

Fourth of July
Historical

The first Fourth of July celebration held in North Yakima was in the year 1885 when the population of the city was about 500.

It was in the form of a picnic and was held in the grove on the bank of the Yakima river on a line about due east from the foot of B street on what was known as the Ross Beck place.

The celebration was well attended by both the city and country people. Patriotism reached the high-water mark.

Wilbur F. Sanders, afterwards United States senator from Montana was booked to deliver the oration but at the last moment he disappointed. The task then fell upon Colonel L.S. Howlett who it is said delivered as able an address as ever heard in the valley. Unfortunately the colonel was interrupted in the middle of his speech by George Ferguson who came down on horseback and told Mr. Howlett that his wife was dying of a paralytic stroke. The colonel left the stand immediately and hastened to the bedside of his wife. She rallied, however but died two years later after having suffered two more strokes. This sad incident cast a damper over the celebration although it was kept as quite as possible at the time.

The committee on arrangements for Yakima's first celebration consisted of Edward Whitson, now judge of the federal court for Eastern district of Washington; A.B. Engle, then cashier of the first National bank and Captain J.H. Thomas who was at the time register of the United States land office.

There was at the time no organized band in the embryo city. A quartet took the place of the band and sang many national songs.

In the evening there was a grand display of fireworks.

It was the first considerable celebration ever held in the valley. Previously there was one held in Yakima City on which occasion Judge James B. Reavis was the orator of the day. He was afterward

judge of the supreme court and is now practicing law in Seattle.

The day was extremely warm. Not a cloud was in the sky. Miss Kate Fearbach, who is now Mrs. J.J. Tyler was at this time county auditor, the county seat being located at Yakima city with offices in the old course house recently burned.

The Yakima Herald, July 4, 1906.

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Yakima City

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Resume of 1880 Fourth of July celebration called Yakima city's initial "first class celebration:" "Parade started from Centennial hall 10 a.m. Yakima brass band led off ahead of liberty car. Miss Jennie Guillard, "Goddess of Liberty," on Liberty car with young girls representing states and territories. Following the car which of course was the main feature of the day came citizens of the town and country in buggies wagons and on horseback. They marched to the grove and listened to speeches from the stand there. Greased pig chase and sack and foot races in town. Races at track 1 mile out of town. Salute fired at sundown. Ball sponsored by band ended day. It was Yakima's biggest affair. Record, July 10, 1880.

Mother's day

Next Sunday, May 14, will be Mother's Day in North Yakima and in all other cities throughout the land.

Celebrating Mother's day consists principally of wearing a white carnation and writing a letter home, these at least being the outward observances of the day.

It is presumed that there will be special at many of the local churches and also at the YMCA Auditorium (Copy) Yakima Herald, May 10, 1911.

Christmas-historical

Yakima's first Christmas tree graced the home of Lum Goodwin a short distance north of the city limits in 1873, Mrs. Frances M. Lahar remembers.

With her parents Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Cook she made the trip the day before Christmas from their ranch on the Antanum to the Goodwin home.

"There were only a dozen or 15 persons there but we had a good time," she said today. "The tree, a fir, had been cut up in the hills near Soda springs and brought down on a lumber wagon.

It was decorated with popcorn strings as we didn't have any fancy ornaments. I received a rag doll and my brother a rubber rabbit. They meant as much to us as a present costing \$10 or \$15 means to children now.

"We had dinner with the Goodwins Christmas eve--whole roast pig, browned cherry sauce in lieu of cranberry sauce, mince pie and pumpkin pie. We also had walnuts and peanuts ⁱⁿ and mosquito bar bags. The nuts were brought from The Dalles with other supplies and we made the bags. Gifts consisted principally of clothing. I remember we danced and sang and enjoyed ourselves, just as much as people do now--" Yakima Republic, Dec. 25, 1924.

Are the toys which filled Santa Claus' pack today, and which were distributed to the homes of hundreds of little boys and girls in Yakima more or less interesting than those which the boys and girls of a generation or two ago received from the old Saint Nick on Christmas day?

