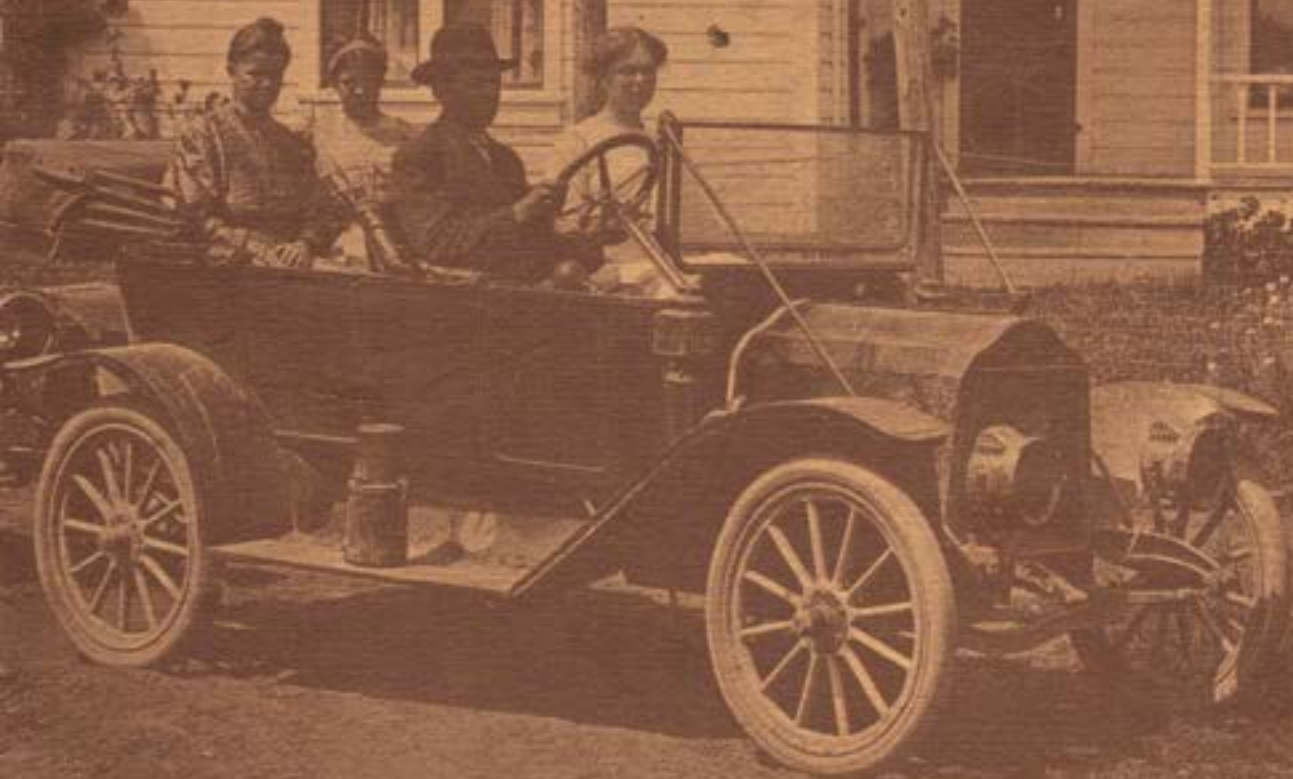


EARLY HISTORY of INDEPENDENCE, OREGON



by

SIDNEY W. NEWTON

INDEPENDENCE, OREGON

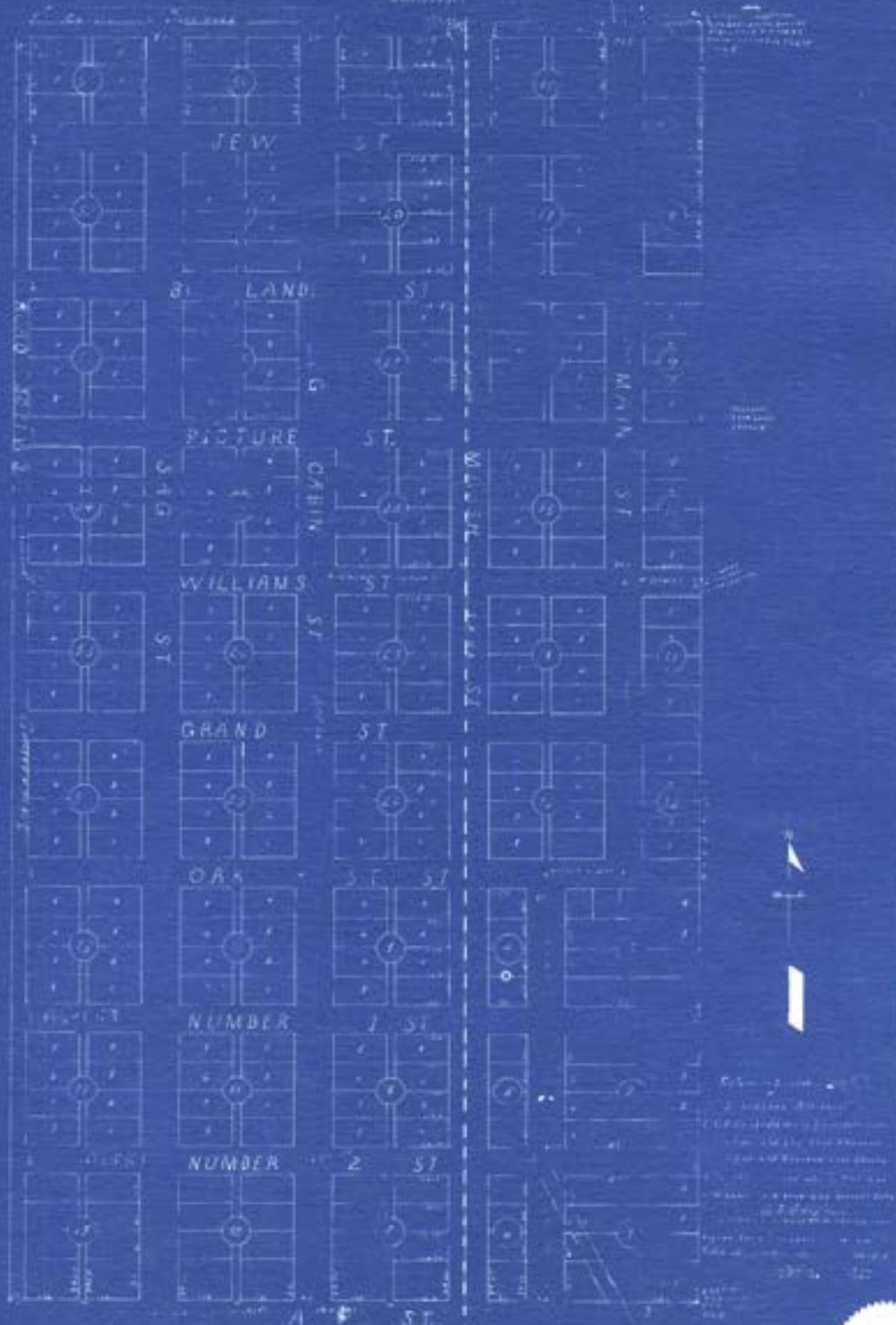
E.A. THARP'S TOWN OF INDEPENDENCE, OREGON

T. 2 S. R. 4 W. WM

Platted in 1884

Original plat

1884



Platted in 1884
Original plat
1884

EARLY HISTORY
of
INDEPENDENCE
OREGON

by

SIDNEY W. NEWTON



HARRY S TRUMAN
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

March 3, 1971

Dear Mr. Newton:

Thank you so much for the personally inscribed
copy of "The Early History of Independence,
Oregon" which you published.

With appreciation and good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Harry S. Truman

Mr. Sidney W. Newton
16 - 3rd Street
Independence, Oregon 97351

I wish to extend my thanks to the many interested citizens
for their cooperation in donating valuable information and
rare pictures for this book.

Sidney W. Newton

OREGON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
MONMOUTH, OREGON 97361

May 21, 1972

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

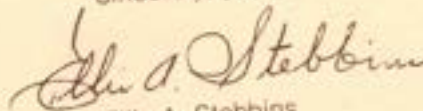
Mr. Sidney W. Newton
16 Third Street
Independence, OR 97351

Dear Mr. Newton:

Has any one remembered to tell you that your EARLY HISTORY OF INDEPENDENCE, OREGON was microfilmed in total and included in the materials placed in the cornerstone of Campbell Hall April 29, 1972? It photographed real well. No one knows how well microfilm will withstand the ravages of time for 100 years, but the film is surely well sealed in a steel capsule and was sealed in a laboratory in Portland by a special process which took nearly a week to complete. We hope it will come through in fine condition.

If we may we would like to add the volume of the history you gave for microfilming to the material being collected for what we call the Archives Room in the OCE library. It will be a nice addition to the collection.

