

EARLY DAYS AT WHITE SALMON AND THE DALLES

[The following paper was written by a pioneer who settled at The Dalles in 1858. She is now eighty-six years of age, but remembers well her neighbors of the early days. Her paper was read first at a meeting in the Congregational Church at White Salmon a few years ago. Later it was read at a meeting of The Old Fort Dalles Historical Society and again at a pioneer's meeting at Hood River. It is published here that others may enjoy the reminiscences of this survivor in an interesting portion of the Northwest.—Editor.]

It has been said that the Hoosier Schoolmaster, by Edward Eggleston, was inspired by a sentence in Taine, advising young authors to write about the things they know most about. Perhaps some of us ought to know more about the happenings in our immediate neighborhood than we do, and that is one reason we are here, to learn, if possible. Beginnings are always interesting; the beginning of a community the most interesting to us.

These reminiscences I have gathered from the memories of the few that are left, and recall, somewhat, the simple annals. Every year the number of these grows less.

A class of persons, that we have been accustomed to call pioneers, Jack London is pleased to call world missionaries, who have spent the years of their lives in pushing out the walls of civilization, and in making the wilderness blossom with roses.

They are those who began the work of making these desert lands blossom as the Valley or Sharon; those who laid the foundation of our state so well and so strong, that they who come after can build upon it; those who founded the Inland Empire, by building on law and morality so well that it survives the wear of time and stands a monument to the founders. The history of a community is a record of the work of those who have been the makers of the place, the accumulated results of which in America are among the foremost achievements of the century.

A correspondent of the Portland Journal, after giving the story of the old Wasco County Court-House, closes by saying, "That is the history." But there will probably remain some reminiscences recounted by the old inhabitants. That is what we want to do today. The remnant of those of us who came to this Inland Empire as a temporary expedient for bettering our fortunes by utilizing the luxuriant bunch-grass or by the

rich mines, or by trade; look wonderingly upon the products of this once arid land, which challenges the admiration of the world. While there were intellectual giants in those days, the absolutely necessary duties of life occupied their time. They were history makers. Very little was chronicled. The unsettled conditions of the country bred a class of men and women whose like will never be seen again on American soil or on the face of the earth. For brain and brawn their leaders were unrivalled. Tourists are enchanted with the picturesqueness of our scenery, poets have sung its praises, artists have put on canvas what only an artist can see. These mountains to me are as dear as are the Alps to the Swiss peasant. A look back to the time when the first settlers swung their axes in the primeval forest shows progress. Victor Hugo said: "An invasion of armies may be resisted, but an invasion of ideas cannot." The history of a community is the life story of each of the individuals whose work was given to it. The desire to transmit the story of our lives, and that of our predecessors to our successors is found among all nations; it may be by tradition, or told from father to son, or in sagas or by monument, or written words. History is principally to keep alive the spirit of the true nation-builders, who bravely did their work, which was not only for their own time, but for all ages. Those who cleared the land, built houses and mills and bridges, established schools and churches, civil liberty, and all that makes American citizenship valuable.

We wish now to recall some of the time-honored, once familiar names. Unwritten may be their names, except on the lives and hearts of those who knew and appreciated their work. The first mention we find of White Salmon and Hood River was by Lewis and Clark on October 29th [1805], when they were passing down the Columbia River. They gave the name of La-Biche to Hood River and White Salmon they called Canoe River, from the number of canoes lying there, their owners fishing in the stream. The next spring on their return, on the 14th of April [1806] they saw the first horses they had seen since leaving that neighborhood, six months previous. The Indians told them they had captured them from the Deschutes while on a warlike excursion. The Indian name of Deschutes was Ta-wa-na-hi-ooks. The French voyageurs gave it its present name.

Erastus and Mary Joslyn were among the earliest settlers on the North Bank of the Columbia River. They came from Massachusetts, Mr. Joslyn has told me that when he was nine years old he was put to work in a cotton mill, and he never attended school afterwards. He was married to Mary Warner, also a native of Massachusetts, in 1852.

