

# Jacksonville, Pioneer City of Southern Oregon



By Fred Lockley.

Few indeed are the western communities that live in their yesterdays. Some there are that live in the present. More, by far, live in the future and capitalize values accordingly, but Jacksonville lives in the past.

With Astoria, Vancouver and Oregon City, it can look back to a storied past, and historic antiquity.

You may name on the fingers of one hand Oregon's oldest cities, and Jacksonville will be one of the five. Yet so young is the past, so short its history; you need go back but a brief three score years to a time when there was no Jacksonville.

Boiling down the tales told me by the different pioneers, this is the story they tell of the discovery of Jacksonville.

### In the Days of '49

From the spring of '49 to the winter of '51 the present site of Jacksonville was a favorite camping place for the eager throng who were hurrying southward from the Willamette Valley to the gold fields of California, as well as for the packers who were coming and going between the valley and the gold fields. Late in December of '51 two young men camped on Ashland creek. One of them in washing their tin dishes in the stream saw a small nugget. Looking more carefully he found other nuggets. They did not stop to stake out a claim, as they did not attach great importance to their find. Meeting J. R. Poole and Jim Cluggage, they told them of having found gold at their camp on Ashland creek. A little later, or to be exact, early in January, 1852, Cluggage and Poole camped there, and near a spring in a ravine not far distant from Ashland creek found coarse gold in large quantities. So abundant were the nuggets and coarse gold that they called their discovery Rich Gulch. They took in two friends named Wilson and Skinner and soon the rumor ran up and down the trail that new diggings had been struck so rich that a man could pan out a cupful of gold in a day.

Farmers in the Willamette valley heard the rumor and the next day they were headed south. Miners from creek and gulch and bar of California joined the northbound exodus. By February, Rich Gulch was entirely staked.

Appler & Kenney at Yreka hastily loaded a pack train with whiskey of a cheap and deadly variety, tobacco, boots, rough clothing, beans, flour and bacon and went to the new diggings, arriving in February and starting a store in a tent.

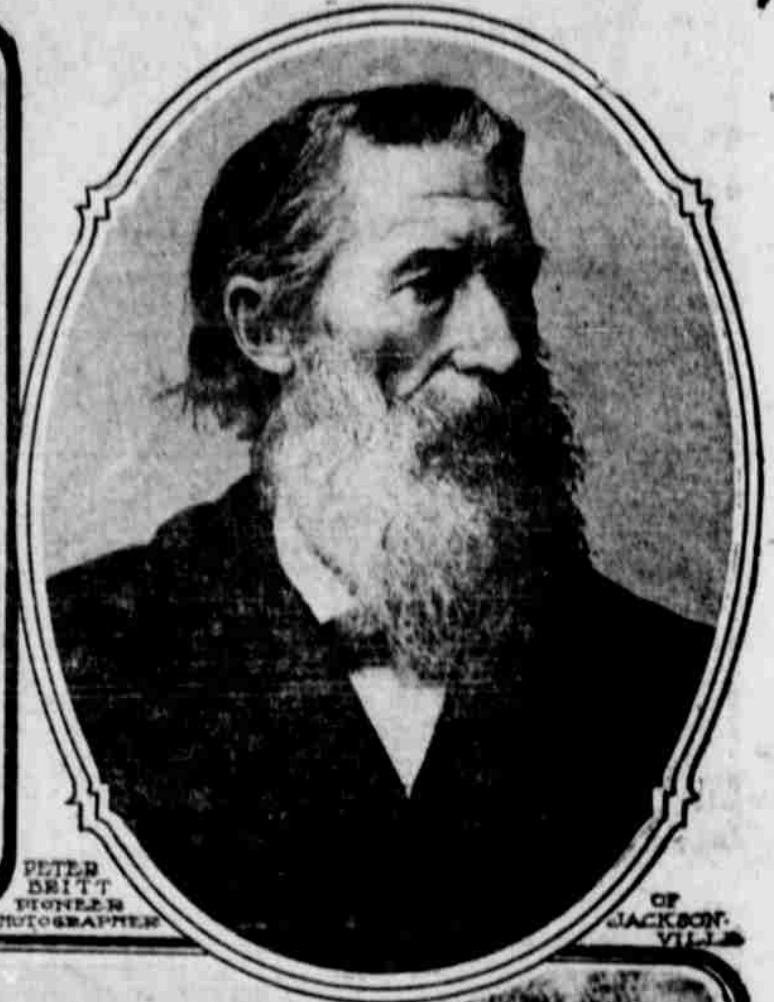
A few weeks later W. W. Fowler put up a log cabin, the first real house to go up in the new camp. Lumber was in immediate demand and woodmen who felled the nearby trees and whipsawed them into lumber sold the rough lumber for \$250 a thousand.



