

## PIONEER DAYS AT OLD DUNGENESS\*

The history as related dates back to the time when Captain Vancouver, a navigator and explorer, named Dungeness—“New Dungeness”—because of the similarity to a harbor on the southern coast of England of that name. It is not generally known that Port Angeles was named False Dungeness, because of a similar sand spit which encloses its harbor, until a Spanish navigator was driven into the harbor for refuge from a fierce gale and so it derived its name—“The Port of the Angeles”—later being officially named Port Angeles.

In the vicinity of Dungeness as the earliest settlers found it in 1852, there was a heavy growth of fir and cedar timber, some of which stood as late as 1914, when it was logged off by the Dungeness Logging Co., operated by N. I. Peterson, although the lowlands near the Straits of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound have always been fringed, with willows, alder, maple and under brush not of high value for lumber purposes. Puget Sound derived its name from a man named Puget, a member of the crew of Captain Vancouver's ship.

In 1852 the settlement of Dungeness was located on what was called Whisky Flats, at the mouth of the Dungeness River. Indians in strong tribes peopled the beaches, their village being on the sandspit later known as Clines Spit. Their dead were buried in shallow graves on top of the ground similar to the mounds of the Dakotas. A few were buried near the edge of the high bluff near the McAlmond and Abernathy homesteads and relics of these inhabitants are often turned up by the plow, since that soil has been put to use for farming purposes.

With the coming of the Hudson's Bay Company using the Longhorn or Mexican type of cattle for logging and clearing land, and later inducting stock of the Durham breed, which eventually was to be a great factor to the settlers of Dungeness, for some years later Thomas Abernathy and two companions crossed the Straits in a row boat to bring back with them two calves of the Durham breed, a sire and a heifer. Their object was to raise them for oxen for use in the logging camps, and also for the settlers to clear up their

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land and to supply beef for food for the trading post. Later it was found that they were satisfactory for dairying purposes. This type of cattle being strong, and large in build, proved to be admirably suited to the pioneer conditions of the community, and were successfully used in clearing their land, transportation and finally dairying for a section of the country that in late years has become one of the most famous dairying districts in the United States, and the cradle of the dairy industry of the State of Washington.

In 1859, Mr. and Mrs. George Lotzgesell, Sr., and two children, Catherin and Johnnie came from Germany by way of New York, Panama, San Francisco and Victoria B. C. to settle on a homestead in the Dungeness valley. A son George Lotzgesell, Jr., was born in 1860, the first white child born in the district now known as Clallam County. With the aid of members of the family the homestead was cleared up into a very productive farmsite and is now owned by Frank Lotzgesell. Other lands acquired by Mr. Lotzgesell comprise the farms of Jim Lotzgesell and his brother John Lotzgesell, Jr.

In 1862 the settlement on Whisky Flats was moved to what is now known as Old Dungeness, or to the older settlers as New Dungeness. At this time there were but thirty five settlers in the neighborhood. The town or trading post, had but one store and a saloon in what is known as the Bill Law house, and a court house. The court house was used for all public gatherings, Church and Sunday school services, marriages and christenings were conducted whenever a circuit riding minister would journey by. All settlers would attend these meetings regardless of denomination.

At this time there were but two horses and two wagons in the community. John Thornton, father of Mrs. Quenell, now of Sequim, Washington, was the owner of one horse and wagon and the other proud owner was Mr. Cline, father of Henry Cline, now of Dungeness. These horses and wagons had been brought across the plains by these pioneers. The other settlers used home-made sleds and also trucks, the wheels of which were made from round blocks cut from a good size tree of about two feet in diameter and eight inches wide, and oxen were used as a means of planting, harvesting, and moving their crops to the waterfront village over roads that were not much more than trails through the woods, where they would have to wait for a schooner or scow to carry them to upsound points, or San Francisco.

During 1868 a small band of Northern Indians camped on the

sand spit enclosing the Dungeness harbor, and the Dungeness Indians attacked them annihilating all but one squaw, who had covered herself in the beach sand until the battle was over after which she swam to the mainland and was given refuge by some of the white settlers. Pieces of blanket in perfect preservation, arrowheads and other trinkets can still be found on this battle ground, which is formed in the shape of a battle axe on the sand spit. The canoe of the Northern Indians was very large and was afterwards fitted into a schooner and used by Captain Andrew Abernathy to transport produce and supplies to and from Victoria, B. C., which lies just across the Straits. Captain Andrew Abernathy and Thomas Abernathy were brothers, the latter being grandfather of Walter Martin, now living in the Dungeness valley. Mr. James Dick now owns the Abernathy homestead which is located on the hill overlooking the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

Mr. Thomas Evans deceased, Mrs. Thomas Knoph and Mr. McDermott were the early school teachers. Of these Mr. Knoph is still living and resides on a part of his original homestead at Jamestown the balance of his farm being owned by Rex McInnes, son of Donald McInnes an early settler in this community.

