

St. Johns History

BICENTENNIAL
ISSUE

CORRECTED & ENLARGED



This is the second in a series of booklets brought to you by our local historical group. Knowing full well that much more history remains to be researched, sifted and compiled, we would appreciate your cooperation in furnishing us with old photographs and memorabilia that might be of assistance in the presentment of future issues.

St. Johns Historical Group

INTRODUCTION

This is the Bicentennial year and in observance, the Portland City Park Bureau is sponsoring a neighborhood history project wherein each of the city's 47 neighborhoods is invited to participate in a celebration and history pageant to be held in mid-July. Cooperating in this endeavor, a group of interested and dedicated citizens has volunteered to research and record some of the intriguing history of St. Johns and to offer it in this pamphlet to the public. These volunteers are entirely amateurs in researching, writing, editing, photographing and publishing, and with the exception of a \$100.00 contribution from the St. Johns Boosters, they have financed this booklet with their own personal donations. This has been a novel and enjoyable experience for each of them, and their only compensation will be your acceptance and appreciation of their efforts manifested here. This booklet is dedicated to the early and recent settlers of St. Johns who, thru hard work and high ideals, step by step, have made St. Johns a solid and pleasant place to live. Their realization that good things don't just happen and their determination to protect and preserve the community have made St. Johns the finest neighborhood in the City of Portland.

Mr. Don MacGillivray, Coordinator of the Portland Neighborhood History Project, worked with a volunteer amateur group to produce this portion of the City of Portland's Bicentennial effort.

Special credit goes to Mr. Howard Galbraith, area chairman, who compiled the book, was writer of the geological introduction, business and sales manager, general coordinator and printed the entire book.

Mr. A. E. "Bob" Furrer and Mr. David C. Swart spent many hours researching and collecting photographs from generous St. Johns residents for the inclusion in this booklet.

Laura Minkler earned a very sincere debt of gratitude for her superior research and articulate reporting of St. Johns history in the 1954-55 editions of the St. Johns Review. Without this dedicated work, extensive, irreplaceable records would have been lost.

Skee Larson lent his talents to Laura in her research, and he also authored many historical articles himself. His clear recollections of the past and the vivid review of his observations have preserved a good share of St. Johns history which he has a knack of recounting in a delightful style.

Acknowledgements and thanks are accorded also to the Oregon Historical Society, the public libraries and schools who have contributed information, and a particularly special thanks to the St. Johns Review whose loan of 72 year's back issues has been the principal source of historic information.

Some of the St. Johns History Group Committee members who contributed many hours of time and a great deal of effort are as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ida Cates | Historical knowledge |
| Gladys Dickson | Research, writing |
| Florence Evans | Research, writing, committee, finance |
| Harry Factor | Research, historical material |
| Ruth Hannula | Historical material |
| Bernice Hill | Historical material |
| Maxine Hurt | Historical material |
| Gwen Stevens Koonce | Research, committee |
| Scout Lind | Remembrances of the past |
| Grit Lind | History of river transport |
| Helen Miles | Research, writing, committee |
| Dick Miller | Research, Portsmouth Museum |
| Walt & Art Morey | Tape Recordings |
| Toini Niemi | Research, composition, writing |
| Lorraine Singleterry | Art, taping, sales |
| Edwina K. Swart | Editing, typing |
| Mrs. Bert Whitehead | Transcriptions |
| Mary Wilbur | History knowledge, committee |

There are many other generous individuals who contributed photographs and information used in this publication. To these wonderful people, we are indeed grateful and extend a special thank you. With the combined efforts of all interested parties, we give you the story of early St. Johns.

* * * * *

ST. JOHNS HISTORY GROUP

President:

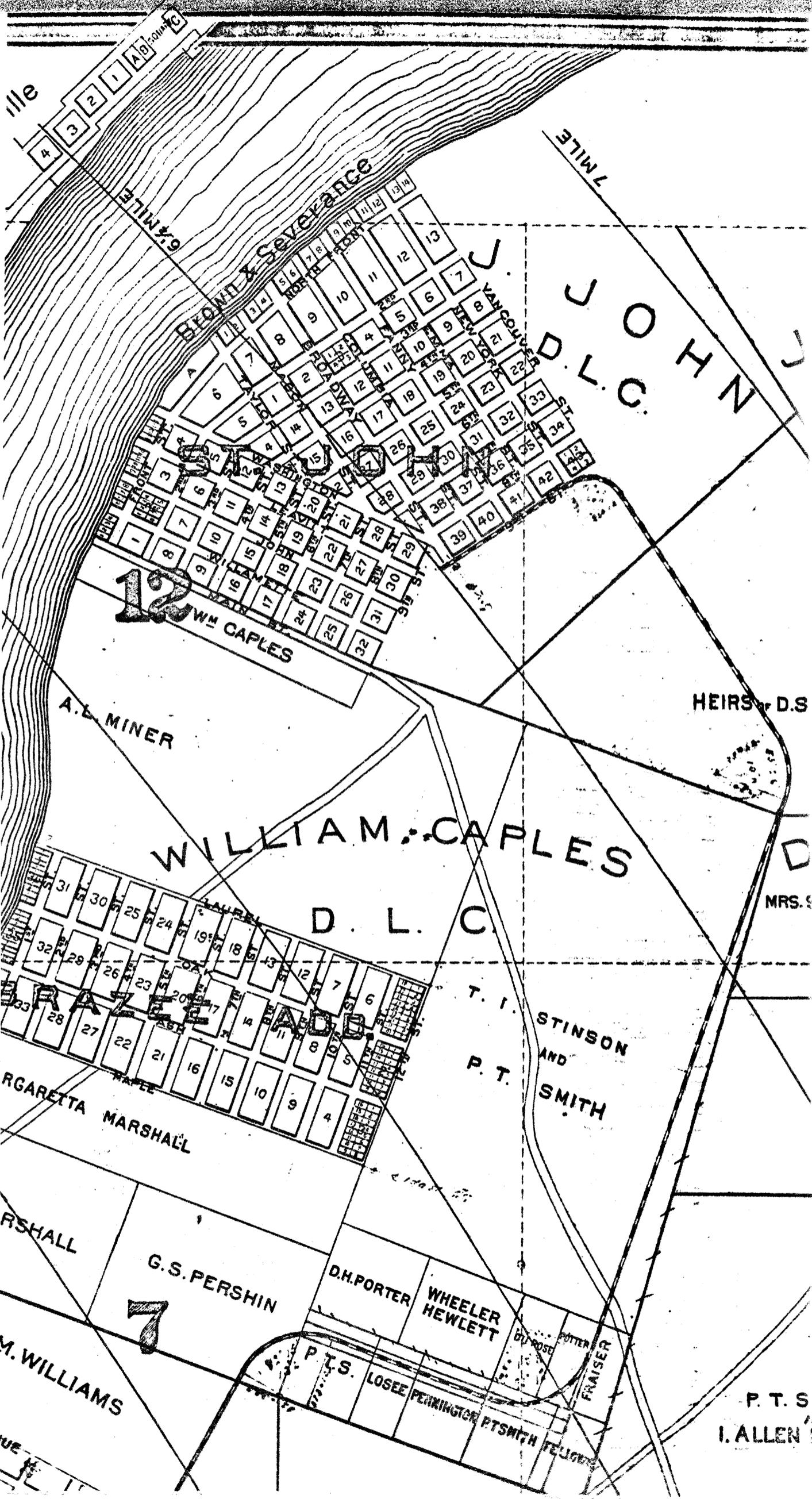
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* * * * *

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WM CAPLES

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T.I. STINSON AND P.T. SMITH

MARSHALL

G.S. PERSHIN

D.H. PORTER WHEELER HEWLETT

M. WILLIAMS

7

P.T.S. LOSEE PENNINGTON P.T. SMITH FRAISER

P.T.S. I. ALLEN

7 MILE

JOHN

HEIRS D.S.

MRS. S

D

EARLY ST. JOHNS MAP

CIRCA 1891

INFORMATION AND LEGEND:

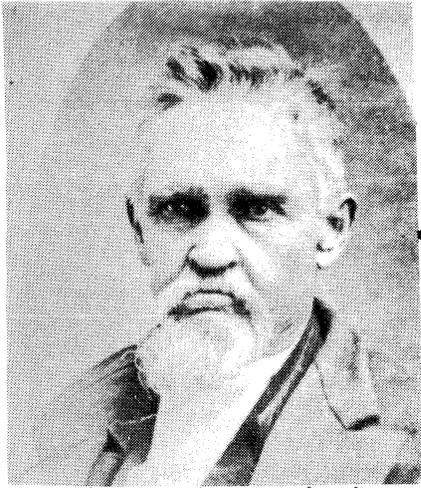
1. Roads:

- A. Leading southeast from Main (Richmond) Street: Columbia Way (road to Vancouver).
- B. Leading southwest from Main Street: Road to Albina (Willamette Blvd.).

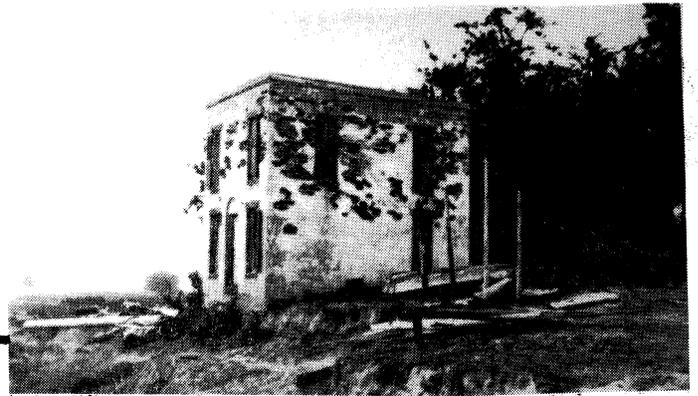
2. Street Railway - dash lines from Dawson (Lombard) on the south to Macrum; thence southeast to Depot Street (Fessenden); thence along Fessenden to St. Louis (NW bearing - same street) and along St. Louis to Jersey (Lombard) St.; thence to the terminus at the corner of Burlington & Jersey, in front of Bickner's Hall (St. Johns Hardware).

3. Block "A" Springville: (West side of Willamette River) Terminus of James Johns ferry (not to be confused with St. Johns ferry).

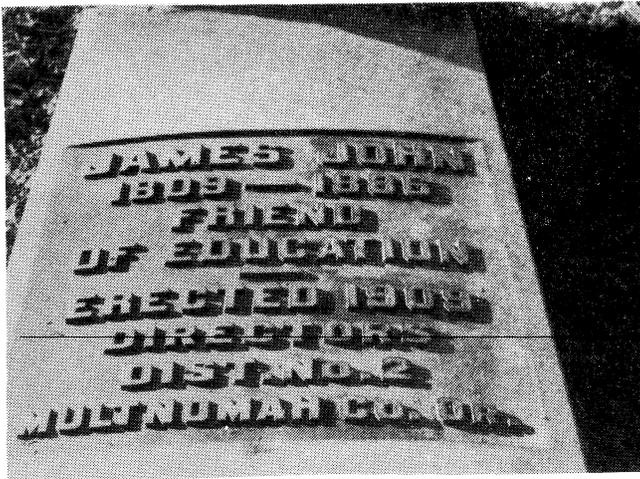
4. You are looking at a map of Albina, not St. Johns, as this is a map of 1891. For a short period of time, from February 20, 1891 to July 6, 1891, the entire Peninsula was annexed to Albina, and then on the latter date Albina was annexed to Portland.



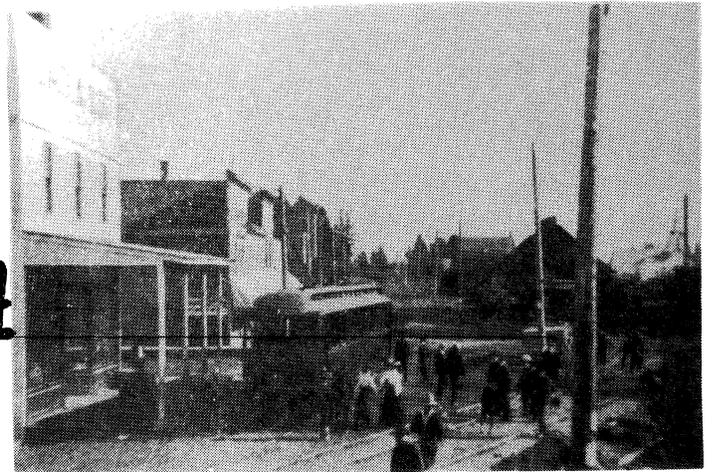
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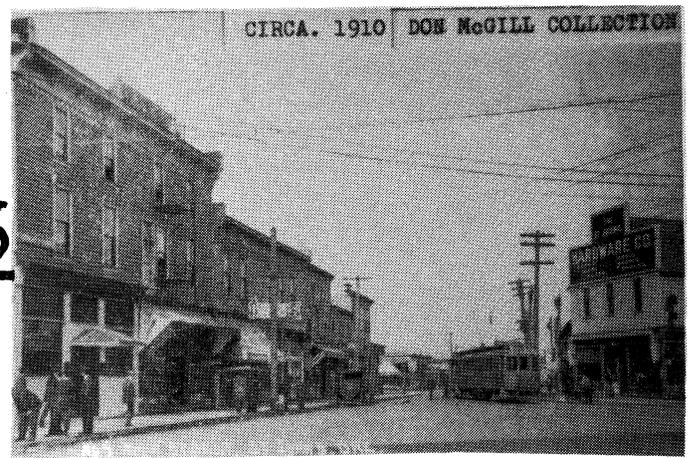
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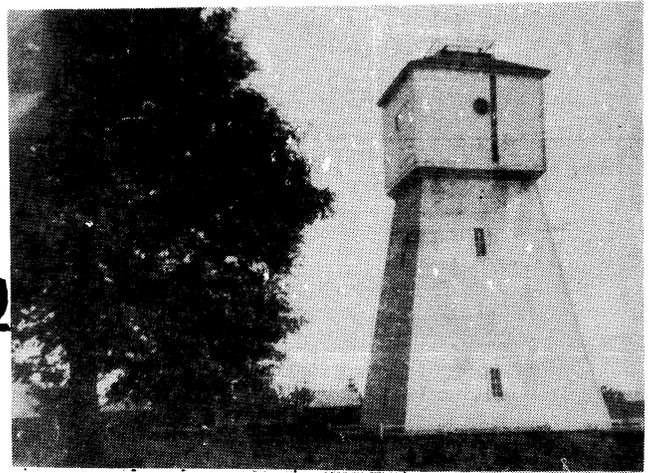
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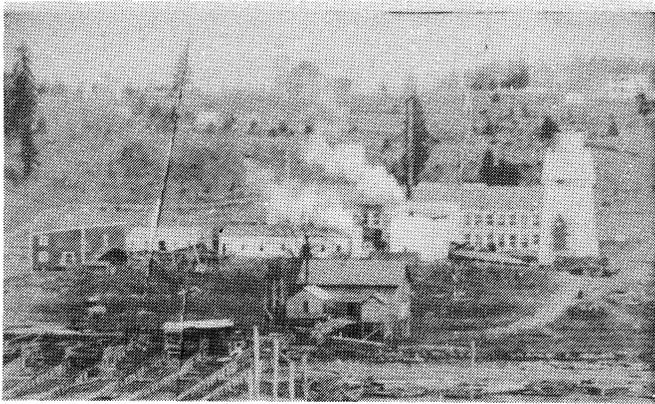
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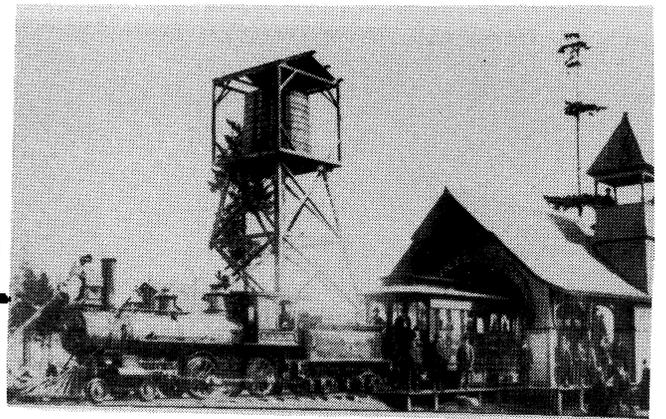
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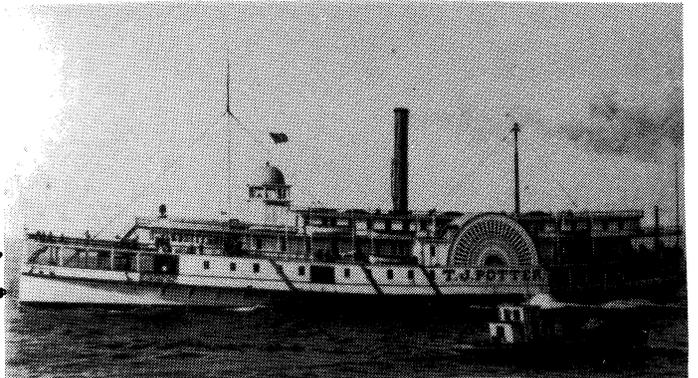
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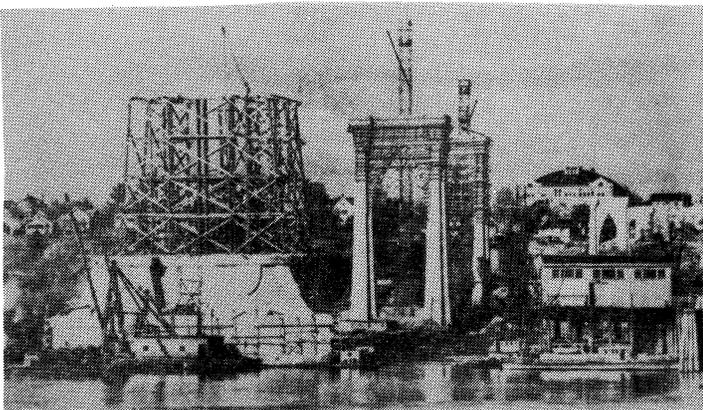
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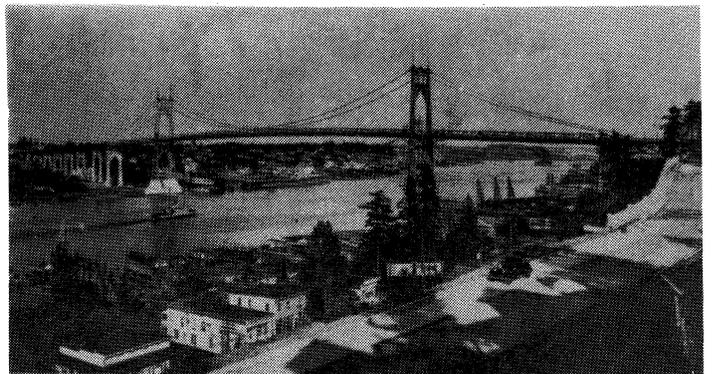
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ST. JOHNS SUSPENSION BRIDGE

Spanning the Willamette River at Portland, Oregon. Date of Dedication: June 13, 1931.

16

We wish to thank our many friends who have submitted photographs from their collections for display in the Peninsula Branch of the United States National Bank, and we thank the officers of the bank for providing space in the lobby for our showcases. Some of the borrowed photos are reproduced in this pamphlet and all the street names have been translated to present day designations for the convenience of those who may wish to locate or observe the former landmarks. Photo reproductions by A. E. "Bob" Furrer and David C. Swart.

CAPTIONS TO PHOTOGRAPHS

1. James John, 1809-1886. Founder of St. Johns. His name suggested and inspired naming the community after him - St. Johns, in his honor. Photo from Maxine Hurt collection.
2. James John's home and store, built about 1850 at the foot of Burlington Avenue, where the St. Johns Lumber Co. is now located. 1902 photo from Oregon Historical Society files.
3. Slab marking James John's grave in Columbian Cemetery on Columbia Blvd., near I-5 overpass. Bob Furrer collection.
4. View looking south on Lombard St. from near Burlington Ave. Bickner's store is on left (presently St. Johns Hardware). In the distant background above the center of the car is the tower of Central School. The barnlike structure on the right (between Leavitt and John Aves.) is the car barn where the locomotives were serviced. In the center foreground is one of the first electric cars to run on the St. Johns line. They began operating here about January, 1903. Photo from a 1904 pamphlet "St. Johns on the Willamette", submitted by Bernice Hill.
5. Philadelphia Avenue looking east from near the present Police Station in 1907. Photo submitted by Don McGill.
6. Lombard Street looking north from N. Philadelphia Avenue about 1910. Don McGill collection.
7. Central School on east side of Lombard St. between John and Charleston Aves. (present site of James John School playground). Built in 1894 and destroyed by fire January 13, 1930. Note the car track in front of the school and the unimproved Lombard Street. From the pamphlet submitted by Bernice Hill.
8. James John High School, on Syracuse Street between Philadelphia and Alta Aves. at the east end of the St. Johns Bridge. Built in 1909 and destroyed by fire on September 22, 1934. 1918 photo from Glenn Smith collection.

CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

9. Reputed to be the oldest house (or what is left of it) still standing in St. Johns. During a recent visit from his home in Crescent City, Calif., Mr. V. J. (Skee) Larsen, an early time historian in the St. Johns area, stated that construction of this house was started by the Loomis family in 1878 on their donation land claim. In later years, as was needed, the home was enlarged. Mr. Larsen's parents bought this house and two acres in 1905 and they lived there for about 25 years. This information has been verified by Tom Lind, resident of St. Johns since 1907 and author of an article in this brochure. This house is being demolished by its present owner, Mr. Doug Peterson, who with his parents lived in it for many years. It is at the foot of N. Reno Ave. beyond the "Dead End" street sign. Shutterbugs take notice. Photo from Bob Furrer Collection 1976.
10. First water tank to be constructed at N. Willamette Blvd. and Oswego Avenue, 1903. From pamphlet submitted by Bernice Hill.
11. Portland Woolen Mills at foot of Baltimore Avenue, St. Johns Shipbuilding Co. in foreground. 1906 photograph from Tom Lind collection.
12. Locomotive "Old No. 5" of the Willamette Bridge Rwy. Co., leaving the Portsmouth Station. 1890 Oregon Historical Society photo.
13. St. Johns Congregational Church and YWCA at Ivanhoe and Richmond Avenue, presently the home of the American Legion Post No. 98. This building was moved from the Lewis & Clark Exposition grounds to this site in 1906. 1925 photo, Oregon Historical Society.
14. The T. J. Potter, built in 1888 for the Portland to Ilwaco and Astoria run. A frequent visitor to St. Johns to pick up passengers heading for the ocean beaches, she was the fastest boat on the river before being rebuilt in 1901; condemned in 1916 and finally beached and abandoned near Astoria in 1921. Her boiler and whistle were installed in the Astoria Box Co. plant. Photo from Emmett Frank collection.
15. St. Johns Bridge construction in early stages; east approach piers and main pier foundation, old James John High School in right background. St. Johns Review photo, 1930.
16. Requiem for a ferry. Shown in its final days crossing between Linnton and St. Johns. 1931 photo from St. Johns Review Bridge Dedication booklet.

OREGON GEOLOGY & EARLY HISTORY OUTLINE

This is intended as an introduction and outline of the prehistory of Portland and of the geological episodes leading up to its existence. It is not an academic or scholastic thesis and boring details and dates will be omitted wherever possible.

Dr. Thomas Condon, who was a professor at the University of Oregon, published a book entitled "The Two Islands" in 1902 which delightfully describes the geology of Oregon, and although this book was written 74 years ago, it is considered the "Geologist's Bible" today. Much of the geological information in the following review was taken from this book.