Sincerely, yours,



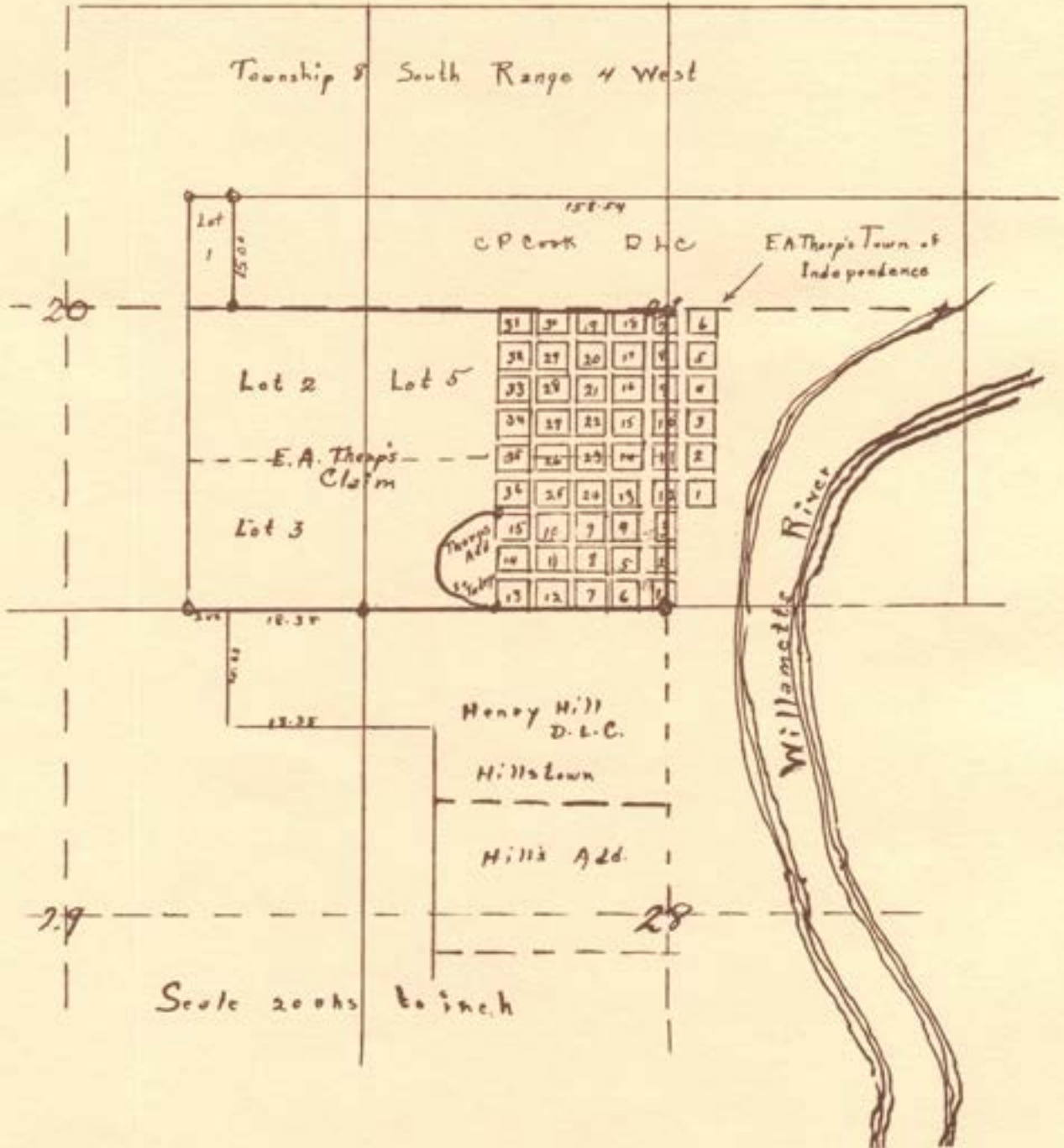
Ellis A. Stebbins
Emeritus Dean of
Administration

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The above map shows the original Thorp's Town of Independence, Oregon. the half-circle indicates Thorp's addition which he developed after his successful gold mining in California.

The three following pages are copies of legal documents verifying the fact that E.A. Thorp and Elvin A. Thorp was one and the same person and that Elvin A. Thorp was the founder of Independence, Polk County, Oregon.

Miscellaneous Records, Volume 5, page 108.

STATE OF OREGON)
) state seal
County of Polk)

I, John T. Ford, being first duly sworn upon oath, depose and say that I am a resident of Dallas, Polk County, Oregon and am of the age of 76 years. That I was personally acquainted with Elvin A. Thorp, who received a patent from the United States of America for lands described in the patent recorded in Volume 10 at page 16 of the deed records of Polk County, Oregon dated February 19th, 1866.

That Esther Thorp, who was the wife of the said Elvin A. Thorp died either in the late winter of 1872 or the early spring of 1873, and that the said Elvin A. Thorp never again married but remained a widower up to the time of his death, which occurred about 1910.

That the said Elvin A. Thorp laid out and platted "Thorp's Town of Independence" in Polk County, Oregon, and the addition thereto and that he signed his deeds E.A. Thorp, and that where the name E.A. Thorp occurs on the records of Polk County, Oregon in relation to the land or property of Elvin A. Thorp, it is one and the same person as Elvin A. Thorp who received the patent from the United States as hereinbefore mentioned, the said E.A. Thorp and Elvin A. Thorp being one and the same person.

These facts are within my own personal knowledge, the said Elvin A. Thorp was my uncle.

John T. Ford

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 8th day on Nov. 1924.

Hort C. Eakin

Notary Public for Oregon

My commission expires Aug. 27, 1928.

(SEAL)

Filed November 6, 1924.

In Book 12 of Deeds, page 239
E.A. Thorp's Town of Independence

"This indenture Witnesseth; That for the purpose of laying out and establishing a town within the County of Polk and State of Oregon to be known and designated as the town of Independence and in consideration of the location and establishment of said town and of the benefits to thereby occur to me, E.A. Thorp hereby signify my approval of said location of said Town or as much thereof as may be upon my land and do hereby grant, lands hereinafter described, laid out and designated as streets and alleys, on the plat and described of said Town of Independence being as follows: "The same being in the North East corner of my donation land claim." "The North East Corner of E.A. Thorp's Donation Land Claim was marked by a 3/4 inch iron rod three and one-half feet long and a beer bottle buried along side of the iron rod."

"There is an alley through each block running North and South 16 feet wide; each lot is 60 feet in front and 112 feet back with eight lots in a block; the North line of blocks are three-quarter blocks and are some 27 feet between me and Cook."

(Signed) E.A. Thorp

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
By the President
Andrew Johnson,
DONOR

to
Elvin A. Thorp,
DONEE

PATENT
Dated February 20, 1866
Recorded January 14th, 1876
Book 10 deeds page 16
Official seal affixed

GRANTS:

Notification No. 1866, being lots 1, 2 and 3 of section 20, Lots 4 and 5 and south $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 21 all in Township 8 South Range 4 West in the District of lands subject to sale at Oregon City, Oregon, containing 259.31 acres.

(This was copied from Abstract of Title No. 4336 prepared at request of Mr. D.E. Fletcher, atty. May 17, 1923. Dallas, Oregon)



THE BEGINNING

In 1845, Independence, originally called Thorp's Town of Independence, was "...a desolate and lonely spot without the sign of habitation to cheer the vision or the sound of civilization to enchant the ear with any prospect of its advancement." This quote was from an unknown pioneer who was interviewed by the Westside, the newspaper published in Independence during the 1880's, for an article titled "Forty Years Ago."

By 1861 Independence was an established town with several warehouses located on the water front, and was emerging as one of the important shipping centers on the 125 mile length of the Willamette River.

Elvin A. Thorp arrived in Polk County in the spring of 1845. He, his father, John Thorp, mother and the rest of his family left Council Bluffs, Iowa during May 1844. John Thorp was the captain of this small wagon train which followed the Platte River to Fort Laramie, then the Oregon Trail to Oregon.

Shortly after he arrived in Polk County, Elvin Thorp, who was 21 years old, filed for a donation land claim located approximately 12 miles southwest of Salem, Oregon. In June 1845, Thorp petitioned for a patent from the President of the United States to lay out a townsite in the Southeast corner of the claim near the west side of the Willamette River. The townsite was to be bordered on the east by C.P. Cook's land claim and on the south by a small stream later to be called Ash Creek. Thorp named the town Independence for his home town of Independence, Missouri and in honor of President Andrew Jackson's outstanding characteristic of "independence."

Elvin Thorp received the actual copy of the patent for the townsite in February 1866, signed by President Andrew Johnson.

June 1845 was the beginning of Independence. Unofficially, Independence was recognized six months before Polk County and 14 years before Oregon was admitted to the Union.

PLATTING THE NEW TOWN

Beginning next to the east line of the claim the first street to run north and south was named Indian Grave Street because it was placed next to Indian burial grounds. Today, there are no markers of any kind to indicate where these burial grounds are located, however, I believe they are in Block 12. Indian Grave Street was later changed to Main Street. After Indian Grave Street came Marsh, Log Cabin, Sag and Ash Streets. These streets were six city blocks in length.

The first street to run east and west starting at the north end of the claim was Jew Street, later called Polk Street. After Jew Street came Boat Landing, Picture, Williams, Grand, and Oak Streets. These streets were five city blocks in length.

The east line of the new town bordered a 30 foot embankment that dropped to a 15 acre triangular piece of land. This piece of land known as Cook's Addition, was part of the 640 land grant which belonged to C.P. Cook. The remainder of Cook's land lay just north of Thorp and across the Willamette River.

