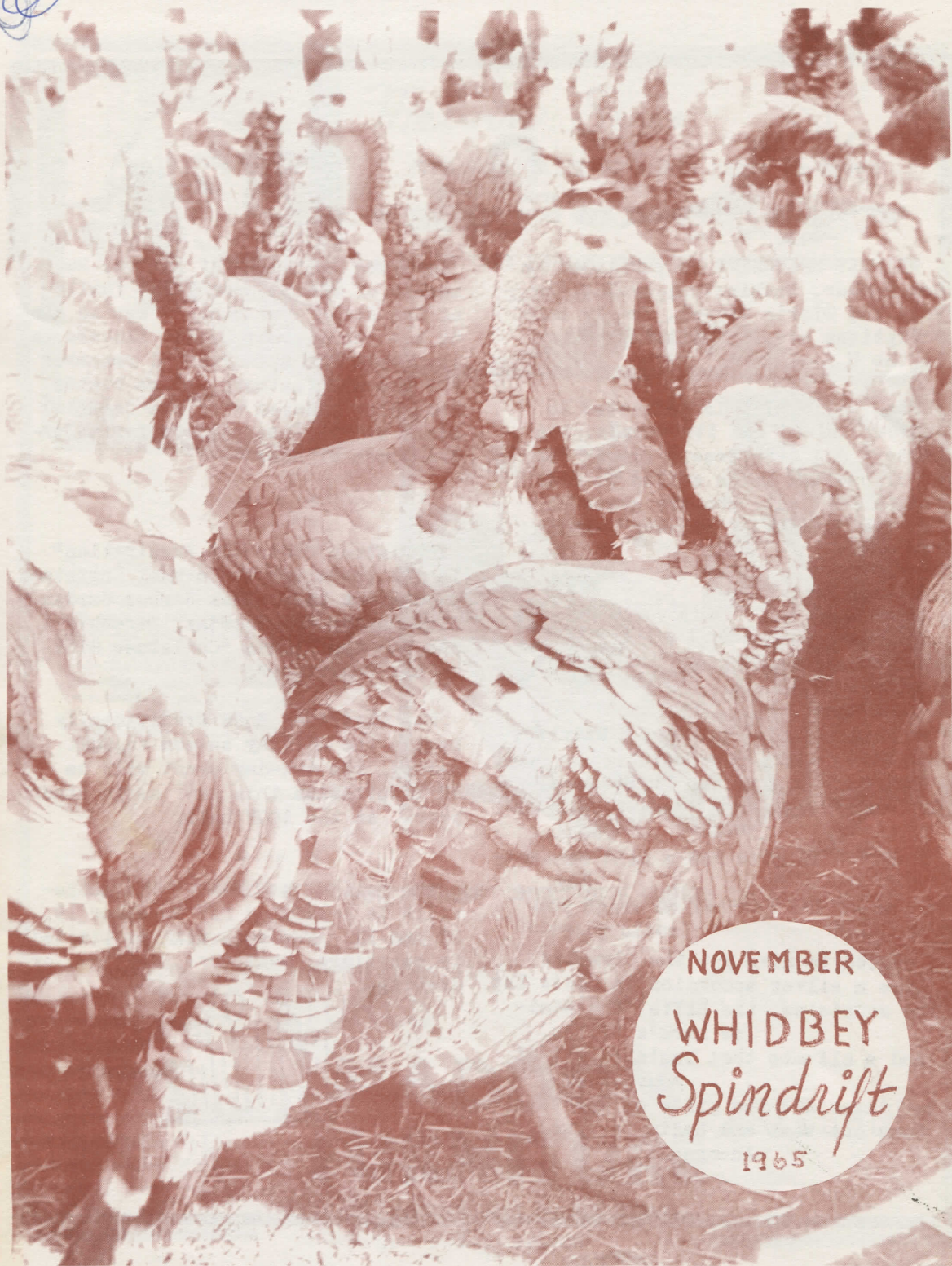


20



NOVEMBER
WHIDBEY
Spindrift
1965

HISTORY—FORT CASEY OF WORLD WAR I

Washington State Governor Dan Evans has proclaimed November as "Guns for Casey" Month, and an effort is being made by the Coupeville Lions Club to raise over \$30,000 to bring two large ten inch disappearing guns, the only two in existence, from the Philippine Islands to Fort Casey.

The guns weigh 200 tons, and must be disassembled and crated and hauled to the sea where Navy ships will bring them to Washington. The two big guns are counterparts of the guns located at Fort Casey during World War I.

Two smaller guns have already been brought back and mounted in their old location.

As one strolls today along the great concrete bunker area of Fort Casey, one can envision somewhat the activity of yesterday when the Fort was in its hey-day.