There are those who look in the shop windows and shake their heads --- "no, they're not what they used to be" while others equally truthfully to hear ~~of~~ their childhood memories think there were never such wonderful things in the past. To a generation of Yakima ~~and~~ folks who spent their childhood in Yakima and who are now buying playthings for their own little boys and girls of 5 or 10 years there is nothing now to compare with Sam Ahrendt's store on North Second street which was a veritable fairyland for children 25 years ago.

"There is nothing these days to compare with the toys the children had then," Miss A. Aaron, sister-in-law of the late Mr. Ahrendt recalls. "There was one whole room full of dolls at Christmas time. There were all sizes and kinds. Lovely great big ones the size of a baby were not more than \$6 or \$7 and they had fine kid bodies with many joints and real hair which could be combed and sleeping eyes. Those were dolls made to last for years. They were all imported from Europe.

"Now there are mamma dolls, which cost much more than those old ones did but they can't compare with them.

"There were all kinds of mechanical toys too, nearly as many kinds as you see now. There were even electrically propelled toys in Mr. Ahrendt's store. There were big well finished alphabet blocks that one does not see any more and building blocks and ten pins and big iron trains much more substantial than one sees now days. The large rocking horses and swinging horses too were finer than the ones children

now have. "There were doll buggies strongly constructed and all kinds of doll furniture."

Mr. Ahrendt was affectionately known to many Yakima youngsters as "Mr. Santa Claus" and trips to the store at Christmas time brought thrills to many children.

"On the toys now are wonderful, there weren't such things when I was a little boy" W.L. Barker, county commissioner from the third district remarked. "No it didn't take too much to make us happy in those days. I remember a little toy hatchet I had when I was five or six years old which cost but a few cents but which I thought was wonderful. We never saw ready made wagons in those years, we made our own with clumsy wheels. Sometimes we would take little wheels of farm implements to make them.

"W.E. Herd of the assessor's office sold toys in a store in Gallesburg, Ill, 50 years ago. "There were tin whistles and rabbits, monkeys on a stick, transparent pictures which would be traced, Noah's arks, drums, wooden guns, iron railroad trains, carts, expressmen, dolls--in fact nearly everything that one finds today but they were poorly made and not too lasting," he said.

"While one would buy a whole pack of toys for a dollar or two, they didn't amount to much and were quickly easily broken--The Yakima Republic, December 25, 1925.

The first Christmas trees on the market were brought to the city this morning by David Clark, who was the first man to sell Christmas trees in North Yakima more than 20 years ago.

Clark began selling trees for Yakima merriment when the city had about 400 inhabitants and has never missed a year although some seasons his venture has been unprofitable from a financial point of view.

The trees brought in today are known as the balsam fir and came from way up in the Cowlitz about 40 miles from the city.

With his helper Clark waded in snow from a foot to waist deep in cutting them. They were hauled down by two teams, the best he could get.

North Yakima people are not as much inclined to the old fashioned way of celebrating the day as they used to be, Clark thinks. When only 3,000 to 4,000 people lived here he used to sell as many as 300 trees in one season. Of late years with 10 times as many inhabitants, his sales have sometimes run below that. He expects this year to dispose of at least 350. Yakima Republic, Dec. 2, 1910.

Yakima

Christmas was observed in Yakima with good cheer. Hundreds of children were made glad by the unloading of Christmas trees at home and at the Methodist, Christian and ~~Methodist~~ Episcopal festivities. Appropriate services were held in all of the churches, and, as the weather was pleasant, the attendance was good.

The sleighing attracted many people out of doors and every sleigh. from the huge affair drawn by four stout horses to the dainty cutter and the clumsy home-made bob were put in use. The merchants all say that the trade was much better than was expected and that the presents made this year were in as great volume and value as ever before--Yakima Herald, December 26, 1889.

Thanksgiving History

Thanksgiving in the early days in Yakima was much like it is today with turkey dinners as the main attraction according to a half dozen valley pioneers.