In the late 60's, the arrival of Alonzo Davis at Dungeness was a means of revolutionizing the cattle industry. Mr. Davis came from Canada and brought with him a small herd of grade Jersey cows, and settled on a large tract of land running to the beach and adjoining the trading post on Whisky Flats. His stock was subject to much ridicule and did not make a very impressive showing in the eyes of the early settlers in comparison to their large smooth Durhams. However he was an enthusiastic dairyman and felt that sooner or later his cattle would be recognized for their commercial value. By 1872 Mr. Davis had developed a herd of sufficient size to be classed as a commercial dairyman, devoting his time and energy to dairying and delivering his butter to upsound markets—his own brand "Gold Edge"—and he was the first man to engage in such a business in the then Territory of Washington. It was found that the butter made by this early settler and others in this vicinity following his example for use in the logging camps and trading post trade was much preferred to the "pickle roll" brought in from California.

Some years later Hall Davis, brother of Alonzo Davis contributed to the development of the dairy industry, by installing large vats four feet long by two feet wide and two feet high in which

the milk was allowed to set and as the cream formed it was skimmed off and stored in cans for shipment and making his butter, as this was before the days of the modern cream separator. Hall Davis was rather a unique character and his many kindnesses were reported by his neighbors in those hard pioneering days. Donald McInnes, Sr. came into possession of the Davis farm in later years and it is now owned by his son Donald McInnes, Jr.

From 1883-1890 the town of New Dungeness was the scene of many lovely and delightful affairs, the settlers holding a yearly Fourth of July picnic, dances, roller skating contests, sleighing parties, clambakes, smelting parties, and baseball games. The town at that time boasted of a general store and Post Office combined, owned and managed by Mr. Frank Clapp; a good hotel owned and managed by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ward, now living at Dungeness; a barber shop and a dressmaker shop. The Bill Law house was managed by Mr. and Mrs. Elias Cays father of Alfred Cays of Dungeness; a Good Templar hall where the dances were held, Clark's and Cline's residences, the Methodist Church and the County Court House. In 1885 Mr. George Lotzgesell, Jr., was elected Justice of the Peace and had the honor of marrying a couple from Forks, Washington. Mr. Lotzgesell was later elected County Commissioner and his foresight in building roads and other community improvements were helpful in building up his district as he was always active in matters of welfare of the country surrounding his birthplace, conducting a vigorous campaign for the office of County Assessor at the fall election previous to his death in 1931 at the age of seventy one years. By 1889 Dungeness was linked with Port Angeles and Port Discovery by a wagon road and although a new hotel had just been built and the settlers thought they had quite a city, it was at this time that the county seat was stolen and removed overnight from Dungeness by citizens of Port Angeles and moved to their now growing city. This incident fairly knocked the props out of the liveliest town on the coast. The fact that the harbor at Dungeness was not always accessible on account of tides, made it unfortunate for the east enders in trying to recover their loss since Port Angeles has a harbor always accessible, and at the present writing is a regular port of call for ocean going vessels.

In 1889 Mr. George Lotzgesell, Sr., who was always known as "Gran Father Lotzgesell" donated a tract of land, part of his large farm, to the county to be used as a burial ground for the settlers, the following year this was cleared and fenced by his son, George

Lotzgesell, Jr. Later this cemetery was taken over by the younger branch of the old settlers who have since organized a company to manage the affairs of selling the plots and keeping it in respectable care.

Up to this time the settlers who had been busily engaged in logging and clearing their homesteads had not paid much attention to the dairy business but as soon as their farms were cleared, the thriving activities of the Davis brothers attracted their attention and the Dicks, Woods, Evans, Pettitts, Alexanders, Cassalerys and Lotzgesells followed their example. "Gran Father Lotzgesell" made a business of raising cattle to sell as beef as well as the making of butter, and often realized as high as \$150 per cow for beef.

The coming of the hand separator and machine-turned churns greatly facilitated the industry, and later the Glendale Creamery Co. owned by Mr. Ladd of Portland, Oregon, built a creamery at Dungeness which was managed first by Dave Troy of Chimacum and this was the first commercial creamery of note in Clallam County, Will Clark uncle of Elliot Clark, later managed the creamery for a number of years, and this creamery finally came into the possession of the Dungeness-Sequim Cooperative Creamery, an organization of farmers of the Dungeness Valley and was successfully managed for many years by James Dick, and Jim Lotzgesell, his successor.