In the very far distant past, Oregon was a part of the ocean floor off the west coast of North America, and as the surf pounded the foothills of the Rocky Mountains which were then the sea shore, two islands began to emerge from the depths and this was the beginning of our great state of Oregon. As they reared their crowns above the surface of the surrounding sea, violent tremors and earthquakes caused by the buckling of the Earth's crust below set off volcanos pouring out immense flows of molten lava accompanied by clouds of steam and hot gasses under terrific pressures. As the islands grew in bulk and height, the ocean floor around them began to rise slowly due to the intense pressures and tensions in the Earth's crust on which it rested. These two islands eventually evolved into the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon and the Siskyou Mountains of southern Oregon. This island building subsided some but with its relaxing the motivating pressures shifted and another greater activity began which was probably the most devastating cataclysm of all time in our area (all time meaning the last 500 million years). The Cascades began to thrust upward from the sea and with such violence and ferocity that to attempt description is futile. Dozens of volcanos erupted simultaneously attended by shattering earthquakes, tops of mountains were blasted to dust, and great sheets of molten lava poured out over hundreds of square miles forming layers of solid rock 1000 feet thick. This was some of the tumult which spawned the Cascade Range, and as it continued to rise, so also did the two islands and the sea bottom around them.

This new mountain range grew up between the two islands leaving the Blue Mtn. Isle on its east side, and the Siskyou Island on the west, and it also created a broad trough eastward to the Rocky Mountains. This trough collected all the runoff moisture from both mountain ranges and all low lying basins became lakes many miles across and hundreds of feet deep. The Columbia River was the important drainage for these vast lakes and some of its age and tremendous power can be partly realized by pointing out that it cut the Columbia Gorge through the Cascades as they grew.

As all this mountain building progressed, still another blessed event was being born to our geologically restless state; the Coast Range was rising up from the sea as a chain of islands off the coast whose beach was now along the western foothills of the Cascades, and as these islands grew into a mountain range just as all their ancestors had a long time before, they impounded

a huge body of sea water in the Willamette Trough. This was an inland arm of the sea-like Puget Sound and very likely the two were connected as the valleys of the Willamette and Cowlitz Rivers lie in the same trough as Puget Sound. All this uplifting and shifting continued for thousands of years until the entire state of Oregon was above sea level; it is still bouncing and growing but so very gently most of the time that it's impossible to detect without very delicate instruments. If we now move along in history to more recent times (geologically), we find our state involved in another turmoil - - - The Last Ice Age.

Several ice ages have occurred when broad expanses of ice covered the northern cap of the world, the latest occurring about five thousand to twenty-thousand years ago extending as far south as California. During this period an event occurred which greatly influenced the land contours in the Portland basin; ice blocked a trough in Northern Idaho damming up the Clark fork of the Columbia River and creating a huge lake extending back into Montana. When this dam broke, it released five hundred cubic miles of water in a few days, and as this tremendous flow of water raced across Northeast Washington, it scoured off everything overlying the lava beds below including the remaining ice sheets, everything was stripped off down to the lava bed foundation which is now the "scabland". This runoff created a huge lake in the Columbia basin upstream from its only escape through the Wallula Gap, where the river cuts through the Horseheaven Hills east of Pasco and the mouth of the Snake River. This gap could not release the great volume of water piling up behind it, and the entire area from Pasco east, north, and west was flooded, including Hanford, Priest Rapids, Ellensburg, and Yakima. All the ice sheets in this area were floated and could have caused an ice jam at the gap checking the flood's escape, but likely twenty to twenty-five cubic miles of water per day passed through which flooded and overflowed the Umatilla Basin below; it eventually reached and started its ruthless rampage down the Columbia River Gorge carrying its cargo of mud, silt, sand, gravel and boulders, and the floating chunks of ice which rafter a similar cargo. As it tore its way through the gorge ripping off huge blocks of lava and carrying off anything movable in its path, it reached depths of one thousand feet at constricted sites.

When this torrent reached Crown Point, it spread across the flood plain from Washougal northwest to Battleground and north beyond Longview; it also spread south across Gresham and west across Portland to the West Hills, and south again up the Willamette Valley and over into the Tualatin Basin. The entire area was flooded up to four hundred feet above sea level. No traces are found above this level but frequent are the erratics (boulders up to fifteen feet in diameter carried by the floating ice) deposited where the ice conveying them ran aground and melted. Many erratics are plainly visible in the Troutdale and Blue Lake area east of Portland. This flood deposited one hundred and fifty feet of sediment under Vancouver and up to three hundred and fifty feet under Portland; below this is twelve hundred to fifteen hundred feet of sand and sediment, now turned to rock, of the ancient sea bottom, and below this the thick layers of basalt.

All the peninsula and islands from Troutdale to Oregon City to St. Helens are one great delta system where two rivers spread out across broad flood plains slowing their flow and causing them to deposit their conglomeration of cargos. The entire Portland basin was a wide mud flat when the flood receded and the Willamette River met little resistance in cutting a deep ditch through

it. The high sand bluff along the Greeley Street cutoff, below Kaiser Hospital, around the steep rim of Mocks Bottom and the University of Portland shows remarkably clear proof of water-deposited sand to a depth of nearly two hundred feet. The steep profile and sharp features of this bluff indicate it was gouged out quite recently - - just yesterday geologically.

Since the ravages of the Ice Age reeked such havoc on the most desirable sites of habitation by early Man in Oregon, it could be theorized that all habitation sites predating the Ice Age either were devastated beyond recognition or did not exist; this is not true and many logics prove it otherwise. It is hoped that evidence will unveil his presence here a long, long time before the last Ice Age. Scattered in every part of Oregon wherever animal life existed are the occupational remains of early Man, his tools and weapons, his campsites and fire-pits, and his rubbish heaps, and while many of these ancient remains are buried under silt deposits along the river banks and lakes, others are overgrown with brush and trees and vegetation, but they are certainly here and in quantities to rival any in the world. The climate and living conditions were attractive to the ancient hunters and hundreds of thousands of them lived and died here during their many centuries of residence.

Lewis and Clark led the first official party across the plains from Missouri to explore "the great River of the West", and their journals report many intricate details of the Oregon country and its inhabitants before either was molested, corrupted, and desecrated by the white invaders. This epic journey spanned most of 1805 and 1806 and its western terminal was at Camp Clatsop between Astoria and Seaside. Though they were the first to officially survey the Columbia River from the Snake River to Astoria, Robert Gray had entered the river's mouth from the sea nearly thirteen years before in 1792, and Bruno Heceta had entered it before then, later giving Gray its location and directions. Heceta's crew in crossing the rough bar of the Columbia had become so seasick that when they were inside in quite water, he refused to let them drop anchor and go ashore fearing they were too sick and too weak to haul the anchor aboard again, so they swung about off Tongue Point and headed back out to sea. According to fairly reliable notes this gives Heceta the honor of discovery but there is also evidence of Russian migration to San Francisco Bay around 1600.

The Indian population, heaviest along the Columbia River, was endowed with all the necessities for good living; the climate was mild and birds, game, fish, and roots were abundant all around them. They prospered in this luxury and great nations developed in their midsts; this was almost paradise, but contact with the white man ended it abruptly. It may have been coincidental, but when the White Man invaded this Indian territory, a deadly plague accompanied him and entire populations of Indian villages were wiped out. One early "voyager" passing some of the villages along the river noted in his journals "where a short time ago there were hundreds of residents at these sites, I now see no sign of life". Another early traveler in speaking of the muted villages mentioned the many corpses "festering in the sun". This epidemic spread over the entire area and so degenerated and emaciated a once-powerful race that it is difficult to determine their past from the few who survived. No record of what transpired was attempted as the White Man's only intent was to take the Indian's land from him and no interference or resistance was tolerated.

Many of the old Indian campsites surround the Portland area, around Ramsay, Smith, and Bybee Lakes, along the rivers and sloughs, and particularly on

Sauvies Island which, incidentally, Lewis and Clark declared the most appropriate location for a large city that they had encountered since leaving Missouri. Most of the old campsites have now eroded and washed away, or are buried under industrial fill, or are flooded behind hydro-electric dams, or have been excavated by relic hunters. It is saddening and tragic that no authentic, unbiased record was kept of the true American living in his natural environment before his fatal contact with the White invasion. The skillfully crafted relics retrieved from his former campsites place him entirely out of context with the roll of savage in which he is portrayed so unjustly. We should bow our heads in shame as we view these precious trinkets he left behind, the vestige of a slaughtered civilization.

History moves on, and a few years after Lewis and Clark a group of men was outfitted by John Jacob Astor and sent to Astoria to establish a fur trading post, being followed later by the Hudson Bay Company, who finally settled at Vancouver and under the domination of Dr. John McLoughlin. The old Ft. Vancouver is being reconstructed now on the exact site and as an exact replica of the original. A visit to this and the attendant museum will occupy most of a day well spent. For a long time this fort became the focal point of many travelers heading west, and though McLoughlin was an agent of the British Crown, he welcomed the Americans who arrived in his domain, and many early pioneers in Oregon received assistance from him.

Oregon City attracted many early settlers, being the upstream terminal of all the river traffic on the Willamette, where all cargoes were unloaded and dispersed to other areas. Like the rivers had deposited their cargoes of silt when their free flow was restricted, so did Man deposit his cargoes at Oregon City where the falls impeded his passage. A small settlement grew up here and transportation by boat to Vancouver developed, but the trip was too long to complete in one day, so a resting spot developed at the head of Tidewater some distance below Oregon City on the Willamette. Upstream from this spot the river current was much swifter than downstream and more difficult to navigate, so the resting spot became a popular stopping place for travelers going either direction. This spot was the beginning of the City of Portland, and in a very short time it became a busy, bustling port, often boisterous and brawling, later to become the largest city in Oregon, and the largest port between Seattle and San Francisco.

Today this City of Roses sprawls peacefully across many square miles of a huge delta at the junction of two great rivers and certainly it reveals no evidence of the violence spanning thousands of centuries that led to the creation of its picturesque setting. The citizens of this city are infected with a restless independence contracted possibly from their land contaminated by eternal turmoil since its hectic birth at the bottom of the sea.

FRED H. RAMSEY, A ST. JOHNS PIONEER OF 1844

By Gladys N. Dickson

Somewhere in the history of every village, town and city is a legendary figure about whom little is known but much is speculated. Here in St. Johns our legendary figure lies beside a busy three road triangle at the head of a tree tangled draw in a tiny graveyard overgrown with weeds and bushes. Overgrown and neglected his grave might be, but it is not unguarded, for towering over it is an extraordinary cedar tree of great age and strange shape, with one huge limb raised as if to ward off trespassers. Trucks and cars rumble past his resting place day and night. Gone forever is the tranquility of his homestead. (see picture No. 3, Courtesy of Dan Carter, Old Portland Today).

Fred H. Ramsey, a native of Missouri, came to St. Johns when much of the peninsula was wilderness. He was a "Pioneer of 1844" and homesteaded 640 acres of land in the St. Johns area along the Columbia Slough and down to the end of the peninsula. (see map No. 1). According to newspaper records, he first settled on the lower point of the peninsula which is now the Rivergate development. During the gold rush in California he struck out for the gold fields, and one of his brothers who had filed a homestead claim on Sauvie Island lived in Fred's three room cabin on the upper farm (near the present Chimney Park) until his return. This three room cabin located between Fred Ramsey's grave and the Columbia Slough had as a sentinel, a great maple tree which grew at the corner of the cabin, and it was reported to have been a "landmark". Perhaps even gold could not keep him away from his wilderness home.

In 1846 Mr. Ramsey was said to have participated in the Cayuse Indian War. He truly was a great and good friend of the Indians living on or near his land, and legend has it that a number of them are buried in his private cemetery. It is said of him that he preferred Indians to white people. Be that as it may, there was one good friend who meant a good deal to him, and that was the young Lt. Ulysses S. Grant who was stationed at Fort Vancouver across the Columbia River in the State of Washington. His cabin on the peninsula was often visited by Lt. Grant and some of his men. At that time army pay was said to be poor and the food unexciting, so the hunting and fishing at the Ramsey place, as well as Mr. Ramsey's special brand of "refreshment" were welcome indeed. At Fort Vancouver the great ovens in the bakery turned out 200 loaves of bread a day. There has been some speculation as to the route taken by Lt. Grant and his men to reach the Ramsey cabin. During the June freshets much of the lower peninsula was under water and transportation was hazardous, so Mr. Ramsey moved out of high water reach to his cabin on the upper part of the peninsula.

There was no bridge across the Columbia River in the early days of the settling of the west, and people as well as horses and wagons crossed the river by ferry. The ferry, City of Vancouver, operated from the slip at the foot of Washington St. in Vancouver and crossed to the slip at what is now Hayden Island on the Oregon side (see map No. 2). Vancouver Road (now Vancouver Avenue) was the only street in Portland connecting with the ferry. Mr. Dom Molinari who came to Portland from Genova, Italy in 1902 at the age

of 7 years remembers that his father farmed 15 acres of land on the Love Donation Land Claim (near Columbian Cemetery) at that time and that he vividly remembers the ferry and the road leading to it. Later when he farmed in Washington, 4 miles east of Vancouver, he brought wood and produce to Portland by horse and wagon over the ferry.

From Vancouver Road there was a road which paralleled the Columbia Slough and was called the Columbia Slough Road (now Columbia Blvd.). This was the only road to the Ramsey Farm at the end of the peninsula, and a branch of it went into St. Johns proper and down the hill to Caples Landing and the Willamette River. This Columbia Slough Road from Vancouver Road to the end of the peninsula was the road taken by Lt. Grant and his men to the Ramsey cabin.

During the last years of Fred Ramsey's life a young Portland man who lived somewhere in the vicinity of the present Coliseum, and whose name was Conrad Reinlaub (correct spelling unknown) spent most of his weekends and much of his summers on the Ramsey acreage and very often cared for the old man when he was "in his cups". Mr. Ramsey died when his cabin on the lower peninsula burned and he, being "under the weather" was unable to get out. Mr. Reinlaub inherited a piece of land from Ramsey which was directly behind the Gatton Cemetery. For many years after the death of Ramsey, "Con", as he was called, operated a trap-shooting area on his property, and assisted hunters and fishermen on the lower peninsula and on the lake where the St. Johns dump now is.

As late as 1900 there were families living on the upper farm, but it was not until Mr. George Repp, and later his brother, Mr. Peter Repp and his wife, Katie, came to the farm that it was properly cared for. Mrs. Repp's father, Mr. Henry Schleicher, often lived in a small cabin directly across the slough from Con's property, and cared for the duck blinds for the hunters. Once, in order to build a hay barn and make some more farm space, Mr. Repp cut down a row of trees which grew along the Columbia Slough Road just beside the grave of Mr. Ramsey, and in his digging out of the tree stumps he unearthed many Indian artifacts.

Directly across from Mr. Ramsey's grave there was a small white house (see picture No. 1) in which a Mr. John Emerson lived. At this time he was not married and did a thriving business in whiskey. To deliver his wares he had purchased a small easement which skirted Con's property, past the grave of Mr. Ramsey, and lead down to the Slough and the boats. This small white house was moved by Mr. Ross Gatton, when the Gatton farm was purchased by the Union Carbide Company, to just east of the entrance to the St. Johns dump, and set up on the Oscar Mason property.

Finally, about 1929, the Ramsey upper farm and the lower farm too, were taken over by two of the Widmer Brothers, who at one time farmed the Gatton Farm. Max and Otto Widmer built on three more rooms to the three room cabin of Mr. Ramsey, (see picture No. 2), new cattle and hay barns were built, and it became a thriving dairy farm. The great maple tree still stood on the farm at the corner of the house until the beginning of World War II, and the Widmers moved elsewhere. This wonderful productive farm then became Meadowlark, and shacks, small houses, wrecking yards and various other buildings were built there, and the Ramsey farm was no more.

And now I give you a mystery. After the Widmer Brothers moved to the upper farm they plowed the fields with a single plow drawn by two farm horses in the time honored way, but as the plow turned over the earth it also turned over many half dollars, and most of them bore the dates 1886 and 1887. The children of the family followed closely behind the plowman and picked up the coins, and each year at plowing time there were more coins - all half dollars. Where did they come from? Had someone buried them hoping to dig them up at a later time? Only in one section of the farm did the money appear. Were they buried in a box or in a sack that finally disintegrated? Who knows?

HISTORY OF ST. JOHNS

(Condensed from Laura Minkler's article for St. Johns Review)

The personality of St. Johns was established by early emigrants. Only the courageous ventured to the new country filled with struggles and difficulties.

Train service was available to some extent in the 1880's. Emigrant coaches were attached to freight trains. The pot-bellied stove on the coach provided heat and warmed food with its stove-top oven. At train stops, food staples could be bought, such as bread and cheese.

Such a train brought the Thomas Monahan family, John Poff and a group from Missouri to San Francisco. They finished their journey to Portland via steamship.

In East Portland, where they first settled, they met Mr. John Mock who had a farm, and extensive land along the bluff of the Willamette River. When he delivered butter to the East Portland settlement, he invited the men to visit his farm. They walked from Portland to Mock Crest area, arriving for dinner with big appetites.

Mr. Monahan worked for Mr. Mock, then was hired at a Portland blacksmith shop. One of the Best brothers went to Toutle, Washington. Jim Shannon taught school near Toledo, Oregon. John Poff went to river boating from Portland to Corvallis, by way of the Oregon City locks, to load cargoes of wheat and flour for Portland. He later worked at dredging for a dry dock at Albina.

Most of the Missouri group gravitated to the St. Johns area, where they found work - many at the Severance's Barrel Factory (Wooden-ware factory), they made barrels for the Hawaiian Sugar trade. Mr. Monahan was a blacksmith at the barrel factory. He later hauled wood for P. T. Smith, who furnished cut wood for the steam boats, at \$2.50 per cord. Boats averaged 40 cords a day. The wood was from the forests of St. Johns.

Mr. Monahan later worked for the Willamette Bridge Co. that operated a steam train from St. Johns, down Dawson St., (Lombard) to Greeley St., to make connection to downtown Portland. Mr. Monahan was the conductor-engineer. He became a St. Johns Postmaster and a civic minded citizen.

Mr. Poff worked on the river boats that collected milk, produce and fish for Portland, stopping at the dairies and farms that dotted the Columbia slough from Portland to Hayden Island, and finally stopping at Sauvie Island for cargo for delivery to the city.

Mr. James Crittendon Scott, from Nebraska, settled in St. Johns in 1888, when the town was on the waterfront. He bought land from P. T. Smith and John Mock and built a home below the Burlington St. hill. He was the first man to build and make improvements above the waterfront, on the hill. He was one of the founders of the first water works. His first tank was at the present site of the City Hall Building, now the Police Station.

A steam-run motor, pumped water through wooden pipes to homes on the water front. The Scott boys, Vern and Vinton, used field glasses to detect the volume of water in the tank (saving trips up the hill), and they were responsible for firing the engine with wood to produce steam to pump the water. Stacks of wood were lined along the side of the pump.

When electricity was available, a larger tank on Willamette Blvd. was built and an electric pump was installed. Growing population overtaxed the system and was too much for the Scotts, so the Powers Thompson and Hartman Co. took over the project, using two water tanks from the Lewis and Clark Fair of 1905. These were also installed on Willamette Blvd.

Mr. Scott was prominent in civic affairs and represented St. Johns at the legislature when the community asked for a city charter. He donated five acres of ground to the Adventist Church so it could move up to the bluff from the river front.

Hans and Charlotte Peterson arrived from Sweden in 1891 making their way to St. Johns after previous stops. They bought property at Pointview Addition at Brunswick St. (now Mohawk). He worked at the Albina Yard of O.W.R.N. Railway, sometimes ten hours a day for \$1.50 a day. Transportation between his home and work was most difficult. He also worked hard grubbing stumps to clear additional land he bought in the Smith Avenue - Seneca Street area, which they promoted and sold.

The Peterson's granddaughter, Angeline Ervin (Mrs. Doty), attended James John High School, told of her memories as a child of visiting the A. L. Miner home on the Willamette Bluff at Crawford and Tyler Streets, where children were welcomed to play in the beautiful garden, and to arrange pretty shells found there.

* * * * *

MORE ST. JOHNS HISTORY

(Condensed from Laura Minkler's articles for St. Johns Review)

There have been disputes at various times about the reason for calling the town St. Johns instead of St. John. In his 1914 "History of the Oregon Country", Harvey Scott, editor of the Oregonian for forty years says: "The

town which calls itself St. Johns should be called St. John; for James John was the original settler there, and he was known as "Old Jimmy John". He was a recluse and a hermit, so they often or usually called him "Saint". There are Saints John, but no Saint Johns".

Mr. William Gatton told Mr. Fred Lockley in 1931 that the town should be called St. John.

In 1909, The St. Johns Push Club asked the Oregon Geographic Board to make a decision, but they refused to change the name on the grounds that "The name St. Johns has persisted and evidently can't be changed". The Oregon Historical Society made an effort, but failed. The name was finally adopted because it was said that James John had filed the original townsite plat under that name. They also said that it would be complicated because of its recognition in post offices throughout the country.

Whether James John actually filed the name as stated, is questionable because a "Certificate for a deede" which is owned by Mrs. Toost and written in the handwriting of James John reads as follows:

"St. John, June 1, 1872

This is to certify that I James John do hereby agree to deed to T. D. Taylor or his Heirs Traction five in the addition of the Town of St. John. Providing that he pays me the amount of a note that I holt against him for one hundred \$120 ant twenty dollars on sylver and gold coin with interest at one percent per month until paid.

James John"

The certificate was recorded in Washington, D. C. in 1872 and carries the embossed seal of Congress and ten one cent stamps, cancelled by hand.

James John built several houses which were used by people when they first moved into the area. The Douglass family moved into one of them when they moved their mill to St. Johns in 1902. When expanding activities necessitated the moving of the houses they were placed on rollers and taken to other locations. Some of them were moved to lots in the area of Charleston and Crawford Streets. Families remained in the houses while the moving activities took place.

Mr. E. T. Bolen, step-father of Mr. Lawrence Butt, came to work in the mill shortly after it was started. Mr. Butt and his family which included two brothers moved to one of James John's houses in St. Johns in September of 1902. Their house was also one that was moved and the process required more than a day.

Other people who resided in similar houses in the mill area included the Hanks, who were second cousins of Abraham Lincoln. Members of that family were Mrs. Hanks, Pearl, Nancy, Merritt, L. B. and Herbert. The children resided in the area several years after their parents died. Henry Knight was batching in one of James John's houses when the mill was built.

Sometime in the 80's, after Mr. Crook had operated James John's store

for awhile, he built his own store on a two hundred square feet block on Crawford St. His was the old-fashioned general store except he did not stock dry goods. Mrs. A. K. Graves, grandmother of Dr. Luzanna Graves, started a dry goods store in 1888 at the foot of Burlington St. (The Crook's store was the only other business at that time). She stocked silks, satins and other materials as well as the usual line of other merchandise carried in a store of that type.

Grandma Graves lived to be 99 years old. Although she wore glasses for a time, her eyesight was good during her later years. It is amazing that she could make "point face" handkerchiefs with 1000 thread (size 70 is considered fine). Her handkerchiefs sold for twenty-five dollars.

In 1868, Mr. B. O. Severance established the first post office with headquarters in the Barrel Factory. Alice Learned was the first assistant until W. H. Livermore was appointed clerk in 1886. When Mr. Severance died, Mr. S. Crook was recommended for the position. Mr. Crook rejected the appointment.

The town was besieged with difficulties. Mr. Tilman, postmaster of Portsmouth, was ordered to remove the contents of the St. Johns office to Portsmouth. For two or three months, Mr. Monahan donated his services to carry the mail from Portsmouth to St. Johns. A committee called for action on behalf of St. Johns and Fredrick Miller was named postmaster until Mrs. Anna Clark was appointed in 1900.