Elvin Thorp received permission from Cook to plat streets on this land so the new town would have access to the important river frontage for docks and warehouses. The streets running east and west in Thorp's Town were extended from the embankment to the river. One new street, Water Street, was platted to run north and south.

WAGON TRAINS ARRIVE IN INDEPENDENCE

During the next year, 1846, two more wagon trains arrived in Independence. A man named John Stewart was the wagon master of one of these trains. His train of approximately 100 wagons had left Missouri in the spring of 1845.

John Stewart and his wife were neighbors to Elvin Thorp in Holt County, Missouri and helped him to prepare for his trip to Oregon. When the Stewarts arrived here, Thorp built a cabin for them where Mrs. Stewart gave birth to the first white child in the vicinity, a girl named Cerinda. From an article titled "In Earlier Days" in the September 16, 1913 edition of the Oregon Journal, Mrs. Stewart (then 92 years old) told about her covered wagon journey to Independence. She said when the wagon train reached The Dalles, Oregon they had to take boats from The Dalles to the Cascades. This cost \$100.00. Their goods then all had to be carried around the Cascades, and loaded on another boat which carried them to Linton.

Mrs. Stewart said Elvin Thorp gave them ten bushels of wheat. She said "...her husband made a plow and plowed a few acres of land and sowed the wheat." "That fall he came back and got 150 bushels of wheat." "He tramped it out with our oxen, built a little platform and waited for the sea breeze that came up every afternoon, he threw the wheat and chaff in the air and the chaff blew away, letting the wheat fall on the wagon sheets which had been spread on the ground."

Mr. Stewart was a plow builder and made plow shares adapted to the Willamette Valley. This saved many pioneers from buying plow shares from the Hudson Bay Co. at a higher price since this type of equipment was shipped from England. The Stewarts stayed in Independence for a few months then moved to Marysville. (Later named Corvallis).

Two other members of this wagon train were Dr. J.W. Boyle and David Stump. Dr. Boyle was the first and only physician in Polk County and Independence for many years. He received his medical degree in St. Louis, Missouri. David Stump, later called "Uncle David" by everyone, was a school teacher and surveyor. He was 26 years old. Before he joined the wagon train he platted the town of Oskaloosa, Iowa. David had no money or wagon so he walked most of the way to Oregon and Independence. He was an excellent shot and hunter and paid for his fare to Oregon by supplying game for the wagon train. His surveying equipment was transported in one of the wagons.

Elvin Thorp's sister, Amanda, married Mark A. Ford in 1846 in Independence. Mr. Ford, born in Missouri and a graduate of Lexington College Kentucky, was a lawyer. He studied law under Governor Reynolds of Missouri and was admitted to the bar in 1843. Mr. Ford and Col. J.W. Nesmith established the first law firm in Independence and Polk County area.

BUILDINGS

In 1846 and 1847 a few log cabins were constructed and some of the surrounding land was planted to wheat. Elvin Thorp built his log cabin on the corner lot of Grand and Marsh Streets. The first business was Bill Tetherow's Saloon in 1846. It was located on the corner of Log Cabin and Boat Landing Streets. Bill's saloon was a multi-purpose building. It was used as the first church and school house. The saloon sign was taken down

and the school sign hung when school was in session, and a church denominational sign hung when church services were held. Reverend Osborn, father of John Osborn, gave the first sermon in the make-shift church.

Finished lumber for buildings and homes was hauled by ox-team from a sawmill in Silverton, a distance of 30 miles. This was the only sawmill within hauling distance that had a planer. Much of this finished lumber was used to build cabins and buildings on Log Cabin Street.

NEW RESIDENTS HEAD FOR THE GOLD FIELDS

The discovery of gold in January 1848 at Sutter's Mill, California lured a number of new residents to the gold fields. One Independence resident, Mr. Stephen Staats, was directly involved in the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill. Stephen Staats came to Independence in one of the wagon trains that arrived in 1846. He married Cordelia Forrest, who was a member of this same train, shortly after he arrived.

A Mr. Marshall came to Oregon and the Independence area in 1844. Because he couldn't find work in the area he went to California the next year. In California, Mr. Marshall formed a partnership with an old pioneer, Captain Sutter of Sacramento. Mr. Sutter sent his partner, Mr. Marshall, to start a sawmill in the Sierra Nevadas. The mill was built at Coloma, on the south fork of the American River. On this river after the water was turned on the millwheel, Marshall discovered shining pieces of gold. This was January 19, 1848. Mr. Marshall called his two helpers, Stephen Staats and Charles Bennet, from Salem, Oregon to substantiate his discovery. Since both Staats and Bennet had previous gold mining experience, they were able to verify the discovery. Stephen Staats returned from the gold fields to settle in

Independence and Polk County. He was active in local and state politics and twice represented Polk County in the Oregon Legislature. C.S. Staats and Mrs. J.E. Hubbard were two of his ten children who remained in Independence.

In 1849, a year after the discovery, David Stump left Independence to find gold. He returned within the year with enough money to buy 2300 acres of land and to purchase a band of sheep. The sheep were one of the first bands to be driven across the plains to this area. David later told that when he, the herders and the sheep reached the Snake River he arranged for the Indians to help them get the sheep across. The arrangement was, that for their help the Indians were to get all the sheep that drowned in the crossing. This plan worked for awhile. However, as the crossing progressed there were more and more sheep drowned. When the herders watched closely to see what the Indians were doing, they discovered the Indians were paddling along side the sheep and pushing their heads under water. David Stump's land was located south and west of Independence on the Luckiamute River. He married Catherine E. Chamberlin in 1850.

Elvin Thorp, his brother, Theodore and his father, John Thorp, headed for the gold fields near Placerville in 1849. They successfully mined about \$10,000 worth of gold. Mr. Thorp and Theodore used their share of the money to build a grist mill at Falls City in 1852, while Elvin used part of his share to develop his town. Thorp added a three block long by five block section to his town, called Thorp's Addition. The streets that ran north and south, except Water Street, were extended three blocks to end where "A" Street is today. The three new streets to run east and west were Number 1, later changed to Albert, Number 2, later called Butler and a portion of "A." The south line of his donation land claim runs down the north side of the curb on "A" Street.

A block and a half to two block wide gulley formed by Ash Creek ran through the addition. A foot bridge was constructed to cross the gulley at Log Cabin Street.

Elvin Thorp was married about 1850 and his wife, Esther, died around 1873. He remained a widower until his death in 1910.

Henry Hill came to Independence November 14, 1847 and filed for a donation land claim just across Ash Creek and south of Thorp's land claim. Hill also left for the gold fields in 1849. Many gold hunters took the overland route to California, but some like Henry Hill went by boat. He walked to Portland and took a canoe to Astoria. In Astoria he and other men who were heading for the gold fields outfitted an old abandoned schooner, The Starling, that was stranded at the mouth of the Columbia. By keeping close to the shoreline, Hill and the others managed to keep the boat afloat long enough to get to San Francisco. From there they took a boat to Sacramento, and walked to the mines at Hangtown. Hill mined for twenty months and mined \$4,300.00 worth of gold. Hill returned to San Francisco and invested his money in merchandise to bring back to Independence. When he returned he formed a business partnership with Asa Burbank and Leonard Williams. They opened a log cabin store on the corner of Main and Polk Streets.

In the fall of 1849, Mark Ford was lost at sea returning from San Francisco. He boarded a ship at San Francisco and at Shoalwater Bay, he and three others took one of the ship's boats and tried to go ashore. The boat was swamped.

DONATION LAND ACT

The Donation Land Act of September 27, 1850 brought more and more people to Oregon country and the Willamette Valley. The Land Act was designed to Americanize the Pacific Coast. If a man arrived in Oregon by December 1850, and made an application as a married citizen before December 1851, the man and his wife received 640 acres. From December 1851 to December 1855 the acreage was reduced to 320 acres. There were at least 8,000 claims registered under the Donation Land Act.

There were many teenage marriages because of this Act, but young or old they were eligible for 640 acres of land. Many single white settlers married Indian women.

MORE BUSINESSES ESTABLISHED

During the late 1840's and early 50's a sawmill owned by John Davis was constructed on the corner of Water and Grand Streets next to the river. Thomas McKinley opened the town's first brick kiln and yard located where the Valsetz Depoe is today. Isreal Hedges opened the first blacksmith shop. Robert and Luther Grounds started the first livery stable.

In 1852 the school house moved from Tetherow's Saloon to a one-room log cabin. The school was located west of where the Clifford Montague home is now. Mrs. Thomas Burbank, a sister to Henry Hill, was the teacher. There were 16 students and at recess time the girls were seen skipping with braided rawhide ropes and boys were seen playing with knitted balls. This school was later to become school district #29.

This same year Henry Hill's log cabin store was converted to serve as the first United States Post Office and one of his business partners, Leonard Williams, was appointed to serve as the first postmaster. Lavilla Williams, Leonard's daughter, later married J.R. Cooper. Henry Hill sold the store at a loss in 1851 and returned to the gold fields. He did not find gold on the trip so he returned to Independence within the year to develop his land claim. And married Martha Virgin.

