday morning about 8:30 o'clock when George, Brown and Leonard and Joe Godowa, the latter two Piute Indians, went to the school house and George asked for a book from the branch county library which Miss Johnson runs.

Brown became involved in an argument with Frank Thompson, Indian farmer, and Thompson finally hid in Miss Johnson's living quarters. The 25 Indian children of the school had already been frightened away by the intoxicated Indians, Miss Johnson said.

George and Brown talked and then went in to find Thompson and George threatened him, she stated. She went into her living quarters through another door, got the two guns from the bedroom and intended to give one to her house-keeper, Mrs. Edna Sweetman, who resigned Tuesday, but could not find her.

Armed with the two revolvers, held at her hips as she had seen Western men do in moving pictures, Miss Johnson told the men to leave.

"It was just a bluff, because I didn't think I'd have to shoot," she said.

George replied, "No, I will not leave," according to Miss Johnson. She then "peppered" the floor but he didn't move

or show any fear, she said. It was then that she shot him in the legs. Bullets from each of the guns lodged in one of his legs. One went through and struck the floor, she said.

George, Miss Johnson stated, grabbed at his leg and then walked out, turning his head to grin at her as he left.

Brown also left, but Thompson stayed. Then came a report that the men were returning armed and the children and Thompson were locked in the school house. Later she let the children and Thompson out the back door to go and hide in the willows nearby. Miss Johnson and Mrs. Sweetman, each armed with one of the revolvers, hid for a time.

Then the telephone rang. She had previously telephoned officers that she had shot George in the leg. The call was from Mrs. Frank Schmitz of Beatty who was inquiring whether or not Miss Johnson was safe.

Miss Johnson and Mrs. Sweetman looked out through a hole in the wall. One Indian was patrolling in front of the building like a sentry. Two others were coming up the road. Others were hammering on the door.

The constable, David Chocktoot, an Indian, and Frank Young, a special officer, arrived. Chocktoot stayed.

Miss Johnson rang the school bell and opened school on time at 9 o'clock. Chocktoot stayed throughout the day to protect the teacher and the children should any Indians return.

"I wasn't scared any time during the morning," Miss Johnson said.

Miss Johnson had studied nursing before coming here to teach a year ago this last September. Previously she had taught at the Flathead reservation in Montana. She often gives medical treatment to the children and the older Indians, she says.

She likes the Indians and believes if she can help them she should do so.

The Indians still like her, she says, and do not blame her for her act.

Miss Johnson, although only 23, appears capable and has a striking personality. She is a blonde with sharp blue eyes, regular features and of average size for a woman.

"I didn't think anything about this being in the newspapers," she commented, "although they warned me about reporters after it happened."

## Mrs. Louella O. T. Anderson

Mrs. Louella Anderson was born in December, 1894 less than one half mile east of where she now lives, and has lived for many years. Her present home is approximately one half mile due north of Beatty on the Godowa Road.

At the age of six years she was taken from her home along the south bank of Sprague River and placed in the old Yainax Agency boarding school. Of this school she has only the most unpleasant of memories, all the children being infected with lice, the buildings lacking heat and very cold, and the food very poor. To this kind of environment the children were arbitrarily taken from fairly clean homes. Thus they were initiated into the "white man's ways."

Later she was sent to school at Klamath Agency where they ate better but the lice and other conditions were about the same. At that place she was given a choice, which she took of staying there or attending Sherman Institute in Riverside, California. She remembers she was attending Sherman Institute when the Titanic was sunk, April 15, 1912. She was almost eighteen at the time.

After finishing school, she married a William Beal and moved away from the Sprague River country for a time, to live in the Modoc Point for a number of years. The Beals had two children, a boy and a girl, both now deceased.

Her second marriage was to O.T. "Buck" Anderson. Six children, two girls and four boys were born to this union, Anna, Jim, George, Miller, Junior and Toots.

After returning from Sherman Institute the name Elva was added to her reservation title, but she never knew when or by whom.

She remembers a little church that once was located at Junior Anderson's present home near where she was born. Also how the Indians used to spear sal-

mon in Sprague River, just under the little ridge where she lived. The location was called *Weloxi*, and referred to a nearby white formation of earth. Further, at this location, she remembers an old ford across Sprague River immediately above the salmon spearing hole. One wonders if this is the early emigrant crossing of miners and others from California enroute to the John Day mines, via Sycan Marsh, Silver Lake and Crooked River near the latter's headwaters. All these activities centered at this almost forgotten spot, tended to make this site a sort of community center of the area, the predecessor of later Beatty.

Mahekesket, meaning "Big Belly" was one of the influential Indians of the neighborhood and will be remembered as one of the signers of the 1864 Council Grove Treaty. He was the father of Harrison Brown, who kept a stopping place

along the Linkville (Klamath Falls) and Chiloquin wagon road to Lakeview in earlier days. Mahekesket is remembered further by having a nearby cemetery named for him. This cemetery lies about two miles northeast of Beatty and in it are buried Mrs. Anderson's husband and son George. The latter was killed in a plane accident three years ago while rounding up wild horses for the All Indian Rodeo in Klamath Falls.

Mrs. Anderson lives alone and at nearly 80 years of age, still drives her own car. The Anderson family own considerable property along Sprague River in the Beatty vicinity. Mrs. Anderson can readily tell you about all the older Indians, where they lived and who their children were, even who they married, etc.

Mrs. Anderson is very active in the Beatty Methodist Church.



The Saddle Mountain Lumber Company sawmill near Sprague River. It was never finished beyond this point.



Teamsters at the Campbell-Towle Lumber Company (later Lorenze) sawmill near Sprague River.

## SPRAGUE RIVER

The youngest town in the Sprague River Valley is Sprague River, begun as a direct result of the construction of the O.C. & E. Railroad. At approximately the same time, anticipating the arrival of the railroad, several logging camp operations were also set in motion. And at least two sawmills were planned and construction commenced.