Together they started for Oregon by way of the Isthmus. In the spring of 1853 Mr. Joslyn made his first trip up the Columbia River in search of a location for a home, which he selected and filed upon, under the donation land law, the place selected being the same since owned by Judge Byrkett. For many years they were the only white residents on the North Bank with the lordly Columbia between them and civilization. The pioneer instinct is one of the strangest of the race. There are few stranger manifestations of it than that which brought Mr. and Mrs. Joslyn to such a place. No civilized people were within reach. In the fall of 1855 there were rumors of dissatisfaction among the Yakimas, with Kamai-kan, the chief, in the lead, threatening extermination of the whites. The Klickitats, who had been about the Joslyn place, were always loyal and friendly; and well they might be, for the Indians never had better friends.

The Joslyns had built a house and barn, planted an orchard, set out small fruits, started a dairy, which was better than a gold mine in that early day. A friendly Indian warned them, and they fled for their lives, before a band of warriors; crossed the river to Dog River, now Hood River, where two white families, those of Nathaniel Coe and Wm. Jenkins. From there they saw their house and barn go up in flames. This was in February, 1856. The Joslyns spent the years until 1859 in Portland. When they returned after the Indian excitement was quieted, the government had built a blockhouse, and Indian Agent Townsend was superintendent. He lived in the blockhouse until 1859. A. S. Cain, in charge of the Indians on the north side of the Columbia River from Vancouver to opposite The Dalles, assisted by A. H. Roby, in charge of the Yakimas, occupied the blockhouse until they could make improvements the second time.

The Joslyns were never residents of The Dalles more than a few months at a time, but they were always identified with the interests of that place. There was their church home and their place of business. On the 17th day of September, 1859, Rev. William A. Tenny and Abby, his wife; Erastus Joslyn and Mary, his wife; William Stillwell; Zelok M. Donnell and Camilla, his wife, and E. S. Penfield were organized into the Congregational Church of The Dalles. Only one of these original members remains to this day. The Joslyns helped greatly in the support of the church, attending the services as often as practicable. This will be better understood when it is remembered that they had to go to The Dalles on Saturday and remain until Monday morning at 5 o'clock, the hour at which the steamer left The Dalles, and that the fare was five dollars the round trip; ten dollars for the two. While there they were usually entertained by friends, most often at the pastor's house, dividing the beds;

the women took the beds and the men and the children the floor in pioneer way. The first time I was at White Salmon was in June, 1862, at the time of high water. Mr. Joslyn had come to The Dalles in a skiff and took a number of us home with him, twenty miles down the river from The Dalles. There was the Rev. Thomas Condon, wife and four children, myself and three children, in the party.

There was with the Joslyns at this time the Rev. E. P. Roberts, wife and three children. I do not know how many hired men were there, but I do know there was no hired person in the house to do the cooking and general work necessary to be done for such a family, besides the dairy work resulting from the more than twenty cows kept.

Mrs. C. J. Crandall tells this little incident that she remembers as having occurred at the time of this visit. She was then only a child eight years old. Some Indian women had brought in an immense quantity of wild strawberries. They had to be picked over. Mrs. Joslyn ranged the children around what the child thought was the biggest table she ever saw, with a pile of berries and a cup before each child, to put the picked berries in. No child was allowed to eat a single berry until all were picked, then each one was given some to eat. I tell this to show how Mrs. Joslyn had the tact to use even little hands in useful employment. It is the kindergarten idea and shows how pioneer women had to manage. Mrs. Joslyn never forgot a birthday, child's or adult's; she could always have a cake, some flowers, some little present that made it a red letter day.

