

Umatilla... gold...landings.
Mining. Columbia navigation

..As early as 1851 Dr. William McKay a grandson of Alexander McKay who was a well-known member of the Hudson's Bay Company settled on the Umatilla river at the mouth of the Houtama afterward and now called McKay creek about three miles below Pendleton. He was the earliest permanent white settler of Umatilla county. His home was destroyed during the war of 1855 by hostile Indians but he rebuilt it and remained a citizen of the county. In 1857 R.R. Thompson then living at The Dalles was appointed agent at Umatilla and Green Arnold afterward a prominent citizen of La Grande was his deputy in charge. It is not recorded that Thompson ever lived at the agency. It was an important point however since it was the only settlement between The Dalles and Salt Lake and in August of 1857 a postoffice was established and C.F. Rogger was the official in charge.

The recalling of these.....

After the close of the Indian wars of 1855-56-57 Umatilla gradually lost its prestige but in 1861 the material worth of the Umatilla country of Grand Ronde Valley and Powder River Valley began to attract the attention of prowling western adventurers and prospectors and so during that year several families had settled along the Umatilla River and Ben Brown at present one of the commissioners of Union County and past 80 years of age had located where La Grande now stands. The next year the gold mines at Auburn were discovered and thousands of people from western Oregon began to retrace their steps across the mountains in search of the yellow metal.

This together with discovery of other mines gave an immense stimulus to the travel on the Columbia River and it was found necessary to abandon the usual course of transportation by way of Wallula to Walla Walla into the Leiston region. To answer the new conditions A.J. Kane of Portland went up the river in search of a good boat landing

near the mouth of the Umatilla in order that freighg teams might take thdeir cargoes at that place and proceed a cross the Blue Mountains to the Grand Ronde and Powder River valleys. He selected a point about 10 miles below the mouth of the Umatilla a d named it Grand Ronde Landing.

By this time men by the thousands were seeking their fortunes in the mining regions of Eastern Oregon and Idaho and it was at once seen that an immense business wouod be done at the embarking point on the Columbia River. Other landings were sought and a man named Spencer went beyond the Grand Ronde landing and started an opposition dock at themouthof the Umatilla River on its east bank.

This avoided the crossing of that river and it was not long until its rival was abandoned. Kane himself soon after moving to Umatilla at first called Columbia and opened up an extensive forwarding plo house at that place.

First Hundred Years of U.S. Territorial postmarks, 1789-1887
by Carroll Chase and Richard McP Carbeen

Washington territory. March 2, 1853 to July 1, 1887
Compiled from po lists for 1954, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61,
62, 63, 65, 67, 70, 71, 74, 75, 76, various supplements between 76
and 87, the postoffice guide for 1887 and some actual postmarks and
historical data.

There are a total of 528 post offices listed of which only 196
still exist(The American Philatelist, Feb. 1949, Vol 62, No. 5)
But it will be remembered that a great many of these early post
offices in the state were in lonely cabins serving neighbors
scattered for many miles around and were not in town. This type of
post office is now almost eliminated by RFD service.

Key:

FNL first noted in the list that follows

EST-Btw --Post office established between the dates given.

DSC btw- discontinued between dates given.

'87- Indicates the post office existed in 1887, the final list checked.
(Not all copied.. typescript note)

Ainsworth-postmark seen dated April, 1881.

Alki-Est. possibly Aug. 1, 1854. DSC Mch. 27.

Alkali Flat, DSC betw Dec 1, 1879 and Oct 25, 1880.

Alpola or Alpowa. Fnl. Oct 1, 1874. '87.

Assotin-Est. btw Dec. 1, 1879 & Oct. 25, '80.

Attanam- Fnl Sep. 1, 1870.

Asotin '87.

Badger Fnly '87.

Baker's Fnly April 1, 1859.

Derryman-Fnly '87.

Pickleton-Est. btw. Dec. 1, 1879 and Oct. 25, 1880 '87.

Berryman, Fnl '87.

Centreville Fnl Oct 1, 1874. Postmark seen dated Mar 5 72 '87.

Columbus-Fnl April 1, 1875 '87.

Cottage Glen Est. btw. Dec 1, 1879 & Oct 25, 1880.