One, the Saddle Mountain sawmill, an H.H. Edmonds-J.W. Siemens' corporation project, was first mentioned in local newspapers on March 20, 1920. The corporation encountered financial troubles when the First Trust and Savings Bank of Klamath Falls closed on January 12, 1921. Although reopened a few months later, the bank became defunct within two years. The litigation connected with the bank closure resulted in the Saddle Mountain sawmill not being able to install the necessary machinery, so the unfinished plant was eventually sold to Campbell-Towle Lumber Company. The mill stood upstream and east of the present bridge across Sprague River, where the concrete foundations can still be

seen immediately north of the stockyards.

The other sawmill was incorporated under the name of Sprague River White Pine Lumber Company by Sharp and Schmidt, backed by Cullers and Bowles of the Northwest Bridge and Iron Company of Portland, who seem to have been the real owners. The *Klamath News* of June 26th, 1923 reported that "this mill will soon be completed."

In the meantime, on May 11, 1923 the *Klamath News* announced that Frank Mutto, Superintendent of Yainax Sub-Agency and B.E. Wolford, store-keeper at Yainax, had laid out a townsite of 300 acres (the future town of Sprague River - Editor).

Then on August 21, 1923 the *News* announced that B.E. Wolford had moved from Yainax to Sprague River. It seems that he moved his store and post office building overland from Yainax, with that building becoming the first set up in the new town, and known as the Wolford and Wann Store. Dibbon Cook helped move this building.

U.S. Postal records show the office as officially opening in Sprague River on September 14, 1923.

The postal history of the Sprague River office will be finished at this time, before continuing with other events of the little mushrooming city.

Four years later, on April 20, 1927 Patrick L. Gogerty became the postmaster with the office moved to the ground floor of his rooming house adjoining the Wolford and Wann Store on the north.

Then on November 27, 1938 Anna G. Wolford became the postmaster, with the post office probably moved back to the original site. These buildings, the Wolford and Warm Store, and the Gogerty building burned at some unknown date, probably in the mid-1940's.

Bonnie B. Brotherton became the postmaster on November 1, 1946, with the post office located in a building, probably on the site of the Gogerty property.

On February 19, 1947 the post office was moved into a building west across the street to a location where the Ray Pickett Motel had stood. Freida B. Varnum became the postmaster.

Florence M. Shadley became the next postmaster on July 6, 1960 with the office moved east across the street into a building, still standing and painted white, that is just south of the present Allen's Store.

Some 14 months later, Teresa M.

Herrera became the postmaster in a small building, still standing with a porch on the front, just south of the old Carnini Restaurant.

We are next informed by postal records that the Sprague River post office was discontinued April 23, 1965 with the mail transferred to Chiloquin and delivered to the patrons by a mail route.

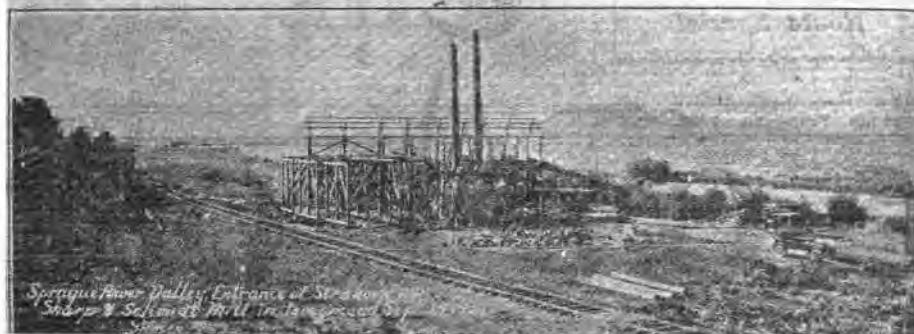
This route, according to Klamath Falls postal records, appears to be Contract Route No. 97630 out of Klamath Falls with the office in Sprague River a contract rural post office.

Three postmasters have served Sprague River under this system, Claudette Barclay, Joanne E. Sutherland and Pauline Allen, the last and present holder of the office. Dibbon Cook thinks the location of the office under Claudette Barclay was in the building south of Allen's Store where Florence M. Shadley was postmaster.

Joanna E. Sutherland ran the office in the present Allen's Store when she operated that establishment. For the past several years Pauline Allen has operated the office in its present location, to the right of the Allen's Store entrance.

Returning now to the lumber industry we find that on August 28, 1924 the Sprague River White Pine Lumber Company sawmill was sold by Joseph Bowles to Edgerton and Adams. The sale included the sawmill, completed but never operated, and one and a half million feet of

## New Sprague River Mill Under Construction



Sharp & Schmidt sawmill at Sprague River, under construction during September 1923.

logs in the river. The mill was situated 200 yards from the terminus of the O.C. & E. Railroad and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of the new townsite of Sprague River.

On March 9, 1925 the Campbell-Towle Lumber Company purchased the sawmill from Edgerton and Adams. It was at that time only a small circular mill, but by May 10, 1928 was a band mill with a capacity of 75,000 feet per day, with a planing mill added.

W.E. Lamm in *Lumbering in Klamath*, 1944, states: "In 1928 the company sold to G.C. Lorenz, who rebuilt the mill completely and operated it under the name of Lorenz Lumber Company, cutting timber from Cherry Creek, Rock Creek, and Whiskey Creek units. In the middle of 1930 the plant was sold to the Crater Lake Lumber Company, for whom Huntington. Taylor was manager. In 1912 a box factory was added, and in 1937 the Crater Lake Box and Lumber Company was organized and operated the plant under lease from Crater Lake Lumber Company until December 28, 1942. It was during this time that a logging rail-

road was constructed to the southeast with a logging camp established on present Highway 140 where the first pine timber is entered,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of the Sprague River-Chiloquin road. Logs were obtained from Whiskey Creek, Bly-Brown Creek, Trout Creek, and Squaw Flat units of the Reservation and also from private holdings. On January 1, 1943 the Crater Lake Lumber Company again started operations and continued until the fall of 1943 when the sawmill was shut down and dismantled; the box factory was then sold to the American Box Corporation, which is still (October, 1944) operating it. Crater Lake Lumber Company has been selling logs since the middle of 1943 up to and including the present time, part of its logging operations being carried on under contract by the Beatty Logging Company."