Mr. Joslyn was one of the incorporators of the woolen mill at The Dalles. At one time he represented his county in the territorial legislature. The hospitality of the Joslyns and of all the pioneer homes was known far and wide. Friends, visitors, travelers from the lower country, to what was later called the Inland Empire, all found a welcome. On Sundays, if they had a preacher with them, they had preaching services; if not, they had a Sunday school or a Bible reading, many of them remaining to dinner. Their home was headquarters for all kinds of business, a court-room, or a post-office. Often meals were prepared for not less than thirty persons. To provide for so many involved a vast amount of labor, considering the inconveniences of things to do with, it exacted the greatest patience. Most of the supplies were brought from Portland, over the Potrage, and freight was forty dollars per ton. Some years later, I was at White Salmon, a company of us went up the hill to attend a religious meeting of the Indians. Mr. Willetts drove the wagon. Crossing Jewett's creek was very different from what it is now. We went straight down and up again. The Indian camp must have been about where Jewett's lawn is now. The tent was oblong, perhaps forty feet in length, of matting, made of cattails,

which grew in swampy places. There were as many as two hundred and fifty Indians. They were cleanly dressed and looked nice. They had "gone back" on what they had learned from Jason Lee or from Father Wilbur and from the Joslyns. Centrally in the room were four Indian men, with tomtoms, beating on them continually. Outside of these were ranged the old men, then the middle aged men, then the young men, then the boys, then the women and girls. They had shells on strings that they shook and rattled, beating on the drums and singing "hoohoo." Their order was perfect. All were solemn, not even a boy smiled, or made the least noise. We stayed five hours.

To the close of their lives, Erastus and Mary Joslyn retained a glad humor and a keen relish of the joy of living. Their rectitude was such as to inspire the respect of all who knew them. Memory recalls them as those who waken in their friends simple affection. They were in many ways in advance of their time. Above all, they were Christians whose first want was a church.

The early history of White Salmon was closely connected with The Dalles. It was their trading point, also their social and religious center. Rev. Mr. Tenney, the organizer and first pastor of the Congregational Church, with his family, made many visits to White Salmon during and including the years 1858 to 1861. Mr. and Mrs. Tenney were born in the State of Maine. Mr. Tenney was a graduate of Amherst College and of Bangor Theological Seminary. He supplemented his education with missionary work in Oregon, at Astoria, St. Helens, Forest Grove and outlying places, which had well equipped him for the work he found awaiting him at the gateway of the gold mines in the unexplored regions. Abigail W. Davidson had taught school ten years in the State of Maine; was married to Mr. Tenney in 1856; the following month sailed from New York. They made their first home at Eugene, two separate times at Astoria and at The Dalles.

Rev. Mr. Tenney gave me this incident. He said: "I preached the first sermon at White Salmon in English, but Jason Lee preceded me in a sermon to the Indians. Old Panna-kanick related to me the story of his conversion, resulting from the preaching of Jason Lee. Panna-kanick was a reasonable man, a Christian in spirit and in practice, but he labored under obstacles. Panna-kanick said: 'Jason Lee, close Boston man, choca nika illahee, heap wawa, wawa Jesus Chlist. Nika hiu cly; hiu chuck nika eyes. Nika tumtum hiu sick. Mesache tumtum seven days. Mr. Lee come again to nika illahee. Wawa much more Jesus Chlist, nika tumtum got well. I have been happy ever since.' Long ago the old Indian went to meet the Joslyns, of whom he was always fond."

Rev. E. P. Roberts and wife had been missionaries in the Ponapo, one of the East India Islands. They landed at White Salmon March 29th, 1862. They lived in the house with the Joslyns until June of the same year, when they moved to the blockhouse, it not being in use at that time. The blockhouse was built by the general government, as a place of security for supplies needed at Fort Simcoe. Dr. Lonsdale was then the agent in charge of the Klickitat and Yakima Indians. Mr. Roberts built a house on Point Lookout, as we used to call it, where he removed his family in September. Mrs. Roberts has told me that she and Mrs. Joslyn were the only white women on the North Bank of the Columbia River.