When it comes to numbers of Thanksgiving dinners on one single day, R.B. Milroy probably carries off the prize for all time. On his first Thanksgiving in Yakima in 1885 he ate no less than five Thanksgiving dinners. The only reason he didn't take on another one or two, he frankly admits was because the hours of some of his invitations conflicted.

The program of dinners started at 11 o'clock in the morning and concluded at 1 o'clock the next morning.

Early settlers were always hospitable and no one had to eat his turkey dinner in solitude. The weather was not cold as Mr. Milroy recalls it though there was a light sprinkling of snow and about. The principal difference between Thanksgivings in the olden days and now was in the drinks, Mr. Milroy ventures. Cocktails or egg-nogs were a usual accompaniment to such meals in pre-Volstead days.

Turkeys were so plentiful in the early days they were herded in large bands like sheep with a herder in charge. Turkeys were raised in such numbers in order to destroy the crickets which infested the sage brush. The birds got fat on the crickets.

Dances were a special Thanksgiving accompaniment in the early days. There was often a dance in the hall in the building where the Emporium now stands, either a community affair or a private gathering. Later the dance were held in the old Mason's opera house building on North First street.

Turkey shoots were an important part of the pre-Thanksgiving arrangements. Fred Parker, president of the Pioneer association recalls. He remembers a Thanksgiving in 1888 particularly

A day or two before the holidays a group of some 20 citizens gathered at the ranch of S.A. Gilson which is where the state fair is now situated for a turkey shoot. One dollar was the price put upon each turkey and shots were sold at 10 cents each.

In those days the contestants did not shoot at targets but actually at the turkey. The turkeys were tied up in front of a wall and the shooters picked them off at a distance of 250 yards. Any kind of gun could be used. The first one to shoot a turkey above the knee got the bird. The man who got one bird had to take the tenth chance if he wished to enter the contest for the next one. Twenty or 25 birds in all were killed that day, Mr. Parker recalls.

As John Lynch recalls not much was made of Thanksgiving until about 1890. While there were turkeys in the early days they were a different variety than the bronze ones common today.

Mrs. Zona Cameron, another pioneer asked about the early conditions here and did not recall any particular occasion and is of the impression that celebrations were simple affairs.

Herbert A. Shaw, secretary of the pioneer association recalls vividly his first Thanksgiving in the town of Yakima. He was born in Lampico and spent his early boyhood here. In 1896 the day before Thanksgiving the family moved to Yakima. Herbert and his brother, Roy had the duty of making the trip from Lampico to Yakima on horseback in order to drive the two cows to town.

On the day was bitterly cold, in fact Shaw swears it was 20 below zero with 11-2 feet of snow on the ground. Half of the trip was made the first day, then the two boys made the rest of the jaunt the next morning. The rest of the family with with the household furniture made the trip to town on a bob-sled. As the pipes in the house into which the family moved on Naches avenue

Blossom Festival

School children of Nifty Yakima with some outside assistance certainly gave the citizens and guests from other places a good entertainment when they paraded as one of the feature of the blossom festival week.

It was the first time in a very long while that the children have taken part in a public performance of any kind.

Thousands of people lined Yakima avenue to watch the children and their assistants in the line of march....

The inevitable Northern Pacific freight train put in its appearance at the usual inopportune time and cut the procession in two and caused some disruption as it permitted the long string of camp followers to catch up and crowd across the avenue along with those who were on the parade.

The floats, the automobile decorations, the pony procession and such features lent novelty and interest. Leon D. Green's contribution of a score or more of Holland ponies was one of the heaviest contributions of the day.

Fred Lindekugel as a Klootchman with black pony was one of the best figures in the procession.

Following the Indians came the mounted soldiers who fought the Indians and after the soldier came the farmer in his farm wagon and with his grain sacks. George and Martha Washington were represented by Sears Horsley and Lois Shardlow and they were real parade figures.

Miss Armina Williamson was the queen of the festival and her ladies in waiting were Misses Ruth and Edith Johnson, ~~Donna Thompson~~ Mira Thompson, Frances Townley, Clara Wallen and Elizabeth Henry.