School history of Sprague River will next be reviewed. As we have seen under Bly school history the name Sprague River was first applied to a school in that vicinity, the name being changed to Bly in 1883 when the new county of Klam-



The second and last Sprague River school still standing but unused.



Main Street in Sprague River sometime around 1930. Right Side: Wolford and Wann store, the first building in town, with Wolford standing in front; two story building with the post office downstairs and Gogerty rooms upstairs; taller white building, the Ed Gowan store. Left Side: pool hall, restaurant, Pickett Hotel, confectionery and Klamath Apartments; service station and an unidentified residence.



Water tank in front of the Hub Billiard Parlor in Sprague River.

Courtesy Dibbon Cook

ath was formed.



**Sprague River Fire Department, 1962:**  
Back row, left to right: Bud Gengee,  
Sylvan Crume, Jim Rogers, Irwin Crume.  
Front: Jim Coburn, Robert Haskins,  
Howard Roff and Dibbon Cook, Pres.

Then after a lapse of many years, Klamath County school directory lists for 1920 show a "Sprague River" as District No. 54. The 1921 directory also records "Sprague River" as District No. 54. Following that, directories are missing for several years, but the 1925-26 list shows No. 54 as Beatty, with No. 59 assigned to Sprague River.

What seems to have happened, was that the old Day School No. 2, some two miles west of present Beatty, may have been known as "Sprague River" on county records until such time as that school was moved to Beatty, and the town of Sprague River was inaugurated by Mutto and Wolford in 1923.

The *Klamath News* of August 17, 1923 wrote that the O.C. & E. Railroad had reached Sprague River and that the Sprague River Lumber Company was building a small school house, probably



**Out for a drive to "the Falls". Note the right hand drive and smooth tires. Charlie Robbins, Sam Riddle and Hi Robbins.**

Courtesy Dibbon Cook

the one later to be known as the "red school." This "red school" was located about 100 yards east of the last school buildings which are still standing.

Later, a school to replace the "red school" was built about 100 feet north of the present building and finally replaced by those used during Sprague River's greatest population growth and as stated before, still-stands. At one time a "teacherage" was built just south of the main building, and on completion it was discovered that no rear door had been built.

By 1930 there were 2 teachers and 51 pupils; and in 1938 some 58 pupils.

At some unknown date, but probably after 1947 the older pupils may have been bused to Chiloquin. However, Klamath County school directories show that the primary grades were taught at Sprague River to as late as June, 1964.

The town of Sprague River, although a booming place during the hey-day of the lumbering industry, is now mostly deserted except for the garage-service station, the store-post office, and a considerable number of residences.

On Tuesday June 4th, 1974 we made a survey of the town of Sprague River accompanied by Dibbon Cook, Ruth Heidrich, and Blanche Gowan. The following is a recapitulation of the town to the best of these old timers' memories:

From south to north on the east side of the main street:

1. Garage and Service station built by Willis Pankey.
2. Site of the original Wolford & Wann Store, the first building in Sprague River, burned at an unknown date, rebuilt by Dibbon Cook, and the location at one time of Cook's shoe repair shop and Book's General Store.
3. Adjoining Wolford & Wann's Store, the site of Gogerty's two story building, with the Sprague River Rooms upstairs and post office down.
4. Site of a restaurant at one time, now two small buildings on approximate site.
5. The Mitchell store and later Carnini restaurant.
6. Shadley and Barclay post office loca-

tions in the present white building.

7. Allen's Store, originally built by Ed Gowan, thought to be the oldest building in town, later owned by Sparretorn, Heidrich, Geinger, with Dwight Kerscher, operator, Jim Rogers, Joanna E. Sutherland and finally Rod and Pauline Allen.

From south to north on the west side of the main street:

1. Dibbon Cook's Motel
2. Present fire house.
3. The sites of several businesses, including a bakery, a drug store, and a barber shop with a lady barber.
4. Site of the Hub Pool Hall, operated by Hodges and Lodge.
5. Site of a restaurant.
6. Site of the Ray Pickett Motel building in which were situated three businesses: a confectionery store, the Hotel entrance and the Klamath Cafe.
7. Jack Perch & Fred Zerbel Pool Hall (deserted but still standing).
8. Site of Charlie and Hi Robbins Service Station.

Sprague River has its own water system, installed about 1929, with water being pumped from a well about 1/4 mile southeast of the main part of town. There are a few other wells besides, one at the school, one at Dibbon Cook's home, one near the old Depot, northwest of the present school buildings, and probably drilled by the O.C. & E. Railroad, and finally one that Wolford had in the middle of the street in front of his store.

There is a Friends' Church built by the Indians, a volunteer fire department, with three trucks and a two way fire radio. Sprague River also has a 1962 Cadillac coach used as an ambulance.

A Reservation telephone line passed through the vicinity as early as 1907 or 1908, with another line arriving with the railroad in the fall of 1923. Electricity probably arrived in 1929. No jail was ever built in Sprague River, customers being taken to Beatty.

The Sprague River Valley towns of Bly, Beatty and Sprague River are the nearest shopping centers to a rapidly increasing rural acreage sub-division population explosion. What its outcome will be, no one at present can tell.

# O.C. & E. Railroad

The Oregon, California and Eastern Railroad (O.C. & E., also sometimes known as the Strahorn Railroad), has been perhaps the largest single factor in developing the timber and agricultural industries in the Sprague River Valley. The railroad itself owes its immediate beginning to the initiative of Robert E. Strahorn, who arrived in Klamath Falls Saturday, November 20, 1915, to meet with railroad interested citizens of the Klamath Country.