When the post office acquired third class status, the position of postmistress Clark was subjected to confirmation of re-appointment. Citizens felt her excellent service would be rewarded by another four year term. Instead, the Oregonian printed the notice that Mayor Valentine "had been appointed and confirmed as postmaster". It was reported that Mrs. Clark had accepted the position "at the solicitation of friends when the office was practically worthless. Frequently her pay was as low as eight cents a day". Much indignation was expressed and three or four hundred people attended a mass meeting to express disapproval. It was decided to stand by her now when there was a chance for her to be reimbursed for the sacrifices she had made (the salary for the third class status was \$1,100).

A committee was appointed to send a telegram to President Roosevelt asking Mr. Valentine's appointment to be held up pending investigation. A committee was also named to investigate methods that led to the mayor's appointment and persons directly responsible for it. Mrs. Clark remained in charge of the post office until Mayor Valentine's commission arrived. When he took charge he appointed Willis Moxin as deputy postmaster.

When Mr. Knapp came west to start the Peninsula Lumber Co., he left his family in Wisconsin. Having previously resided in Saginaw he was acquainted with Charles Wood. It was through his influence that Mr. Wood became interested in the Peninsula Bank in St. Johns.

Arriving in Portland, the family of Mr. Wood went to a Portland hotel. The Knapp family and their two children and the Wiggins family and their three children arrived at about the same time. When it became known that the Wood family had arrived, the others prevailed upon them to join a camping venture

on the point close to the lumber company. Each family selected spots of their choice, and set up enough tents required for their own purposes. Others were pitched for guests. Friends of the families enjoyed their hospitality while visiting the fair.

A cook was hired, and a dining tent was equipped so that all might eat together. A "pavilion" tent was used for social purposes. Located on the bluff overlooking the river, the sides of this tent were arranged to be rolled up from the wooden platform to provide an unobstructed view.

These living arrangements continued throughout the summer until the Wood family moved into their new home on Ivanhoe Street across from the Chipman house.

The property used as a camp was later purchased by the University of Portland.

* * * * *

HIGHLIGHTS OF OLD ST. JOHNS

By Toini Niemi

PORTLAND MANUFACTURING COMPANY - -

The Portland Manufacturing Company was incorporated in May 7, 1901, with G. A. Carlson, F. S. Doernbecher & M. L. Holbrook as organizers. These three men constructed a new veneer plant on the Willamette River at St. Johns and had it running the first of 1902.

Mr. Carlson was a Swedish individualist, familiar with rotary veneer plants in Hoquiam, Washington, Mr. Doernbecher had a furniture factory in Portland which he had recently moved here from Chehalis, Washington, and Mr. Holbrook was a banker from Chehalis, Washington.

The corporation changed hands but Mr. Carlson remained and by 1903 he began considering making panels from rotary cut Douglas Fir and by 1904 a small panel department was in operation. By 1905, the year of the Lewis & Clark exposition in Portland, many other Oregon wood panels were displayed which stayed in the exposition building until 1952 when the building was re-conditioned. These panels attracted much attention of dealers and builders, especially easterners.

In March, 1903, Mr. Peter Autzen and Tom Autzen had been invited by Mr. Carlson to observe cottonwood logging operations near Independence, Oregon. At that time Peter Autzen was logging near Elma, Washington. Tom Autzen attended Oregon State College, but worked summers at the Portland Manufacturing plant, and was much interested in wood manufacturing.

In September, 1906, Mr. Carlson died suddenly while on a duck hunting trip in the marshes of Columbia Slough. Mrs. Carlson requested Peter Autzen to assume active management of the plant. In 1907, Peter Autzen purchased

Mrs. Carlson's stock and became sole owner of the plant until his death in 1918. The stock then was taken over by his son, Tom, who after graduation in 1909, had gone to work with his dad, handling outside sales and office responsibilities.

Peter Autzen was a logger at heart and when the plant was completely destroyed by fire in February, 1918, it was Tom who was the nucleus for rebuilding the plant.

Peter Autzen died in a car accident in June, 1918, and the business became the sole responsibility of his son, Tom. During 1918, Jens Lingaas took over management of logs and sales. Many other names must be mentioned of old employees who helped in the success of this business, and some of them are: R. O. Bachman, Mrs. Susie Rogers, Victor Larson, L. J. Walby, George Royer, James Jones, H. G. Rice, A. Olsen, Lu Shinn, John Verdigan, Gibson, Johnson and Homer Smith and those who came later were Harry Fassett, Percy Schuelter, Clyde Miller and many others.

Angus Campbell came to supervise accounting in 1929 and went on to work for James Malarkey and his son, Huntington, of the M & M Woodworking of Portland, who took over the manufacturing and operating in November of 1931. They operated very successfully until August, 1956, at which time it was sold to the Simpson Timber Company who liquidated it in 1964. Brand S Corporation has been operating the lumber mill at the site until March of 1976 when it was sold to Caffel Bros.

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION:

History had been made in the improvement of modes of transportation in the area by 1900. Passengers were still using services of steamers but infringements were being made by the steam locomotives.

A trip from Portland to St. Johns took a full day by horse and buggy or wagon. By 1886, several traction companies covered the west side but by the late 90's the Steele Bros. put in an electric line that ran from Fulton Park to Stanton Street on lower Albina (Mississippi) and upper Albina (Williams Ave.). Here St. Johns passengers transferred to the steam line. This locomotive had been shipped from Kansas and put into operation, running daily trips beginning at 6:00 a.m. and commencing on an hour and twenty minute schedule until midnight. The cars were usually pulled and made eight stops between St. Johns and the transfer point.

On October 1, 1902, progress was being made on the St. Johns electric line and motorman William Evans and conductor Thomas Monahan brought the No. 199 into St. Johns before the year was out.

In November, 1904, the Piedmont car barns neared completion and all upper and lower Albina lines were housed there. A special car remained there overnight to accommodate employees residing in St. Johns and University Park.

CITY COUNCIL DECISIONS:

At the July 30, 1907, session, the council accepted the contract of the Pauley Jail Building Company to supply and install jailcells for \$535.00 and supply vault doors for \$130.00 plus \$10.00 for changes in previously installed doors. Four jail cells were proposed, four feet six inches wide, six feet six inches long, and the same distance in height.

Mayor Couch requested that all previous Youngerdorf contracts and bills be investigated jointly by building and finance committees together with the city attorney and the second attorney of their choice. Wholesale prices were obtained for desks, tables and chairs for the City Hall at the low price of \$91.27.

Councilman Raser resigned on August 1 because of business interests. W. C. Francis was unanimously elected to fill the vacancy.

Thirty-one arrests were made and \$22.00 collected for impounding animals during the period between April 13 and August 1.

Newsboys discovered an early morning fire on July 31 at the Smith-Salisbury Pharmacy resulting in a \$600.00 loss. At about the same time the next morning the Pointview new residence of W. C. Adams was totally destroyed by fire resulting in a \$3,500.00 loss with only \$2,000.00 covered by insurance. Lack of water was again blamed for such a heavy loss. The weather was hot and dry creating a great fire hazard.

BUILDING BOOM IN EARLY ST. JOHNS:

Since industries and businesses provide the foundations of the town, histories of them are of interest.

The building erected for M. L. Holbrook by F. J. Koerner, on the corner of Jersey and Richmond Streets was nearing completion when the same contractor started construction of a one story building for Peterson & Noce near the post-office on May 16, 1907. He also started another one story building on the corner of Jersey and Charleston Streets. The building boom had begun in St. Johns.

Building permits to the value of \$18,200.00 had been issued during the month of April and by the middle of May an additional \$12,000.00 in permits was issued. Considering costs conditions, \$20,000.00 worth of permits in such a short period indicated a healthy growth for the little town.

The St. Johns skating rink opened and an addition was completed to the baseball field grandstand. Baseball was a very popular sport with a local ball club formed. A rod and gun club also was organized, with A. D. McDonald, President; J. D. Foss, Vice-president; Sam Cochran, Treasurer; and George Epps, Secretary.

In May of the same year, Northwest Blow Pipe Company located on the site fronting the OR&N tracks adjoining the Steel Ship Building Co. With a capital

stock of \$75,000.00 the plant was designed to manufacture dust collectors, furnace feeders and galvanized steel piping for exhaust fans on dust producing machines. Incorporators were H. E. Jaeckel, A. J. Brown and Max A. Kaiser.

Buildings for Swift Company, a meat packing firm, were being postponed until after completion of rail facilities. Swift Company plans included filling Smith's Lake and dredging slough at the site of their packing house.

EARLY DAY CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS:

The center of early holiday activities in the community was the church. Preparations started early. Candy sacks were cut and sewn. Large wooden buckets of hard candy were purchased to fill the bags. Usually two large trees were decorated, one on each side of the rostrum. Strings of popcorn provided the main decoration with tinsel and small candles placed in tin snap-on holders. The "hanging of the greens" was traditional with about a dozen people working for two or three evenings winding evergreen ropes which were strung all over the church. The youth studied and practiced for weeks preparing recitations, songs, dialogues and plays for Christmas Eve festivities. In the Methodist Church, Mr. Chipman built the fires and rang the bell. Kerosene lamps were filled and cleaned and the large, tall stove readied with wood.

On Christmas Eve, all gathered for the evening. Gifts were carried to the church and placed under the trees. Sometimes the Superintendent of the Sunday School presented the gifts but at other times there would be a Santa distributing candy and gifts.

Christmas Day was devoted to the home and each family had its own type of observance. In later days, community parties were sometimes held in Bickner's Hall. These were usually sponsored by the Knights of Pythias.

The custom of saying Merry Christmas is still with us and it can still be considered both old and new.

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CURRIN'S DRUG STORE

By Mary Wilbur

The original Currin's Drug Store business was established in 1906 in the French Block and was owned by Smith & Miner. It was called the North Bank Pharmacy. The first prescription sold for 25¢. The French Block was a two story brick building on the west side of Lombard Street at Oswego St. Lombard Street fronted two large stores in the south end of the building. The northern one of these two stores was the northern most building on Lombard, as the street ended at the "jog". The street from this jog to Jersey (one block long) was Columbia Blvd. There were several small shops along this street on the west side only, including a small grocery, a second hand shop, barber shop, shoe store, and Learned's Fuel Yard. Raymond Fisher bought a small service station at the junction of Columbia Blvd. & Jersey, and expanded it into a Chevrolet

agency. This extended back to the fuel yard, and when Fred Bauer bought it, he expanded further south, including the fuel yard and some of the small businesses. There are now only two businesses at this site: a service station at the south end where the two large stores were, and Fred Bauer Chevrolet. (Lombard Street was formerly Dawson St.).

Clarence and Zula Currin bought the business from Mr. Scarborough in 1909 when it was located at Jersey and Leavitt, later moving to the Peninsula Bank Building (now U. S. National Bank of Oregon) in 1917. In 1941, they moved again to Jersey & Leavitt, where Elsie and Wayne Hatch bought the business in 1961.

BONHAM AND CURRIER STORES

In 1906, Edmund S. Currier and Harry W. Bonham, both from Keokuk, Iowa, started their joint business in groceries and dry goods at Philadelphia and South Jersey (now Lombard) streets. Their store location is now Davis Dept. Store and Benj. Franklin Savings & Loan.

Their wives came later from Keokuk. Alice Bonham traveled by train to Seattle, then to the end of the railroad at Kelso, Washington. Mr. Bonham met her there and they came on to St. Johns by horse and wagon.

The old St. Johns steam train depot preceded Bonham and Currier at Philadelphia and Jersey (Dawson St.).

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EARLY ST. JOHNS INDIANS

By Maxine Hurt

The Terminal 4 area was the home of the Multnomah or Willamette Indians, part of the Chinookian Nation. Capt. Clark of the Lewis & Clark Expedition noted an estimate of 200 souls. One of the lodges (apparently a summer residence) was located at the foot of Alta St. and another large group was just North of the incinerator on the Columbia Slough. A great many artifacts were found in these areas. They seemed to be a poor lot and evidence indicates they had an inadequate diet. Kesano was the last powerful chief of the Multnomahs on Sauvie's Island. He was one of the noblest of Indians, spent his entire life on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, and was on friendly terms with both Fred Ramsey and James John and all the whites. He was said to remember the Lt. Broughton's English Expedition that came up the Columbia River, near Troutdale, where Kesano's lodge stood. This was in 1792.

Chief Kesano was an honored guest on a trial run of the steamer Beaver, which was the first steamer to ply the Willamette in 1836. He was amazed at what he called a "Skookum" ship, said he could see what made the boat go, but was dumbfounded as to what made the steam engines go. W. H. Baker's Donation Land Grant (Kesano's Landing, later Baker's Landing) was part of the Chief's land. He died in 1850 and is said to be buried in an unmarked grave back of old Fort Vancouver where he was always a welcome guest and where there was always a plate of food waiting for him.

BLOOD POISONING

By Lorraine Singleterry

During an oral interview taping, Ida Cates, a 70 year old resident of St. Johns, who started at North School in 1912, and graduated from the same school then called Sitton in 1920, recalled a personal incident that happened while she was going to Sitton.

"We wore long cotton stockings. Most of the girls wore black stockings to school. Black and white were all we had, we didn't have any other color. The white stockings were for Sunday and good wear only, until I got blood poisoning. I was in the 8th grade when it happened. Several of the kids I went to school with got blood poisoning.

We had to wear black tennis shoes when we did our calisthenics, and sometimes a sore would start on our heels. I guess it was the dye in the black stockings that caused the blood poisoning. I remember afterward Mama wouldn't let any of us kids wear black stockings anymore.

I was kind of sick and feverish one morning, and Mama told me to go back to bed - she wouldn't let me go to school. My heel started turning black and blue and getting puffy. It began to hurt terribly, and I couldn't walk. There was a red streak going up the back of my leg. My ankle and heel were getting all swollen and tight, like a balloon ready to burst.

Mama had been putting a poultice on my heel to bring all the infection back down to where the sore was on my heel. I don't know what kind of poultice - there were different kinds. She finally called Dr. Schultz, who came down and opened the thing. I don't remember much of what happened.

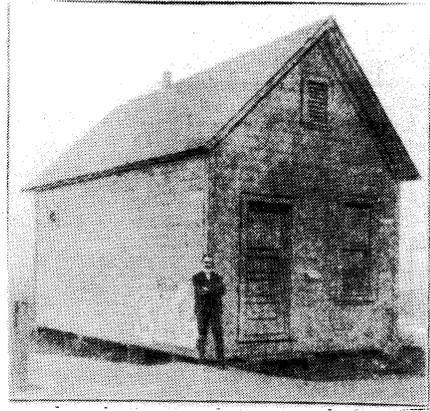
But I was awfully glad we had a telephone in our house then. Not everybody had one. It was because Daddy was a contractor that we had one. An' then he was angry because Mama had called the doctor. Daddy didn't like doctors - I don't know why, and never did find out. He was kind of funny that way.

Anyway, Dr. Schultz had come when Mama told him what was happening to my leg - all swollen, tight, and the red streak, my fever, and everything. When he opened the sore where my heel was supposed to be, and was draining it, Mama said it stunk terribly. Then, Dr. Schultz put another poultice on my heel to draw the rest of the red streak down from my leg. He came down every day, for about a week, and had Mama keep putting the poultice on 'til the red streak and all the infection was drained out of the sore on my heel. Dr. Schultz was a very nice man, he came down to see me two or three times a week while my heel was healing. The day I was able to walk up to his office was the day he told me I could go back to school, but no more black stockings. I only wore white stockings after that, until I got older and went to work, and fashion had changed."



17

ST. JOHNS FIRST CITY COUNCIL. Left to right: F. CLARK, Recorder, CHAS. A. EDDY, Mayor, and councilmen: W. H. HAMILTON, J. F. LIVERMORE (Treasurer), T. J. MONAHAN, L. B. CHIPMAN, GUY BELDE and CHARLES D. HUGHES (and probably E. B. HIRLBERT).

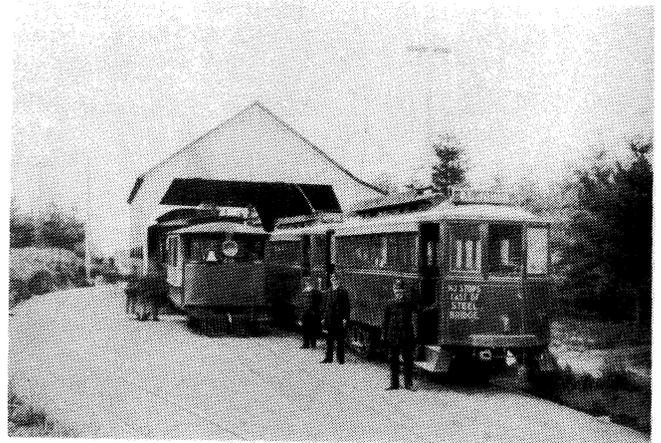


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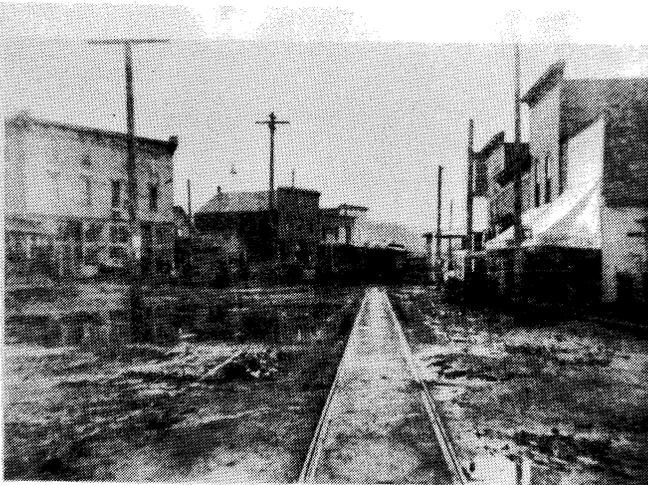


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OLD MOTOR ENGINE AND FIRST CAR TO ENTER ST. JOHNS.



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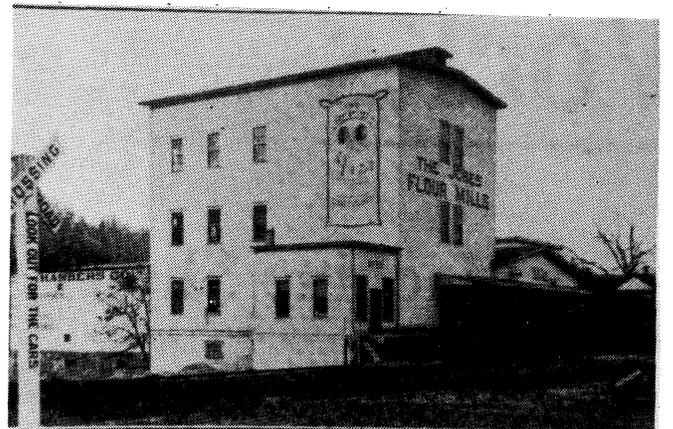
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CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

17. St. Johns first City Administration following incorporation on Jan. 5, 1903. Organization was completed on March 23rd and they began serving on April 5th. The original personnel remained almost intact throughout the two year tenure of Mayor Cook. Circa 1904 photo, Oregon Historical Society.
18. First City Hall, St. Johns. Built during the summer of 1903 by John Crooks for \$400.00. Located on N. Philadelphia Avenue between Ivanhoe and Syracuse Sts. The Police Station (Old City Hall) was built in 1907 at a cost of \$12,000.00. The 1903 census was between 200-300. (Source - 1908 St. Johns City Directory) Photo from "The Peninsula", a 1909 publication, loaned by Dick Crouchley.
19. The Portland, Albina and St. Johns car of the Willamette Bridge Rwy. Co. Prior to 1890 their tracks terminated at N. Lombard and Portsmouth Ave. In that year their steam motor line was extended to St. Johns by way of N. Macrum to Fessenden and to N. Lombard. Photo from "The Peninsula".
20. The electric car from Third and Morrison meets the Steam Motor at E. Stanton and Commercial. This depot was in about the center of the present Emanuel Hospital compound. View is looking north. Early 1890 photo courtesy of Mrs. R. F. Hastings.
21. View N.W. on N. Lombard. At left is the Central Hotel, now Dad's Restaurant and Lounge. The buildings at right were destroyed by fire and replaced by the Stine Block in about 1906. Bonham and Currier then occupied this site until a few years ago. Photo from 1904 pamphlet submitted by Bernice Hill.
22. St. Johns Baptist Church built in 1907 at N. Chicago and Leonard St. At right is the first church built in 1905 and known as the "Wigwam or Teepee Church". 1908 photo courtesy of Mrs. A. E. Johnson.
23. View n.e. from N. Syracuse and N. Burlington. From left are Central School built in 1894, Un. Evangelical Church built in 1888 and the Methodist Church built in 1889. Both churches were originally constructed near the foot of N. Richmond and moved to the locations shown in picture. The date of the United Evangelical Church relocation is unknown. The Methodist Church was moved in 1904. Not one of the structures shown remains today. Photo from booklet issued Dec. 12, 1904 and submitted by Bernice Hill.
24. The Jobes Flour Mill was built and incorporated in 1904 at the foot of N. Pittsburg Avenue by W. V. Jobes and his sons Wm. H. and Allen R. Its existence was threatened by the Aug. 30, 1905 fire which destroyed the Oregon Fir Lbr. Co. and the St. Johns Lbr. Co. Photo from "The Peninsula".

CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

25. The National Cash Register Bldg. of the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition shown on its original site before removal. (Refer to photo No. 13 and caption) 1905 photo - Oregon Historical Society.

26. View S.E. on N. Lombard St. from N. Baltimore Avenue 1907-08. The tallest buildings were Potter and Gould Hdw. (now St. Johns Hdw.) L., and Central Hotel (now Dad's Lounge) Ray Don McGill collection.

27. View N.W. on N. Lombard St. from N. Philadelphia Ave. 1908. The tallest building in the distant background is the Ormandy Bldg., built in 1906. Don McGill collection.

28. Looking S.E. on N. Lombard St. from N. New York Avenue: on the left is the McChesney Bldg built in 1906. On the right is the Ormandy Bldg. The car tracks are curving onto N. St. Louis Avenue. The wooden sidewalks were replaced with cement in 1911. Circa 1910 photo, courtesy of Tommy Lind.

29. First Crouchley Plumbing Co. shop adjacent to the Ormandy Bldg. at left. Pictured is Ernest Crouchley. The Baxter Auto Parts is the present occupant of this site. Circa 1910 photo courtesy of Dick Crouchley.

30. View S.W. on N. Philadelphia Avenue from N. Lombard St. ca 1914. Some of the business firms were: The Toggery on the left, Currins For Drugs, W. M. Tower, Jeweler, Dan's Restaurant, F. O. E. Hall and the St. Johns Review, all which were removed to make way for the present U. S. National Bank and parking lots. Old City Hall in background. Photo courtesy of Hans Widmer.

31. City Hall and new fire truck, 1914. This piece of equipment was converted by Letson's Garage from a chain drive Selden Truck. Chief of the volunteer fire department was Lee Cormany. Hans Widmer collection.

32. Interior of the St. Johns Review, 1914. The first editions were published beginning May 11, 1904 where Slim's Bar and Restaurant is presently located. In picture is A. W. Markle, Editor and Publisher, left, and Dave Dickson, Irvin Gromachey in background. Courtesy Irv Gromachey.



25



26

1907-'08 DON MCGILL COLLECTION.