In the 1850's Independence was large enough to establish a city government. A board of five trustees, including a recorder and marshall, were the ruling officers of the government. The trustees were chosen by popular vote. To qualify as a candidate a man had to be a legal voter and reside in the town for at least three months before election.

A circulating library was organized. Each person brought books to a specified home to be loaned out.

Boat docks and several warehouses, including J.B.V. Butler's, were constructed on Water Street during the 1850's. Produce from the surrounding area was brought to Independence and reshipped by boat or barge to various places up and down the river and its tributaries.

I remember "Grandma" Helmick telling me when I was a small boy, how she and her husband, Henry, brought their produce to Independence. The Helmick's farm of 640 acres was located on the Luckiamute River about six miles south and west of Independence. She said when they had farm produce such as cured meats, butter and eggs, they polled a raft down the Luckiamute to the Willamette River, tied up their raft, were picked up by a steamboat and brought to their market place in Independence. Some of their produce was shipped to Portland. The Helmicks made this trip several times during the year.

THE RIVER

In January 1852 the Willamette River froze over at Independence. This came as quite a shock to the citizens because the mild winters and beautiful not-too-hot summers of the Willamette Valley had been praised many times by letter to neighbors, friends or families who still lived in the Middle West or East.

The ice was thick enough to be a definite advantage for farmers who lived on the east side of the river. They used the ice to bring their cattle and wagons full of produce to market. Usually these farmers marketed most of their produce in Salem, rather than trying to boat all their items back and forth at Independence.

Until 1853 the ferry used to cross the river was a variation flat-boat and barge. If a person wanted to cross the river, he probably had to operate the barge himself. Invariably the ferry was on the wrong side of the river and the person had to row across to get it.

The first licensed ferry service at Independence started in the summer of 1853. The records in the Marion County Court files at Salem, Oregon show "...that the court at its July term in 1853, granted John Leabo a license covering the operation of a ferry." For this he paid a tax of \$5.00. The court order which was signed by the county commissioners, Robert Childers, William p. Harpole and John M. Harrison, gave Leabo the right to charge the same rates as John White at Salem. "These ferrage charges were as follows: Yoke of oxen or team of horses, \$1.00, additional span, 25 cents; man and horse, 25 cents; footman, 12½ cents; per head of cattle 7½ cents; sheep or goats, 6½ cents; 100 feet of lumber not on a wagon, 20 cents; 100 pounds of freight on a wagon, 12½ cents; horse and carriage, 75 cents."

In 1851 the steamboat, Canemah, built by A.F. Hedges was put into service on the Willamette above the Oregon City Falls. The boat piloted by Captain McClosky and Bennet transported large shipments of grain for Avery and Company in Marysville (later named Corvallis). The Avery Company paid 20 cents per bushel. Mr. Hedges also contracted the Canemah to deliver the U.S. mail to Independence for the surrounding area. A.F. Hedges built this boat at Canemah (which means canoe-place and is near the Oregon City Falls) where a natural depression in the rocks formed an excellent harbor large enough to build and launch canoes, rafts and boats. This steamboat was a magnificent boat built entirely of woods native to Oregon. It was a side-wheeler powered by two 30-horse power engines bought in Louisiana. It was 135 feet long, with a 19 foot beam and a four foot hold. The boat was equipped to carry passengers and freight. The estimated cost was \$32,000. The Canemah started steamboat traffic on the Willamette River.

A unique river craft launched on the Willamette around 1860 was an oxen-powered boat called the "Hay Burner" by Independence residents. A man from Marysville decided steamboats were too expensive to operate, so he constructed a skow with tread-mill machinery that used oxen for power and hay for fuel. On the boat's maiden voyage down the river the craft went aground at McGooglin's slough where it remained until the oxen had eaten almost all the fuel. The steamer Onward pulled the "Hay Burner" back into the current. The "Hay Burner" continued on down to Canemah with no further mishaps. However, on the return trip the current was too much for the oxen. The skipper abandoned his venture and sold his oxen.

THE 1861 FLOOD

In December 1861 a devastating flood eliminated the entire commercial section of Independence, destroyed many farms and drowned livestock.

Fall started as usual with the rainy season beginning in late October. In 1861, the rains continued through the first two weeks of November. It was cold, and the rain fell as snow in the Cascade and Coast Range Mountains. During the last two weeks of November, a warm front moved over the state and brought with it rains which melted the snow pack in the mountains. By the first week in December the entire town was inundated. From Early Settlement of Independence by Mrs. Joe (Cora) Hubbard, Mrs. Hubbard said "...a person could row a boat across entire Thorp's Town of Independence." All the warehouses, docks and the ferry located on Water Street were either swept away or ruined. One of these warehouses, owned by J.B.V. Butler, was full of wheat ready to be shipped. When the water came up into the warehouse, the wheat swelled and burst the building. Residents said wheat hominy was a regular dish on many dinner tables for some time.

G.W. (George Washington) McLaughlin, a local resident who escaped the rising waters, was interviewed by the Independence Enterprise in December 1937 about his experiences. Mr. McLaughlin was four at the time, but he remembered the flood. The details of his family's experience were told to him many times. Mr. McLaughlin said his father, Robert McLaughlin, came to Oregon in 1853. The Indians who were living here told his family a great flood a few years before swept away their horses which were grazing in pastures as far away as Dallas. Local farmers didn't believe the Indians, although some farmers found pieces of driftwood on fields miles from the river.

For the first week in December the rains came in a steady downpour on the McLaughlin log cabin in American Bottom, about 1½ miles north of Buena Vista. Within a few days the river was over its banks. At first the high water didn't worry them; the river always flooded its banks during the winter. There was no telephone service so the McLaughlins and other settlers in the valley had no idea what was coming.

The river crested at night the first weekend in December. That morning the McLaughlins let their horses out of the barn, and the horses wandered over to a wooded piece of land not too far from the river to graze. By afternoon the McLaughlins decided it was time to move the horses to higher ground, but the water was so deep the horses would not move. A number of these horses, some of them considered to be the best in the country, were drowned during the night.

By late afternoon the water rose so rapidly, the McLaughlins decided to leave their home and quickly loaded possessions into the wagon. It was dark before they left, and Mr. McLaughlin's father used a kerosene lantern and walked ahead of the team with a stick to sound the depth of the water. Water came into the box of the wagon as his father led them to safety.

Mr. McLaughlin told about the Isreal Hedges family. (He is the grandfather of P.L. Hedges, Mrs. E.G. Davidson and Mrs. J.G. McIntosh.) Mr. and Mrs. Hedges and their two daughters remained at home the night the river crested and during the night water came into the house. The house broke loose from its foundation and started to float. It headed for the open river, but when it reached the river bank it bumped into a big fir tree. The Hedges grabbed quilts, climbed into the big tree and tied themselves to the branches.

Just as they did, the house twisted around and started down the river. They were rescued by boats the next day.

Mr. McLaughlin said his father could have bought the whole bottom, nearly 2,000 acres, for as little as \$500. Many settlers were discouraged and afraid.

In Independence, Orville Butler owned a two-story house on the corner of Polk and Main Streets. He and other men carried neighbor women who lived in one-story houses to the second story of his home to escape the rising water. Mr. Butler said everything went fine until it was time to carry Mrs. Foster, a neighbor who weighed about 200 pounds. Mr. Butler said he was about half-way to his house when he collapsed and dropped her. Mrs. Foster floundered around in waist deep water until he regained his strength. He piloted her the rest of the way.

One woman saved her hen that was setting on 15 eggs by putting the hen in an iron kettle and hanging the kettle in the rafters of her two-story home. The hen was fed out of a tin soup ladle hung on the wall. She said most of the eggs hatched.

REBUILDING THE TOWN

When the flood waters receded, the people of Independence asked Henry Hill if he would plat a new town on his higher ground just across Ash Creek. According to Howard Corning, author of Willamette Landings, "Hill debated the matter until 1867, then consented." The new townsite was on forty acres of land that bordered the Willamette on the east.

Main Street was placed near the east line of the tract. After Main Street came 2nd, 3rd, 4th, through and including 9th Streets. The streets running east and west started on the south of Thorp's Town with "A", "B", "C", Monmouth, then "D" through the alphabet to "I". A wagon bridge was constructed across the gulley made by Ash Creek to connect Indian Grave Street and Main Street.

When the streets of the new town were matched up to the streets of the old town, they mis-matched about a half-block. Today at the north end of 3rd Street in the new town, one has to go approximately one-half block to the right to Log Cabin Street to continue north, or turn and go one-half block to the left to Walnut Street.

I was told that if the streets matched exactly and the city developed further south, Main Street would end on the river bank. It was decided to offset the streets that one-half block.

Hill gave a few residents lots. He gave a lot, located on the corner of Main and "C" Streets, to Mr. Isaac Van Duyne and Mr. Hamilton McCully to build a store, and a lot was donated for a livery stable. The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches each received a lot with the understanding that if the lots were to be used for any other purpose, the ownership of the lots reverted back to the heirs of Mr. Hill. Hill sold most of the lots for a small amount down, with monthly or annual payments on the balance.

The first school in the new town was held in a vacant saloon on Main Street where the Masonic Building is located. Mr. Alonzo Gesner was the first teacher and taught during the 1865-66 school year. The school was designated as School District #38.