I am indebted to Mrs. E. L. Smith of Hood River for this story: Sapot-wil, the Indian who warned the settlers of White Salmon of the intended assault, and so saved the lives of the Joslyns, lost his standing among his own people, and was so ashamed of the Indians that he changed his name to Johnson, and made his home on the Hood River side. Mrs. Smith says: "He often visited us and was given a seat at the table, with the family, to show the esteem he had won by his heroic action. He was welcomed by the children, for he brought such beautiful bows and arrows, a string of trout or a haunch of venison. Johnson was possessed of a fund of knowledge that made him an ideal guide in the mountains. As an instance of his good theological principles, he was asked, 'Where do you think you will go when you die?' Johnson instantly replied: 'Chee memaloose, Chee cumtux,' meaning: So soon as I die so soon I will know."

Thomas Condon, the second pastor of the Congregational Church at The Dalles, with his family, spent the summers at White Salmon. Mr. Condon began his work in Oregon as a home missionary in a number of places. During his pastorate at The Dalles, he made the discovery of the fossil beds of the John Day Country. At that time there was not a packer nor a teamster who was not on the lookout for a specimen for Mr. Condon's collection; it has been added to throughout his lifetime, and gained for him a world wide reputation, as one of the foremost geologists of the age.

He worked alone in his chosen field; others came in and reaped the benefit. For many years he was professor in the Oregon State University. Many of pupil of that university will go through life with his knowledge of geology some way mixed with Mr. Condon's personality, that peculiar smile wreathed about his face when he spoke, the tender manner in which he handled the bones and rocks, his quaint manner that is indescribable. He read truths in God's books of sand and stone. It is my wish and pleasure at this time to witness to the help I have received from the high

ideals and advanced thought of Thomas Condon, for he was my friend. Perhaps the best work he did at The Dalles was through his deep and tender sympathy for all.

Turning back the pages of history, we find that James Warner, a brother of Mary Joslyn, when a young man, during the troublous times of our Civil War, took his musket, left his pleasant home and young bride, at the call of his country, offered his life in defence of that flag, for which more precious blood has been shed than for any banner that waves beneath the Heavens. At the close of the war, finding his health much impaired and his business gone, he, with his wife (Cynthia Clark), came to White Salmon and purchased the interests of Rev. Mr. Roberts. He moved the house from the place where Mr. Roberts had built it to the place where it now stands. It has been added to, time and again, every addition marking another historic epoch. The rooms at the west end of the house were set apart for Father Clark, who came from his old home in Massachusetts to spend quiet days with his children in the West. Mr. Warner was devoutly attached to his White Salmon home; no place on earth was so dear to him. He was the father of the "Little Church on the Hill." Dr. Atkinson visited here often and organized the church on Jewett's historic lawn in 1868. Mr. Warner and Mrs. Jewett kept up the meetings and the Sunday school, through all kinds of weather, with the persistency of heroes. Everybody respected Father Warner. Little children loved him. He was always interested in the work for the cause of Christ throughout the world. Let his memory be cherished by those for whom he toiled so earnestly and so faithfully!

Miss Mercy Clark of Portland spent her vacations at White Salmon. She says of her sister, Cynthia Warner: "She was an ideal pioneer woman, with a cheery courage she faced the privations of life in a sparsely settled region, and was ready to help all who needed assistance. The hospitality of their home was unbounded. They gave their influence to all that would tend to build up a righteous community."

Harry A. Jewett was one, when little more than a boy, who heard the call of his country, though Abraham Lincoln, and responded by taking his life in his hands and serving in the army until the close of the war, when he was married to Jennie Waters. Together they came to Oregon, landing at White Salmon, where they have literally hewed out their home from the "forest primeval," making the wilderness blossom with roses and every flower and fruit. They have entertained and made many people happy in their pleasant home and beautiful grounds. Mrs. Jewett has been a most devoted, unselfish woman, intent on helping any and all who might need her. She has kept her husband as much of a lover as in the

days of their youth. She has brought up children that are a comfort to her, and that promise to take up her work and carry it on. In hunting up pioneer work it is not hard to find what men have done, but women's work is not recorded. Their memory will only live in the hearts and lives of those who loved them. Olive Schreiner says: "For ages and ages woman has stood, longer than the oldest recorded language, and on rocks, now crumbling into dust, are found the tracks of her footsteps." Harry and Jennie Jewett have been history makers. Mrs. Jewett was the first white woman to camp on Mount Hood.