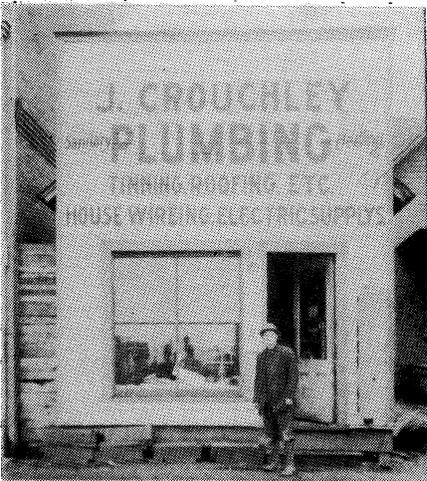


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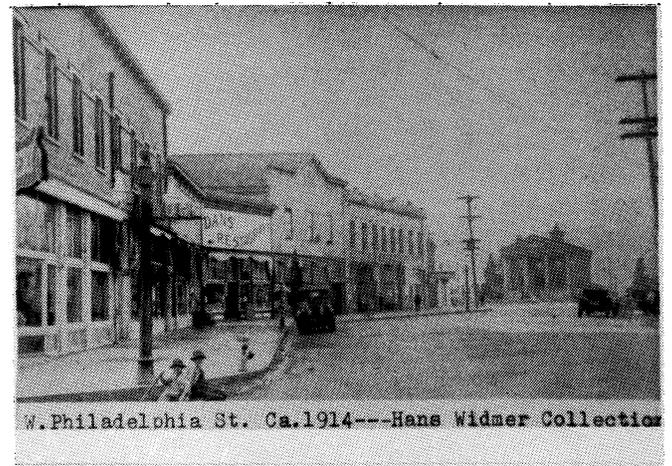
1908. DON MCGILL COLLECTION.



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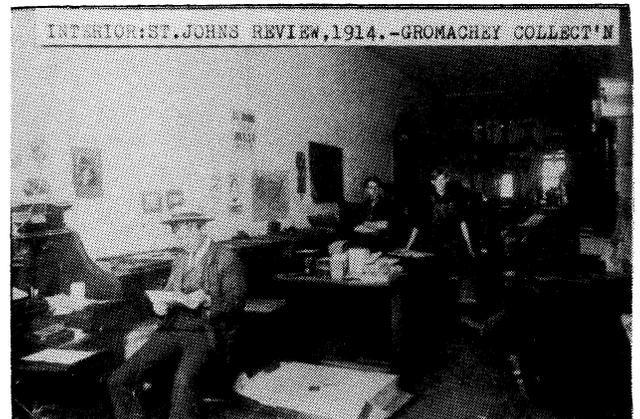
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W. Philadelphia St. Ca. 1914---Hans Widmer Collection



31

They call it a new fire truck. 1914--H. Widmer collection



32

INTERIOR: ST. JOHN'S REVIEW, 1914.--GROMACHEY COLLECT'N

ANNEXATION, SECESSION AND HOME RULE

By Jonathan James, et al.

St. Johns owes its corporate existence to Albina rather than to Portland, a little known fact. In the beginning, all of the cities along the waterfront were just considered to be a series of independent and competing river towns, each vying with the other for supremacy. The two main contenders for leadership on the East side of the Willamette River were East Portland, founded by James B. Stevens in 1850, and Albina, founded 10 years thereafter. The two Westside cities were Linnton, founded in 1843, and Portland, founded by Lovejoy and Pettygrove in 1845.

The only real reason for Linnton's creation was to provide a route from Ft. Vancouver to the Tualatin Valley. The town was founded by Morton M. McCarver and Peter H. Burnette and they opened a wagon road, Springville Road, over the hills to Hillsboro in competition with Portland. Lt. Neil M. Howison, U.S.N., wrote his impression of Linnton in 1846 as follows: "It contains a few log houses, which are over shadowed by huge fir trees that it has not yet been convenient to remove. Its few inhabitants are very poor and severely persecuted by mosquitoes day and night..." (This might well have been a good description of St. Johns at the same time). If you have ever tried to drive on the old Springville Road, you know why Portland, with its Canyon Road, won out. The road was so bad it still remains unimproved and is a challenge for the best 4 wheel drive automobile ever produced. McCarver and Burnette moved on after losing money on their speculation and this left Portland in complete command of the West side of the river. McCarver and Burnette both became famous in the years that followed - but the Linnton adventure played no part in their future.

The contest between East Portland, Albina and Sellwood was no contest at all. East Portland ranked next to Portland all the way and if it were not for the erection of the main railroad depot on the West side perhaps East Portland would have won out as the queen city. It should have been named "Boston" to give it a separate identity. The residents of Albina had friends in the Oregon Legislature and what they lacked in population they made up in territory by annexing everything in sight.

Albina first showed up as a separate town in the City Directory in 1876 with one brief page of names. The town was platted in 1873 and incorporated on February 4, 1887. Albina soon had its own bank, three schools, nine churches, and a newspaper, the "Albina Courier". It grew rapidly and by February 20, 1891, Albina had annexed all of the peninsula into the City of Albina, including St. Johns. Before the citizens of St. Johns could realize what had happened, Albina (their arch enemy) was annexed to Portland on July 6, 1891, probably without ever collecting a cent in taxes. The population of St. Johns, when it was first overrun by Albina and then Portland, was less than 500. In anticipation of receiving the benefits of the Estate of James John, the citizens of St. Johns wanted home rule and the town was incorporated as a separate city on February 19, 1903. Elections, expenditures, law enforcement and development became the current topic of conversation and remained as such until St. Johns was once again annexed to Portland on July 8, 1915.

In March, 1903, the political fortunes of the Town of St. Johns (later

called the City of St. Johns) came under the guidance of a duly elected Mayor and six Councilmen. At their first meeting, held in Knight's Hall (N.W. corner of Jersey & Leavitt) they appointed a Recorder, Treasurer and a Town Marshal. This first Council served the town diligently and in comparative harmony for two years. The next election was held in April, 1905 and from that time on a new slate of officers was elected annually.

The second Council consisted of a Mayor and seven Councilmen. These gentlemen did not work together as agreeably as their predecessors had. In fact, they divided into two distinct factions, the Mayor and three Council members opposing the other four more conservative members on almost every controversial issue. However, as the year went on, meetings became less turbulent and their term of office ended quite peaceably.

Succeeding Councils from 1906 to 1915 had many problems but worked together at solving them, for the most part, in a spirit of friendly cooperation. From their friends and neighbors, the electors chose competent, responsible men who accomplished much in these years of growth and prosperity.

The minutes of the Council meetings provide fascinating reading for anyone who has a real interest in the St. Johns of the early 1900's and its people. The following is just a small sampling taken from them.

In 1903, a bid was submitted and accepted for building a jail and Council building. Total cost - \$240.00. The Marshal reported five arrests; one man for intoxication, fined \$5.00; four boys from Albina for bathing in the river, fined \$5.00 each. A bill was received for feeding prisoners - 12 meals @ .25 each - total \$3.00.

On January 4, 1904, the Treasurer reported a balance of \$56.05. On April 4, George W. Joseph was present at the Council meeting and was employed to act as attorney and counsel for St. Johns. In December of that same year, property in the corporate limits of the City of St. Johns was assessed on the tax roll for the year (1904) at \$317,615.00. The Council voted to levy a 3 mill tax.

The year 1905 brought more interesting Council sessions. The purchase of fire apparatus was authorized - 1 hook and ladder, 2 hose carts, and 1,000 feet of hose - all for a total of \$1,700.00. On April 21, the Council discussed tentative plans for building a City Hall at the corner of Philadelphia and Burlington streets for an estimated cost of \$7,272.00 (land - \$2,550.00, building and improvements \$4,722.00). On June 19 an ordinance was passed "forbidding cows to wear bells at night". Later that same year, in October, a Mrs. Woodstock presented the Council with pictures of President Theodore Roosevelt and Vice-President Fairbanks.

During the April 9, 1906 meeting, the retiring Councilmen voted themselves \$37.50 each for the past year's salary. Three days later, the salary of the Mayor was changed from \$3.00 per meeting to \$4.00. On April 24 the first license to sell "spirituous malt and virous liquors" was finally granted after numerous applications, discussions and refusals dating from early 1903.

The final Council meeting was held on July 6, 1915 and it was decided to call a mass meeting at the City Hall on July 13 "for all residents of the

Peninsula for discussing the needs of St. Johns and the balance of the Peninsula and preparing resolutions setting forth same to the City Commissioners of Portland".

There is a feeling on reading this final page that the motion to "adjourn for the last time" was carried almost reluctantly in an atmosphere of real regret at the passing of this period in the history of St. Johns.

* * * * *

EXCERPTS FROM TAPED CONVERSATION OF ART & WALT MOREY

Art (of KWJJ fame) and brother Walt, (author of Gentle Ben), and family moved to St. Johns in 1920. Their father worked for the Portland Mfg. Plant, one of the first veneer plants in the Northwest. An uncle, M. Boomslichter, was the first Superintendent.

Both boys attended James John and Roosevelt High Schools. They also attended Sitton School, with Mrs. Hagenbush as 8th grade teacher. Rosalind and Walt were in the last class to start at the old James John High School and were in the first class to start at Roosevelt High. There were 408 students and it was then in the mud flats. So few turned out for football, the right hand side of the line sometimes had to move over to make scrimmage with the left hand side. Some of the football players were Kelly Robertson; Elmer Lot (called Tiny, the boy with the educated toe, who could kick a field goal from kick-off, and did, not once, but dozens of times; Lincoln Cochran and Vernon Jessup (both made All-City); Kurt Robinson and Bob Miller. The first Rose Festival Queen to be selected from the Portland High Schools was won by Roosevelt. All 408 students were let out that day and gathered outside in the mud (that spring there was no grass). Queen Lucy Lee Thomas was introduced by Mr. Fletcher from the second floor balcony. The whole school started a parade and every car (open sided sedans) sounded their horns all the way from Roosevelt to St. Johns.

The old touring car jitneys used to run into Portland. The fare was something like 5¢, and they cruised around picking up fares wherever they found them. Later the Dollar Dougan came in. The steam propelled tug at that time was one of the main sources of transportation used on the Willamette River. The Interurban street cars were in operation, and the older kids used to try to rock the rear cars off the track down on Wall Street where the tracks weren't so level and where the cars could be rocked off the tracks. The cars weren't too stable and the trolley was always jumping off. The kids would run around, grab the trolley and jerk it off, and the motorman would have to get off, hook the trolley back up in order to get the thing started again.

In the 20's, both Art and Walt worked at the old Multnomah Theater. Their duties included managing, picking up film, sweeping out the place, tossing out drunks and doing projection work. They used to kick some of the kids out of the theater, telling them to go home. Frank Pratt, who later was Chief of Detectives in Portland, Kelly Robertson, Al Maplethorpe, Arthur and Willy Ris-

tou, and Terry Shrunk, were all some of the St. Johns boys. Art played the organ, and then would go up and run the projection booth. Skee Larsen also played night music at the theater. Those were fun days! Later the theater was moved across the street, becoming the Venetian. Hugh McCreadie built the Venetian that later became the St. Johns Theater. Art and Walt's wives were also former theater employees. Golden Pheasant China and other items were given away on the 'give-away nights'. The old Multnomah Theater later became the first bowling alley in St. Johns.

Ah Wing Lee, the Chinese Lullaby (Jimmy Jower), was our famous prize fighter. Mr. Currin used to play his victrola out in front of his store, so all up and down the street could hear. Crouchley Plumbing is still in St. Johns. The old Institute of Technology (one of the boys attended) was later absorbed by Multnomah College. On driving thru St. Johns now, some of the houses look exactly like they did 50 years ago. Even painted the same colors. Our little house is sitting there exactly like it was and still the same color. (9525 N. Kellogg). Becketts green house is gone that was once next door. The Rickman boys used to live in our same block.

There was a tremendous interest in the football games and when the Bachelor's Club and Albina had a game it was a civil war, not only on the field, but in the stands as well. Pinky Lind was quarter-back, Shorty Frank (Twist) was half-back. Salty Groh, Kurt Robertson, a Larson (Swede), "Five Yard Truskey" Perry Berdeen and Mert & Harry Adams were all football players. Horace Addis was one of the feisty Albinians. The hat was passed in the beginning, and later a stadium was built down by Terminal 4 where a 50¢ charge was made. The Oregon Shipyard complex in World War II was built near the Terminal 4 area.

Even so, with the changes of the years, there is a certain air, a certain something about St. Johns that stays the same. The future is going to be just about like the past...it's going to change. There's going to be more industry, more people, but it will always be St. Johns! At any year, someone will walk in and be able to write history and say, "This is St. Johns, as it was, as it is, and as it's going to be!"

EARLY HISTORY SKETCH

By Howard Galbraith

We are taught that Columbus discovered America in 1492, and assuming that this is correct, let's review some of the slow progress which followed. Columbus, not realizing the vastness of his discovery, claimed it all for Spain; however, with little delay almost every country in Europe embarked on missions of exploration and colonization here and eventually England and France claimed all the eastern part of the United States and Canada and the Great Central Plains, Spain laid claim to the South and the Southwest. Settlement of this new country was slow and tedious as many obstacles faced the early settlers. The Indians offered some ineffective resistance but they had no match for the "modern weapons" of the invaders. Probably the greatest deterrent was the immense project of building a new nation out of the wilderness with unsuitable equipment or none at all, with lack of experience, with the exasperatingly slow communication and transportation to and from the civilized world, and with little or no credit or financing. Disheartening struggles and crushing failures led to bitter conflicts and bloody wars, but the inherent indomitable spirit which brought the migration of invincible refugees to this new land endured and survived and the United States of America evolved as an independent union of free people.

The purpose of this very brief outline is to emphasize in proper perspective the very long time lapses between some of the major events in the past. Thus, a few dates will be established along this trail of history to serve as mileposts and time stations. Columbus was here first in 1492, and although he was followed immediately by others from many different nations, 115 years passed before the first settlement by the British was founded at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. The landing of the Mayflower is often mistakenly referred to as the "first", but it was considerably late to be classed even as among the many that preceded it. It landed here in 1620, 13 years after the founding of Jamestown and several other small settlements. Many renowned and historic events followed which eventually led to the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. This famous document was endorsed on this date 169 years (almost six full generations) after Jamestown. It had taken these many years to build a small settlement in the wilderness of an island in the James River into a self-declared independent nation. During this time it had become a powerful and respected nation in the world determined to create its own destiny with no interference or assistance from abroad. However, with the establishment and expansion of this new nation and all that transpired to create it, very little effort or time was given to investigating or exploring the broad territory west of the Mississippi River. Furthermore, this belonged to France.

Jefferson became President in 1800 and soon afterward negotiated the "Louisiana Purchase", thus acquiring all the land in the Great Plains from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains. Lewis and Clark were sent to survey this new acquisition and to find the Great River of the West which had been reported by early sea voyagers exploring the west coast in the 1780s and 1790s (Gray 1792). The Lewis and Clark trip was conducted during 1805 and 1806. Unbelievably, it was 199 years after Jamestown and 314 years after Columbus before anyone knew what lay between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean.

Some exploration and scattered occupation of the West began shortly after Lewis and Clark, but more than a full generation (35 years) expired before migration to Oregon really got under way, and it was during this time that James John joined a wagon train heading west. He arrived here in the mid 40s and staked a claim (the first) in the wilderness of the St. Johns peninsula. Incidentally, James John followed Jamestown by 239 years and in parallel fashion, he started on a riverbank in the wilderness to build a settlement which later became the great little city of St. Johns, which was named after him. He settled here alone in 1846 and in a very short time he had close neighbors all around him. In the following ten years a sizeable community had developed and by 1900 St. Johns was a busy manufacturing and shipping center and many of these activities prevail here today.

St. Johns was conceived in a pioneering spirit, and though it was annexed by Albina and later by the City of Portland, the friendly pioneer and independent atmosphere is still here: Who could not feel justly proud of this fine heritage, 130 years after James John, 200 years after the Declaration of Independence, 369 years after Jamestown, and 484 years after Columbus?

* * * *

OLD ST. JOHNS AS I REMEMBER IT

By Scoot Lind

When I arrived in St. Johns in 1907 at age 11 years, there were no paved streets and the sidewalks consisted of 2 x 8 wooden planks laid on 6 x 10 timbers. The St. Johns Peninsula Bank was at Jersey & Philadelphia Streets, in the Old Central Hotel Bldg. There were 5 saloons and a half dozen churches in the area. On Meyers Street (now Pier Park Place) there was a large brickyard and several of the early local buildings were constructed of brick: The Portland Woolen Mills, the Jower Bldg., the McChesney Bldg., the Ormandy Bldg., the St. Johns Hotel, the old James John School (now torn down), City Hall, and the French Block (torn down). On the waterfront were the main industries: a small shipyard at the foot of Chicago St., repairing boats and barges, the Portland Woolen Mills on Baltimore St., the Peninsula Iron Works, the Asbestos Plant, Jobes Flour Mill, Douglas Planing Mill, St. Johns Lumber Mill, Marine Iron Works, Autzen Plywood Plant, a stove factory, and the Drydock. The ferry boat which crossed the river between Linnton and St. Johns landed at the foot of Pittsburg Street.

Most freight was transported to St. Johns by boat or barge and Capt. Smith and his steamer Sacajawea made two trips per day hauling merchandise. Across the river in Linnton, there was a horse cannery where a good pony could be purchased for ten dollars or less and so, many boys delivered their newspapers on horseback. Home telephone office was in the Clark Furniture Store, and the late Mrs. Gusta Noce was the first operator there. City water was pumped from a well on the corner of Leavitt and Edison Streets thru water mains made of wood wrapped with wire and coated with tar; all the water you could use cost one dollar per month. Cedar Park was a large area in north St. Johns now enclosed by Charleston, Smith and Fessenden Streets. It had many large trees and no underbrush, there was a dance hall here and during the summer months

picnicers would come from Portland on open streetcars and fill the park. In 1907, the first skyscraper was built in Portland: the 12 story high Wells Fargo Bldg., built of steel, concrete and marble. The only wood used in the entire building was for the doors and window casings.

The Columbia Slough was a beautiful stream in the early days with all species of fish - bass, catfish, crappies and others not to mention the thousands of carp which kept the water clean. Several springs of ice cold water bubbled from the banks along this waterway. This was the most beautiful stream in all the world, with the wildlife and picturesque scenery, birds galore singing and chirping to the fullest, ducks and geese were plentiful and occasionally a swan could be seen. In those days, the Slough was open at both ends and a gentle current flowed through it. The Ogden Slough (sometimes called Gatton Slough) cut across the peninsula connecting the Columbia Slough with the Willamette River at Terminal 4. Where this Slough entered the Willamette was the site of a very large prehistoric indian camp and from here were gathered many thousands of arrowheads and other indian artifacts; hundreds of people visited this place and took home many cigar boxes full of arrowheads and other relics. Progress continued and today this ancient village site is buried under a coal loading dock.

In 1907, there were about 500 automobiles in Portland and though the speed limit was only 15 mph., the police had trouble in enforcing it as their only mode of transportation was by foot. St. Johns had a rod and gun club with 150 members and many trapshoot contests were held on Cochran's Field below Reno St. Teams from all around the northwest would compete for prizes. During the summer months the sternwheelers Telephone, Hassalo, Bailey Gatzert, Charles Spencer and others would bellow black smoke along the river. Every Fourth of July, the local volunteer fire department would stage a meet with other fire departments from Corvallis, Oregon City, St. Helens, etc., to compete for prizes. Hose cart races, water fights, ladder climbing and other stunts made up the competition. It was a big celebration and included horse racing on Ivanhoe Street.

Over in Linnton, there was a ballast dock along the waterfront below the Columbia Engineering Co., where windjammers unloaded their rock ballast. It contained all sorts of seashells and people would cart off sacks full. This dock was started in 1910 and lasted about five years when a shipyard took over the ground. Columbia Engineering Co. fabricated scales at first, later steel tanks and pipes, and later still made Skookum logging blocks and equipment. They also made hydraulic rams which pumped water automatically when placed in a fast flowing stream, lifting water 100 feet high. On the St. Joyns riverfront between Chicago and St. Louis Streets, Mr. MacIntosh operated a ship repair yard. A terrible accident happened herein one night when the steam boiler in the sternwheeler Regulator exploded, killing three men. Portland Woolen Mills was originally built in Sellwood but destroyed by fire. Mr. Olds, a department store owner, and E. L. Thompson, a banker, decided to rebuild the mill in St. Johns in 1904. Mr. Charles H. Carter deserves much credit for keeping the mills operating for 56 years without a shutdown. He was superintendent from the start, also Sales Manager, Vice President and General Manager and in 1935 upon the death of Mr. Olds, he took over as President. During the war years, they manufactured Navy Melton cloth for uniforms, they also made

Army blankets and were awarded the Army and Navy "E" for their efforts. "Wool of the West" was their trademark, and their Artic Blankets, made of virgin wool were known all over the world for their quality. In the First World War, Grant, Smith and Porter erected a shipyard in St. Johns and from their eight building ways they launched more than thirty wooden ships.

In the summer of 1907, Mr. Pascal Hill built an enclosed baseball park which included a grandstand seating about 750. It was located at Jersey, Catlin and Leonard Streets. The St. Johns team known as the Apostiles, joined the Tri City League made up of teams from Frakes, Kelso, Woodburn, Astoria, Brainards, Brewers, and the Trunkmakers. The St. Johns team had as its nucleus, the Moore brothers: Charlie - Pitcher, Otto - Catcher, and Clark - First Base. The St. Johns team finished third winning 18 out of 26 games played - Frakes team won the cup.

On Labor Day, Sept. 2, 1907, sports galore were on tap for the ball game and somehow a "wag" tossed a phoney ball into the game. The batters kept knocking it over the fence for home runs, but it was not discovered until the third inning when a very poor batter hit one over the head of the racing fielder. Pitcher Charlie Moore's suspicions were aroused by all the heavy hitting and he asked the umpire, Trilby Ranking, to investigate. Ranking called for the ball and when he bounced it on the ground, it bounded back and nearly hit him on the jaw. It was a pneumatic ball and when he punctured it with a knife, it was heard all over the field. The Frakes team had already scored six runs in the first two innings; with a new ball they put in a Portland Beaver pitcher named Califf. Frakes won the game 7 to 5. The game was protested and replayed later and over 1,600 fans attended.

A very serious marine tragedy was miraculously averted at the mouth of the Willamette River in the early morning of August 8, 1907, when the Panama City crashed into the Alliance at 4:30 a.m. She plowed into the Alliance a distance of 7 feet and would have gone clear through except that the force of the blow pushed the Alliance ashore. The sloping bank allowed the 90 passengers and 25 crew members to escape. The Panama City was pulled free by the sternwheelers Diamond O, and T. K. Wentworth. Luckily, it was daylight, the dredge Columbia was anchored in mid-channel which left very narrow passage between it and shore. This is regarded as one of the most miraculous accidents ever occurring in local waters. In the early times, a score of Hindus were hired by a local sawmill and many of the citizens objected, so one night a group rounded up all the Hindus, put them on a street car and sent them over town. The British Consul said the Hindus were British subjects and should not be abused. Some of the citizens who engaged in the roundup and capture were prosecuted for staging a riot.

One very exciting incident happened when the Arnold Circus came to St. Johns many years ago and set up their show at Ivanhoe and Chicago Streets. A lion escaped and roamed all over the place, scaring the customers half to death. The circus trainer finally captured him upstairs in the Ormandy Bldg., where he had torn up the carpet on the stairway. One of the first grocery stores in St. Johns was at John Avenue, between Decatur and Bradford Streets. It was first opened and operated by James John, who died May 27, 1886, and was later purchased by the Crooks family. The St. Johns Bachelor Club was organi-

ized in 1909 and had many championship baseball and football teams during the '20s and '30s. They played games all over the Northwest. In 1931 this club bought 11 acres northwest of Roberts Street and erected a grandstand seating 750; about 7 acres were fenced for a ball field. As an attraction for the opening dedication ceremony, a walkathon was sponsored starting from downtown Portland and ending at the new sports arena; about 300 participants entered the hike. A street car running from Jersey and St. Louis Streets to the terminal was nicknamed the Toonerville Trolley, and it was operated by Mr. Prescott, a retired PEPCO employee. This furnished transportation to many fans. When the streetcar stopped operating during the depression, the sports stadium was dismantled. After the St. Johns Bridge was opened in 1931, operation of the ferry was no longer necessary and the old ferry boats James John, Multnomah, Lionel Webster, and W. S. Mason became just a memory.