Queen Williamson wore a court gown of white satin. She was

crowned and there was a profusion of floral decorations and offerings. The queen and her attendants rode on a float which had been prepared with much care to represent a throne room during a reception.....Yakima Herald, April 26, 1911.

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Fred Parker and Bruce Milroy have taken a mental journey through the years that have passed. Their impressions of the old time celebrations and the modern days are given below.

In the early days the oratorical spellbinder ruled supreme. No one thought of having a celebration on the Fourth without at least one oratorical address and the least one patriotic address and the reading of the Declaration of Independence.

By horseback, wagon and in buggies and on foot people came to town. Nowadays, aided by the automobile, people leave the city to lose themselves in the mountains and countryside.

A quarter of a century ago and even much later, everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion. Each person considered himself a committee of one to make the celebration a success. The Fourth, then was almost a 24 hour affair. The crowd gathered early on the festal morning and usually did not disperse until the next morning.

Referring to his diary Mr. Parker finds that the first celebration of which he has record is that of 1888. Col. L.S. Howlett was the orator of the day. In those days Mr. Parker was usually pressed into duty as marshal. Many Indians were present and there was an abundance of real lemonade.

Horse races and wrestling were features on the program. Horse races were held on Yakima avenue from the Yakima hotel to the NP depot which stood in the middle of the street. During the races that year an old man named Milo Eglin attempted to cross the street and was injured. In future years this feature on the program was eliminated.

In 1890 the celebration was held on the reservation and many Yakima people attended. Charles Pearne and Charles Allen gave speeches and a number of Indians talked through interpreters.

W.L. Jones, now senator, was the principal orator at the celebration

Fourth of July

held in 1891 which had the usual entertainment program and ended with a dance in Switzers hall. In the evening a number of people climbed Mt Adams and built a fire which could be seen in Yakima.

Features on the program in 1892 were a hurdle race for women which Rose Carey, Belle Dunn and Maude Stone participated in and a fat man's race which was won by Sam Vincent. Thad Huston was orator that year.

Mr. Milroy recalls the parades and floats of the early day celebrations. Much care and attention was given the construction of patriotic floats and some highly creditable pieces of work were turned out.

The first celebration he attended was also the first held in the new town of Yakima. It was in 1885. The speeches were held on the Yakima river near the present location of the Moxee bridge. Col. Howlett was the orator but his forensic ability did not compete with the mosquitoes and his audience gradually drifted away.

At that time the block on which the Miller building now stands was vacant and the fireworks were set off there. Mr. Milroy was on the fireworks committee. Some little excitement was provided in the evening when a box of Roman candles ignited. Mr. Milroy took refuge under the float which served as the platform and the other members of the committee fled among the crowd. The float caught fire but peace was soon restored.

After that experience the fire companies were organized and hose cart races became a feature. The city council bought special racing carts and for several years the keenest rivalry existed between Yakima and Ellensburg. Some of the men who served the Yakima company and took part in the races were Fred Reed, J.E. Meavin, Volney T. Phillips, Charles Hauser and J.C. Liggett.

Customs Miscellany

Yakima was entertained for several days during the past week by a phonograph. There was no drop a nickle in the slot business about this affair and the proprietor made a killing at twenty-five cents a head.

The twenty-fifth silver anniversary of the organization of the G.A.R. will be observed Monday evening by Lincoln post at their hall over H.H. Allen's drug store.

There will be music, recitations and an account of the organization of the society.

The Sons of Veterans, Woman's Relief Corps and the public generally is invited to be present on this occasion.

Four additional water hydrants have been located on the four corners surrounding the corner of First street and Yakima avenue. There is no no good reason why the streets shouldn't be given a good soaking occasionally.

Denman Thompson and troppe have written to secure a date here some time the latter part of this month. The "Two Sisters" will be placed."

Harold Preston, Mrs. A.A. Boyers and the Misses Zona and Myra Howlett spent a couple of days at Amasa Walker's Sunnyside ranch this week.

J.R. Peter received four carloads of timber for the Natcheez railroad bridge today. He has thirty-five men at work at present and will increase the force on Monday--Yakima Herald, April 2, 1891.