Prior to that time, railroading in the Klamath Country can be traced back to 1855 when the Pacific Railroad survey party under Williamson and Abbott made the first preliminary scouting trip, from south to north, along the eastern base of the Cascade Mountains through Oregon and extreme Northern California.

Railroad surveys, projections on paper, and proposed construction became the subject uppermost in everyone's minds, especially wildcat promoters, in the early 1860's and continued for many years. Completion of the first transcontinental railroad with its final joining of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific systems on the deserts of Northern Utah on May 10, 1869 fanned the flames of imagination anew.

Later, with the completion of the California and Oregon Railroad, with the Golden Spike ceremony at Ashland on December 17, 1877 everyone wanted to build a railroad and get some sort of land grant whereby to receive thousands of acres of free land.

As early as July 2, 1864 Congress had granted the State of Oregon certain lands "to aid in the construction of a Military Road from Eugene City to the eastern boundary of said state." This road followed up Sprague River from a point six or eight miles west of the present town of Sprague River, to a point some four or five miles east of Bly.

Next, on March 3, 1869 Congress extended the time for completion of this road with the added provision for selection of suitable lands for " \* \* \* depot

grounds, water tanks, switches, warehouses or turnouts for a railroad, should one be constructed over said route."

Then, on January 12, 1870 the Governor of Oregon certified the Oregon Central Military Road had been completed. Accordingly on April 21, 1871 the United States Government deeded thousands of acres of open land (every odd section for three miles on either side of the road) to the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road Company for a road that had not been and never was completed. Only built (and that very poorly) to the summit of the Cascade Mountains, with a few wagon tracks, made by others, to the eastern border of the state, it was considered "completed." Thus it will be seen that nearly one half the land in the Bly area came from these odd section O.C.M. lands, clearing up the point that many old time ranches do not show on Government homestead records.

On July 2, 1874, a railroad, the Corvallis and Eastern, was formed with the intention of building across Oregon from Yaquina Bay on the Pacific Ocean, through the central part of the state to Ontario, on Snake River, there connecting with a railroad still in the planning stage, that would later cross Southern Idaho and follow down the Columbia River. After years of failure and frustrations, this road was actually completed from the ocean to as far as 57 miles east of Albany, Oregon. Some construction was done east of the Cascades along what is now the North Santiam Highway. Originally, a branch line was envisioned, to run south from some point near present Burns, to Winnemucca, Nevada, on the Central Pacific Railroad. By 1893-94 this road was bankrupt.

Thereafter for many years, Southeastern Oregon remained untouched, and still is, from any attempt to actually construct railroads across it. However, numerous surveys and paper projections crisscrossed it from time to time. Actually numerous branch lines have approached its borders but none succeeded in follow-



O. C. & E. Railroad engine No. 1 at the terminal in Klamath Falls. Robert E. Strahorn, promoter, is the man in the straw hat and light "duster."



Thought to be the excursion trip of business men from Klamath Falls to the end of the line on the O. C. & E. Railroad, when that concern was accepted by the city, in September, 1923.



Ewauna Box Company moving their road building equipment from McCready Camp (Lone Pine) to end of the O. C. & E. Railroad at Sprague River in 1928. They made their track as they went.



Great Northern engine, a Mallet, No. 1968 on the O.C. & E. Railway at Sprague River, between Klamath Falls and Bly. 1939-1940 period. Courtesy A.S. Clawson, Jr.

ing out their original plans to connect with some other railroad across the state.

To the north in 1899, the Columbia Southern branched from the Oregon, Washington Railway & Navigation line down the Columbia River to arrive at Shaniko on May 13, 1900. Its preliminary surveys reached Prineville and its officials hopefully predicted it might be extended. This line was replaced in 1911, when the combined Hill and Harriman lines built up the Deschutes River Canyon to reach Bend for a Golden Spike Celebration on October 5th of that year.

As late as 1904, there was still talk of which railroad, the Corvallis & Eastern, or the Columbia Southern would first reach Central Oregon. Neither did.

Also from the west, but farther south came what started out as the Oregon Midland Railroad, but ended up as the Klamath Lake Railroad. As constructed, it branched from the Southern Pacific Railroad at Thrall, California and by means of switchbacks reached Pokegama, in extreme southwestern Klamath County on May 1, 1903. Its avowed destination had been Klamath Falls but it was partially abandoned by 1911.

The Klamath Lake Railroad owed its demise to a new railroad that came from further south, at Weed, California, where the Southern Pacific commenced building a line that reached Klamath Falls on May 20, 1909 and Chiloquin and Kirk in 1911.

Also from the south, but farther east came the Nevada, California & Oregon Railroad, starting at Reno, December 22, 1880, which floundered around for years with many changes in route and destination, finally reaching Lakeview as a narrow gauge line on January 10, 1912.

From the east, up the Malheur River, came yet another branch line. This time, Harriman's Oregon Short Line Railroad which began in Ontario and reached Vale in 1906, but was yet seven months short of reaching Crane, near Burns in Harney County.

One other line, a proposed one, remains to be mentioned. It was to connect the Rogue River Valley with the Klamath Country, with a possible extension to intercept the Central Pacific at some vague point on the Humboldt River in

Nevada. Commenced in the Rogue River Valley, the preliminary survey was made in 1869 by Jesse Applegate and apparently brought to a standstill by Captain Jack when it reached the California line south of present Malin, Oregon.

Thus it will be seen; that by the time Robert E. Strahorn arrived on the scene, undeveloped Southeastern Oregon was reached but not entered by four railroads.

1. The combined Oregon Trunk and the lines of James J. Hill and E.H. Harriman respectively, ended at Bend.
2. The Malheur branch of the Oregon Short Line, still short of its destination Crane, Oregon.
3. The Nevada, California & Oregon ended at Lakeview.
4. The Southern Pacific's Weed-Klamath Falls line ended at Kirk.