The OWRN Railroad was build about 1902 running around the peninsula carrying freight and passengers; this was pretty much abandoned when the tunnel was finished about 1914. The railroad bridge and the RR Cut, started about 1906, also led to elimination of the OWRN RR. There was a large skating rink on Ivanhoe Street at John Avenue which served as a local recreation hall. Activities included dances, prize fights, basketball games and other indoor sports. On the west side of the river just upstream from the bridge was the Clairmont Tavern on St. Helens Road and it was recognized as quite a lively place in its day. In the early teens a German band played on the streets of St. Jouns for small contributions from the public and free beer from the saloons. Charles Lindberg landed his Spirit of St. Louis on Swan Island Airport in 1927 after his successful solo flight from New York to Paris. A large crowd gathered and gave him a standing ovation and welcome.

Early settlers of St. Johns included the following: Fred Ramsey, James John, Mr. and Mrs. Caples, A. M. Roberts, William Gatton, James Loomis, P. T. Smith, Daniel S. Southmayd, John Catlin, Elizabeth Byars, Frank Learned, Gordon Ogden, Mr. Troost, Mrs. Kandle, Chas E. Bailey, L. B. Chipman, B. O. Severance, John Windle, Marsh, Horseman, Wadhams, Wiggins, Knapp, Williams, Chas D. Hughes, Merritt L. Holbrook, Chas A. Wood, Cochran. There were many more, but these are a few I can recall at this time.

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THE OWR&N (OREGON WASHINGTON RAILROAD AND NAVIGATION CO.) RAILROAD By Mary Wilbur

The OWRN was first called the Loop Line and later became part of the Union Pacific RR. It was built as an alternate freight route at river level around the peninsula from Albina to Troutdale, where it joined the main Union Pacific. This river level grade was necessary because the Sullivan's Gulch route was too steep. This loop line followed the river after crossing Mock's Bottom and served all the industries on the peninsula including sawmills, factories, ship yards and Terminal 4. Goods to be delivered to St. Johns on top of the bluff were hauled up Burlington Hill by horses and wagons, over a mud and cobble stone street.

AS I REMEMBER. .

The Oregon Barrel Co. was the largest business in the infant city of St. Johns and my grandfather, Benjamin Otis Severance was its founder. He had heard of the large stands of cottonwood in this area, so after his tour of duty in the Army during the Civil War, he purchased machinery in Portland, Maine and headed by ship for St. Johns via Panama (pre-canal). In Panama the machinery was transported by donkey across the Isthmus, and from there by boat to St. Johns.

Mr. Severance not only supplied the biggest payroll in this area, but he also served as the first postmaster and as founder of the St. Johns Methodist Church, now known as the Pioneer Methodist Church. He manufactured barrels for the Spreckels Sugar Co. until it was decided to package sugar in bags instead. He then began producing other wooden products; wash tubs, chair rungs, and other articles contemporary with the times. It was during this period that my maternal grandfather, Sprague Peleg Marsh, also from Maine, contracted to supply logs to the barrel company. He was a real logger and was responsible for clearing a major portion of the land between the Willamette River and the Columbia Slough from what is now Interstate Avenue to the north end of the peninsula.

There have been many legends attached to St. Johns and particularly to "Jimmy John". The John Diary was originally the property of Jefferson Jones, a Minneapolis newspaper publisher, and was purchased by the Roseman interests upon Mr. Jones' death. Historically, this diary has been of value as a source of information about a successful wagon train route. However, the portion of the diary concerning the trip from Salt Lake to Sacramento has never been discovered. General Bidwell, the Chico, California historian who was in the same party with James John on the trip, has mentioned: "Jimmy had enthusiasm, youth, and vigor, and he left the main group at Salt Lake to strike out on his own".

St. Johns is rich in history as well as legend. There is much to be written about the early struggles of the young municipality prior to its annexation by Portland in 1915. The friendly fire hose battles between the various fire departments, the famous bobsled runs down Burlington Hill, Old Central School, the "gang wars" with Arleta, The Bachelor Club and their antics are only a few of the memories dear to the hearts of those who lived in this fine old community.

Frank M. Learned, former St. Johns resident.

First published in the St. Johns Review, 1954

AS I REMEMBER SWAN ISLAND

By "Scoot" Lind

In 1909 our family lived in that deep canyon where the Kaiser Hospital now stands. Our father built a house, all made of red wood, salvaged from the river around the island. Mr. Branstrup, a hardy Dane, ran a dairy farm there. Our family would help with the chores. We boys would herd the cattle down to Mocks bottom land in the morning and bring them back at milking time. Also, with a horse and buggy we helped deliver milk in lower Albina.

Swan Island was covered with a solid mass of trees, and drift wood littered the beaches under the trees. St. Johns road went winding around the hillside and some of it can be seen today from the Greeley cut-off in several places.

Swan Island got its name from a colony of swans nesting there in the spring during migration. The last flock of swans to visit there was in May, 1922. The Oregonian had a front page article about the event.

Mr. and Mrs. Russel Poff and Mr. and Mrs. Lind were fortunate to see these swans while on a canoe trip past the island, and took several pictures of them. These trumpet swans must have had an instinct as to what was going on around the island, for logging of the trees and dredging around the island started. That was the last year the swans nested there.

SWAN ISLAND

Researched by Harry Factor

In 1909 when the Lind family lived in the canyon where the Kaiser Hospital now stands, Swan Island was an island in the Willamette River, covered with trees and bushes, but with a distinction unmatched anywhere on the river. Each spring a colony of swans came to nest there. The last nesting swans came in 1922. At that time the Port of Portland purchased the island from the Swan Island Real Estate Co., for \$120,577.00 and began cutting the trees and filling the island with dredge spoils. In 1927 the causeway connecting the island with the mainland was constructed and though it continues to be called Swan Island, it is not an island and there are no swans.

Swan Island in the busy Willamette River was an enigma. How was it formed? The river itself holds the answer. It is subject to tides, and the movement of the water causes a movement of the sand. As late as the 1920's there were several sand islands in the river where Terminal No. 4 now stands, and during the warm months many families would picnic on the sand islands and swim in the river.

Imagine, if you will, the constant surge of the river that carved out the sandy, marshy, swamp-like Mock's Bottom area which has now been filled with dredgings. Was there at one time a river or large stream which raced down to the Willamette from Sullivan's Gulch? And was there not a racing stream from Goose Hollow which fed into the Willamette at about the site of the Broadway Bridge? All of these must have had an effect on the river, and

the flow combined with the tide and the feeding streams caused sand to build up in bars and islands where the river dropped it. When the sailing vessels came to Portland they used line soundings the length of the river because of the sand bars. So Swan Island was a picturesque solitary paradise for swans until progress came in the form of a river dredge which needed a place to deposit its refuse.

At the time dredging began, the Willamette River channel ran along the east side of the island, so a 1,600 foot channel was cleared on the west side and a causeway was constructed from the island to the mainland at the Portland end of the island thus closing the east side channel and creating a still water basin which now is a ships' berth.

In the mid 1920's, Swan Island, which by then was a peninsula, was chosen as an airfield where air mail service could be handled, and with this development came terminal buildings, four hangars and runways. It was to this airfield that Col. Charles A. Lindbergh came on September 14, 1927, in his Spirit of St. Louis, to participate in the dedication of Portland's first major commercial airport.

By 1931, it was becoming increasingly evident that Swan Island facilities and runways were woefully inadequate and that the hills and bridges surrounding it made flying hazardous. There was a tragic air crash into the West hills which took the life of Portland's Dr. Coffey and several other persons, and the death knell sounded for the Swan Island Airport. In 1941 it had ceased to operate and was leased to the Federal Government for wartime shipbuilding. Here it was that the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company built T-2 tankers and Swan Island was once again a thriving, busy place. Because public housing was so badly needed during the war, dormitories were built there to accomodate shipyard workers.

In 1948 Swan Island became a ship repair yard and barge building facility which is used for Alaska trade and in conjunction with the island facilities there is being developed an Industrial Park on Mock's Bottom. On a frosty night in Portland it is a thrill to stand on the edge of Mock's Crest and see the many lights shining from Swan Island and the area around it. What a far cry from the solitary island as a nesting place for swans.

Composed by Gladys Dickson

MEMORY RAMBLINGS OF UNIQUE ST. JOHNS

By Janet Wood Kingston

In June 1905, the year of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, three families arrived in St. Johns from Saginaw, Michigan. A case of "go West young man". These families were: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Knapp and two children, Addison and Florence (now Mrs. Eddie Sammons, Wilsonville, Oregon); Mr. and Mrs. Dave Wiggins and two children; Charles A. and Evelyn Wood, son William, age 11, and myself, a baby of 1½ years (now Mrs. Charles Kingston).

No houses were available, but 3 were in construction. The families camped out in an old apple orchard on what is now a part of the University of Portland campus. Tents with raised wooden floors were provided, for each family, plus one very large one, for general use and dining. I understand that I was one mass of mosquito bites, but luckily too young at the time for

me to remember it.

Fred Knapp established the Peninsula Lumber Co. Their house was built on Willamette Blvd. on the bluff overlooking the mill. The company produced wooden ships for the Merchant Marine for W. W. I. My brother sailed on one as a junior officer in 1917.

The Wiggins family settled in the Piedmont district in Portland.

Charles Wood was the first manager and cashier of the Peninsula Bank located on the northwest corner of Philadelphia and Jersey (now Lombard). I believe Peter Autzen was the President. The bank later became the U. S. National Bank of Oregon. My father had John Edlefsen as a teller who took my father's place when he died in June 1911. John was the youngest of three newly arrived Germans from the Frisian Islands. Peter was connected with the St. Johns Waterworks. Anton established the Edlefsen Fuel Co. in the Albina area, and quit business in 1931 for reasons of ill health. There was a competing bank at Five Corners. (Six Point - it went bankrupt)

Early crime! A man came to our back door about 3 a.m., and demanded that my father go with him to the bank and open the vault. Needless to say he couldn't have opened the time lock if he had wanted to, and told the man so. Foolishly, the door had been opened slightly and the man pulled a gun. My father threw himself on his back and braced his feet against the door, jamming the gun in it. The man ran and somehow retrieved his gun - no trace. My brother was told to get me to safety in the back bedroom.

My family's house (Wood) was on the northeast corner of Trumbull and Hayes (now Syracuse). Our house was 3 stories with a flat top enclosed with a railing (now removed), I believe one called it a 'widow's walk'. It was from there that I saw Haley's Comet - what a spectacular sight! My mother impressed on me what age I would be when I saw it again. I fully expect that I will, and that it is as beautiful as then. The papers were full of dire predictions. One report gave an account of chickens laying eggs with tails.

The Carlsons lived on the southwest corner of Syracuse and Trumbull. The Chipmans lived on Willamette Blvd. and Trumbull - they ran a fine boarding house. Willis Moxon was assistant postmaster, and later became postmaster at Ecola, now Cannon Beach.

The Jowers were friends of my parents. An outstanding event was when they were taken for a visit to friends in Portland's old Chinatown. A most gracious, interesting and enjoyable visit from their recounting of it.

I swung in the swing at the Mortimer Stearns - it was hung on a very high branch, but there were no steps nor was it a double swing at that time. The Stearns held a considerable amount of timber land especially in the Gales Creek area. Mrs. Stearns gave a piece of land on Gales Creek to Mrs. Sears for a summer camp for young children - 4 to 6 years old. I understand that the camp is used for diabetic children now. On some property they owned was one, if not the largest, of Oregon trees.

I was sent to Mrs. Stearns, for the day of my father's funeral, as Mrs.

Stearns was the finest person my mother knew for me to be with on that sad day. The mode of transportation to the funeral at that time was a string of streetcars carrying the many people of St. Johns to Portland and Finley's undertaking parlor, then by carriages to the Riverview Cemetery.

Excerpts from the C. A. Wood obituary: "Charles Wood was well liked by all who knew him, and was known to be a most fair man in all business dealings. He believed in the City of St. Johns, and the potentiality of its future. He had been a 33° Mason and a charter member of Doric Lodge, A.F. and A.M. of St. Johns, and also of the local Order of Owls. His funeral was held under the auspices of the Knights Templar, and was attended by a large concourse of St. Johns folks, including members of the Mason and Owl orders.

Odds and ends about the town: It was mud in the winter, but seemed warmer in the spring and summers than it is now. Lanterns were used when going out at night. The river traffic was wonderful, and in full view from the house. We loved the whistles of the boats. There were docks with warehouses near the ferry landing. My grandmother would fix a lunch, usually gingerbread with butter, and take me with her to fish off the dock. The ferry was a joy, but the whistle blast was scary when blown upon coming in to the landing. There was at least one basketball game played, that I saw, in an empty warehouse.

A grocery boy would call and take one's order, then deliver later. A weenie was a child's reward when one's mother paid her bill at the meat market - eaten right there, of course. There was another drugstore and ice cream parlor run by the Thompsons near the bank. They featured Mt. Hood Ice Cream.

There was a movie house with the usual piano accompaniment. My memory of this was a film of acrobats with a crash of a cymbal at each landing. The Chautauqua was a real event. A memory there was the presentation of "The Red Mill".

Sitton, then called North School, saw me in the 1st and 2nd grades. It was then in a far corner of the community surrounded by trees. Mrs. Stephenson was the principal, and 1st grade teacher, and any 1st grader today would be lucky to have such a superior teacher. My brother went to Central School, and then 2 years to the old James Johns High School. The walls of that building were already cracking - though fairly new. It was later condemned.

* * * *

MEMORIES

By Howard Galbraith

The Old Shingle Mill, on the river below Portland U., old Joe's houseboat and moorage, canoes and boats for rent, paddling across the channel on a plank to Swan Island, riding the wake behind a stearn wheeler on a plank, ships and river boats plying the main channel on the east side of Swan Island.

Mud Harbor and the swimming hole by the pump house, the endless saw ripping logs in the mill, the wooden shipbuilding and the launching thrills,

leaping off the high bluff to land in the soft sand talus 60 feet below, the Cooperage with whining saws and weary workers keeping pace, the drydock lifting a mighty ship and uttering not a sound, where school boys playing hooky could earn "big money" scraping and painting ships. The excelcior plant and bales of the fluffy stuff, the rotary peeler in the plywood plant and the workers piling sheet on sheet, the chain shop and the sweating blacksmith joining link to link.

The planing mill, the box factory and the oar works and each busy filling orders, the Shaver dock and fleet of boats, the fire boat by the pier, the everlasting thump-thump-thump of the piledriver with the rattle of the rivet guns building a bridge, the woolen mills whirling spools and flying shuttles weaving comfort yard on yard, the iron works cutting grinding twisting steel, the cannery where girls stood side by side sorting berries on an endless belt - minute by minute and hour by endless hour.

The flour mill at Terminal 4 and the grain dock and the sore fingers piling sacks of grain 7 high, and the cold storage where pears and apples 12 years old were still too hard and too green to eat.

Post Office Bar where fishing was good and an occasional arrowhead was found on the beach, Ramsey Lake, so natural, so close to home and yet so peacefully isolated, the Columbia Slough with all its haunting fascination for my youthful adventures - the arrowheads and artifacts of ancient tribes, the fishing and boating, the rafts of cedar logs towed to the shingle mills, and the barges of wild horses transported to their dooms in the Kenton slaughter houses, ice skating on Smith Lake and crappie fishing in Triangle Lake.

The big fire at Swifts in the 20's and the fires at Peninsula Lumber Co., and Beall Pipe and Tank, also the burning of the surplus wooden ships from WWI near the site of the Monarch Shingle Mill, Vanport Flood, the big fire at the garbage dump where garbage and refuse was burned continuously but this time getting out of control was blamed on smoker's carelessness. Portland State College beginnings at Oregon Ship housing site.

Sunday football games at the stadium on Wall Avenue near Hudson, the gang fight at the carnival on Ivanhoe Street, prize fights in the dental clinic building on Lombard at John Avenue, the strike at the plywood plant and the longshore strike when three men were shot down by police at the rail road crossing of Columbia Blvd. at the north corner of Pier Park, salmon fishing every spring (with oars and hand lines) and the salmon derby sponsored by St. Johns Hardware Co., Saturday night dances at the IOOF Hall and the street dance around the horse trough and fountain in the street at the intersection of Ivanhoe and Philadelphia.

There are many, many more, but best of all are the memories of all the fine people I have met and associated with during the past sixty years in St. Johns.

* * * *

ST. JOHNS RESIDENTS - 1870

The following is a list of St. Johns residents taken from the U. S. Census of Multnomah County in 1870. This list was researched by Mrs. George W. Miles and compiled by Mrs. Harry L. Hiday. An attempt has been made to correct the spelling of as many names as possible as taken from the original census.

| <u>FAMILY</u> | <u>VOCATION</u> | <u>FAMILY</u> | <u>VOCATION</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| ABRAHAM, D. R. | Dairyman | EVANS, James | Farmer |
| BERMAN, S. | Farmer | Jane | Keeps House |
| FOGLESKI, Ino | | Sarah | |
| BARRON, J. | Cooper | James | |
| BEALL, George | Laborer | ENYARD, James | Laborer |
| BENNETT, John | Laborer | Eliz Ann | |
| BENN, Jacob | | David L. | |
| BENSON, J. W. | Laborer | Rebecca | |
| BOONE, F. D. | Boating | FISHER, I. | Laborer |
| BREENE, Chas. | Wood Chopper | FOGLESKI, Ino. | |
| BRUSH, G. E. | Farmer | (St. Johns or Sauvie Island) | |
| BURLINGAME, A. | Laborer | FRANCES, William | Laborer |
| BYARS, Injah | Farmer | FERGUSON, Jas. | R. R. Foreman |
| Elizabeth | Keeps house | Eliza | Keeps House |
| Maria L. | | SULLIVAN, Clara | |
| Mary L. | | Edwards | |
| Martha E. | | Kate | |
| Zylpha | | Eugene | |
| CAPLES, M. D., William | Farmer | FERGUSON, Elizabeth | |
| Nancy | Keeps House | Mary | |
| William W. | School | GATTON, William | Farmer |
| Elizabeth | " | Nancy Jane | Keeps House |
| Robert | " | Samuel A. R. | |
| Olive | " | Thurston | |
| CHISHOLM, R. J. | Cooper | George G. | |
| CLARK, W. M. | Laborer | Margaret Lucretia | |
| CLEMENS, Edward | | Mary Anetta | |
| CLINTON, Jas. | Ship Carpenter | Erastus A. | |
| Mary | Keeps House | Greenly | |
| COLBRIDGE, Chas | | Minor W. | |
| CONNELL, William | Farmer | GEDAMKE, William | Farmer |
| (of Connell Road) | | Lucinda | Keeps House |
| Emily | Keeps House | Charles E. | School |
| Mary | | Lucy | |
| Holly | | GILES, Jesse | Laborer |
| CONNER, James | Blacksmith | GLANDON, Charles | Laborer |
| CRIMMENS, T. | Laborer | Phoebe | Keeps House |
| CROSBY, George | Laborer | William | |
| DICKINSON, Charles | Hospital Keeper | Jane | |
| Della | Keeps House | Catherine | |
| DOWNNS, A. | Laborer | James | |
| | | Charles | |
| | | George | |

| <u>FAMILY</u> | <u>VOCATION</u> | <u>FAMILY</u> | <u>VOCATION</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| GREEN, Harry | | MADISON, A. L. | Farmer |
| CASPER, John | | Sarah | Keeps House |
| HALE, Louis | Farmer | Frances | |
| HEIBLE, Samuel | Laborer | Lucy | |
| Mary | Keeps House | Martha | |
| Franklin | | Alice | |
| Charles | | Grace | |
| HARTY, James | Farmer | MASON, Milton | Laborer |
| Valindor | Keeps House | Dosia | Keeps House |
| HOLBROOK, A. | Laborer | Martha | |
| HOLE, James | Farmer | William, Th. | |
| HOYT, E. | Laborer | Emma, T. | |
| HUTCHINSON, B. F. | Physician | MALONEY, Thomas | Cooper |
| Iretta | Keeps House | Catherine | |
| Hellen | | Carlton | |
| JOHN, James | Farmer | Thomas | |
| JOSEPH, John | Laborer | MERRITT, Benjamin | Laborer |
| KENNEDY, Barnard | Laborer | MITCHELL, Wm. | Laborer |
| KNOX, A. A. | Dairy Man | MORRISON, Jas. | Laborer |
| Plus 3 laborers, | | McLALONEY, John | Laborer |
| (Abraham, Giles, Morrison) | | Ann | Keeps House |
| KNOX, Jeremiah | Teamster | John | |
| Esther | Keeps House | NEAL, Felix | Carpenter |
| Mary | | Catherine | Keeps House |
| Almira | | COLBRIDGE, Chas | |
| William | | NEAL, Felix | |
| John | | Eliz. | |
| Tilly | | O'HARA, William | Cook |
| Eddy | | Catherine | Keeps House |
| Cally | | William | |
| Haddie | | Bernhardt | |
| KORBE, George | Laborer | Kate | |
| LAWLER, Alex | Farmer | Bertha | |
| Robert | | Mary | |
| LEARNED, Albert L. | Laborer | William B. | |
| Arris V. | Keeps House | Ann | |
| (Plus 2 Chinese - Sing Wood | | John | |
| & Cling Sing) | | OPELEY, John | Stone Mason |
| LINDLEY, M. | Laborer | Clara | Keeps House |
| LOOMIS, James | Farmer | Louis | |
| Anna | Keeps House | Catherine | |
| Edward | | Clara | |
| James | | Peter | |
| Louisa A. | | PAYNE, C. P. | Farmer |
| WINDLE, Joseph | | PAUL, G. W. | Wood Dealer |
| LOOMIS, Sarah | Keeps House | Sarah | Keeps House |
| William | | Edward W. | |
| MOCK, Henry A. | Invalid | Plus 2 workers, both wood choppers | |
| John | Wood Dealer | (Tucker & Breen) | |

FAMILYVOCATIONFAMILYVOCATION

PIERCE, Nathan School Teacher
 Emilie Keeps House
 Joel N.
 James D.

PROEBSTEL, W. Dairy Man
 Elizabeth Keeps House

RAMSEY, Fred H. Farmer

SHEPPARD, Ellen

ROBERTS, Amos M. Laborer
 Susan Mary Keeps House
 Wallace N.
 Artemus G.

ROGERS, Theodore Farmer

SCHAEFER, G. W. Farmer
 Sarah Keeps House
 John K.
 Mary
 James
 Lincoln
 Ellen
 George
 Deline
 Susan

SCOTT, James Farmer
 Catherine Keeps House
 Alice
 Francis
 Susan
 Estella
 James
 Eddie
 George

SEVERANCE, Ed. Laborer
 Preston "
 William "

SIMPSON, John Wood Cutter

SMITH, Joseph Farmer
 Margaret Keeps House
 Joseph
 Siadda
 Martha
 Elle
 Olive
 Irella
 Jason
 James

SMITH, P. T. Farmer
 Mary Keeps House
 Henry W.
 Martha F.
 Sarah J.