Crab Creek Fnl April 1, 1875 . '87.

Dayton Fnl Oct 1, 1874. Postmark Dec 17, 1873 '730 '97.

Deadman DSC btw Dec 1, 1879 and Oct 25, 1880. ~~DD~~

Dixie-Ever seen dated 1884 '87.

Dot--FNL 87.

Ellensburgh--Fnl Oct 1, 1874 '87.

Estes- Fnl '87.

Fidalgo or Fidilgo Fnl Oct 1874 '87.

Fort Colville Fnl April 1, 1859.

Fort Simcoe Fnl Sept. 1 1870 '97.

Four Lakes Fnl Apr 1, 1875.

Fourth Plain Fnl April 1, 1875- DSC btw June 17, Sept 1, '75.

Fulda-Fnl '87.

Garfield Fnly '87.

Grand Coulee Fnly 1884 '87.

Klickitat Landing Fnly Oct 1 ~~and Oct 25, 1880~~ 1876.

Not '87.

Konework Fnly Oct 1, 74. DSC btw Dec 1, '79 and Oct 25 '80.

Konewock '87.

Moses Coulee- FNL 87.

North Yakima Est. btw Dec 1, 1884 & May
27, '85- '87.

Olympia-Est as Nesqually Jan 8, 1850 while in Oregon Terr.

Name changed to Olympia while still Oregon Terr. on August 28,
1850.

Palouse-Fnl Oct 1, 1874 '87.

Pasco Fnl 1887.

Pomeroy-Postmarks seen dated from 1882.

Pomeroy-For 1884-1885.

Prosser-Est. btw Dec 1, 1883 and thJan 20 July
26, 1884 '87.

Riverside. Fnl Oct 1, 1874.

Rockland-Fnl Sep. 30, 1861.

Rockford- Est between Dec 1, 1879 & Oct 25, 1880 '87.

Key to old postoffices marked on map. (Spelling per postal guides)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1-Ainsworth | 28-Gabel |
| 2-Touchat | 29-Starbuck |
| 3-Mstes | 30-Taxas |
| 4-Merryman | 31-Marengo |
| 5-Badger | 32-Deadman |
| 6-Cottage Glen | 33-Luna |
| 7-Konework | |
| 8-McCallum | |
| 9-Pleasant Grove | |
| 10-Moses Coulee | |
| 11-Vulcan | |
| 12-Shell Rock | |
| 13-Collins Landing. | |
| 14-Fisher's Landing. | |
| 15-Cape Horn | |
| 16-Chenowith | |
| 17-Gilmer | |
| 18-Fulda | |
| 19-Hartland | |
| 20-Blockhouse | |
| 21-Columbus | |
| 22-Centreville | |
| 23-Cleveland | |
| 24-Dot | |
| 25-Tuttercup | |
| 26-Coppei | |
| 27-Huntsville | |

Early Days at the Cascades.

By George Iman from ~~George~~ D.A. Brown for the Skamania county historical society.

The first school that we went to was a log house someone had built. It was called the Minter cabin. It did not have any windows and only the ground for a floor.

There were six scholars, my brother, T.C. Inman, Henry Sheppard, Ellen Nelson, Mary Ann Nelson and Flora A. Inman. The teachers were Stark and S.A. Bull. The school house stood somewhere near the Lyndes planing mill. Mr. Nelson lived above Nelson creek bridge and the place has been called Nelson ~~place~~ place ever since.

The Sheppard family owned the donation claim where Stevenson now stands. My father lived on the west side of Rock Creek near what was once the Iman ~~located~~ sawmill and I remember when my father felled a large tree across the creek to make a foot bridge so we could cross on its going to school. It was near the first bridge on Rock creek built by John Brazee and was built during the early 70s. The footbridge was constructed by holes being bored ever so far apart on the log and standards put in with rails on them to make it more safe. My father built and owned the third and fourth saw mills in this country. The first was built just below the 20 foot falls on Rock Creek near the L.F. Iman place (Iman) but was later carried away by a heavy flood in the creek.

At first the mill was what is known as a sash saw mill and very much unlike the saw mills of today. The carriage ran on slides that were kept well oiled and I dare say there were not many persons of today who seen the sash mill in operation.