Prior to arriving at Klamath Falls, Strahorn and other interested railroad personages had just completed a junket which visited the dead-ends of the above mentioned railroads in the order given above.

Before proceeding with the history of the Oregon, California & Eastern Railroad, it may be well to understand to a small degree the background of Strahorn, the man who was to promote the proposed new connecting railroad to an uncertain joining with one or more of the other dead-ends.

Strahorn was born in Center County, Pennsylvania, May 15, 1852, thus making him 63 years of age when he first arrived at Klamath Falls. He had moved to Illinois at the age of four and took up the printer's trade at 13. He followed journalism for eleven years.

Then during 1875-76 he served under General Crook in the Sioux War, and was commended for gallantry by the Secretary of War. He later wrote several books on Colorado, Utah, Montana, Oregon and Washington. After a short time spent in railroad construction and operations, he entered the advertising and publicity department of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1878. While thus employed he made his first visit to Spokane, Washington, scouting the situation for Eastern railroad capitalists. Shortly thereafter he went to

Boston in 1890 where he seems to have remained some seven or eight years, engaged in the bond business. It was during this period that he became one of the original promoters of the Granby mine in British Columbia.

Strahorn returned to Spokane in 1898 where he entered the business of establishing electric lighting and power plants, constructing plants at Centralia, Washington; Wallace, Idaho; Sumpter, Oregon; and North Yakima, Washington. He held a large interest in the Bellingham, Kennewick and Pasco light and power plants as well as the irrigation plant at Pasco. He is further credited with founding the cities of Haley, Shoshone, Payette, Caldwell and Mountain Home, Idaho; and Ontario, Oregon.

He became quite active in 1905 in promoting railroad building projects. About 1909 he formed the North Coast Railway Company to build an independent line from Spokane to Walla Walla to eventually be extended through Yakima Valley to Seattle and Portland, which was later taken over by Harriman. Usually his promotions were sold to larger companies for a satisfactory profit.

To close out Strahorn's later career, it seems he was married twice, his first wife passing away in 1925. He was again married by October 7, 1927 at the age of 85 to Ruby Garlund in San Francisco. He and his wife settled there, where she passed away in 1936. Strahorn died March 30, 1944 at the age of 92 years.

When Strahorn, "the man that changed Spokane from a village to a city," first arrived in Klamath Falls a mass meeting was held and there he presented his 400 mile "Strahorn System."

He announced that he wished to build railroads, in other words, connect the dead-ends by building a line from Klamath Falls to Silver Lake, and from there connecting links to Bend, Lakeview and Burns, the latter slightly north of the first projected route through the Harney Valley. During August, 1916 and the following months, Strahorn approached the Mayor and City Council of Klamath Falls, and other prominent men of the area, with his plan for the "Strahorn

System." In the meantime, he had decided to expand his "System" to include branch lines to Merrill, Bonanza and Bly.

However, before arriving in Klamath Falls, Strahorn, to expedite his plans, had incorporated the Surprise Valley Railroad Company on October 28, 1915 as a part of his master plan. Originally the route extended from Flanigan, Nevada, on the Westwood Branch of the Southern Pacific, to Cedarville, (located in Surprise Valley in Modoc County), but by supplementary articles of incorporation filed almost a year later (October 26, 1916), the route was extended-northwesterly to Lakeview, Oregon.

It may be of interest to know that by this time the railroad following up the Malheur River reached Crane on July 11, 1916, thus completing the last dead-end in the planned "Strahorn System."

Returning to the Surprise Valley Railroad, considerable right of way was acquired, and in August, 1916 the newspapers reported that J.E. Sexton of the Eureka and Palisades would undertake the job of building the line. The projected route extended southward from Lakeview, parallel and east of the Nevada, California and Oregon to Willow Ranch, then up Willow Creek and through the Warner Mountains at Fandango Pass by means of a 4820 foot tunnel at 5364 feet elevation, almost 800 feet under the summit. It would then go down a 2.2% grade into Surprise Valley, through Cedarville, west of the lakes, and entering Nevada near the Modoc-Lassen county line. It would continue through Duck Lake Valley, over the second summit and down into Buffalo Meadows with a 2.35% grade. After skirting the west side of the Smoke Creek Desert, it would go over Sand Pass, cross the Western Pacific near Astor and join the Southern Pacific near Flanigan. Distance over the projected route would be 154 miles. After acquiring a substantial portion of the right of way, the project lay idle for a number of years and was finally abandoned in 1927. Strahorn hoped to connect with the Great Northern or Union Pacific near Bend, and the Nevada, California and Oregon at Lakeview. With his base at Klamath Falls

on the Southern Pacific, he hoped to interest one or more of the four large companies in purchasing his "Strahorn System."

Strahorn's proposed railroad would reach Olene in three months, Dairy in six, and Sprague River in twelve. All that was necessary was for the communities affected to hand him terminal sites and rights of way "on a platter," and raise a reasonable bonus — in the case of Klamath Falls, \$300,000. He was confident that enough capital would come in as soon as we were on a through line that we would not miss that trifling sum. Klamath Falls rose to the challenge, voted bonds for the required bonus and took subscriptions for terminal sites, etc. Captain J.W. Siemens started the subscription list with \$5,000 and others gave as generously, according to their ability. A "one thousand club" was organized among the women, seeking to enlist a thousand women who would pledge to give a certain amount regularly each month for five months. Charles W. Eberlein of the Enterprise Land and Investment Company, who acted as trustee of the railroad terminal fund, was the largest single contributor, giving a mile and a half of right of way 100 feet wide, 3,000 feet for freight yards, and all the terminal lands necessary except the site for the passenger terminal, which the Business Mens' Association and others were buying. In 1912 Mr. Eberlein had interviewed James J. Hill at St. Paul in an effort to interest him in extending his lines to the city and at that time had offered to him these lands east of the city. Hill having declined for the time, Mr. Eberlein had kept the lands intact, hoping for an acceptance of his offer, but now, feeling that Strahorn's project offered the best chance of connecting with the Hill lines, turned his property over to him.