Not all residents rebuilt in the new town. Some remained to rebuild in the old part and new citizens settled in both parts of the town.

Jesse I. Claggett opened a warehouse on Water Street in the late 1860's. Mr. Claggett was a career warehouseman and was credited for establishing Independence as a shipping center during the 1880's. His home still stands on the corner of 2nd and "B" Streets. Present owners are the Howard Steigers.

In 1873, Henry Sloper built a sawmill directly over the old foundations of John Davis' sawmill. The foundations and sawdust were all that remained of the old mill. Henry Sloper, his wife Rebecca, and their sons Carvil and L. Mortimer, came to Independence in 1871.

One of the first orders to be filled by the Sloper Sawmill was to supply the lumber and supplies for the new school house in Old Town. The new school was built near the Valley & Siletz Depoe. The following is a copy of a specification sheet from the Sloper Company Ledger for the school:

The house to be built is to be 26 feet wide, 50 feet long, 16 feet high, foundation walls to be two feet high, and twelve inches thick of brick. Sills to be 10 by 10 red fir lumber. Floor joists to be 2 by 8, sixteen feet long and on eighteen inch centers. Studding to be 2 by 5, sixteen feet long and sixteen inch centers. Upper joists to be 2 by 6 to be placed on two foot centers. Flooring, 1 by 6 red fir. To be covered with nine inch rustic siding, shingled with cedar shingles. Cornice to be two feet projection finished with crown mold. Ten windows, sash to be hung with weights and cords to be inside partition. With two doors, hinges complete, one double door with hangers complete. The room is to be sealed around three feet high from the floor. The balance to be lathed and plastered. Painted inside and out three coats.



Nothing can replace the old traditional "turkey-shoot." The picture depicts the fellowship and sportsmanship of the early 1900's.



The Sloper's sawmill and flour mill located on Water Street. The sawmill was built in 1873 over the foundations of the John Davis Sawmill. The flour mill was built in 1882.

FIRST NEWSPAPER

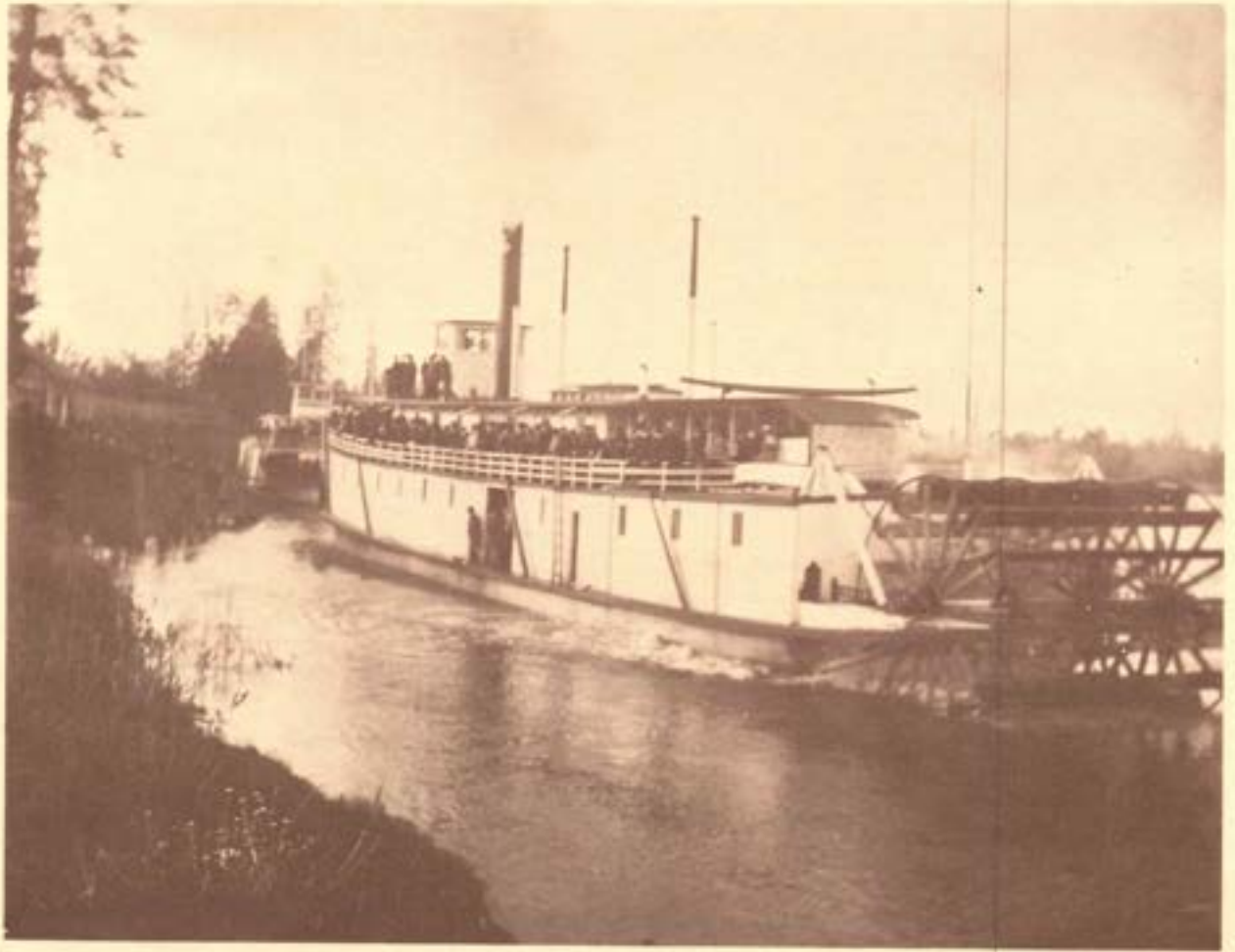
In 1876 the first newspaper published in Independence, the Weekly Telegram, was started by Luther Pipes. Pipes and his bride came directly to Independence from Mansfield, Louisiana. Pipes had one assistant, W.P. Conway, who set the type. This paper and partnership lasted six months. Conway was a zealous Republican and Pipes a staunch Democrat, and Pipes had to watch Conway like a hawk to keep him from making embarrassing changes in his editorials. During this six months Pipes helped to establish the Oregon State Editorial Society.

Before the Weekly Telegram Independence residents had access to Oregon's first newspaper The Oregon Spectator, published in Oregon City. This paper was delivered by horse back every two weeks, and rates were determined by how far a person lived from the newspaper office. If a person lived over 30 miles away, the cost per copy was 15¢, 30 to 80 miles, 25¢, 80 to 200 miles, 30¢ and over 200 miles, 50¢.

The next paper to be published in Independence was the Riverside established by G.W. and Walter Quigby in 1879. This paper was an independent weekly issued on Fridays and ran for five years.

RIVER TRAFFIC

By the end of the 1870's steamboats such as the Isabel and Bentley towed huge log rafts down the Willamette for the Independence and Salem sawmills. At one time the Bentley took eight thousand feet of lumber from the dock at Independence to deliver to Albany.



A stern-wheeler docking at Independence to discharge passengers and freight. This was in the 1860's.

Steamers and boats passed up and down the river at all hours of the day and night. The river was the principal source of transportation for passengers and freight. These stern-wheelers went up the Willamette to as far as Eugene. The trip from Portland to Independence was an all day trip.

The locks at Oregon City (this is where the river drops 41 feet to form the Oregon City Falls) were privately owned. The freight on wheat and potatoes from Independence to Portland was \$1.50 per ton and the lock owners took 50¢ out of this. The fee for all passengers to pass through the locks was 10¢ per head.

On one of his runs up the river, Captain Bell of the Occident noticed several head of sheep in the mud on the river bank near Buena Vista. The sheep were in danger of drowning, so Captain Bell ran his boat up to the bank and he and his crew pulled the sheep out of danger. More than once during his 33 years of piloting Captain Bell stopped to save livestock along the river.

When livestock were unloaded from a steamboat, a captain and his crew sometimes had trouble getting animals to go down the gangplank. When this happened one of the crew went ashore to tie a rope to a tree on the bank. The opposite end of the rope was made into a loop and tied around the animal's neck; the order was given to back away.

THE FERRY

In the middle 1870's David Hedges, William Jones, Isaac and Charles Madison, and Sol and John Cox built a ferry for Independence. The ferry was 12 feet by 48 feet and propelled by the current of the river. One thousand sixty feet of 3/4 inch steel-wire rope or cable was connected to 100 foot

supporting poles which were placed on each side of the river. The distance from pole to pole was exactly 996 feet and 7 inches. The ferry was to be operated in the summer months only, since the current was too treacherous in the winter.

Foot passengers who used the ferry had to wait until there were enough people to make a paying load. One time two men, who were roaring drunk, got tired of waiting and decided to swim across. They jumped off the end of the ferry apron and made good headway until they reached the heavy current in the middle. Here, they became exhausted and the ferryman had to take the attached boat to get them. Next time, they waited for a paying load.

THE DECADE OF THE 1880'S

The 1880's marked a rapid period of growth for Independence and Oregon. It was during this decade that the greatest influx of people came to Independence. The population grew from about 500 to between 1000 to 1200. Most of the major buildings standing today were constructed during this time. Except for the horses, dirt streets and board sidewalks, it is difficult to tell the difference between a picture of Main Street taken in the 1880's and Main Street today.