SEVERANCE, Benj. O. Lumber Man
 Mary Keeps House
 William
 Tanny

STANBERRY, I. Laborer

SWITZERL, Mary Keeps House
 Frank
 Josephine
 George
 Minna
 Charles

TAYLOR, D. B. Carpenter
 Ann Keeps House

THOMPSON, Jos. Wood Dealer
 Matilda Keeps House
 Nancy J.
 Arizonia

(Plus 2 laborers: Rodgers & Wallace)

TOOHILL, John Farmer
 Rosa Keeps House
 Nancy

SMITH, Samuel

TUCKER, James Wood Chopper

WALLACE, James Laborer

WALLACE, Joseph Laborer

WALSH, William Farmer
 L. J. Keeps House

WILLIAMS, E. Laborer
 Maria Keeps House
 Esther

WILSON, Henry Farmer

WOLF, Wm. B. Laborer

CONNER, James Blacksmith

ZIMMERMAN, Ed Dairy Man
 Anna Keeps House

Edward
 Larh Laborer

WILLIAM AND NANCY GATTON - Pioneers of 1852

By Gladys N. Dickson

When we think of St. Johns pioneers, how easy it is to see them as old, enfeebled or as a name on a tombstone. It is difficult to visualize them as young, vigorous and far-seeing, wanting an ongoing life of productiveness. There is an aura of unrealness surrounding them. What were their hopes and desires as they walked their land claims, their homesteads?

William Gatton and Nancy Jane Hendrickson were each only 19 years old that 15th day of December, 1850 when they were married at West Liberty, Iowa. William, one of 7 children of Gallentine and Sarah Gatton, was given a farm by his very successful agriculturist father, and he made good on his farm raising cattle, all the while dreaming of the vast Oregon country where it was possible to file a claim on large tracts of land.

Finally, when he was about 21 years old, the day came when William sold his farm, and he and Nancy packed their possessions into a covered wagon and set out for Oregon, driving their cattle before them. When they arrived at what is now Cascade Locks, they hired a man to drive the cattle the remaining distance to Portland over the Barlow Trail while they ferried the river to Portland. Unfortunately for the young pioneers, nothing was ever heard of the hired man or the cattle again. William's ancestors were hardy Welshmen, and he would manage even though the loss of the cattle meant beginning a new life in the Oregon country under severe hardships. That winter they stayed in Albina with one of Nancy's brothers who had arrived there before them.

On May 16, 1853, William and Nancy settled a Donation Land Claim just north of the City of St. Johns. This 320 acres, a half section of land, was added to over the years until the holdings were about 652 acres. There was a great deal of timber on the land as well as some valuable bottom land with excellent grazing possibilities for a dairy herd. As William cleared the land he cut and sold wood.

In what is now Pier Park there is the beginning of a ridge which at that time extended north through a heavy stand of timber (now just a few trees behind Chimney Park), and bearing west ended on a high point with gently sloping terrain along its length on either side. This was a sweet bit of land with a view to lighten the heart. Here William built two houses over the years. The first house was only a small cottage, but as the family came he needed more room so a two-story house was built beside the small one, and the latter abandoned. A black walnut tree was planted beside this house and it grew and flourished over the years. According to records, the first house was a one room log house built near the river. Out from the house on the ridge William built cattle and hay barns, a dairy and work shed, and near the house dug the well. The fine orchard was planted on the ridge near the barns and part of the sloping land around the orchard and barns was fenced off for the cows. On the land sloping down from the house toward St. Johns and behind the barns he planted hay and grains. This was a beautiful and exciting place to rear a family.

William was industrious and far-seeing. His large two-story house consisted of a master bedroom and a small one, small sitting room and large farm kitchen on the first floor and two large dormitory rooms on the second floor. (This house may still be seen near the Gatton Cemetery although the front of the house has been extended and a small bedroom added to the front of the second floor). Each house had an ample porch along the front, but strangely enough the porches faced away from St. Johns and looked out on the lush bottom land to Sauvie Island and the bend of the Willamette. From here the sailing ships and the stern and side-wheelers could be seen moving up and down the river.

Pioneer life was hard and often frustrating for a man, but it was a time of hard work and anxious times for a woman, especially one of child bearing age. Nancy Gatton bore eleven children and died one month after the birth of Clarissa, at the age of 40 years. She was buried in the little Gatton Cemetery which now lies along the road to Rivergate, just north of the grave of Fred Ramsey. William carried on with the family as best he could. He became one of the first school board members in St. Johns, helped to build the first school which was one room made of logs, and helped to build the first Methodist Church in St. Johns. Life went on for William for fifty-three more years.

The road to St. Johns from the ranch ran down the slope behind the barns connecting with the Columbia Slough Road at the point where the Gatton Cemetery now is and turning easterly went on past the Ramsey upper farms. In 1895 E. B. Chipman, A. F. Learned, A. L. Miner and John Mock petitioned for a county road, and County Road No. 613 was surveyed and platted and then established in the County Court. This road (now Lombard St.) ran past the Loomis Donation Land Claim and the Amos Roberts land and ended at the point where the railroad now runs at right angles to Lombard St., where the small bridge now spans the railroad tracks. The railroad around the peninsula was not built until about 1905.

On the easterly side of this road, beginning at what is now Bruce Avenue, there were 14 acres of cleared land running back to what is now Pier Park which William Gatton planted in hay and grain. From this 14 acres bearing northerly was a fine stand of timber (where the Industrial Park now is) which connected to another stand of timber behind Chimney Park. This county road was a second road to the Gatton Ranch, and where the county road ended William had built a road which turned right through the edge of the forest and on about three hundred feet to a low place in the terrain. From there the road wound north through a clearing in the trees between wild rose and blackcap bushes and up the slope to the ranch. The small triangle where the road turned right from the county road was a favorite camping ground of the gypsies who came there year after year, and across the road from this spot was the small cabin and truck garden of an aged Chinese man who went his lonely way and associated with none.

William lived to be 93 years old, still hale and alert, and died in March of 1924. He was buried beside Nancy in the Gatton Cemetery. His was a long, fruitful and interesting life. The place where his beloved ranch stood was purchased by the Union Carbide Company and every vestige of the ranch was cleared away and the ridge graded down to road level. Rivergate and sand cover the lush meadow, and now 24 years before the beginning of a new century, the Gatton ranch is only a memory.

ST. JOHNS BRANCH LIBRARY HISTORY

(The following information was gathered from library records, contemporary newspapers, and the text of an address delivered by Dr. F. N. Sandifur on February 22, 1939, at the St. Johns Branch Library.)

Library service in the St. Johns area was first established in April, 1907, through a small reading room on Jersey Street. The St. Johns community furnished the room, heat, and light, while the Library Association of Portland furnished reading materials and the salary of the custodian, Mrs. T. T. Parker. This small reading room, supplied with only 200-300 books and magazines, was open only one year and closed in May, 1908.

By 1911, the need for a new reading room with a larger collection and experienced staff led Dr. F. N. Sandifur, minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in St. Johns, to approach Miss Mary Frances Isom, librarian of the Library Association of Portland, and the library board with the suggestion that a branch of the Portland Public Library be established in St. Johns. Their response was favorable, as Dr. Sandifur reports, "If the responsible people of St. Johns would rent a suitable room and pay the rent and provide for light, heat and janitor, the Library Association would furnish an ample supply of books, magazines, and pay the librarian's salary for an indefinite time". Dr. Sandifur and other citizens of St. Johns petitioned the St. Johns City Council, which approved the request and provided a rented building in the McChesney Block near the post office. The new reading room opened on May 1, 1911 with Miss Mabel Rundall as librarian, and was enthusiastically received. Its use increased, and the need for a larger, permanent building soon became apparent.

The library's new building, at 7510 N. Charleston, was built with Carnegie library funds on land donated by M. L. Holbrook, a St. Johns banker, and opened in 1914. Portland architects Don Mayer and Folger Johnson designed the \$12,000.00 brick building, of the Southern or Maryland Colonial style of architecture. The original collection housed by the library consisted of 5,000 volumes.

Today, the St. Johns Branch is located in the same Carnegie building. Its collection has grown considerably since 1914, and with the recent addition of materials from the University Park Branch and Roosevelt High School, it now totals approximately 15,000 volumes.

LOOMIS FAMILY

James Loomis was born in 1813 in New York, married Sarah on October 1, 1833 and arrived in Oregon November 1, 1844. They had seven children, Manah, Clancy, James, Albert, Charles, Christen, and Edward.

James Loomis and his family located in St. Johns in 1849. An article in the Oregon Journal for November 1, 1931 states that Mr. Loomis had a store on the bank of the river, but early residents believe that he might have run James John's store for a time. They had a large family, but only one child remained in 1904. She was Mrs. Perry Baker, who resided in Portland.

Laura Minkler - St. Johns Review
Nov. 25, 1954

In 1905 the family bought a two acre tract at the corner of what is now Edison and Reno. This was part of the original donation land claim of James and Sarah Loomis. The Loomis cemetery, set aside by Sarah Loomis, then a widow, in a deed recorded on Feb. 21, 1872, reserved a half acre containing the grave yard. This lies less than a hundred yards from the old home. First interment was over a hundred years ago. About a year before we moved into the Reno home the Loomis heirs had a concrete slab placed over the 15 graves of this family. Appropriate markings could be noted, the center one in particular, a column about 6 feet tall and bearing a Masonic emblem marked the resting place of James Loomis.

For a number of years our family, on noting the first marriage license in Multnomah County in 1855 to a Mr. Baker and Miss Loomis, have considered the possibility of kinship, especially between James and Sarah Loomis who settled in the immediate vicinity of the Larsen home some 100 years ago.

V. J. "Skee" Larsen - St. Johns Review

BYARS FAMILY

Irijah Byars, born Jan. 27, 1832 of English ancestry. Settled in Iowa, started to Oregon March 1852 and arrived November 1852.

Elizabeth Huff Byars, born in Boone County, Indiana. Married to Irijah Byars.

Records show that in 1856 James John deeded 108.8 acres to Irijah Byars, Mrs. Ashby's father. In 1861 the Byars moved to their new home, about a half mile north of James John's place.

V. J. "Skee" Larsen - St. John's
Review - October 9, 1975

James John sold three acres of his land on the southeast corner to Southmayd in 1856, and 108.8 acres to Irijah Byars on the north side of his claim. In 1867 James John sold a strip of one hundred acres bordering his property starting on the Burlington St. side. It extended up to Southmayd's

across the Southmayd boundary on the west and back down to the river along the land previously sold to Mr. Byars.

Laura Minkler - St. John's Review
Dec. 2, 1954

The first school house was built on property belonging to my father, Mr. Irijah Byars. My father gave an acre of ground from his farm to the school district and the other farmers furnished the building material. I do not know who built the one room school house with an entrance hall to hang our hats and cloaks and to set dinner pails on the floor.

In regard to the round house in St. Johns, it was built by George and Mary Loomis Brush when I was a real young girl. They had a small girl by the name of Carrie and she and I had lots of fun running in and out of one room into another. Little Carrie said she was growing to be so tall, her father would have to make a hole in the roof so her head could get out.

The Etheridge family first lived in the Byars' pioneer home rather than in a home of their own. They moved into their own home on Edison St. after Elizabeth Byars and Edward Ashby were married and moved into the pioneer Byars home. Mr. and Mrs. Ashby were still living there when Mrs. Elizabeth Byars sold a strip of land to the OR&N railroad company. The house was then moved to the top of the hill by N. A. Gee and his son, James, to vacate the land for the railroad.

Maria Byars, Mrs. Ashby's sister, married Edward Loomis, son of the pioneer family. When Edward Loomis sold the farm to Mr. Gatton he retained the cemetery mentioned previously.

Elizabeth Byars Ashby - St. John's
Review

The following remains were taken from the Loomis Cemetery in St. Johns and reinterred in a common grave in Section 9 of the Riverview Cemetery, Portland, Oregon, August 11, 1949.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| James Loomis | 1813 - 1859 |
| Sarah Loomis | 1814 - 1879 |
| Christopher Loomis | 1838 - 1863 |
| Clarissa L. Collier | 1842 - 1898 |
| Albert Loomis | 1847 - 1874 |
| Edward Loomis | 1849 - 1883 |
| Charles Loomis | 1852 - 1854 |

* * * *

MEMORIES OF THE HENRY GAGEN FAMILY

By Helen Miles (a granddaughter)

Henry Gagen was born in 1858 in Baltimore, Maryland. On his way West, he lost his mother, father, and one brother all within 7 days of the typhoid

fever. His oldest sister, Ann, brought him to Oregon with the rest of the orphans in a covered wagon over the Barlow Pass Road. They settled in Oregon City on top of the hill at Elyville. His youth was spent on a farm.

On New Years Day, 1887, he married Ellen Leonard in Portland. She was from an early Portland pioneer family. Five children were born to them: Frank, Leonard, Mary, Elizabeth and Helen. In the early part of 1900, they decided to move "out into the country" to St. Johns. They had a house built on Myers Street (Pier Park Place). It was surrounded by huge fir, cedar, and dogwood trees. Henry also planted 18 fruit trees. The house was completed just in time for Thanksgiving Day.

The children loved the space to run and play. The girls liked to go to Mrs. G. W. Simmons' farm to get fresh eggs and milk. Sometimes, she would invite them inside and give them hot biscuits with honey and milk. Other times, they would walk in Pier Park and gather buckets of wild blackberries for jelly. The woods were full of vines, Thimble-berries, elder-berries and hazel nut bushes. Even a walk through the woods on a rainy day was unforgettable. The fragrance of dripping wet red currant, finding clusters of white Trilliums, brown coffee-cups, yellow Johnny-Jump-Ups, and tiny white Umbrellas at the foot of centuries old fir trees was delightful. The wind rustling through the fir needles on a stormy day sounded lonely, and they would go home to a warm kitchen, stand by the new Magestic wood range, and open the oven door to warm themselves. Usually, a big kettle of Irish stew would be simmering away on the back of the stove. Sometimes there would be fresh baked apple dumplings with vanilla sauce to pour over them, one of the childrens' favorite desserts.

The boys had their chores to do. When the loads of wood were delivered in the fall, two teams of horses delivered it. Frank and Leonard would "throw it in". The boys liked to play the phonograph. They said they had the first phonograph in St. Johns. Henry worked for Eilers Piano Company before moving to St. Johns. Now he barged pianos down the river. It was a heavy load to pull a piano on a sledge, up the hill with a team of horses, but it was done. About this time, Henry's brother John was busy building cement-block houses in Kenton. He wanted Henry to start a soda pop factory in St. Johns. Equipment was brought out, but later John decided to build it in Kenton instead.

Ellen spent most of her time with the housework. Occasionally, she would visit neighbors who lived nearby. Mrs. Henry Henderson was one neighbor she saw quite often, and she liked her very much. Before Ellen was married, she had been a dressmaker downtown. Besides fashionable herring-bone dresses, she made nun's habits. Now she sewed for the girls. She had several pieces of Battenburg Lace in her living room. Her mother was an expert lace-maker. She made curtains, tablecloths, table runners and pillow covers. She made her own patterns. Ellen was proud to say that her mother made altar pieces for churches. Several pieces she made were around the city. Sometimes Ellen would start out early in the morning and take the trolley to see her sister Julia (Mrs. Cornelius Murphy) who lived in Portsmouth. They would have green tea and apricot jam cakes. They liked to talk about early Portland, and their childhood days on the farm in the "wilds of Goose Hollow". Another day, she would visit her other sister Lucy (Mrs. Timothy Murphy) who lived in East Portland near Albina. It would be an all day affair. She would thoroughly enjoy her day. Late in the afternoon, she would board the trolley, and go back to St. Johns refreshed from the outing.

HISTORY OF ST. JOHNS

(Condensed from the Laura Minkler articles of the St. Johns Review)

As St. Johns was growing south along the Willamette, Albina was growing to the north; although they were widely separated when first settled, the intervening gap was becoming sparsely filled by 1880. When Albina was absorbed into Portland in 1891, it claimed St. Johns, too. It was a part of Portland until the spring of 1895, when it broke away. At that time it was still unincorporated.

Excerpts taken from an Oregonian clipping found in Thomas Monahan's scrapbook are as follows: "The residents of that portion of the city known as St. Johns are jubilant over their success in securing a divorce from Portland, and a speedy return to rural simplicity. The bill introduced in the legislature (by a newly elected) Representative Beach, amending the charter of Portland, was one of the few considered, and passed by the senate during the last days of the 1895 session. (In 1897, Beach was returned as a Senator, but presented no bill that year.) It changed the boundaries of the city, leaving out that portion west of McKenna Ave., and the city limit is now fixed so as just to include Portsmouth. The General Electric Co. will be a considerable loser by the change of city boundaries. St. Johns has seven electric arc lights provided for it by the city, and in order to supply the light the company at heavy expense constructed a line of poles and wire for two miles. The line was only completed two months ago, and the people of St. Johns are not likely to have the lights retained if they have to pay for them. St. Johns has a population of about 700 people." (They must of erred in stating the population as 700. All other information indicates that there were about 500 inhabitants at that time.)

Prior to 1890, the Steam Motor Line hired John Henry Smith, who had just arrived from the east, to do the surveying for the line. H. C. Campbell of the Willamette Bridge Co., whom Mr. Smith had known back east, was to help Smith with the surveying. They started from the main office at Third & Yamhill through Albina and into St. Johns. When an inventory was taken later to determine the exact amount of track laid, John Franklin Poff worked with John Henry on the project.

It was P. T. Smith, who had promoted the idea of the St. Johns Line. Several people gave parcels of land along the route where it dissected their property, P. T. Smith and John Mock gave considerable land. John Catlin, County Judge at the time, opposed the idea of placing the line through the long stretch along Killingsworth Avenue, but P. T. finally persuaded him. About that same time, Mr. Smith had his own tract platted and surveyed.

James John's claim curved on both the north and south sides until he purchased a strip of land from Dr. William Caples which straightened his property on the Main (Richmond) side. Washington St. (Burlington) retained its curve. Whether that determined the triangular shaped town center or whether it was a planned arrangement has never been determined.

The streets in James John's townsite had been named by him, but later name changes occurred. Sometime after P. T. Smith "laid out" his land the

CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

33. Plaird's Auto Electric, circa 1920. This station was located on the N.W. corner of Lombard and Charleston Ave. (present Chevron station). Left to right: 1918/20 Overland (background): 1918/20 Hudson (foreground): 1915 Studebaker (far right): 1917 Chevrolet in far background. Oregon Historical Society photo.

34. Winchester Store built around 1900 and first occupied by Bickner's Dept. Store. It became Potter & Gould when they leased the building in 1906, and it was then purchased almost immediately thereafter by Chas. S. McGill and W. R. Evens and renamed the St. Johns Hardware Co. The second floor, known as Bickner's Hall, was the meeting place of many fraternal and religious organizations. The St. Johns Christian Church held its first meetings here. The building was reduced to a single story in July, 1933. Circa 1921 photo, Don McGill collection.

35. N. Lombard & N. Alta Avenue, looking S.W. Photographed from the St. John's Bachelor Clubroom above the present Crouchley Plumbing Company shop in 1921. Tommy Lind collection.

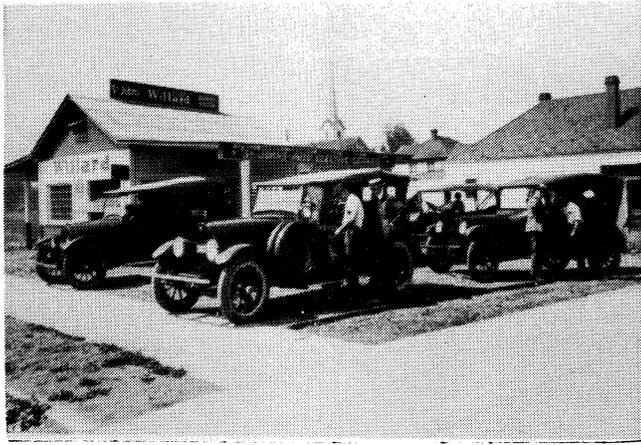
36. Roosevelt High School nearing completion in 1922. Classes began on Jan. 29, 1923 for the students from James John. The first principal was W. T. Fletcher. He was succeeded as principal by Chas. A. Fry in 1924. Photo from Miss Beatrice Rundall's album by permission of Miss Madeline Munson.

37. Star Hotel. Built about 1908 on the N. W. corner of Chicago Avenue at Ivanhoe Street (also known as the Chicago Rooming House). It was destroyed by fire in 1932. The site is presently the dental office of R. R. Quick. Oregon Historical Society photo.

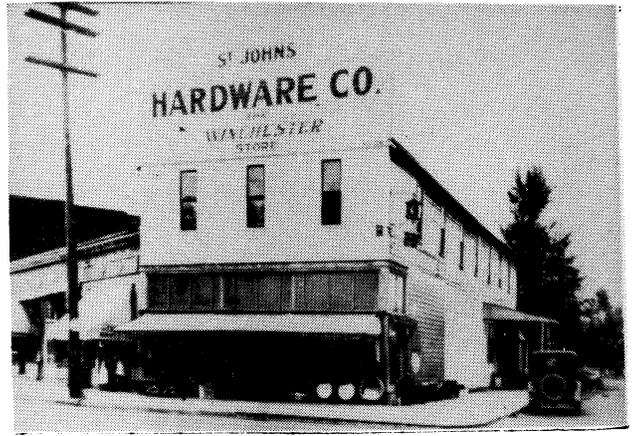
38. View N. W. on N. Lombard from N. Richmond Ave., Feb. 14, 1927. At right is H. F. Clark Furniture Store which has been at this location from 1911 to the present. Behind Clark's is the old Central School built in 1894 (compare with Picture No. 7). In 1915 the name was changed to Williams School. A fire on Jan. 13, 1930 destroyed this old landmark which was already destined for replacement by the new James John Elementary School under construction. Oregon Historical Society photo.

39. Old North High School erected in 1906. Renamed "Sitton Grade School" following the annexation of St. Johns by the City of Portland in 1915. Demolished in 1964. Photo from N. Reno Avenue and Hudson St. looking east. Courtesy Mossbargers St. Johns Studio. C. 1944.

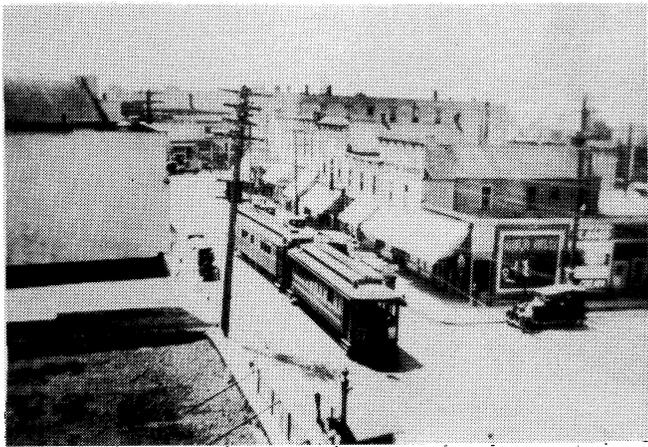
40. How good is your memory? What are all these people doing and why? This is the stern wheeler "Monarch" built in Portland in 1901 and transferred to California in 1914. Courtesy St. Johns Review.



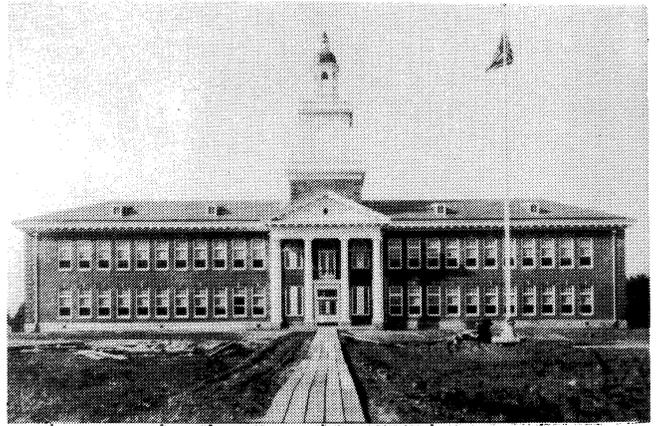
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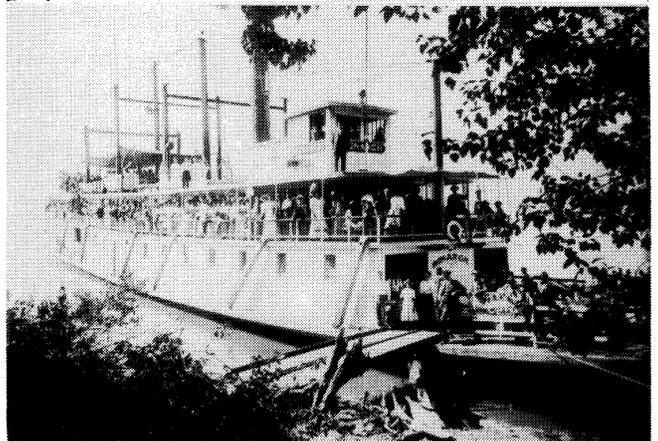
LOCATED ON N.W. COR. OF IVANHOE AT CHICAGO ST. 1924 to 1932.