After the boom of 1890 and the crash of 1893, residents of Coupeville were encouraged by news that the government was to build a fort at Admiralty Head on the west side of Whidbey.

Admiralty Head is an area which has figured much in Whidbey Island history. It was the site of the homestead of Dr. Kellogg, the "canoe doctor" of early day history.

The Crockett family settled near Admiralty Head; the area just east of the fort area where the Keystone Ferry landing is located, was once chosen for a boom town, "Little Chicago" or "New Chicago".

The Admiralty Head lighthouse was built near the site of the present lighthouse, which has now been made into a State Parks museum, and was the home at one time of Flora Pearson Engle, who is credited with changing the spelling of "Whidbey" to "Whidby" Island.

Fort Casey was one of three such military installations, and the mammoth coastal defense guns guarded the entrance to Puget Sound.

The other two forts guarding the "triangle" of the straits were Fort Flagler and Fort Worden. Bids were opened for excavation and concrete work on August 11, 1897, and workers received \$1.65 for a ten-hour work day. Fort Casey was on its way.

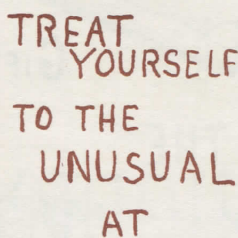
The new military installation was named Fort Casey in honor of the Chief of Engineers of the U. S. Army Brigadier General Thomas L. Casey. The big guns first fired on Sept. 11, 1901.

World War I came and went, and the hundreds of soldiers finally left, until the fort was reduced to caretaker status. As wars always leave their mark on the areas affected, so Fort Casey's complement left its mark on Whidbey Island in many lasting ways. Many of the Island girls who danced with soldiers at community and fort affairs, married them, and many came back to Whidbey to live when the military duty was finished.

The presence of Fort Casey and a sudden increase in county population which brought more business to Coupeville led to the incorporation of the town in 1910.

Following Pearl Harbor, Fort Casey was again activated and served with a complement of men until 1950 when it again came under caretaker status. The age of coastal guns for the defense of the area was over, and the fort's big and little guns were gone sold for scrap, or moved to other locations in the South Pacific.

During World War II it was used to train amphibious forces, then a few years ago General Services offered the site for sale.



THURS. FRI. SAT. SUN. 11 TO 4:30

OR5-6118

[illegible]

FRESH! DUNGENESS

CRAB (Formerly Sold

From Ken's Truck)

Fresh! Thanksgiving Turkeys

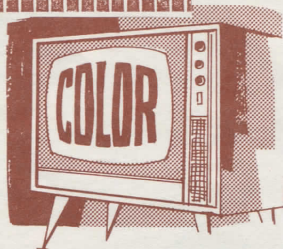
MELTON'S MARKET

Chimes Corner

OR 5-2131



MOTOROLA
TV
COLOR-BW
GENERAL
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CARSKADDEN

NORGE **HARDWARE**
NEXT TO PAYLESS OR-5-2279

NEXT TO PAYLESS OR-5-2279

✧ ✧ ✧

Mount Baker, the Great White Father of Northwest Indians, peacefully sleeps beneath a blanket of perennial snow to form the focal point of some of the most beautiful scenery in the Northwest.

Mount Baker is an extinct volcano of the Cascade Range, and the last time it erupted was 74 years ago.

In December of 1891 it was reported from Whatcom (Bellingham) that one of the Twin Sisters was emitting dense clouds of smoke. Shortly afterward, Mount Baker followed suit.

A rent never observed before was seen in the side of the mountain, apparently about a quarter of a mile long, running perpendicularly from the top. A distinct shock of earthquake was also felt in Whatcom early in the morning.

The 1891 eruption was apparently the last of the dying volcano. Since then its slopes have become the playground of winter sports, and in both winter and summer her trails offer fantastic opportunity to artists and photographers.

* * *

In 1895 what appeared to be a volcano erupting in the Olympic Mountains could be seen from Whidbey Island and caused some concern.

Explorers found a seam of lignite coal had ignited by lightning and was burning merrily to produce the volcano effect.

In 1895 Thomas Cranney of Coupeville said, "People here nowadays don't know anything about hard times. If they had been here 40 years ago (1855) they might talk. In those days we would sit down to a meal of potatoes and nothing else and think nothing of it. Except when we could get a piece of salmon from an Indian or had the time and the luck to get game, this was the usual fare.

"When we wanted to go anywhere we tucked our pants into our boot tops and walked. Now we must have a carriage. Then, a dress pattern took seven yards. Now it takes seven yards of cloth to make a sleeve".

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