By the end of the decade there were over 30 places of business, 11 brick; a mayor-council form of government adopted; the first flour mill built; a fire department organized; another newspaper established; railroad lines completed; a water works completed; electricity and telephones installed; two banks established; a new opera house and city hall built; four churches

established; and the grain and hop growing industries started.

The merchants were---

Eli Johns, livery and feed stable
 J.A. Jones, livery feed, buggies and teams
 Jackson's restaurant, good meals 25¢
 Beamer & Craven, harness and saddles
 M.B. Henderson, grain storage
 J. I. Claggett, warehouse
 J.R. Cooper, brick yard
 I.A. Miller, marble and granite works
 A.W. Howell, hotel
 Mitchell & Bohannon, sash and door factory
 Cooper Bros., hardware
 Cooper & Peterson, real estate
 Baker & Kirkland, real estate
 H.M. Lines, undertaker
 A.J. Whiteaker, furniture
 O.A. Kremer, watch repairing
 L.M. Sloper, well drilling
 H.R. Patterson, druggist and jeweler
 W.G. Sharman, tailor shop
 Mrs. A.M. Hurley, millinery
 Mrs. E.J. Estes, dressmaking
 Churchill Sash & Door Factory
 Beck & Gales, masons
 Godley's Tin Shop
 Prescott & Veness, sawmill
 George Skinner, roller mills. Later he operated the George Skinner Launches
 The grocerers were---Henkle & Walker, Dalton & Co., D.B. Taylor, Shelly & Vanduyn, and J.D. Irvine
 There were four saloons: The Arcade Saloon, owned by J.R. Cooper; Mazeppa Saloon, F.J. Morris, Prop.
 Alsorn Saloon, J.J. Marrasseck, Prop.
 The Gem Saloon, owned by Johnson & Cooper.

These saloons were located in the same block, on "C" Street between Main and 2nd Streets. Women were apprehensive about walking past them unescorted.

Hill's Town of Independence was incorporated in 1878. However, it was not until February 26, 1885 that the City Charter Bill, passed by the legislative assembly of the State and signed by Governor, Zenas F. Moody, incorporated both E.A. Thorp's town and Henry Hill's town.



This is the river boat "Albany" getting ready to dock at Independence.



Independence street scene in 1895.



The west side of south Main Street taken in approximately the same place as the street scene in 1895. The building in the foreground with the cupola is the J.S. Cooper building. The building next to it is the opera house. The building in the distance with the cupola was the Independence City Bank, now called Citizen's Bank.

During 1889 Henry Hill sold 32 of his lots, the last he had except for a few poor ones. Hill let a buyer take his choice of lots and if he built a house within a year, he let him have from two to four years to pay for the lot with interest paid each year in advance. The price per lot depended on the location. Henry and Martha Hill built their first home on the corner of 3rd and "B" Streets.

CITY GOVERNMENT AND EARLY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

In 1885 a mayor-council form of government with a paid appointed watchman was established. The first mayor was S.W. Smith and the first recorder was George W. Belt.

At the September 22, 1885 council meeting nine sealed bids for watchman were opened. The bids were--- John Graves, \$45; John Bohannon, \$45; J.A. Sherwood, \$44.99; J. Fluke, \$40; Jas Robinson, \$39; Chas L. Pierce, \$37.50; George McAuley, \$35; John Matcey, \$35; and R.E. Marple, \$30. (These were monthly wages). On January 4, 1886 at a special council meeting John Bohannon was appointed the first watchman and city marshall.

One of the first decisions made by the council was to appoint Councilman Godley to examine the foot bridge across Ash Creek and to have all necessary repairs made. The bridge had been in dangerous condition for some time. At other council meetings in 1886, the council oked the building of crosswalks on "A" Street, and on Monmouth and Main Streets, and Monmouth and "C" Streets. By 1887 several loads of gravel had been put on Main Street from the bridge across Ash Creek to "E" Street.

On "C" Street from Main to 2nd Street the City asked business owners to remove the mud from the streets. A Mr. Jack Veness agreed to remove the mud and cart it away for 25¢ per load. One square yard was a load. The property owners paid for the streets and the City paid for removing the mud from the crosswalks and intersections.

It was also the responsibility of the business owners to keep the board walks in repair. Broken boards had to be replaced and the heads of nails lowered. If the businessman failed to keep the walks in repair, the marshall did and sent the bill to the business owner. The boardwalks were built 2½ to 3 feet from the ground.

Some of the bizarre city ordinances passed during this decade were---

Owners of all teams, saddle or buggy horses, found standing on the streets later than 10 o'clock at night were to be notified by the marshall. If the owner could not be reached, the animals were to be put in the livery stable and the cost charged against him.

All flocks of chickens must have a rooster.

Judges and clerks for the city elections for Independence were allowed up to \$2 each for their services and paid \$1.50 for the use of their home for polling places.

Late in the 80's Mr. Godley introduced "An ordinance to prevent and suppress gambling and gaming houses within the city limits." This ordinance was passed but was soon forgotten after the first enforcement, since many of the town's leading citizens were among those arrested.

During 1889, George McCauley, city marshall, enforced the Cow Ordinance which called for the impounding of loose cows and horses wandering around the

city streets. The main complaint was that cows slept on the sidewalks and people were fed up dodging and walking around them. The cows opened gates, tore down yard fences and ate gardens. Owners of the animals were notified to keep their animals penned up at night or the cows were to be placed in the city pound and the owners fined.

Horses were not allowed to dig up the streets by pawing while hitched in front of stores.

The Independence City Charter and Ordinances were printed by the Enterprise Publishing Company at 64¢ per page.

In 1882 the Sloper's who built the sawmill on the corner of Grand and Water Streets constructed a grist mill next to the sawmill. This was the first flour mill in Independence. The grist mill was first operated by ox-power, but later the power source to operate the waterwheel was water that was flumed from Bridgeport, a community 12 miles west of Independence. The water was taken from the Little Luckiamute River below the falls at Falls City. The footings for the grist mill can still be found.

The Slopers also manufactured waterwheels and sold them for mill use as far north as Wenatchee, Washington. To deliver to Wenatchee, the waterwheels were shipped by boat from Independence down the Willamette to Portland, then up the Columbia River to Priest Rapids, Washington and overland by wagon to Wenatchee.

FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF A FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1883, the town purchased a hand fire engine from Astoria. The price paid was \$450. This engine replaced the bucket brigade.



The Independence Fire Department proudly pulling their new fire engine in the July 4th parade.

In the background is the newly constructed brick City Hall completed in 1889.

At the April meeting of the town council in 1885, the council decided to purchase 400 feet of fire hose for the engine and buy a hose-cart. An effort was made to organize an engine company. The time for a trial drill was set for a Saturday evening. The men ran 500 yards, laid 400 feet of hose and threw a stream of water in less than 1:45---one hour and 45 minutes, that is. Right then, it was decided to organize a fire department and practice fire drill.

The fire department had a real test in the latter part of November, 1887. J.R. Cooper's saloon chimney caught fire and ignited the roof, but as reported in the Westside, the prompt action of the fire department saved the building. The saloon was located where the Legion Hall is today.

The fire engine was homeless until the new city hall was completed in 1889. The quote from the Westside, "Until the city hall is completed the fire apparatus must stand in the street unprotected from the weather." "First, Mr. Lines' Feed Store drove it out of the Conway Building, and then the tailor shop of W.G. Sharman, and the newspaper drove it out of the Vanduyn Building, so it has no place to go now."

THE WESTSIDE

The Westside newspaper was established by William H. Perry in 1883 and was an independent weekly issued on Fridays. The newspaper office was located where the Beaver Hotel stands today.

In 1886, Will H. Brooks was editor and publisher and in 1888, E.D. Pentland took over. In November 1889, the paper purchased a steam propelled printing press. During the last half of the 80's a majority of the editorials were written by Frank Rigler, Polk County School Superintendent.

The editor for 1891 was J.R.N. Bell. However, Pentland was back by 1893 and edited the paper for six years when he consolidated with the Enterprise which had been established by J.T. Ford in 1894. At first the paper was called the Westside-Enterprise but in 1908, the Westside part of the name was dropped and it was known as the Enterprise and published weekly.

Charles E. Hicks issued the paper on Thursdays from 1908 until he sold it to Z.C. Kimball in 1920. After issuing the paper for seventeen years, Mr. Kimball transferred it to Ralph Kislinger.

Dutch Leonard bought Kislinger out in 1937 and ran the Enterprise until 1952, when he sold it to Al Noble.

The year 1962, Mr. Noble sold his interest in the Independence Enterprise to Jim and Helen Irvine. At present, Mrs Helen Irvine is sole owner and publisher. Mrs. Irvine purchased the Monmouth Herold in June, 1969, combining the two papers and named it the Enterprise-Herold.