The first preliminary surveys seem to have been run as early as January, 1916. Included in these was a line which exited from the main Klamath Valley, up the west side of Link River.

Commencement of construction was delayed until Strahorn had the money "in hand." Then on May 3, 1917 the first ground was broken when Mrs. George

McDonald of Langell Valley turned the first shovel-full of dirt near Third Street and Klamath Avenue. Actual construction began three days later, and on May 12th, the contract between the city and Strahorn was signed.

The Klamath Falls Municipal Railroad's (as it was sometimes called) first locomotive arrived August 18th, and helped in laying the track toward Olene that fall. The first trip in a railway coach was made November 6th. It was not until the following year on July 3rd, 1918 that the first freight was shipped from Olene on the new line.

By August 22nd, a side track was completed at Olene and it was reported that lumber was piled high on all available space, awaiting shipment to various markets, some 530 wagon-loads of lumber having been unloaded there. With the first intimation that a railroad would soon tap the area, there was a rush of sawmill building in the Swan Lake, Pine Flats and Hildebrand areas. These mills started production before the arrival of the railroad, so to market their product, manufacturers commenced hauling their lumber by horse and wagon.

Construction work was slowed by legal entanglements, time extensions, which Strahorn always presented to the City Council in due form, and which were always granted, and the failure at times to secure the needed supplies and equipment to keep moving. Sometimes work stopped completely when the general nationwide slump threatened to sidetrack the project in its wave of wartime (World War I) commercial and industrial failures. However, Strahorn always managed to get the project moving again.

By April 20, 1921 the roadbed was finished nine miles north of Dairy and some seven and one half miles short of Sprague River. The ties and part of the steel was at Dairy. At about the same time the first load of logs was shipped in for the Shaw-Bertram Lumber Company.

On August 25, 1922 the O.C. & E. reached Hildebrand and it was reported service from that point would begin September 5th. In the meantime construction had been held up for months

by railroad strikes on the main lines, which also had its effect on O.C. & E.

With the strikes settled, four miles of track beyond Hildebrand were soon added. A contract was let on November 21st for the final twelve miles over Bly Mountain and down to Sprague River.

On January 23, 1923 a 60 day extension was asked for and received by Strahorn, it being necessary to follow a new route to the Saddle Mountain Saw-mill, then under construction some four miles west of the original railroad survey.

The contractors on the section leading over the summit were Burce and Nettleton, who were then constructing two switch-backs, one on either side of the summit, which would temporarily replace the 1300 foot tunnel originally planned through Bly Mountain. Strahorn said the switch-backs would be replaced by the tunnel later. At the time there were two railroad construction camps in action, one at Squaw Flat and one on the north side where 65 men were employed, with 50 more coming. Back at the end of track, 60 lb. rail was being laid.

City officials visited the construction sites on May 11th, at which time there were four camps in operation: 1 - seven miles north of Hildebrand; 2 - Squaw Flat, which was reached by rails on July 1st, and freight delivered there by August 2nd; 3 - The Summit; and 4 - Headwaters of Cherry Creek.

The *Evening Herald* announced on June 26, 1923 that the O.C. & E. trains to the fairgrounds on July 2, 3 and 4, during the Fourth of July celebration, would leave Second Street and Klamath Avenue every fifteen minutes between 11:30 and 1:30. Round trip 25¢.

The new town of Sprague River was established August 21, when Frank Hatto and B.E. Wolford of Yainax Agency moved their store to the new location, where they had purchased 300 acres of land and laid out a townsite called Sprague River.

On September 16, 1923 the O.C. & E. Klamath Municipal Railroad, or Strahorn Line, whichever, was finished into the new town of Sprague River and a Klamath Falls delegation was taken there by

railway coach, and accepted the railroad as satisfactory the following day, September 17th. The Golden Spike ceremony, however, did not take place until Friday, October 12th, at Sprague River.

As reported in a special railroad edition of the *Klamath Evening Herald* of October 11th, there were 16 loading stations along the new railroad: Altamont, Merrill Road (Hager), 5 miles; Pine Grove 7; Olene 10; Swan Lake Junction 14; Swan Lake on the branch line 16; Pine Flat 17; Dairy 20; Bonanza, on the Bonanza branch 27; Hildebrand 24; Horton 28; Egberts 30; Squaw Valley 32; Cherry Creek 37 and Sprague River 40.

Log or lumber shippers were: Ewauna Box, Big Lakes, Ackley, Wheeler-Olmstead, Lakeside Lumber & Box (Klamath Falls), W.H. Kitts (Bonanza), Nine, Meadow Lake, White Pine Lumber Company, Swan Lake, Langell Valley Lumber Company (Bonanza), and Southern Oregon Lumber Company.

Two short branch lines were built, one from Swan Lake Junction to Swan Lake, a distance of 1.84 miles. It was abandoned September 22, 1929. The other branch planned but only partially built was to reach Bonanza, 6.7 miles southeast of a point approximately one mile northeast of Dairy. Only 1.57 miles of track were ever completed, long since reduced to .54 but still in existence, leading to a potato cellar.

1923 was indeed a red letter year in railroading for the Klamath country. It witnessed the arrival of the O.C. & E. at Sprague River and the renewal of Southern Pacific construction toward Portland via the Natron Cut-off.

Even as early as February 21, 1924 it was reported that some of the O.C. & E. rolling stock was worn out. Their No. 1 engine, a wood burner, was being scrapped, which left them with only one other, an oil burner.

Later in 1924 Shaw-Bertram Lumber Company secured timber at Squaw Flats and commenced a logging road into it from the south switch-back on Bly Mountain. By September 10th, from 60 to 75 carloads of logs per day were being shipped to Klamath Falls from the Shaw-

Bertram camp, Big Lakes at Horton and Wheeler-Olmstead near Sprague River.