A REMINDER OF YESTERDAY

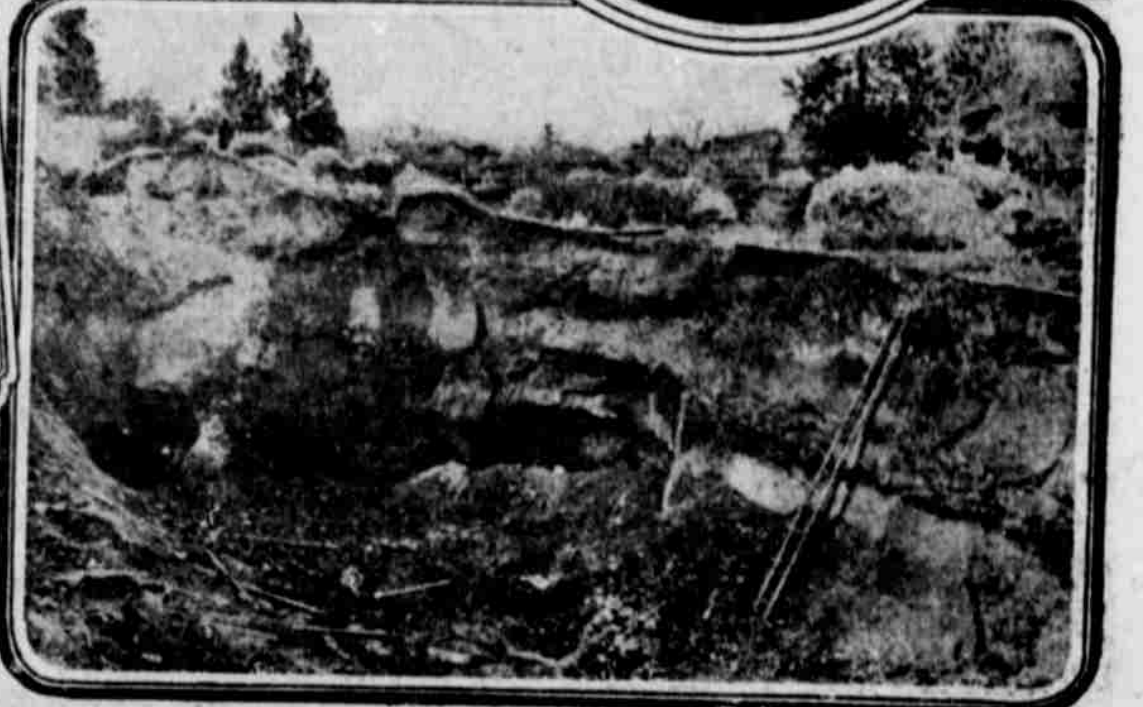


JACKSONVILLE IN 1856



PETER BRITT PIONEER PHOTOGRAPHER

OF JACKSONVILLE



ONCE GOLD DIGGINGS ON RICH GULCH

## Many Interesting Incidents, Intimately Associated with Jacksonville's Yesterdays, Are Recalled By Pioneers

(Courtesy of Oregon Journal.)

The winter of '52 was a hard winter; provisions ran very short. Tobacco went up to \$16 a pound and salt was not to be had. Men went out over the trails on snowshoes, bringing in provisions on their backs and getting very high prices for all supplies.