SOUTH MARKET ST. (NOW W. DUNDAS) LOOKING NW FROM RICH-
MOND, PENNA., 1927. (L-Photo: GEA. HIST. SOCIETY.)



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names of the streets leading up the hill were changed from Front, Second, Third, etc., to Albany, Bradford, Crawford, Decator, Edison, Fillmore, Ivanhoe, Jersey, Kellogg and Leonard. That was as far as the town extended at the time. (Dr. Luzanna Graves said that may have been as much as they ever expected the town to attain.) It has not yet been determined when these name changes occurred. Syracuse and Willamette Blvd. interrupted the alphabetical sequence.*

In 1894, the first section of Central School (two rooms) was in use. In 1895 another room was added, and the first class graduated in 1897. Prof. Alderson was then the principal, but Emma B. Hamlin was elected in 1899. Her appearance was comely despite the severity of dress, and it was said that she was "indorsed and highly recommended" by the Roseburg and Douglas County school officials where she had taught for a ten year period.

The town was moving up the hill by that time. P. T. Smith gave each of his children a block of land on top of the hill in what is now the center of town. They built homes on their land, and P. T. built one where Safeway Store now has a parking lot. After a time, they constructed a new home for themselves where the St. Johns Drug Store is now located. They sold their former home to Mr. King. The house was an old time landmark until the land was taken over for parking. Then the house was moved to its present location on New York Avenue where it was remodeled into apartments. John Henry Smith married Belle, daughter of P. T. They met when he was engaged in his surveying activities. Dr. Graves said that Belle was "quite an artist".

The Henry Knights, "Aunt Belle", had constructed a building on the corner of Crawford and Burlington, which they operated as a store for a time before they sold it to Pete Peterson, who then moved it up on the hill. The Knights then built a building on Leavitt and Jersey where later Council meetings were held upstairs.

*(There was a diary kept by an early day supervisor that had been offered for reference purposes - it has yet to appear.)

MORE ST. JOHNS HISTORY

(Condensed from the Laura Minkler articles of the St. Johns Review)

The Ogden family came to St. Johns in 1897 and built a house on the brow of the hill. They also had a farm at the terminal point and another place near the mouth of the river. They had prospects of oil on the "terminal" place near the mouth of the river, but their drilling venture was so costly they ran out of funds. They formed a stock company and continued drilling but there was so much water hindrance that they again ran out of funds. The project was finally abandoned.

In the late 90's, a small match factory was started by the Feldman Co. on the corner of Leavitt and Albany Sts. They built two small buildings on a plot of land leased from P. T. Smith. One housed an engine, a boiler, a saw, and a matting machine. The other was used for dipping and packing. Shipping was by coastal steamer, and they continued to operate for a short time

after the OR&N started. The next spring Mr. Poff purchased the operation. Henry Knight had experimented with chemicals and assisted Mr. Poff in the business. After they had been operating a short time, a Portland firm contacted them and made them an offer. Mr. Poff learned that "big manufacturers in 'Frisco and Portland gave little fellows a bonus not to operate", and the company wanted to offer the keyman a job. Mr. Poff declined the proposition. In the meantime a fire destroyed the packing house. It was fortunate there weren't many matches there at the time. Lumber was procured from the Douglass Mill across the street and another packing house built. Operations moved smoothly for a time until they attempted to buy more "match wood". The big firm had frozen the market so there was no choice but to sell.

"Grandpa Gee", Nelson Alphonso Gee, was an old time house mover in St. Johns. During the 1905 Fair his son James (Jim) came from Wisconsin and they purchased one of the Match Factory buildings. They also obtained another old building at the foot of the hill. The Match Factory building became the front room of their house and the other, a two-story building, was attached to complete the dwelling. The house which was originally located on a small hill became elevated when Catlin St. was graded. (The house located at Catlin and Ivanhoe has now been torn down.)

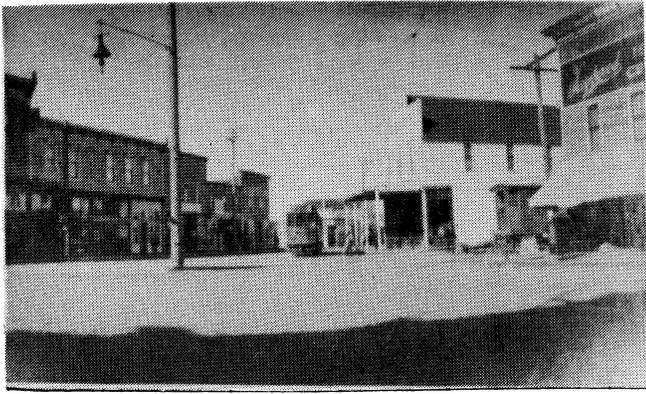
W. L. Thorndyke was enlisted to act as recorder pro tem for St. Johns when Recorder Hanks became ill. Mr. Thorndyke's first committee assignment on the council was that of appraising grading for Gresham (Princeton) and Harriet (?) Sts. Also he was to request the electric light company to service lamps in the manner stated by the franchise. Neglect had been in evidence.

Mr. Thorndyke affiliated with Mr. McKeon in 1905, both men having had years of experience with eastern papers. The local paper received new equipment and a telephone was installed. Mr. Carl Nelson was authorized to secure business and news items in St. Johns and Portsmouth. The paper was previously delivered by carriers but now it was "entered at the post office as mail matter".

The block system was chosen when it was decided to number all business houses and residences. Each block was to be a separate hundred by itself. Burlington and Jersey were accepted as the base line of numbering so that numbers on North Jersey would start with the one hundred block and likewise on South Jersey. The same would be true with Burlington east and west. Street signs were ordered placed at all intersections.

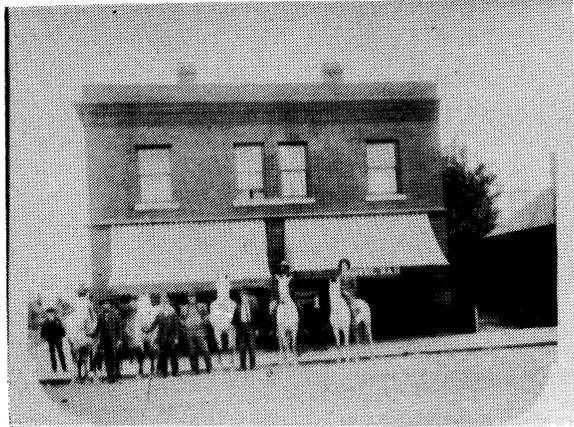
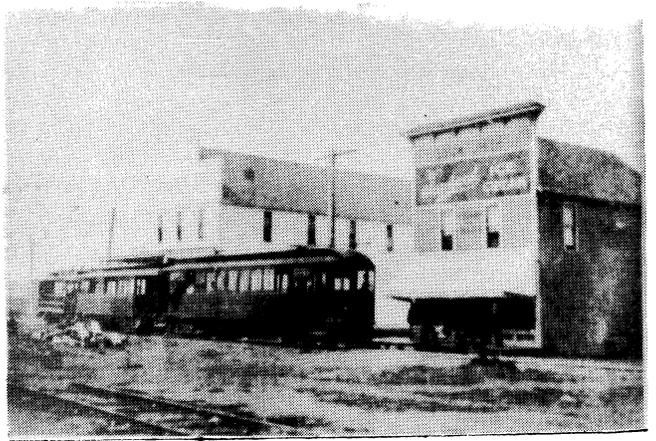
Street name changes were also considered. "Monteith" was changed to "Jersey" since, except for a slight jog, it was a continuation of "Jersey". Because two streets were named "Catlin" one was changed to "Maple" in honor of one of the old settlers. "Park Place" was renamed "Chicago" to be effective as soon as the extension was completed from Jersey to that point.

When St. Johns property owners had been ordered to lay fir sidewalks, the advisability of the plan was questioned. At 53¢ a foot, the cost of laying plank sidewalks and placing curbs in front of a fifty foot lot was \$26.50. The length of service could only be anticipated as being from four to six yrs. One business man advocated the use of cement walks which would cost 60¢ a ft. including the curbing. It was said: "To hear one say that St. Johns is a town of well-graded streets and cement walks" would be a handsome compliment knowing that it is a progressive, up to date place. It was a nice but impractical dream at that stage of the town's growth.



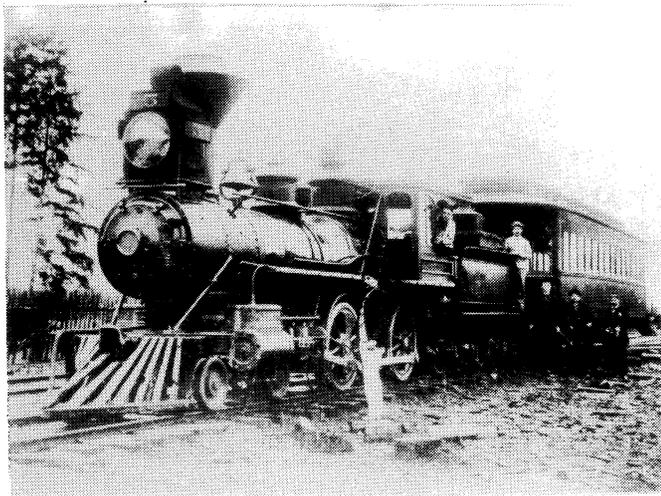
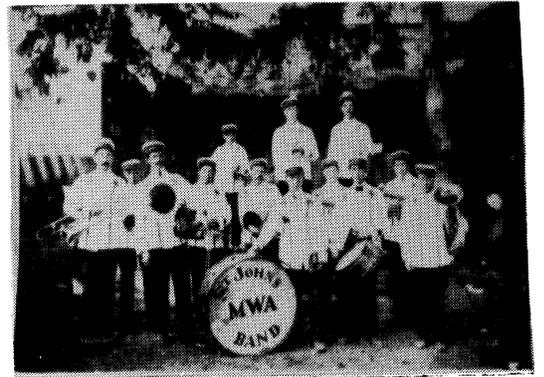
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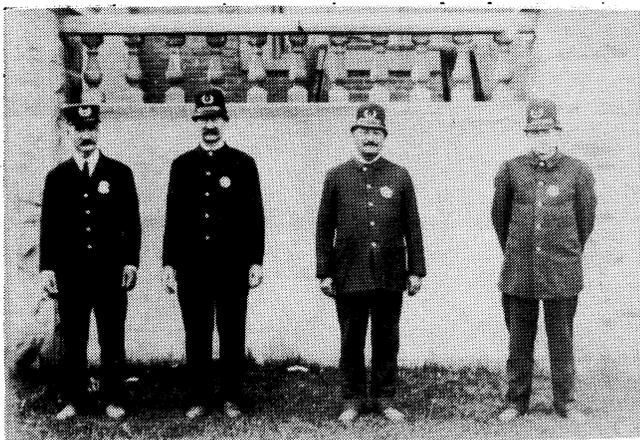
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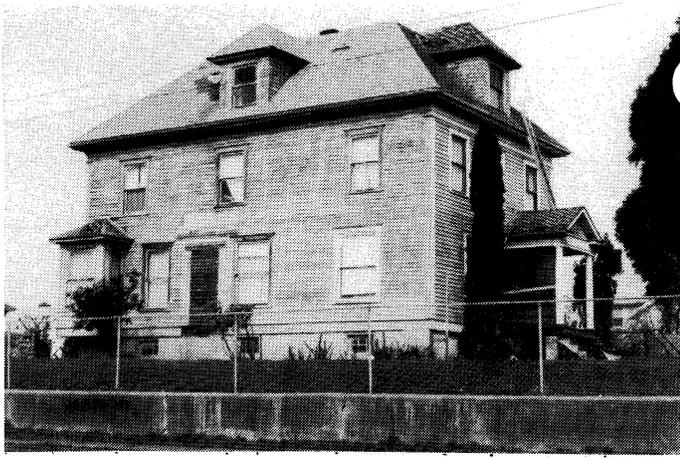


CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

41. Looking North on Lombard Street at corner of Philadelphia. C. 1907. Photo courtesy of Robert Currier.
42. When the electric line first starting running between Piedmont and St. Johns. C 1903. Photo courtesy of Don McGill.
43. New St. Johns Hotel, picture believed to be taken July 4, 1906 shortly after the grand opening. The horses are lined up for the annual 4th of July race on Ivanhoe. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Robert T. Irish.
44. The St. Johns MWA Band in 1908. Photo courtesy Mrs. Robert T. Irish.
45. City & Suburban Rwy. Co. No. 5 built by Brooks for Kansas Central as their No. 10 (3 ft. guage). Frank Smith, Engineer, W. R. Evans standing on rear of tender and Tom Monahan, Conductor. At corner of St. Louis & Jersey. Circa mid 1891. Photo courtesy of John T. Labbe, author.
46. Home of Hiram W. Brice built in 1903. He became Mayor of St. Johns for the term of 1908-09. This house can be seen today at 7207 N. Chicago Avenue. (Refer also to Picture No. 37) Photo courtesy of Mrs. J. L. (Anna Brice) Douglass, daughter of the former Mayor.
47. The St. Johns Police Dept. in 1914. At left is Chief Ora W. Allen followed by officers J. S. Jones, Henry Muck, and Walter Norene. In that year Mr. Allen was also proprietor of the Riverside Hotel on N. Burlington and Decatur. Later, he was in business with his stepson Thos. A. Glover. He died on Dec. 21, 1931. Photo courtesy of his granddaughter, Mrs. Glenn Smith.
48. View of St. John in 1890. This rather faded photo shows the brick store built by James John around 1850. (The two story white bldg. in center of picture near the river) Above it at right center is the Un. Evangelical Church built in 1888. It was moved "up town" sometime around 1900. (See Pictures No. 2 and 23) Enlarged section of photo submitted by Mr. V. J. "Skee" Larsen, early St. Johns historian, now living in Crescent City, CA.

CAPTIONS TO PICTURES

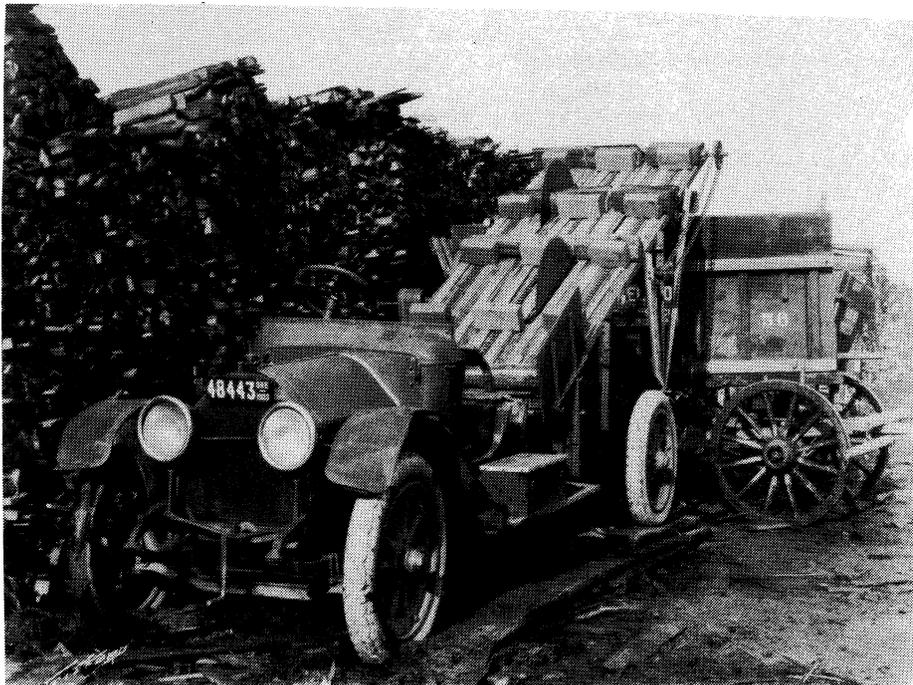
49. Peninsula General Hospital in operation from 1925 to 1927. Formerly the Home of L. B. Chipman, St. Johns earliest real estate broker and hero of the Civil War. Photo courtesy David C. Swart.
50. St. Johns Sanitarium located at 303 N. Smith Street, presently 8920 N. Smith. In business from 1913-14. It was very shortly owned and operated by Ethel M. Hardt, M. D., a leading peninsula obstetrician. Photo courtesy David C. Swart.
51. John Windle (3/20/1822-10/15/1902) and his wife, Isabella Windle (1/25/1824-12/23/1904), early Donation Land Claim holders and parents of Mary J. Windle, wife of Phillip T. Smith. Photo courtesy Mrs. Robert T. Irish.
52. Amos Benson house. Picture taken in January, 1976 for February publication of Old Portland Today by Dan Carter.
53. 1914 Cadillac, converted to a wood saw, owned by Holman Lumber Company and used to cut cords of wood delivered to St. Johns residences. Oregon Historical Society photograph.
54. St. Johns Methodist Church, corner of Syracuse and Leavitt. Circa 1904. Photo courtesy Mrs. Robert T. Irish.



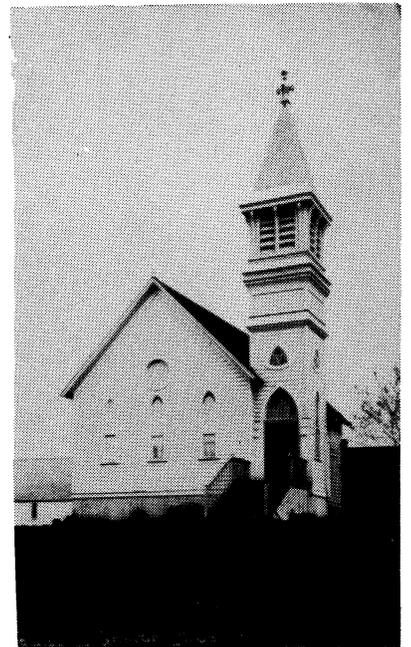
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EARLY DAYS ON THE PENINSULA

By Lorraine Singleterry

In an interview with J. Violette Elliott, she related various stories, most of which were told to her by her mother, Elizabeth Dodge Hughs, daughter of Marion and Jane Caples Dodge, the granddaughter of Dr. William and Nancy Jane Caples: one of the first families to settle on the Willamette River side of the large peninsula between the Columbia and Willamette Rivers prior to 1850, the area that is now St. Johns.

"About 60 years ago, when I was about 12 years old, I remember one time when my mother brought me down to visit Elizabeth Caples, who was quite ill, and I was left standing on the corner looking down at the river. I could see great grandpa Caples' house down there, but I had never been down to see it. I was so proud when aunt Grace Caples (her great aunt) came up, and took me down to see grandpa's old house. She took me by the hand, and we walked up the rotten old porch. She held me very closely, and sez, "Be sure you don't fall down through one of these rotten boards. Now don't step on this board.. now step over here". We couldn't go through the big old house, 'cause it had deteriorated so badly . . . even at that time. But we went into the house, and I saw the rooms, and I saw the stairway that my mother had talked about that went up to grandpa's office. She was so proud that she was the only one who was ever allowed to go up while grandpa was working on his medicines and prescriptions for the people who came to him all the time.

For years afterwards, everything that went wrong with me, I had to take a "grandpa pill". (She threw her head back, and laughed heartily, then continued..) They seemed at least 50 feet long. Anything that ever went wrong, a "grandpa pill" had to be taken. (She burst out laughing again.)

I don't remember who she said told her this, but it was something that happened when grandpa and grandma Caples were with the wagon train coming to Oregon. One of the wagons lost a wheel, and went over the cliff - with a baby in it! They thought sure the baby was dead. A couple of men went down to check the battered wagon near the base of the cliff. As they got near the wreckage they heard a muffled squall. Under a part of the wreckage they found the baby . . . all rolled up in feather tick and blankets - alive and well.

Sometime after grandpa and grandma Caples settled on the Willamette River side of the peninsula here, grandpa helped a little Indian boy because he had been injured. He took the Indian boy up into his office and took care of him - medically, whatever it was. The little Indian boy then returned to his tribe across the river. The tribe lived in the area we call Willbridge today.

As time passed, the little Indian boy grew up, and he was always a welcome and friendly visitor at the Caples home. They called him Indian Joe.

When my mother was a small child playing down on the river bank near the landing, one day she saw a canoe pushed off the bank across the river, and an Indian paddle upstream. She continued to watch him. . . he went w-a-a-y-y-y up the river, and when he got to a certain point in the river, he

suddenly cut across, and then she couldn't see him in the canoe anymore. The canoe was drifting back down on this side of the river, passed the Indian encampment, and got hung up on the river bank above Caples Landing.

Mama saw the young Indian getting out of the canoe, and ran to grandpa's house. It was Indian Joe. He came to warn Dr. Caples that they (the Indians) were going to come over, and kill all of 'em. Grandpa grabbed Mama under his arm, and they ran for the block-house. The whole bunch ran lickity cut to the block-house, and Indian Joe skiddle-de-daddled. He saved their lives, because he trusted Dr. Caples, for the kindness that had been shown to him as a small injured boy.

The block-house was where the police station is now. There used to be some old wooden blocks or logs down in there that they couldn't get out when they built the City Hall there.

Mama's hair was black, and so curly. They had to cut it short, 'cause it was so curly. When it was a hot day, and Mama would get so hot . . . she'd go stick her head in the rainbarrel, next to grandpa's house. Just to cool off. An' her hair would get even curlier, and then the wiggle-tails would go down her neck. Wiggle-tails are when they first start to hatch, they're just a little straight . . . wiggle-tail. They aren't tadpoles yet . . . they're wiggle-tails! An' they'd all go down her neck. But she loved that rainbarrel when it got hot, so she could cool off . . . even with the wiggle-tails.

Then there was that hill over there that Mama loved to slide down. Grandma would always spank her, 'cause she'd always get her panties dirty. But she had the best time slidin' down that hill gettin' her britches muddy. There's an apartment house right next to that hill now.

Everybody went barefoot most of the time. They never wore shoes in the house. They had to take their shoes off, and put them in a certain place when they came in the house in the winter, or when it was raining. There were the times when they'd be sitting around the fireplace with their barefeet, and Grandpa would be reading out of the Bible to them, and if ol' Joe Meek was visiting them, he would spit tobacco juice between her toes. "Oh, I hate him!" she said. Just mention Joe Meek, and she'd say "Oh, I just hate him!"

They just got to wear their shoes on Sunday, or some special occasion, in the summertime. An' when they outgrew them, the next fella got 'em. Mama used to complain that she had to wear boys shoes. She didn't like them. She didn't tell me what kind of shoes they were. They were probably made like moccasins or somethin', 'cause they had their hides, and they tanned them.

At sometime, Grandpa Dodge bought some property from great-grandpa Caples, and built a house, a barn, and all the rest of the stuff they had to have, for a farm. Grandpa Marion Dodge was a teacher, and he taught by going from house to house at that time.