RAILROADS

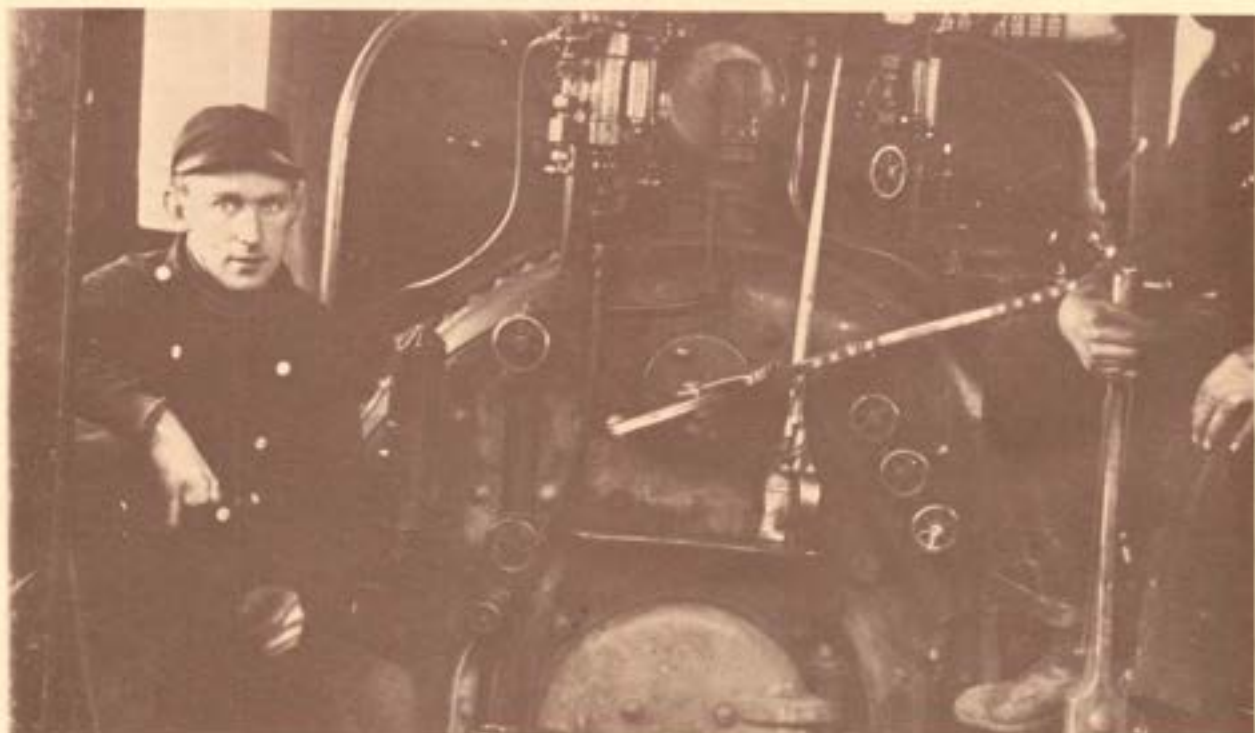
During December 1886, the first train passed through Independence over the Portland & Willamette Valley and Oregonian Railways. An ordinance, #18 of June 9, 1879 authorized the Oregon Western Railroad Company of Portland to lay a railroad track, and granted the right of way over and across the center of 2nd Street within the town.



Two participants in the Trades' Carnival of 1891. Lena (Rider) Jones and John Newton Jones.



The Independence-Monmouth Motor Railroad 1890.



Inside of the steam engine cab that pulled the Independence-Monmouth train. At left: the fireman Carl Kleiver and Mr. J.A. Bewley, the engineer at the right.



After the discontinuance of the Independence-Monmouth Railroad the lines were used by a small gas-powered unit called "The Peanut." It was used for passengers, cream and other freight.

The train consisted of an engine, baggage car, a day coach and enough sleepers to accomodate the passengers. Within two years the passenger train employees wore uniforms of blue suits and caps. The caps had gold bands and the name of the employee was in gold letters on the band.

An excursion fare from Council Bluffs, Iowa to Portland, Oregon was \$21 round trip. Many people who came to the Willamette Valley were side-tracked at Portland, Oregon and other towns from a few days to a week. Many times Independence sent delegations to meet these trains that were side-tracked, to give the people the old sales pitch about how wonderful it was to live in Independence.

Some people used an entire freight car to bring their household goods and livestock. James Gibson arrived in Independence with a freight car loaded with furniture, pigs and chickens.

The appearance of the railroad solidified the fact that Independence was an important trade center in the Willamette Valley. Independence had a freight train every day plus the passenger trains. Six or eight steamers stopped a week and there were regular stage connections with Salem, Monmouth and Dallas. Prairie schooners passed through town almost every day, laden down with people and their household supplies. Some of these people stopped to settle in Independence while others continued on south.

During 1889 the shortest independent railway in the world was built to run between Independence and Monmouth, a distance of two miles. The company was named the Independence-Monmouth Railway and the fare was 5¢ one way. Many baseball games and later horse races were held at Talmadge, a community situated midway between the two towns, and the railroad was used many times

by participants and by spectators of the games. The train made six round trips a day, and it consisted of a steam engine, one coach and a flat car.

A WATER WORKS COMPLETED

In 1887 the water works was completed. Thirteen thousand feet of water mains were laid and every business house was supplied. Also in 1887 a 20,000 gallon tank 50 feet from the ground replaced the 17,000 gallon cistern. And in 1888 a steam pump replaced a windmill as a source of power. Sprinkling streets in the summer and more and more people hooking on to the water lines made it impossible for the old windmill to keep up with the demand. The new pump had a capacity of 6200 gallons per hour.

L. C. Gilmore was credited as the main organizer of the water works movement.

TELEPHONES

Early in 1888 the telephone line between Independence and Monmouth was completed. Bell telephones were installed. In the following spring the telephone line was extended to Salem and Dallas. In Independence the central office was placed in the Nichols' home.

BANKS

In March 1885, Mr. Jas. Cooper opened his bank on the corner of "C" and Main Streets. This brick building was built by local tradesmen. Mr. George

Brey of Salem, was the bank's first cashier and assistant. The bank had the latest chronometer lock safe, and a large fire proof vault.

In January, 1889, the Independence City Bank (later the First National, now the Citizen's Valley Bank) was established. The brick building located on the corner of Main and Monmouth Streets has been preserved, so today it looks exactly as it did in 1889.

H. Hirschberg was the first president, Abraham Nelson, the first vice-president and W.P. Connaway, first cashier. Other members of the original board were H.H. Jasperson, Joshua McDaniel, T.J. Lee, A.J. Goodman and I.A. Allen. The first depositor was seven year old Hugh Sheley who deposited his life's savings of \$3.

At the end of 1889 the statements from the two banks showed that there was \$215,172.47 loaned out and there was \$120,070.65 on deposit.

OPERA HOUSE AND BELT HOUSE

In the latter part of 1888 the opera house on Main Street was completed. This was a brick building with a metal roof. The house was supplied with 200 wooden-bottomed chairs and the scenery was painted by the brother of artist H.C. Best. According to the Westside, the building was undoubtedly the finest in Polk County.

The Belt House, a wood building located on the corner of 2nd and "C" Streets. was a popular meeting place, hotel and emergency treatment center for accidents until it burned in 1915.



A parade on Main Street going north. The building on the left is now Taylor's Drug Store.

On the right shows the river front and a boat coming into dock. This was during the late 1880's.

In the summer of 1888, Buzz Sloper was leading a bull down Main Street, when the bull lunged, ran through the open door of the Belt House, on into the bar-room, through the main hall and out the side door. Afterwards the people in the hotel wondered what the outcome would have been if the side door had been closed.

THE NEW CITY HALL

The brick city hall was completed about the last of December 1889. The two story building was 33 feet wide and 50 feet long. There were four openings on the ground floor. One was for the future hook and ladder trucks; another for the engine and hose cart; a third to ascend the stairs to the second story and a fourth on the alley to enter the room that was eventually used as the city jail. The second floor was divided into two rooms. One for the city council and the other for the fire department. A cement finish was put on the front of the building. All the brick buildings had this cement finish. The fire engine and hose cart finally found a home.

This building was located on the alley on Monmouth Street between Main and 2nd Streets and was torn down in the early 1960's. The brass elevation marker can be found embedded in the concrete there. (The elevation is 167 feet above sea level).



The Belt House located on the corner of "C" and 2nd Streets.
This was the first large hotel built in Independence.
The photo was taken by S.E. Gray, photographer, Independence.



A Gathering of a bicycle club in the late 1800's.

CHURCHES

In 1882, the Presbyterian Church was completed and was located on the corner of 4th and "D" Streets. This original building is located today on the south side of the City Library and is the Womens Club clubhouse. The Presbyterian Church was the second church to be built in Independence; the first was the Methodist.

By early 1886, the ladies of the Christian Church had raised \$800 in subscriptions towards a church building. The building cost \$2,000 and was located on the corner of 3rd and "D" Streets. This church building is now located on the corner of "A" and Walnut Streets and is used by the Pythian Sisters Organization.

In 1888, the First Baptist Church which was organized April 25, 1869 by Reverend John W. Osborn, was completed. This church was built of bricks manufactured by the J.R. Cooper brickyard. (J.R. Cooper supplied almost all the bricks for the brick buildings in town). The cost of the church was \$4,000. Today, this church is at the original location and the bell that was installed in the 80's is used today.