### Jacksonville's First Hanging

The year 1852 also saw the first occasion for primitive justice. A gambler named Brown without provocation shot a man named Potts. The miners gathered and appointed W. W. Fowler as judge. Twelve men were selected as a jury and after hearing the stories of the witnesses, the jury announced that in their opinion it had been a cowardly murder and that Brown should be taken to a nearby oak and hung. The sentence was immediately carried into execution and he was buried under the tree upon which he had been hung.

There were more miners than claims and as a consequence there were many disputes about jumped claims, and as to the ownership of

water. There being no regular law in Jacksonville the miners from the whole district gathered together and elected a man named Rogers as alcalde or mayor. His decision was to be final on all disputes. Unfortunately Rogers was a very poor umpire and finally the matter was brought to a crisis by what the miners deemed a piece of rank injustice, so a supreme judge was elected.

U. S. Hayden, a New Englander, was elected as supreme judge. A jury was immediately selected, P. P. Prim and Don Kenny were chosen to represent Springer and Orange Jacobs, a newcomer from Michigan, was selected to represent Sims. The jury found for Springer and the mining claim was divided equally between Sims and Springer. A year later Prim was admitted to the bar and later became chief justice of Oregon, while Orange Jacobs was chief justice of Washington territory at a later period.

Law Comes to Jacksonville Cluggage, who had taken up the original mining claim, desired to

make his title secure, so took up the site of Jacksonville as a donation land claim. Inasmuch as there were several thousand mining claims filed in the district, he did not attempt to interfere with the mining rights. So many technical questions and questions of property arose that in September, 1853, Mathew P. Deady, the United States district judge, was sent to Jacksonville, and held the first regular court.

In the spring of the same year Cram and Rogers of Yreka opened up a branch of Adams & Co.'s express office. C. C. Beckman, still at Jacksonville and for the past 59 years proprietor of Beckman's bank, was employed as a messenger, traveling from Jacksonville to Crescent City, Cal., with letters and gold dust.

### First Child Born

This same year also saw, on August 27, the birth of the first child in Jacksonville, a son being born to Dr. and Mrs. McCully, the proprietors of the bakery at Jacksonville. He was named James Cluggage McCully, in honor of the discoverer of Jacksonville.

Jacksonville in 1854 was the center of a very large trading district. Appler & Konny had been followed by many other mercantile firms, the principal ones being Mowry & Davis, Birdseye & Etlinger, Fowler & Davis, Sam Goldstein, Little & Westgate, Wells & Friedlander and J. Brunner.

A considerable number of families had come to Jacksonville, so a school was started that winter, Miss Royal being employed as teacher.

### Jacksonville's First Newspaper

The next year Colonel T. Vault, with two partners, started a newspaper, called the Table Rock Sentinel. Colonel T. Vault, however, soon bought out his partners and ran the paper alone. He was a brilliant man and a forceful writer. He met his death in a very distressing way. In 1858 smallpox broke out in Jacksonville and the citizens were panic stricken. More than 40 died and those who were sick were given but scant attention. Colonel T. Vault took the smallpox, and the only one who attended him during his sickness and death was a faithful priest, who

was with him when he died and was the only mourner at his funeral.

"First man I ever saw killed," said one of the old-timers, "was in front of the livery stable just around the corner. He was coming by slowly on a horse, when a man ran out from the livery stable, jumped on a horse behind him, pulled out his knife, stabbed him through the heart, threw him off his horse and galloped away. A group of us ran up to the man, but he was dead, the knife having severed a large artery near his heart."

"What became of the murderer?" I asked.

"Oh, he was caught afterwards and released on the plea of self-defense."

"Do you remember the Spaniard that killed Alex Williamson?" asked one of the group. "Williamson was foreman of a pack train. A Spaniard driving for him stabbed him, thinking he would be able to get away, but by the merest chance another pack outfit came in sight of the camp just as the murder occurred. They caught the Spaniard, put a rope around his neck and threw the

rope over a tree and pulled away. The Spaniard, whose hands were not tied, grabbed the rope above his head and began climbing up. One of the packers grabbed him by the legs and brought him down with a jerk, and hung to him until he had strangled to death. It was swift but sure justice."