The next mill was first a water power mill and was driven first by what is known as a center discharge wheel. It was afterwards driven by what is known as the overshot wheel. It was five feet on the face and 29 feet in diameter. At last the mill was driven by a steam engine

of the Houston, Stanwood and Gamble pattern.

My father aided in construction of the blockhouse at the Upper Cascades, built in 1856. About the time there was a village just this side of the cut where the blockhouse stood. The name of it being called "Baghdad."

This section house at the Cascade Locks was the John Chipman house on the John Chipman donation land claim and was built in 1855. It ^{is} ~~was~~ a very good house now and an ancient piece of carpentry

Passenger boats.

Bo Roger G. Atwell, a late pioneer, manufactured the first matches in the early 50s. He lived just across the river from Stevenson. He and my father were partners in one of the first passenger boats that plied on the river from the Cascades to the Dalles.

The people called it the big float. It was huge, its beam being about 12 or 14 feet and its length about 40 feet. It was built of slabs, the edges of which were made straight and sized down on the back side to fit the timbers, the side side cut.

Isaac H. Bush built a ~~big~~ hospital near the blockhouse for the benefit of the sick emigrants that ~~crossed~~ crossed the pioneer trail to help build our country.

Railroad

The first railroad at the Cascades ran near the I.H. Bush house; its cars were drawn by mules. I have some of the wood taken from it. It was built about 1850 or 1851. It was owned by Bradford and Company.

There was also a mule road on the Oregon side of the river, owned by Colonel Duckle; it extended from the Cascade Locks down to Eagle Creek.

At the time those roads were in operation the first steam craft came upon these waters to ply between the Cascades and the Dalles.

She was an iron hull boat about 50 feet long with a propeller. Her name

was Allen. Her captain's name was Gladwell. She went to wreck on a bar near Hood River. The next boat was the Mary and the third the Wasco, built by my father during the year 1854.

^{Indian burials}
On one of small islands known as the Sullivan Islands, also called lower Memaloose island, was once a burying ground for the Indians. Their mode of putting away the dead was to take them out on the island and put them in what was known as "dead houses." I well remember just how this dead house looked as I have visited this island many times.

A hole, dug in the ground, four or five feet deep and the size of the ground they wished it to be. Then they put some pieces on the ground about ~~around~~ around the top of the basement, after building a house with walls and a roof.

They would take the Memaloosed party down in the basement and put it next to the wall; then stack them as they died, one on top of the other, till the house was filled. The boxes used for burial were of most any length; it mattered not what the size of the person might be. The boxes were covered with most any kind of calico so long as it had red in the color. All of their belongings were put in with them.

Another mode of burial was to put the corpses up into trees on shelves, also to hang them by the neck to pins or beams in a house. Those who were hanged for participating in the war of 1856 were buried on the river bottom. ~~000~~ Most of all of the trees they were hanged on are washed away by high water.

names

Grant County

Big Bend.

Ferries. Cattle. Horses
characters

Railroads

The Big Bend country was settled mostly by emigration from down the Columbia river way, including the Walla Walla country. Previous to this settlement, however, there were a number of stockmen.

The first white man to tarry awhile of whom we have a record was a man named Marlin who settled on Crab Creek above the present site of Marlin. This was in 1871 and he sold out to Donald Urquhart. Philip McEntee's ranch was too at the springs known to all the pioneers as McEntee Springs, now the town of Coulee City.

Jack Walters settled on Crab creek, Tom Walters and Portuguese Joe on the Kenneway. Thomas S. Blythe operated on both lower and upper Crab creek, Dock Irby at what is now the town of Irby and Wild Goose Bill at the present site of Wilbur.

The ~~Hoodson brothers~~ and Hutchinson brothers, prominent stockmen and the McManimans were on lower Crab Creek. Sam Hutchinson was seven feet four inches in height. He was quite a colorful character, serving as Yakima county sheriff in later years.

A man named Parker, for whom Parker Horn is named had a ranch near Moses Lake. With the exception of Wild Goose Bill who ran a ferry across the Columbia river, these were all stock men disposing of their cattle wherever they could until the coming of the Great Northern railroad.