The barbers of Yakima will close their shops hereafter on Sunday,
and the winds which sweep ^{up} and down that lovely vale will toy on the
Sabbath with the whiskers of the unfortunate who are unable to
reach the shop before Saturday midnight--Spokane Review,
May, 1891.

Cultural

The preliminary spelling contests inaugurated by the Good Templars was finished Tuesday evening by Miss Jessie Henderson winning the 10th silver medal.

The final contest will take place at the opera house Tuesday evening next, the successful aspirant to be awarded a gold medal.

Those who will contest for the gold medal are F.M. Spain, J.B. Pugsley, W.H. James; Henry Teal, L.E. Sperry, Lee Purdin, Robert Noonan, Miss Lettie Kingsbury, Miss Ina Phillips and Miss Jessie Henderson.

The evening's entertainment will close with an excellent musical and literary program--Yakima Herald, March 10, 1891.

The gold medal spelling contest which occurred at the opera house Tuesday evening attracted a large audience.

The spelling was preceded by a literary and musical which was well received, especially the recitations by Miss Henderson.

Of the ten silver medal winners, but eight participated in the final contest, Messrs Sperry and Teal being absent.

City Clerk F.M. Spain was the successful candidate although he was pressed hard by his competitors and declared "down" twice by the moderator on words which an investigation of Webster demonstrated were spelled two correctly, two methods of spelling being given in each instance.

The first one to miss was Miss Henderson who slipped on "contagious". She was followed by Miss Lettie Kingsbury with "asthma," Robert Noonan with "exhilaration," Miss Ina Phillips with "acknowledgment," W.H. James with "Millennium" J.B. Pugsley with "ethereal" and Lee Purdin with "tyrannize." The awarding of the medal was done by Dudley Eshelman in a neat

speech responded to briefly by Mr. Spain--Yakima Herald, March 26, 1891.

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"asthma", Robert Noonan with "exaltation", Miss Lattie Fingersh with

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Spain with "ethereal" and Lee Spain with "tyrannical". The

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Customs

Marriage presents

Rev. W.H. Cornett today pronounced the words which united the destinies of Henry R. Kern of Missoula, Mont and Miss Addie E. Coombs at the residence of the bride's parents.

The happy couple leave tomorrow for their new home in Missoula. Following is a list of presents they received.

Silver card receiver, Dr. and Mrs. Hargrove, Boston, Mass.; driving horse, Mr. and Mrs. M.G. Kern, Cornwallis, Mont; bedroom set, Mr. and Mrs. E.P. Kern, Missoula, Montana; silver berry spoon, Mr. and Mrs. F.M. Ingalls, Missoula, Mont., pickle caster, Mrs. Masters; silver cake basket, the Hilcox family; teaspoons, Frank Jordan; tablespoons and pair of Indian clubs, H.F. Coombs; silver mustard spoon, C.C. Coombs; celery glass dish and two silver napkin rings, Mr. and Mrs. Bland; silver butter dish, H. Voorhees and Fred Miller, silver napkin rings, Mr. and Mrs. T.W. Davidson; cake plate, Miss May Masters; sauce dishes, Mr. and Mrs. Kesling; chair tidies, Harry Davidson; glass set, Mr. and Mrs. F. Foster; salt cellars, Maggie and Lloyd Foster; chair saddle-back, Miss Effie Cary; chair tidy, Miss Rose Cary; whisk broom holder, Mr. and Mrs. Fry; chamber set, Alex Branderburg and J. Sindall; pair of wivels, Mr. and Mrs. C. Scow; napkins, Mr. and Mrs. C. Swain, sheets and pillow cases, Mr. and Mrs. B.B. Coombs; napkins, Miss Annie Parmeter; napkins and towels, Messrs Herke and Gammon; Napkins, Mr. and Mrs. Nat Yeats; silver berry spoon, Miss Jeannie Kelly.

Miss Belle Yeats acted as bridesmaid and W.H. Robinson as groomsman-Yakima Herald, September 3, 1891.