In 1887 Mr. Will Church and Mr. H. J. Lipsett were inducted as managers of the trading store and the business was moved to Whisky Flats, in 1899 and flourished successfully for a time until Mr. C. F. Seal cast his fortune at this place and helped build up the town and incidentally opened and conducted a large general store known as the Dungeness Trading Co., which business was continued till as late as 1927, but the moving of the business center to Sequim led him to establish a small store there as a branch of his Dungeness store. In late years the latter store has been closed and Mr. Seal now conducts the Sequim Trading Co., handling a large line of general merchandise.

The old court house building has been remodeled and moved to property of Lew Thompson at the south corner of the Alonzo Davis homestead and is situated on the highway between Dungeness and Sequim. It is still in use as a residence. The Methodist Church was taken down in sections and moved to Sequim where it was rebuilt and was in use until recently replaced by the beautiful new church now in use. The neighbors in the vicinity of Dungeness built a newer and larger edifice which was in use as late as 1925.

Pioneering today does not call for the courage that was necessary when the constant threatening of the hostile Indians and the utter isolation awaited those pioneers who ventured westward. Bands of Indians would pay visits to the early settlers, go through their homes and fields and anything that attracted their attention was taken without opposition. If a farmer grew potatoes the band would dig a sack for each member and walk off with the usual "Ugh". In later years however as these Indians became acquainted with customs they would generally offer to harvest the farmer's crop and take their supplies for pay. It was not unusual even as late as 1906 to see a band of Indians digging potatoes by use of a long sharp pole which was thrust into the ground under each vine and then the bulk of the hill was thrown out on the ground surface, digging the remainder of the hill out by the use of their hands.

Cooking was done on an open fire, bread was baked in a Dutch oven on the hot coals of a fire with hot coals piled on the lids and around the oven. Tallow dip candles were the only lights available, these were hand made by dipping a string into hot fat until the desired size was gained and later molds were used for this purpose. Water was carried from creeks or open wells. There were no doctors for the mothers to call when their children were born or other illness would affect them, and mail service was nil, the pioneers having to wait for months at a time for letters from their loved ones on the outside. The settlers felt quite advanced when coal oil lamps were brought into use and these had to be cleaned and filled every day and yet with all these hardships they did not receive help from the State or County as is practised today. It would be fitting to erect a monument to those early pioneers and settlers who endured these struggles in order to open up this wonderful section that we might all enjoy. The life sketches of some of these men mentioned in this article are covered in a public library book among them James Brownlee Dick, father of the writer.

Now let us compare this struggle these brave men had with what is set before their sons and daughters today. While the town of Dungeness is slowly dwindling away and one could hardly believe a story that it had been one of the livliest settlements on the coast. The long dock formerly owned by Mr. Seal, measuring a few feet short of a mile has been replaced by a more substantial structure and is a unit of the Port Commission, Frank Knight's Pacific Mercantile store and post office serves those who live nearby, and a few homes including the residence of Fred Ward and the palatial home

of C. F. Seal, famous for the beautiful array of select roses, and the plant of the Dungeness Creamery are all that remain to be of note of the one time famous port of Dungeness—But, nearby the town of Sequim has grown from a crossroad settlement with a store and a saloon to a thriving city of 500 people surrounded by prosperous farms with well built and modernly equipped homes, good paved and gravel highways to nearly every farmer's door and incidentally to ferry connections at Port Townsend and from Port Ludlow to Seattle which enable them to reach that metropolis of the west in 3½ hours in comparison to what used to be an all day trip on such steamers as the *Monticello*, *Evangeline*, *Alice*, *Gertrude* and *Bellingham*. Practically every farm is equipped with telephone, electric lights to light their homes, large barns, dairy houses and other necessary outbuildings, and to supply power for operating their milking machines, cream separators, automatic pressure water systems and other modern conveniences too numerous to mention.

Much of this prosperity is due to the foresight of a Mr. Clallan in prevailing on the settlers to utilize the waters of the Dungeness River in order to irrigate the gravelly soil, which before the use of irrigation was adopted made it safe to say would not enable the settlers to fatten a turkey. Now the Sequim Commercial Clubs slogan is "Where water is wealth" and an annual gathering is held during the month of May to celebrate the opening of their first irrigation canal. Several irrigation districts have been formed in the vicinity since that time and now upwards of 20,000 acres of land are reached by the irrigation canals which aid to the production of crops of vetch, peas, wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, and principally pastures for the world renowned dairies.

Port Angeles has grown to a city of 11,000 with paved streets in the business section, telephones, electric lights and public water systems, piers for ocean-going vessels. Large pulp and lumber mills dot the industrial section on the sand spit, and connects with a good highway extending all around the Olympic Peninsula, and also rail, bus and steamer connections to upsound cities.

MRS. GEORGE LOTZGESELL