Early days in White Salmon, Hood River and The Dalles were very intimately connected; the people were of similar tastes, their social, religious, and civil functions were necessarily so; the attachment between persons far from kindred, and surrounded by treacherous tribes, is beyond that of blood.

The earlier settlers of Hood River were William C. Laughlin and Doctor Farnsworth, who, with their families, went there in 1852, locating at the Spring, afterward owned by the Coes, later by Doctor Adams.

A very hard winter followed—that of 1852-1853. Judge Laughlin hired five White Salmon Indians to bring them to The Dalles in their canoes. I saw in the Hood River Glacier that Mr. E. L. Smith and Hans Lage were the first white settlers in Hood River Valley. I thought the Glacier man was about a generation behind the times.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Laughlin were born in Kentucky, and had pioneer experience in Illinois. Mr. Laughlin was a Kentuckian of education, had studied law, was a man of ability, one of the best business men in the country, was a man of influence of good presence, possessed of that peculiar dignity claimed for high-toned southern gentlemen. He had the foresight to see the wonderful growth of this country and, despite the obstacles, he worked to accomplish that end.

A memorable and sad event occurred May 15th, 1864, when Mr. Jenkin and his little son, Walter, were lost in the river; they sank, and James Laughlin, thinking he could help them, divested himself of his coat and boots, and they were all three lost. Mr. Phelps lost his self control. James B. Condon, who was living here at that time, found the body of James Laughlin about two weeks later. It was a sorry time for all the community, and a great loss to each of the three settlements. Mrs. Mary Laughlin was a gentle woman of the old school with courtly manners and thoughtful kindness, and patience with the lack of the comforts and conveniences, to which she had been accustomed.

Nathaniel Coe was born in New Jersey in 1788, was married to Mary White in 1826. Until 1851 there had been no postal facilities in Ore-

gon, which at that time included all north of California, to the British line, and west of the Rocky Mountains, to the Pacific Ocean.

President Fillmore appointed Nathaniel Coe first postal agent. He was instructed and empowered to locate postoffices, establish mail routes, etc. When his term of office expired he located at Hood River.

Mr. Coe was a man of high moral character, scholarly attainments and religious habits. The rapid progress of science did not check his habits of study. He died at his home October 17th, 1868. The O. R. N. invited all persons who would like to attend the funeral to go on their boat. I remember James Condon being there. Thomas Condon officiated. Mrs. Julia Phelps and others were there. Mrs. Coe was a person of literary tastes and poetic temperament. I will mention here that Mrs. Coe changed the name of Dog River to that of Hood River.

Davis Divers settled in Hood River in 1862, having, with two yoke of oxen and two cows, crossed the Cascade Mountains by the Barlow Pass to The Dalles. He followed an Indian trail which brought the first wagon from that city to Hood River. Davis Divers was born in Virginia, February 9th, 1825. He was married in that state and moved to Missouri in 1845. In 1852 he crossed the plains to Oregon, settling on the Clackamas River, where he remained until his removal to Hood River in 1862. He died at the latter place, August 27th, 1904. D. A. Turner and H. C. Coe are the only remaining pioneers of Hood River who were there when Davis Divers joined the little settlement in the early '60s.

Of the ministers who served these communities, both Horace Lyman and Fred. Balch were native sons of Oregon. The former was from near The Dalles, the son of early missionaries of the Congregational Church. He was graduated from the classical course of the Pacific University, took one year in the Theological Seminary at Oakland, California, with two years at Oberlin, Ohio. He preached one year at White Salmon and Hood River, was once candidate for State Superintendent of Schools. He wrote the history of the state he loved in four volumes. He had charge of the Oregon exhibit at the Centennial Exposition of the Louisiana Purchase. His father, Rev. Horace Lyman, was the first pastor of the First Congregational Church of Portland, assisting in its organization. He held the position for three years.