Dick Stapleton told me the story his father, Dave Stapleton, liked to tell about the Reverend Osborn. One Sunday morning Dave Stapleton met the Reverend Osborn who was returning home from his Sunday church services driving his horse and buggy. Dave stopped the Reverend to see if he could trade horses with him. Dave said, "Reverend Osborn, I have a dappled gray mare in the corral which I'll trade you straight across for your horse." Reverend Osborn paused and then replied, "I can't trade on the Sabbath, but if you bring that dappled mare and ten dollars over to my house on Monday, we can make a deal."



July 4th parade in 1889 traveling east on Monmouth Street nearing the Main Street intersection. The City Hall-flying the flag-on the right. Adjoining City Hall, west, is a small building moved in to accomodate the first City Library.

In the far background, left, is the spire of the Methodist Church, corner of 5th and Monmouth Streets. The church on 3rd and Monmouth Streets was built by the Methodists and later sold to the Catholick Church.

THE FERRY

In 1886, William Jones, one of the original owners of the Independence Ferry bought out David Hedges, Isaac and Charles Madison, and Sol and John Cox. William Jones and his sons, George and Newt, continued to run the ferry until 1907.

From the Westside was the comment, "And by the time those delicious wild blackberries were ripe across the river, the Independence people could enjoy a smooth crossing on a fine ferry and go also over to Mr. J.B. Parker's and drink some of that cool refreshing mountain spring water and climb the mountain and see old Polk in all its beauty."

During hot weather complaints appeared in the Westside about boys and men swimming in front of the town. "Those persons who cross the ferry find it decidedly unpleasant to find nude boys besporting themselves within a stones throw of the ferry."

Usually crossing the river was routine, but sometimes livestock and horses became spooked, fell off into the river or knocked people down trying to get off the ferry. William Jones was crossing with his team and wagon and just as the ferry was landing his team became frightened and ran off. The team knocked Mr. Jones down and ran over him. Although it bruised him badly, he was not seriously hurt.

Another time in the fall of 1886, Mr. Hedges drove on the ferry, then Dr. Ketchum, his daughter, Katie, and Mr. Wheeler drove up in a buggy and pulled beside Mr. Hedges' team and wagon. Dr. Ketchum got out to help bring the ferry across. When the ferry was about halfway across, Dr. Ketchum's horse became frightened, backed up until the buggy dropped off the rear of the ferry, and threw Mr. Wheeler and Katie into the water. Dr. Ketchum caught his daughter by the foot and rescued her. Mr. Wheeler swam and caught hold

of the rear of the buggy which was held on the ferry by the tugs of the horse's harness. The ferry continued on across the river until it reached shallow water and the wheels of the buggy touched bottom.

Newt Jones operated a stage line between Salem and Independence and carried the mail. He operated another stage line between Dallas and Falls City before the rail service.

THE SKINNER LAUNCHES

George Skinner built two boats to haul passengers and freight between Independence and Salem in the middle 80's. The boats were christened the "Independence" and the "Louise." It took three hours to make the round trip between the two cities. These boats were always referred to as the "Skinner Launches."

CITY PARK PROPERTY

At the City Council meeting of May 12th, 1896 the recorder was instructed to draw a warrant for the sum of \$555.57 principal and high rate of interest due on Mrs. Dorcas Whiting's note, the amount due on the City Park property. She would not accept a warrant and the Finance Committee were instructed to negotiate a loan for payment. By August 4th of that year a "satisfaction of mortgage" was received from Mrs. Dorcas Whiting to the city of Independence for payment in full on the City Park property.



Doctor and Mrs. Ketchum.

I can remember riding with Doctor Ketchum on many trips to his farm in the American Bottom. The Doctor gave me special treatment for powder burns on my face and eyes.



George Skinner on his boat "Independence." After his retirement, his son, Claud continued to operate the two river launches, "Independence" and "Louise" for some time.

THE FIRST RECORD OF DRAINAGE

In 1889, the Street Committee authorized Mr. W.T. Burris to lay 500 feet of 10 inch tile; 539 feet of 8 inch tile; 660 of 7 inch tile and 660 feet of 6 inch tile all located in Hill's Town to drain into Ash Creek.

No property owner along the ditch was permitted to attach a drain pipe to the ditch without permission of the City Council and not until he had paid the City marshal \$3 to be turned over to Mr. W.T. Burris for putting in the ditch.

ARTICLE OF PETITION

This is an article from the Westside, November, 1900. "We, the undersigned tax payers do petition and pray your honorable body to construct a cross-walk across Monmouth Street commencing at the southeast corner of Block #8 and running to the northeast corner of Block #7. Signed by the tax payers hereafter named: J.S. Bohannon, Mrs. R.J. Taylor, E.W. Cooper, J.W. Mitchell, I.M. Butler, G.P. Hawkins and J.E. Hubbard." This cross-walk would eliminate the necessity of detouring two blocks for a dry crossing and wading through mud shoe-top deep. Also, the Council was asked to furnish material for building a foot bridge in connection with the wagon bridge across the slough between Second and Third Wards. As this was a county road, County Judge, J.E. Sibley was the one consulted and he granted permission to do so.

HARVEST

The harvest of wheat and other cereal grains in the late 1800's usually started in the month of August. Around the Independence area, there were several caption or horse powered grain separators, and a few gasoline engine hand fed and hand stacked strawpilers. The hand fed separators or threshers replaced flailing the grain. (After the grain was flailed or beaten out of the heads of wheat or oats, it was tossed into the air for the wind to separate.) With the hand fed separators, twine bound the bundles of grain that were tied with a self-tying grain binder, were hauled in wagons from the field and pulled along each side of the separator or threshing machine where the bundle-hauler pitched them onto the feeder table.

When one of these threshers finished the fields at one farm and moved to the next, it looked like a circus procession as it traveled down the road. First came the traction engine, which hauled the separator. Next came the boarding or cook wagon with a canvas top, then seven or more wagons plus one extra tank (water) wagon. The tank wagons filled up at the river in Independence and some hauled water as far as eight miles. Sometimes the cook shack or wagon traveled ahead of the procession, so a hot meal would be ready to serve the crew when they arrived.

It took 30 people, including the cooks and one roustie to run one of the larger threshing machines. The crew included neighboring farmers plus a few extra hired hands. There were three cooks and each was paid \$1 per day; the straw-bucks, \$1 or \$1.50 a day, depending whether he furnished his own horse; pitchers and teamsters, \$1.50; a man and his team, \$2.50; the separator tender and sack sewers received \$2 to \$2.50; and the feeders and engineers, \$3.



Street grading in Independence during the late 1800's. The road supervisor was Mr. Jones shown driving the team -pulling the scraper.



Binder to thresher machine.
Back row, ?, and Frank Hilke.
Front row, ?, Homer Hill, Vic Seeley (15 years old), Bill Ford, and ?. This was about 1905.

All meals were included. There were about 13 teams of horses and the whole operation used about 50 barrels of water a day.

The bundles of grain were pitched onto the feeder platform. Four men operated the feeder platform: Two stood on the outside to cut the binding twine that held the bundles of grain. Their knife was fastened to the wrist so it could not drop in the machine and damage the threshing cylinder. The other two men stood in the center of the feeder platform and spread the grain out across the width of the cylinder, heads first. For the thresher to work efficiently, an even flow of grain had to be fed into the machine. If the grain were fed too fast, the machine plugged. The feeders became proficient at their job and received higher wages.

Some of the threshing crew went home on Sunday, but most of them stayed with the machine night and day until the job was done. They ate at the cook shack and rolled out their bed rolls on the strawpile to sleep. The wagons were in the field by seven o'clock each morning and sometimes the work continued until after dark. On these nights a lantern was hung on the front end of the thresher so the crew could see. If the late hours occurred too often, the bundle haulers deliberately threw the bundles criss-cross into the feeder to plug the thresher at about the normal quitting time. By the time the machine was unplugged and operating again, it was too late to continue.

On Mr. Rider's thresher there were nine teamsters: Charles Leman, Tom Price, A. Cooper, Roe Burnett, Frank Cronon, George Jones, Pearl Hedges, Frank Green and Mr. Bacon. The pitchers were Gus Lemon, William Breeler, Charles McCaleb, M. Bergan, Peter Curry and Louis Wilson. The water was hauled by Newt Jones. C.L. Brown looked after the sacks as the grain filled

them, then William Shafer and Frank Wilson sewed the sacks and stacked them in rows five sacks high by twenty sacks long. W.S. Rider kept the steam up and the cylinders moving on the thresher. Charles Foster and F.R. Rider pushed the ripe bundles of grain into the feeder after Paul Russ and H. Leman cut the bands.

Under the supervision of the three cooks, Mrs. J.N. Jones, Miss Lola Fluke and Miss Nellie Rider, the general roust-about, Wallace Huntley, was kept busy. A threshing crew had huge appetites and consumed enormous amounts of food each day---a bushel of potatoes, four pounds of butter, twenty loaves of bread, thirty pounds of meat, plus numerous pies, cakes and many, many cups of coffee.

The early hand fed stationary threshers were not used much after 1910. They were replaced with the automatic feeders and straw blowers that were steam powered. Today's thresher is self-propelled and has an optional air-conditioned cab. A harvester and two trucks accomplish in one operation and half the time, what the old binder thresher did.