Between the date that the O.C. & E. reached Sprague River, September 16, 1923 and June 3, 1927 when they began extension of rails toward Bly, and even for a few more years, many events transpired concerning railroads in the Klamath and nearby country which are given briefly below:

1. The Southern Pacific commenced extension of its Natron Cutoff on May 23, 1923 when contracts for construction were let. The line was completed August 7, 1927.
2. The Oregon Short Line which had reached Crane July 11, 1916 was extended into Burns on May 1, 1924. It may be interesting to know this line was ordered to be extended to Crescent Lake on the Natron Cutoff as late as December 14, 1929 by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Nothing developed from this order.
3. The Nevada, California & Oregon was bought by the Southern Pacific on October 19, 1926 and work commenced at Wendel, near Honey Lake, on July 16, 1927, changing from narrow gauge to standard.
4. The Great Northern remained at Bend until May 20, 1927 when they began extending southward, reaching Klamath Falls on May 11, 1928. Later, on August 23, 1930 they began to extend farther southward to join up with the Western Pacific at Bieber on September 10-12, 1931, thus paving the way into the San Francisco Bay region.
5. The Southern Pacific began its Modoc Northern extension from Klamath Falls on October 14, 1928 when the first contract was let and connected to the line extending from Alturas on the N.C. & O. at Hackamore on July 13, 1929.

In the meantime the O.C. & E. found itself in the middle of the struggle between the two giants of railroading, the Southern Pacific and Great Northern. The latter wished to tap the Klamath Country

on their way into the San Francisco Bay area, while the former tried to keep them out, not wanting to share the rich returns with others.

At one time the Great Northern sought entrance into the Klamath Country from Bend, via the Silver Lake and O.C. & E. lines known as the "D" route as compared to that which they eventually followed.

At another time, in 1925, Strahorn applied for the exclusive right to cross Sixth Street in Klamath Falls and when it became known that he was expecting money from the Southern Pacific to finance his further extensions, public confidence was shaken in him locally. "Many has espoused his cause in the hope that he would 'break the monopoly' of that railroad company, and now he was apparently acting as its tool to keep out the Northern lines, which were beginning to evince an interest in Klamath County. Had 'Uncle Bob' sold us out?" asked the History of Klamath County, 1941.

At the same time the Southern Pacific was seeking approval of its contract dated February 3, 1925 to acquire all stock of the O.C. & E. from Strahorn. I.C.C. approval was granted in May, 1926 for the O.C. & E. to build its proposed extensions, and for the Southern Pacific to acquire its stock, subject to certain conditions, the most important being that it should allow the Great Northern to buy one half interest in the O.C. & E. The Southern Pacific acquired full control on July 22, 1927 and the Great Northern acquired one half interest on March 23, 1928 or even an earlier date. The purchase price of the O.C. & E. seems to have been \$830,000.

During this same period of time, other events were also transpiring. "On May 22, 1925 City Attorney Carnahan asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to help us (the city of Klamath Falls and others) save our \$300,000 investment; on September 1, 1926 Mayor Goddard requested a receiver for the Oregon, California & Eastern; and in June, 1928 the Southern Pacific and Northern Pacific, having become joint owners of said Oregon, Calif-

ornia and Eastern, paid the city \$150,000 for the bonds."

Concerning these transactions, the *Evening Herald* of April 30, 1929 wrote: "Electorate go to poles to decide what should be done with the city's \$300,000 worth of O.C. & E. stock. If the vote is yes, should they accept the \$150,000 offer by the Southern Pacific? Or, the \$50,000 and the 7th street property offered by the same firm? The City Council adopted ordinance for bids by banks. Strictly a legal procedure." The \$150,000 was eventually accepted.

During the mid-1920's when the O.C. & E. was at its peak under Strahorn it boasted following motive power and rolling stock: Two, 2-6-0 Prairie type steam locomotives, built by Baldwin in 1888, and bought used in 1920. Three, 2-8-0 Consolidation type steam locomotives, built by Pittsburg in 1888, bought used in 1924, one four wheeled caboose, bought used in 1925, four 80,000 pound capacity log flats, wooden underframe, eight, 60,000 pound capacity log flats. These cars were all bought used in 1924-1925. Had one passenger coach, built by Harlan & Hollingsworth in 1883. It was 48 feet long, wood body and underframe, with four wheel trucks, bought used in 1917. The O.C. & E. also had some outfit cars and a 1911 Pierce Arrow with a limousine body, bought in 1917, and a 1920 Ford, bought in 1926. The latter two were used as inspection cars for officials.

After remaining stationery at Sprague River for approximately four years, the I.C.C. ordered the O.C. & E. to resume extension of their line by June 17th, 1928. Purchase of rights of way began at once and by June 2nd, the first ground was broken for the extension to Bly. N.H. Bogue was the chief engineer and John Morgan the contractor. A line change was probably made at this time when the old line around by the river at Sprague River (2.215 miles) was relegated to a side track, a portion later being

abandoned.

Then on May 18, 1928 a new contract was given Johnson Brothers for the final 19 miles of construction to Bly, with actual work starting immediately. Grading was completed to Bly by October 24th, while the rails were yet four miles away. At last, on Monday, November 24, 1928 the railroad was finished into Bly.

During the summer of 1928 the O.C. & E. railroad was reblasted, telephone lines and fences were built. During the following winter, 1928-29, new and heavier rails were laid, and construction of stock yards at Bly finished.

On April 13, 1929 the O.C. & E. established a six day per week service to and from Bly, and on the 15th, the first shipment of logs was made from that place. By June 21st, the O.C. & E. was rebuilding their bridges between Sprague River and Bly, and constructing a \$2,500 depot at Bly, to be in charge of Charles Williams.