Frederic Balch was born in Linn County, Oregon. Oliver Wendell Holmes has said: "To know a man, you should go back one hundred years." I knew, loved and appreciated Harriet Snyder, his mother, more than half a hundred years ago; she was my fellow traveler from the State of Indiana to the then wilds of Oregon, to where she had a career. I have often said that if Mr. Balch had written a true story of his mother's life, it

would have been more interesting than even his *Columbia Legend*, or the "Wauna," as he loved to call it. "The Bridge of the Gods" excels in vivacity, interest and fine thought. Mr. Balch built a church at Hood River, also one at Lyle, which he served acceptably, as well as the "little church across the river." The first edition of "The Bridge of the Gods" was dedicated to his friend, Mrs. Dr. Barrett. He gave his young life in trying to bring the religion of the Cross and civilization to the people of the Inland Empire. Mr. Balch attended the Theological Seminary at Oakland, California.

One of the first to identify himself with this region of country, and to suffer privations and enjoy the beautiful surroundings was Amos Underwood, who crossed the plains with an ox team. When the Cayuse Indian War broke out, he enlisted in Company B, Oregon Volunteers, and became a noted Indian fighter. The Indians soon learned that Mr. Underwood was fair and square and they trusted him. The papers have often sent correspondents to get a story from him, for he is always interesting, often reminiscent.

His wife was a daughter of old Chenowith. She was renowned throughout the country for sagacity. With her husband, she established her home across the Columbia River from Hood River and west of the White Salmon River. She died at her home, November 24th, 1907, the oldest pioneer of that section. She was buried at Hood River. Her husband survives her, but was too feeble to attend the funeral.

Henry Coe paid a beautiful tribute to the true and loyal Klickitats, who had been about these homes and had stood by the whites in the trying times. I quote Mr. Coe's own words: "Truer-hearted men never lived. Tried by the test of battle, they proved themselves men, even though their hearts beat under a dusky skin. Most of them have passed over to the happy hunting grounds. Only a remnant of their race remains." Prominent among them were Johnson, Quemps, Yallup, Johnny Snatups, Coplex, and others who were unwavering in their fealty to the whites. Mr. Coe continues: "I was intimately acquainted with John Slibender for nearly half a century, and can say truthfully that I never knew a more honest and upright man. He never wavered in his friendship for the whites, even risking the anger of his own people."

"White Salmon Dave" was supposed to have applied the torch to the Joslyn houses. For many years he was a pensioner of John Cradlebaugh. During the war of 1856 Chief Mark of The Dalles gave the whites much trouble. Then I find in Myron Eells' "History of Indian Missions" that Mark became head chief under Captain Smith's incumbency, having become converted. Makiah, once a chief among the Klickitats, had to leave the

home of his people, through his being a friend to the whites, during the war of 1855-6. He went to Yamhill County and lived on the farm of the late Dr. James McBride, where he died at an advanced age. Kamiakin was a wily chief; through him signal fires leaped from hill to hill from Mount Shasta to Okanogan.

Of the old blockhouse at White Salmon, Mrs. Roberts, who lived in it some months, says it was 18 by 36, fronting the river. Part of the kitchen had been washed away by the high water of 1862. There were two stories, the upper story projecting three feet beyond the lower. In the upper story there were port holes, arranged so as to point the muzzle of the gun at various angles. It stood at the regular steamer landing above the highest stage of water.

All these homes were noted for their hospitality and were of great service to weary emigrants, old Hudson Bay men or persons making their way from the lower settlements to the Inland Empire. All were welcome. At a cursory glance, the work of these people may seem to be of unrequited toil, but their homes were as oases in a desert, and they have left us an example of patience and perseverance. Now how different! Cherries, strawberries, apples from this district are carried all over the world, and command the highest prices paid in the history of fruit growing, brought about by careful culture and hand picking. Buyers now take the fruit on its reputation, culls and all.

CAMILLA THOMSON DONNELL.