### Their Last Sleep

Later in the afternoon I met one of the pioneers and fell into talk with him. "I suppose there must be six or seven hundred people in Jacksonville," he said, "but you haven't seen the largest part of Jacksonville. There are more than fifteen hundred in the permanent city of Jacksonville. In fact, most of us are there. My wife, my child and my father are all buried there. If you like, I will walk up the hill with you and tell you about some of the oldtimers who are buried there."

Entering the graveyard, my attention was attracted by a stone reading "Gabriel Plymouth, died November 14, 1852, age 48 years." Next to it was the grave of Anderson Plymouth, who also died in 1852. Near this was the grave of the young son of W. G. T. Vault, who died in 1857. Here Judge P. P. Prim lies buried, as well as many other well known men and women of the early days of Oregon. "Here is a part of the graveyard I never like to go in," said my companion. "It is the potter's field." We walked to the corner of the cemetery, where the manzanita brush and weeds grow thick. "Do you see that sunken grave with the wooden headboard fallen in upon it? That is the grave of a man named O'Neil, who was hung in Jacksonville for the murder of a man named McDaniel. It was the old, old, three cornered trouble—two men and one woman. All of those sunken graves are the graves of Chinamen who were buried here and whose bones were later taken up and shipped to China. At one time there were several hundred Chinamen in Jacksonville, but now only one lives here. Negroes, Indians, Chinamen, paupers and murderers have all met here in equality."

As we walked down the hill the old pioneer pointed to the gravelly banks of Jackson creek and said: "I have seen that gravel shifted two or three times and every time men have made good wages working it. Jacksonville is one city that is strictly on a gold basis. You could wash Jacksonville's streets and make good wages. Some time ago an old-timer was employed to dig a well here. He struck bedrock on the old creek bottom and washed out over \$200 in gold from the dirt that came out of the well."

## Great Strides Made by Town of Rogue River During Past Year



A Typical Rogue River Orchard Showing Town of Rogue River in Left Background.

By O. H. Gilmore.

Too much cannot be said in praise of the Rogue River valley of Oregon. When products, natural resources, scenery and climatic conditions are carefully considered. As a whole, it is not strictly uniform, as the different parts show special characteristics due to difference of soil, trend of mountains and elevation above the sea.

The surrounding mountains, grand in outline and marked with the different forest colors, present views of rare beauty. The town is situated

on the north bank of the river, beginning at the foothills on the east and extending to Evans creek on the west. Three years ago it was known as Woodville, and was little more than a way-station. But within the last two years important changes have taken place. Last spring the government changed the name of the post office to Rogue River and soon after, the question of changing the corporate name was submitted to the voters and by their action the present name was adopted. In 1910, ground was purchased, a building

erected and the first bank was established which has ever since conducted a successful business. Within the last year, new stores, dwellings, business buildings and a new hotel have been built, while two large brick blocks are in process of erection, and nearly completed. One is the Odd Fellows Hall, and the other will be occupied by a departmental store.

### City Improvements

Within the last twelve months a system of water works has been established, electric lights introduced, and the streets and dwellings are

lighted by electricity, while cement sidewalks are now being laid in the business portions. It should be specially noted, as an evidence of the advance of this community, that the church building and manse have been improved, and under the direction of the present pastor the church is in a flourishing condition. The matter of education has also received proper attention. A fine, modern school building has recently been erected. Last year four teachers were employed, now five are required, and under the present manage-

ment the school is a credit to the valley.

The ladies have an Improvement club of nearly sixty members, and during the past year they have worked diligently and their efforts have been productive of splendid results. Last October they gave a Harvest festival which was a pronounced success. Visitors from other cities in the valley voiced the general conclusion that the products on exhibition, brought by local producers, would

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