Mama used to tell me that she went up to play with John Mock lots of times. They'd both go wading in the dust of the road (which was ankle deep

at times), and get spanked by Mrs. Mock. The both of them. She dearly loved to go play with John Mock, even though they both got spanked whenever they waded in the dust with their barefeet.

I think the most significant story that she ever told me was the one that happened when she was 12 years old, and living on that farm. She had a baby brother, whose name was Walter, and he was just an infant. She was to take the baby for a ride in the little homemade wagon. The wheels were sections of trees, nailed onto the little wooden box that was used for a carriage. She was to take him for a ride every day, for fresh air. There was a regular trail where she went through the wood for their walk. It was a different trail than the one that went to Grandpa and Grandma Caples.

This one particular day when she was out walking with baby Walter, she began to hear this awful meowing. She knew there were no cats, but she was wise enough, and 12 years old, that she began to know it must have been some of those wild animals that her older brothers had talked about. She began going faster, an' faster, an' it kept getting closer, an' closer. Then she began to run...an' then it still was catching up with her. So she grabbed the baby and left the bedding in the little homemade wagon, and ran. She looked back as she ran, and saw a cougar pounce on the little wagon, and begin tearing it all to shreds. Her brothers saw Mama running with the baby, and they grabbed their guns. They ran back into the woods and killed him (the cougar), where he was still tearing at the things in the wagon.

Another one of Mama's favorite stories - and how she loved to tell it, is as follows: It happened when they were all older, because Walter was a young boy then. She had five brothers, some of them were younger than she was, and Walter was the youngest. A paddle-wheeler pulled up down here at the landing to unload a one hundred pound oak keg of flour. The boys were unloading it and it slipped out of their hands, and fell in the water. They all had to jump in the water to get it out of the river. How she loved that story! They all got soaked! They all got wet! I can still hear her laugh when she'd tell that story. They all got wet! That's how they got their flour then, in big one hundred pound oak kegs.

One of Mama's older brothers, Robbie Dodge, had his own wheat field as a young man. He loved to eat the wild berries that grew abundantly in the woods here on the peninsula. One day he ate a berry that had a poisonous bug of some kind on it, and he died. When Robbie's wheat field was harvested, Grandpa and Grandma Dodge took the money, and bought a large Bible in his memory. It was always referred to as Robbie's Bible, because his wheat field had paid for it."

This story is about a lady with whom Violette Elliott used to board (somewhere in Portsmouth), before she found the small house where she lives now.

"Mrs. Crane's husband was an old man when I boarded there with them. He used to tell me stories about coming out to St. Johns on either the train, or the streetcar, I forget which. He was tall and slender, and so proud of

being a conductor on the St. Johns line.

Mrs. Crane passed away years ago, but she used to make her own home-made bread, and she always wore her hair up in braids over her head.. she was a real old pioneer. She told me about coming over here to the ferry on horseback to go up to Scappoose, when she was a young woman. It was the only way to get up there. She had relatives that lived up in the woods behind Scappoose. It would take her days to ride up there. She had to ride a horse, because the mud was so deep where she went back in behind Scappoose, to get where she was going . . it would come to the horse's belly. Just imagine.. having mud up to the horse's belly, an' she was having fun! Those stories of her riding up in there behind those mountains . . I never go by there, but what I can see her . . on that horse."

* * * *

EARLY ST. JOHNS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

By Mary Wilbur

Necessities came first. Early settlers were so busy building homes, farms, and clearing land in the forest on the bluff, they were too busy for anything else. Neighbors were distant and roads poor, so home projects and entertainment were "the thing". People read books in family groups, listened to Victrolas and did their hand-work. Moving from one house to a new one, "husky movers" used horses and dray wagons. Special talents were found in wood-workers, repair men, merchants and shop keepers. "Home made" extended from bread to clothing. This was the era of "Do It Yourself".

Social contacts with neighbors and friends increased a need for community unity. Gatherings outside the homes were at churches and schools. Local speakers and talent were encouraged. Music and drama lessons became popular. "Outside" lecturers came to speak. Annual circuses were on the square block at Ivanhoe and Chicago streets. Chautauqua Week, under the big tent, was welcomed on the grounds of the Old Central School (now James John Elementary School). There was Bickner's Hall for dances, a skating rink on the Thriftway grounds, and one "Picture Show" for black and white silent films. Needs developed, and organizations and clubs formed. Community Club was important and lodges came into being. A Women's Study Club, a Music Club and other groups, such as the Red Cross in W. W. 1 days, met at the library. St. Johns received a money grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation for a new library, the same library that serves St. Johns residents today.

A community leader, Mrs. Ina Shaw, established a Y.W.C.A. branch in St. Johns and through great effort by her and much community help, a place was maintained for Young Womens Christian Association until the present "Y" building was dedicated. Mrs. Shaw gave girls of various age groups a program of activities, character building training, and a much needed social outlet. She was a friend to both young women and young men.

The Pro-to Group, starting as young girls, still meet, though they are

now mothers and grandmothers. The Merrie Tymers for young women was a social group.

The Batchelor Club consisted of young men dedicated to sports, friendship and public services. They are now fathers and grandfathers, and still maintain an active organization.

Many social gatherings took place at the beautiful home and grounds of Mrs. Adele Stearns on the river bluff. Pier Park was not yet a park.

Transportation to Portland for events was long and tedious by street car. A few lucky people had "Automobiles", but walking was a necessity for most, those who did not ride bikes. Home town affairs were scheduled for larger gatherings at the Old James John High School, Bickner's Hall and at other schools and churches.

Early radio days was listening to a crystal set or to early cabinet sets by earphones, taking turns listening to KGW - Portland's "first and only radio station" at that time.

Telephones were important with a local telephone office and "live" operators who took your number and conversed with you. Messages brought much news that was passed on by "grapevine", one being on the day that World War I ended. There was an error and a premature rumor of Armistice on November 7, 1918, which did not materialize until November 11. On the 7th, jubilant St. Johns' residents and ship building people organized a parade, walking all the way to down-town Portland, carrying an immense flag, horizontally, into which the side walk gatherers tossed money "to help bring the boys home". It was the wrong day, but the right spirit! Telephones alerted the citizenry and the bell on the Fire Station clanged so all could hear. Newspapers delivered to the homes brought the authentic news. Any special news flashes were also brought to the home streets by newsboys yelling "Extree - Extree" and people hunted the boys selling the papers, that sold for 2 cents.

Everyone had a wood pile. The wood sawyer scheduled his customers to cut wood on an appointed day with his clanging, motorized saw. Piling and storing the wood was up to the family. Furnaces replaced the wood and coal appetites of the kitchen and heater stoves era. A mark of affluence was having a gas water heater. Gas furnished from the Old Gas Plant on the Linnton side of the river serviced St. Johns residents. Electricity for lights was fairly reliable, but it was handy to have a kerosene lamp around home - just in case.

To clean a rug, the big boys carried the rug to the clothes line on a sunny day, and a big wire rug beater (manually operated) got rid of the annual dust. A wet broom and wet tea leaves helped relieve the dust problem between times, until the electric vacuum upright cleaner appeared on the market.

There were trails and paths and short cuts through empty lots, where wild roses bloomed in the Spring. There were organized hikes to the West Hills with a ferry boat ride to the other side. Then you could eat your brown bag lunch ahead of time and then starve later, or wait 'till half way on the hike'. The objective was to bring home a big bouquet of wild flowers.

There was much peace and quiet in St. Johns. We were rural and loved it. An occasional cow mooed and a few roosters crowed until St. Johns was made part of Portland and had to abide by Portland Health Department rules. Farms were disappearing. St. Johns was becoming a town of homes, closer and closer together, but everyone had a double lot. You had to have your own garden and fruit trees. People had muddy shoes, for many streets were unpaved. A careful notice today will show sidewalks imprinted with the year of construction (e.g. 1912) and also the cement contractor's name. Streets were scantily lit, but you could see the stars at night. In winter, the snow seemed deeper, perhaps because our knees were close to the ground.

The sounds of town were usually peaceful. A musical family or home orchestra could send its gaiety through the air in summer, when warm evenings necessitated open doors and windows. If the old fire bell on City Hall "spoke" curious householders rushed to see where the sky-glow was. Trains and ships had a special language of whistles that was soothing at the quiet end of a day. Croaking frogs in the distance filled the night with their monotonous lullabies luring tired people off to dreamland.

Growing up in St. Johns was a happy time!

EARLY AND PRESENT WATER TRANSPORTATION

By H. M. "Grit" Lind

There have been many changes in traffic on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers since the day when Captain Robert Gray, in the year 1792, discovered, entered and named the Columbia River for his ship, Columbia. In October of the same year, William R. Broughton, a young lieutenant in the Royal Navy, entered the Columbia River with the armed tender "Chatham" and with a group of men and some friendly Indians explored the Columbia River for about one hundred miles. They encountered many Indians on the river in dugout canoes. Canoes were the only means of transportation at this time. They were painted red and highly decorated, and came in varied sizes. The larger ones were about 40 feet long and carried 25 or more men, while the smaller ones carried only one or two.

Many tribes of Indians came up and down the river and held pow-wows on Oak Island, located on Sauvie Island. Mrs. Hutchinson, a pioneer on the island, tells of watching the Indians paddling on the river, and being afraid of them when she was a little girl.

The first steamboat in the Northwest was the side wheeler "Beaver", which was built on the River Thames in England for the Hudson Bay Company. On August 31, 1835, she left Gravesend behind and accompanied by the bark "Columbia" sailed for the Columbia River. On May 17, 1836, they arrived at Fort Vancouver.

The Beaver did not meet the needs of the Hudson Bay Company as its draft

of 8 feet was too deep for the landings on the river. She was sent to work on Puget Sound, where eventually in the year 1888 she rammed a rock and sank. The fur traders continued to bring their furs to Fort Vancouver in canoes.

The next steamboats to ply the river came in the early 1850's. These were either small side wheelers or screw propelled. From there on hundreds of river boats were built or rebuilt. These consisted of fast passenger stern wheelers, such as the Hassalo*, Bailey Gatzert, Telephone and many others. They were joined by a fast side wheeler, the T. J. Potter.

All these boats were handsomely furnished, but the T. J. was the most elegant of all. She had 30 beautifully furnished staterooms on the salon deck and at the rear end of the main deck was the dining room, seating 100 persons. A splendid meal cost 50 cents. The above steamers carried passengers from Portland to Astoria or The Dalles, making stops at various towns along the river. These large boats only stopped at St. Johns to pick up passengers at the City Dock.

Most of the river traffic in the St. Johns area was carried on by stern wheel work boats such as the Shaver, Henderson, Cascades, Logger, Sarah Dixon and many others. They towed the many log rafts moored on the St. Johns waterfront.

Many "old timers" in St. Johns will remember the small tug "Echo" which was moored at the foot of Reno Street. It was operated by Capt. Miller, whose job was to watch over the many log rafts.

There were many companies operating both work and passenger boats, but one of the most familiar to residents of St. Johns was the Shaver Transportation Company, which was started by George W. Shaver in 1880. The business of the company was carried on by his sons and grandsons. Their boats were moored in St. Johns for a period of years.

There were several smaller screw propelled boats that occasionally stopped at St. Johns City Dock: the Irelida, America and Jessie Harkins. These boats plied both sides of Sauvie Island, bringing goods to the residents and picking up filled milk cans. Occasionally, some of these cans were filled with wild ducks which had been shot by hunters. There was no limit to the number of ducks shot in those days. Sometimes, so I was told, catfish filled those cans.

St. Johns also had a shipyard where many boats and barges were repaired. The steamer "Winona" and the ferry boat "James John" were built here in 1907. In 1909 the yard built the ferry, "City of Vancouver". St. Johns was well served on river traffic from the year 1909 to 1918 by a small but sturdy 120 foot long screw driven steamer, the "Sacajawea". This steamer was run and owned by Capt. Fredrick Smith, known only as Cap Smith by the St. Johns residents. Cap had plenty of help running the steamer as he had several sons. The steamer finally sank at the St. Johns City Dock. It was raised and moored across the river where it again sank, and its bones lie buried in the sand.

Travel from St. Johns to Linnton was made by ferry. These ferries were the James John, 1907-1909, Lionel Webster, V. W. Mason and Multnomah. They carried both vehicles and passengers until the completion of the St. Johns Bridge in 1931.

At the present time there is only one stern wheeler still operating in Portland. This is the steamer Portland, owned by the Port of Portland, and it occasionally helps to moor large ships. Most of the boats on the river are diesel powered tug boats.

How different the river is today. In the early days of St. Johns the river was a part of the people. There was swimming, boating, fishing and picnicing. There were no signs prohibiting access to the river, no roads which were patrolled by guards in cars telling the people to "keep off". In early St. Johns, the river was clean.

*Note: The stern wheeler Portland presently carries the whistle of the old stern wheeler Hassalo. Those who know and love the river boats thrill to the sound of the past when the Portland "blows" today.

* * * *

THE BENSON HOUSE

By Jno. James

The home of Amos S. Benson (b1877-d1944) and wife, Ethel Benson, was built in 1909 and first occupied in time for school that fall. Amos Benson was the oldest child of Simon Benson, "Northwest Lumber King" and philanthropist. The Timberman Magazine listed Amos Benson as the Assistant Manager of the Benson Log & Lumber Company (1900), Secretary of Benson Lumber Company, San Diego, California (1908) and the City Directories for 1910 and 1911 listed him as Superintendent of "Simon Benson". He was never a resident of California until he became a real estate promoter in Los Angeles in 1937. He listed himself as a "capitalist" for two years after the sale of his father's business in 1911 and the designation was dropped thereafter, a term that became unpopular even then.

The house was purchased by Edmund Hall Chaney in 1924 when Amos Benson and his wife were separated. E. Hall Chaney was from Detroit, Michigan and the Timberman Magazine, April 1922, indicated he was going to log the Chaney Tract on Kerry Line, containing 90 mm+-, by association with C. M. Christiansen. He was listed as Secretary of the Christiansen Logging Company when the house was purchased. Son, Edmund H. Chaney, was killed June 29, 1934, when the speeder he was operating on his father's railroad in Coos Bay County jumped the tract and hurdled down an embankment. He was 24 years old. E. Hall Chaney died at the age of 59 years on January 30, 1938, and his widow, Leona N. Chaney is presently occupying the premises at 7654 N. Crawford Street, and she is to be congratulated for maintaining the house and grounds in the original form.

THE ST. JOHNS SUSPENSION BRIDGE

by Toini Neimi

Spanning the Willamette River in the city of Portland, the St. Johns Bridge is not the longest suspension bridge in the world, but it can truthfully be said that it is the most beautiful structure of its kind and the first long span suspension bridge west of the Mississippi River.

Located about seven miles northwest of the city center, it connects the two principal industrial districts of Portland, namely St. Johns on the east side and Linnton and Willbridge on the west side of the river, thus forming the most northerly link between the upper and lower Columbia River Highway. The center line of the bridge is a continuation of the center line of Philadelphia Street in St. Johns. The main river crossing is accomplished by means of a suspension bridge having a main span of 1207 feet and two side spans, each 430 feet 3 inches in length. The approach to the main bridge on the east starts at Syracuse Street and ascends on a three and one half per cent grade for a distance of 1511 feet to junction with the suspension bridge. It includes, in order, a concrete U abutment 227 feet long, three 108 foot, four 144 foot, and two 180 foot steel deck truss spans. On the west side the approach descends from the main bridge on a three and one half per cent grade for a distance of 293 feet leading into the side of a hill, from which point a road was constructed having two arms--one leading north and the other south, both descending on five per cent grades to junction with St. Helens Road. The bridge roadway is 40 feet wide accommodating four lanes of traffic. In addition there are two five foot sidewalks. The length of the bridge between the intersection with Syracuse Street on the east and the junction with the highway on the west is 3872 feet. The two arms of the side hill highway total one mile in length.

Navigation requirements of the Port of Portland specified a clearance of 205 feet at the center of the main span and a clearance of 203.6 feet for a channel width of 440 feet centered between the main piers. The clearance at the harbor lines, 1102 feet apart, is 194 feet.

Special attention was given to the architectural design of the bridge with the Gothic arch prevailing as the fundamental motif--not only in the tall viaduct piers but also in the steel batterleg towers, the combination producing a very pleasing and harmonious impression.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRIDGE PROJECT

Seven years passed between the inception and completion of the St. Johns Bridge project.

While the community had been bridge minded for years, the movement that finally attained the cherished objective took form with the organization of the Peninsula Bridge Committee in 1924. It included representatives from each Peninsula community.

Out of the preliminary negotiations with the Board of County Commissioners, emerged a survey to determine the most feasible sites for a Peninsula bridge.

Two measures were on the ballot in the 1926 general election--one to span the river from the foot of Fremont street at its intersection with Interstate avenue and the other to be located in St. Johns. Both measures were defeated; even so, sentiment began to crystallize in favor of one bridge, to cost about \$5,000,000.00 and to be built in St. Johns.

In the eighteen months intervening before the next regular election, a wonderful work organization, under St. Johns leadership, embracing many community and civic clubs and contacting every part of the city was built up. Victory was attained and a bond issue of \$4,250,000.00 was authorized by the voters at the Primary election in the spring of 1928 for the construction of a bridge at St. Johns.

At the time of letting the contract, the Board of County Commissioners of Multnomah County was made up of Grant Phegley, chairman, Clay S. Morse and Fred W. German. At the completion of the work the Board consisted of Fred W. German, chairman, Grant Phegley and Frank L. Shull.

On November 13, 1928, the Board of Commissioners announced the appointment of Robinson & Steinman, New York engineers, to design and construct the bridge. The resident engineer was R. Boblow.

Construction of the bridge began on September 3, 1929. The bridge was built by Multnomah County and financed by the bond issue. For the purpose of bidding, the work was divided into seven contracts, for a total of \$3,222,206.20.

One of the architectural features of the design lies in the use of tall reinforced concrete piers to carry the approach spans. These piers vary in height from 22 feet to 150 feet above the ground. The two shafts of each pier rise from a heavily reinforced concrete footing tapering towards the top very majestically with the inside faces converging to meet the point of the Gothic arch.

The Gilpin Construction Company of Portland, Oregon, undertook the construction of these piers with a full realization of their significance in the architectural scheme of the bridge.

During the entire excavation for the piers, no rock was encountered on the east side of the river, while on the west side all piers rest on rock.

Anchorage are vital elements in suspension bridge stability and they resist the pull of the main cables which in our St. Johns bridge amounts to 8500 tons at each anchorage. On the east side of the river the anchorage is a massive concrete structure 115 feet by 91 feet in plan, containing 12,500 cubic yards of concrete. In this mass are embedded the anchorage bar and girders to which the cables are attached. The anchorage steel was furnished by the Wallace Bridge & Structure Steel Company of Seattle, Washington and was placed by the Gilpin Construction Company by means of an Erie Crane.

On the west side of the river the cables are anchored to steel which is embedded in concrete filling a wedge shaped tunnel entering 80 feet into the dense basaltic rock in the hill. The construction of these tunnels required 2000 cubic yards of rock excavation. Transit mix concrete was used for the east and west anchorage, about 14,300 cubic yards being required.

The construction of the main river piers on both east and west sides of the river was done by the Pacific Bridge Company of Portland, Oregon.

The east main pier rests upon 1068 wood piles while the west main pier rests upon a rock foundation.

Erection of the superstructure approaches on the east side of the river was completed on November 17, 1930. Then the equipment was moved to the west side and that approach was completed on December 30, 1930.

The Wallace Bridge & Structural Steel Company of Seattle, Washington was awarded the contract for the fabrication and erection of all the suspension bridge structural steel superstructure. The main towers were fabricated in their Seattle shop. Their height is 284.5 feet between the milled surface of the base plates resting on the pier and the milled plates on top on which the cable saddles rest. The vertical legs spread 52 feet apart corresponding to the spacing of the main cable and the distance between batter legs is 88 feet 7 5/8 inches.

The erection of the main towers was done by the J. H. Pomeroy Company under sub-contract with the Wallace Bridge & Structural Steel Company. Everything now was in readiness for the beginning of one of the most interesting features of the job, namely, cable erection.

There are two main cables supporting the suspended spans, one directly above each of the two stiffening trusses. Each of these cables is composed of 91 - 1 1/2 inch diameter galvanized 51-wire bridge strands. The John A. Roebling's Sons Company of Trenton, New Jersey, manufactured and erected the cables.

The first strand was pulled across the river on October 15, 1930. Stringing was completed on November 25, 1930. The 91 cable strands erected formed a hexagon with a long diameter of 16 1/2 inches. Next cable bands were placed around the cable at points spaced 38 feet 6 inches apart horizontally. At each cable band were slung 2 - 1 5/8 inch suspender ropes forming four parts of line from which suspended steel was hung. On January 2, 1931, erection of the suspender ropes was completed.

The fabrication and the erection of the suspended structural steel of the suspension bridge was part of the contract of the Wallace Bridge Structural Steel Company. They fabricated the stiffening trusses, the floor beams and the lateral systems in their Seattle shop. All the splice connections for the trusses had the holes sub-punched and reamed with parts assembled. The side span trusses 430 feet in length were assembled for their entire length before connections were reamed. The main span trusses, 1207 feet between towers were assembled in three units and the cambers checked before connections were drilled. The fabrication of the floor stringers was sublet to the Willamette Iron & Steel Works of Portland, Oregon.

The erection of all the suspended steel was sublet by the Wallace Bridge & Structural Steel Company to the J. H. Pomeroy Company of Portland, Oregon.

The contract for the pouring of the 40 feet wide reinforced concrete roadway deck and sidewalks was awarded to Lindstrom & Feigenson of Portland, Oregon. The curbs are 10 inches in height and the sidewalk is 5 feet wide. The slab thickness is 7 inches for roadway and 4 inches for sidewalk.

As previously stated, the shape of the cable after the erection of the 91 strands, was hexagonal. Next two coats of paint were applied to the outside of the cables. Then the flat surfaces of the cables were covered with segmental

strips of Port Orford cedar about six feet in length, transforming the hexagonal cable cross section into a circular one. The completed cable following wrapping is 16 3/4 inches in diameter.

Ornamental lighting standards are spaced on about 80 feet centers, the system divided into two separate circuits so only half of the lights may be used if so desired. Also navigation lighting is placed in accordance with Department of Commerce regulations. For Aviation lights at the top of each main leg of each main tower, a 50 foot spire was erected, supporting an airport code lantern.

The National Electric Company of Portland, Oregon, installed the complete lighting systems for roadway, navigation and aviation.

The west approach roads contract was let to the LaPointe Construction Company of Portland, Oregon. The Gilpin Construction Company built the abutment, Mills Street bridge and steel spans between piers.

On Saturday, June 13, 1931, at 2 p.m. ceremonies were held in the St. Johns Civic Center for dedication of the St. Johns Suspension Bridge. Queen of Rosaria, Rachel Florence Atkinson was at the opening ceremonies. Music was furnished by the Roosevelt High School band with a dedication parade continuing across the bridge.

Last but not least, we have now in the making under Our Bridge the Cathedral Park, beneath the Gothic Towers which already has been the center of many activities.

CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Work begun | September 3, 1929 |
| Pouring for main river piers completed..... | April 8, 1930 |
| Main tower erection completed..... | September 1, 1930 |
| Cable and suspender rope erection completed..... | January 2, 1931 |
| Suspended steel erection completed, floor stringers and side span trusses riveted..... | March 24, 1931 |
| Pouring of roadway slab completed..... | April 18, 1931 |
| Pouring of sidewalk slab completed..... | April 29, 1931 |
| Paving of west approach road completed..... | May 15, 1931 |
| Bridge dedicated and opened to traffic..... | June 13, 1931 |
| Total period of construction..... | 21½ months |

All information for this article was compiled from the St. Johns Review Bridge Dedication Number, Portland, Oregon, June, 1931, commemorating the dedication of the St. Johns Suspension Bridge as an event of the Portland Rose Festival Saturday, June 13, 1931.