Several large logging railroads were constructed, leading into the timber along the O.C. & E. at various locations. As stated previously, Shaw-Bertram commenced a logging road from the south switch-back on Bly Mountain as early as 1924, which by 1926 extended some six miles westward. By 1929 this line was extended another seven miles to the Ya Whee Plateau. It climbed to the top of the plateau through the aid of a switch-back. Big Lakes also had trackage leading from this spur, which they built during 1926, with a new Shay locomotive for locomotion. Their line also extended to the west. Over this line by July 14, 1929 came 25-28 carloads of logs from Squaw Valley per day.

Pelican Bay Lumber Company started construction of a logging railroad south from Bly even before the O.C. & E. reached that place. It extended southward some 12 miles to their camp at Robinson Springs and much farther on its branch lines.

Ewauna Box Company had two railroads connecting with the O.C. & E. The first line extended over fifteen miles northwesterly from Sprague River, joining up with lines previously used to log into Chiloquin and the main Southern Pacific. A second line was built from Bly to Quartz Mountain in 1929. Eighteen miles were in operation in the fall of that year, and the grading was continuing past their camp. It was reported to be an exceptionally well built logging road.

Lorenz Lumber Company built a railroad about four or five miles long, construction on which was commenced around May or June of 1929. This line led from a point two miles east of the town of Sprague River on the O.C. & E. to and up the west watershed of Whiskey Creek. One of their camps was one half mile west of the present Sprague River-Highway 140 Junction and on the south side of the highway.

Weyerhaeuser built a line in 1940 from the O.C. & E. branching from the main line at a point now known as Sycan Siding, about three miles northeast of Beatty. At first it ended at Camp Six and later Camp Nine, some fifty miles to the northeast. Other branches extended to Camp Eleven and beyond. The Weyerhaeuser logging road is the only one that remains in use today, the others have all been abandoned and torn up.

It is claimed the O.C. & E. "has never made any money. In fact, it has lost over \$3,000,000 since being acquired by the Southern Pacific and Great Northern. Its real value is as a 'feeder' line, hauling mostly logs, although in the fall, potatoes, grain and livestock have been hauled in carload lots."

The operation of the O.C. & E. has for years been traded between the two parent companies, the Southern Pacific and Great Northern. Every five years the entire railroad transfers operators and equipment with the train and track crews remaining the same. Therefore, if past changes hold true, Southern Pacific took over in 1973 and is the present operator.

During the early 1960's "two trains a day departed from Klamath Falls during the peak summer and fall season. One went to Sycan, which is the junction with the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company railroad. The other train departed later in the afternoon, and made the trip to Bly and returned to Sycan and picked up the logs which the first train cannot handle. Weyerhaeuser shipped approximately 90 cars of logs per day from its Camp 11 to Sycan, and was the largest single shipper on the O.C. & E. Train lengths were restricted because of the 'Tails' on the switch-backs, which will hold only 50 cars and two diesel units. Heavy grades are also a determining factor for the length of these trains. The ruling grade from Sprague River over Bly Mountain is 2.9%.

As late as 1939 it was rumored that the tunnel through Bly Mountain would be excavated, eliminating the grade and switchbacks, but the advent of the second world war halted this operation before it had fairly begun.

Within the past year, rumor further has it that Weyerhaeuser will take over ownership and operation of the entire O.C. & E. system from Southern Pacific and Great Northern. In furtherance of this plan they have rebuilt much of their Sycan Spur and have put into operation their new sawmill at Bly during late 1973.



**Toby Riddle (Winema) Indian heroine of the Modoc War.**



**Beatty vicinity residents Frank Lynch and Jeff Riddle, the son of Toby Riddle (Winema) of Modoc War fame.**



**D.A.R. marker at Toby Riddle's (Winema) grave in the Schonchin Cemetery between Beatty and Sprague River.**



Old Schonchin's grave in the Schonchin Cemetery. A signer of the Council Grove Treaty of 1864, he remained faithful to his word and never left the Klamath Indian Reservation while the Modoc War was in progress.



Everett Bell

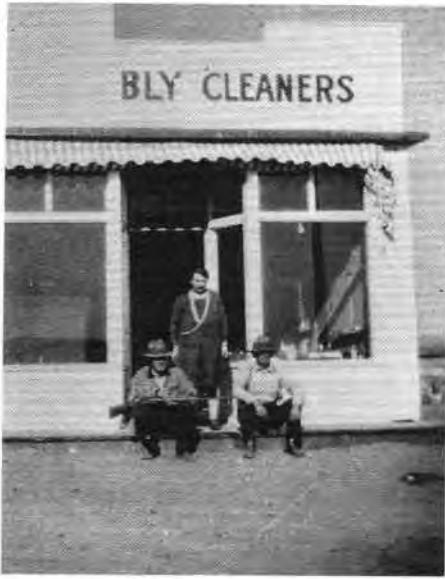
Courtesy Doris Bell



Jesse A. and Mary Parker at the old home place west of Bly, now the home of V.L. Rentles.  
Courtesy Doris Bell



Bly Cleaners building. L. to R. Gerald Keffler, Madeline Keffler and Joe Mason.  
Courtesy Madeline Keffler



Bly Cleaners. L. to R. - - - Daniels, Joe  
Keffler. Standing, Mrs. Daniels.

Courtesy Madeline Keffler



Sprague River as it appeared June 4, 1974. L. toR. Allen's Store and post office, white house to right of poplar tree former site of the post office, Carnini's restaurant, Dibbon Cook building which housed his shoe repair shop and Book's Store, the old Pankey garage and service station.



**Theo Clawson oiling up No. 1 on the Ewauna Box Company logging railroad to Quartz Mountain.**

Courtesy Zane Clawson



**Unloading a log at an unidentified sawmill in the Bly vicinity. Probably near Royston or Keno Springs on the old stage road to Bonanza, around 1920.**

Courtesy Doris Bell



All that remains of the Ivory Pine Sawmill that once operated on the Camp Nine road northwest of Bly.



The John S. Shook home, two miles south of Dairy, where J. O. Hamaker arrived March 1st, 1880 when he first came to Klamath County.