One of the largest operators was Donald Urquhart. His brothers, George and John joined him later and they ran a butcher shop in Spokane, disposing of many of their cattle in that way. After the big fire in Spokane in 1889 they quit business there and operated a 6,000 acre ranch at Wilson creek, raising cattle and sheep and alfalfa to feed them, irrigating from Crab creek.

An outstanding deed in Urquhart's life was his writing a letter to James J. Hill, empire builder, in which he took the liberty of telling

him that his survey party which was running a line west from Harrington to the Columbia river via Coulee City was too far north and that he, Urquhart could show the engineers a water grade from Harrington to the Columbia river.

Some six weeks after this letter was sent to Mr. Hill a man appeared at the bachelor home of Mr. Urquhart where he remained overnight after informing Urquhart that he was there in the interest of Mr. Hill and was ready to be shown the water grade.

This man was an engineer by the name of Tabor, now living in Spokane. Together they went over the route suggested by Mr. U. As they came to the point on the Columbia where the Great Northern now crosses they made camp at the mouth of Moses Coulee. There was a camp there already, that of the Great Northern surveying party surveying from Harrington via Coulee city.

The chief engineer of the party after considerable urging prevailed upon the two men to accept the hospitality of the party of engineers. "What did you find?" he asked Mr. Tabor who replied: "About one per cent. At that time the chief engineer exclaimed: "I see my whole summer's work going into the wastebasket."

In two weeks after the conversation took place a preliminary survey was made over the route shown by the stockman to Engineer Tabor and the following spring, 1892, construction of the line was begun.

Nearly a decade was to pass however before much interest was taken in settling up the country around the little railroad stations. A box car on a siding at Beasley Springs marked the present site of the town of Ephrata. Early settlers in Douglas county camped at the springs on their way to and from Walla Walla where they journeyed for supplies.

A railroad was built from Connell to Coulee City, bringing wheat on good grades from both east and west of Coulee City down to Connell then to Portland via Pasco.

One of the civil engineers who helped survey the Great Northern railroad was A. B. Clark. He later became one of the settlers on Crab creek, locating at the upper end. This lake covered an area of 1,200 acres and was the natural habitat of thousands of geese and ducks. Adjacent land was very desirable as it was possible to irrigate from the lake. Jack Finney located his ranch there as early as 1884.

Being an engineer Mr. Clark studied possibilities of drainage. Finally, in cooperation with Mr. Finney, D.K. McDonald, a pioneer of Spokane and other marginal owners on Crab Lake, this rich body of land was uncovered by draining away the waters. It was a fine piece of engineering and has added 1,200 acres of land that sells for \$200 an acre.

So much land had been homesteaded by 1906 it was found necessary to round up the roving bands of range horses and a last roundup was held that year, the headquarters being at Ephrata, the old camp ground of the stockmen.

The setting for the last colorful act in the living drama enacted by Washington stockmen was over a period of 50 years was the familiar backdrop of hills where slept the warriors of a fast disappearing race. The first white men to camp at the springs discovering the burying ground in the hills and had christened the bubbling waters, "Indian Grave Springs."

Once again campfires glared beside this ancient landmark and the trail as knights of the saddle gathered.

They chose for their foreman a man well merited their respect, Thomas Burgen, oldest among them in point of years as well as residence in Washington. He was a very colorful character and a leader among the range men. So it was deemed fitting that he should bear the honor leading them on this greatest roundup.

Thomas Burgen was born in the John Day country in Oregon in 1848

When he was 2 years old he came with his parents to Washington Ty. living in this ty. and state 83 years , dying in 1933 at the age of 85. In 1875 he was in charge of 2,500 head of cattle during a drive from the Yakima-Goldendale country to Wyoming.

In this final act which was to remove the wild horses from the range, over 6,000 were rounded up in what is now Grant county and shipped to Montana. The rich lands were occupied by homesteaders for dry farming. Population more than doubled in a short time but settlement proved a disastrous and heartbreaking experience. Many of the settlers gave up in despair and have scattered to every state in the union and to almost every civilized country in the world; but they have held on to their land hoping that some day water would come. It seems their hopes are about to be realized by construction of Grand Coulee dam.

Many of these people will return when the dam is completed. Development of this great area will more than double the present population.