

TYRRELL'S NAME SHOULD BE SAVED*

On page 107, Washington Historical Quarterly for April, 1919, "Hawk's Prairie" is alluded to, in these words: "It was named for J. M. Hawk, who settled there in 1853." And the information is credited to J. W. Mayes (a son-in-law as I happen to know) and the postmaster at Union Mills. Now, this name of the prairie ought not to be recognized for the following reasons:

First—The earliest settler upon this prairie was Freeman W. Tyrrell, who, with his wife and six stepchildren, settled upon it in the early spring of 1851, taking a donation claim of 640 acres. In fact, Tyrrell took the claim in 1849, built a log cabin thereon and went to Portland in the summer of 1850. He worked at Rainier several months, mainly in loading vessels. He married a widow, Mrs. Rebecca Davis Prince, on December 27, 1850, on the John Switzler place (about seven miles from Portland) after a courtship of four days, Esquire Bozarth performing the ceremony. Mrs. Tyrrell was a native of Tennessee, an illiterate woman, but a model mother in many respects. The six children by the first husband and two by the second, five boys and three girls, came to be good citizens and had the respect of all who knew them. Tyrrell was also illiterate. He could write his name and that was about all. He was locally famous for his seafaring stories and was generally known as "Captain" Tyrrell. Having a rather retentive memory, he imbibed numerous tales of the sea from the members of the crews connected with the vessels he helped to load, and was quite often the center of interest in the early-day groups of men assembled on election day, Fourth of July, or on Sunday, and he would talk rather interestingly for ten or fifteen minutes. In a very short time, however, he would get the "pints" of the compass mixed up and begin uttering a lot of drivel containing an indiscriminate mixture of seafaring and landlubber terms that was positively bewildering. At the same time he was a good neighbor, accommodating to the limit. He and all of his family were members of the Methodist Church. The home was on the prairie until about 1870. Then all, except the married children, moved to the Lincoln Creek settlement, a few miles west of Centralia, Lewis County. If the name of any person or family, attached to a prairie or

* In sending a correction of the *Origin of Washington Geographic Names*, Mr. George H. Himes, the noted historian of the Pacific Northwest, gives so much of unpublished history that his letter is published in full. The prairie is in Thurston County, not far from Olympia.—
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a section of country on account of being the first there deserves to be remembered, the Tyrrell name is certainly most worthy.

Second—The next settler on that prairie was David Phillips, in 1852. He was a widower with four children—David Lucas (named after Governor Lucas of Iowa), Dorcas, Huldah (the mother of Mrs. H. B. McElroy of Olympia), and a son Charles, I believe, but I am not real certain. The first two were grown. David Lucas Phillips was the second man to teach a school in the country, in Thurston County. I was his pupil in July, August and September, 1854, in a very rude log cabin, more notable for its simplicity and excellent ventilation than anything else. George Guthrie had taught the first school in that cabin in the winter of 1853-1854. While Phillips took the claim, 320 acres, under the donation land law, he did not live on it the required four years necessary to perfect his title, and sold his interest in the improvements to B. F. Whiting in 1856-1857.

Third—Tyrus Himes, my father, and his family settled on Tyrrell's Prairie on November 9, 1853, and lived there without intermission, except the time absent in stockades or blockhouses for protection from the Indians. This period was from the last ten days of October, 1855, up to March, 1857. The land was cultivated during this time. My father died on April 24, 1879. Mother sold the place in 1882 to the present owner, David Fleetwood, whose wife was a daughter of Henry George Parsons, and Mrs. Parsons was a sister of Mrs. Clarence B. Bagley of Seattle.

Fourth—John Melvin Hawk, a pioneer of 1852, was born in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 1818, being from April 14 up to that date younger than my father. He crossed the plains to Portland, arriving about the middle of October, 1852, with a wife and six children. His wife died in December of that year, leaving six motherless boys, the oldest thirteen and the youngest two years of age. All found homes among other pioneer families. In the spring of 1855, he married a widow, Mrs. Sarah Stephens, and that summer they moved from Portland to Olympia. In August he took a pre-emption claim of 160 acres on land adjoining my father's half section on the east. Late in 1855, he moved back to Olympia and remained there until the spring of 1857, working at his trade, that of a carpenter. Five of the older children by the first wife spent a portion of their time with him, but they did not get along well with their stepmother and were therefore away a great deal of the time. The second wife bore him five or six children, one of whom is the wife of Mr. Mayes, already alluded to. Mr. Hawk died on March 19, 1883. After Tyrrell moved away

about 1870 people began calling it "Himes Prairie," as my father was the next oldest settler, but my father always insisted the name Tyrrell should be attached to it, that being the name of the first settler, and he would not allow his own name to be used with his consent. Mr. and Mrs. Hawk were clever neighbors, and the relations between them and my father and mother were agreeable. I do not think the expression "Hawk's Prairie" ever came into use until after Mr. Hawk's death, at least I never heard of it.

I have drawn this out much more than I intended when I began, but in the interest of accuracy it occurred to me that it was worth while. Whether it will have any effect in restoring the name of Tyrrell Prairie remains to be seen.

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