

## AS OSCAR KITTREDGE REMEMBERS

Father met us with a team and buggy he borrowed from Uncle George Small to use on the road for five days from Montahue to Silver Lake.

In 1907, Father and his Brother Walter sold out their cattle and land partnership and Father moved back to Corvallis where he owned four or five ranches there. On the last one, he built a nice big house, the best we ever had. There was about 40 acres of fir and oak stumps. With a team of horses and capstan he cleared that land. That was enough for him for a while...he was ready to move.

In 1910, he bought in with a partner on a sheep ranch over on Cherry Creek, at the mouth where it emptied into the John Day River, probably about half way between Antelope and Mitchell, Oregon. Stayed there that Summer, then sold out to his partner. He got on his horse and went to Silver Lake and bought the Hayes cattle - 300 head and rented their ranch. Uncle Hank loaded Mother and we kids up and took us back to Corvallis. I believe we crossed the South Santiam going back that trip. Sold the place we had built there to Professor Edward T. Reed, who became a life-long family friend. In fact, he was my advisor when I went to college.

In 1910, when we moved to the Cherry Creek Ranch, we put our stuff on an imigrant car in Corvallis and went to Portland. Unloaded, got on a boat and went to The Dalles. Unloaded again and put it on a Narrow Gage Railroad and went to Shaniko, Oregon. There we unloaded and went overland to the Cherry Creek Ranch. I well remember, because I was taken down with the measles as we left Shaniko. It was a rough ride.

On or about July 1, 1911, we loaded up on a team and wagon all our gear and a surrey. Uncle Herbert, his two boys, Perry and Tracey, and a neighbor boy went with us out as far as the Allen Ranch to the Deshutes where they'd taken their camp outfit back into the mountains where they fished all summer. Every ten days

They would come up and move camp and bring groceries and mail. We arrived at the Hayes Ranch July 11, 1911, and stayed there that Summer and put up the hay. When the haying was over, we loaded the wagon up and went back across the Willamette Pass - an old military road to Corvallis to get another load of our belongings. While there, Mother joined her friends and canned fruit and vegetables for our winter provisions. Making wagon stops in those days on the Willamette was a short way out of Eugene to the Lowell Ranch a few miles, then the hills out of Oakridge to the Rigdon Ranch and up the valley and the Graves place in a little town of Crescent. They had sheds build where you can put your wagon in at night if it was raining and a place to take care of your teams. When we came back from this trip, we came back by the McKenzie River Pass, got up to the Frog Camp, just before you hit the lava beds and it snowed there that night about 16 inches. No breakfast that next morning. We took off and got up to where the poles were on the lava beds. Father had a long pole out in front to be sure where the edge of the roads were. It was pretty much of a "white-out", and Mother drove the team. That's the way we got across there. One more day there and it would have been too late.

In the Fall of 1911, we were living at the Hayes Ranch. It was about 15 or 18 miles to any school, so Uncle George invited Mother and the family over to stay with him. He'd lost his wife. Made a trip to school about 3/4 of a mile...we walked that.

In the Summer of 1912, Father rented the Ball Ranch at Klamath Marsh and we moved the cattle over there. Uncle Herbert and his two boys this year came back up there to fish and vacation with us. The Williamson River down there was about 10 or 12 feet wide I guess, and the grass grew up on each side and there was a little strip of water there. The boys with good reels and rods, they could land those landlock salmon. We kids with a twine string and a hook, we didn't land any. We camped in a log cabin about 12 X 14, a cook stove and a table and Mother and Father's bed. The rest of us or any company that came had to bring their own bed and sleep under the stars. In case it looked like rain, we took our beds and went down to the Indian's barn and slept in the hay mound to keep dry.

The salmon came up the Klamath River and up through Klamath Marsh when the water conditions were right, I presume. They were in there for several years, but no more migration after they put in the first dam down the Klamath River below Keno. (The years before this, the water sprang in the Summer and flooded over the banks and went up the river a ways where it came on the banks and the timber lined both banks.) Logs were then floated down end-to-end and it was a good many years I imagine, because they were getting pretty rotten. Big old white grub worms in there. You can just go down there and kick into the rotten logs and get your bait fresh and plenty of it. They took a shovel down there when they wanted to shut the water off for haying and dammed it up between the logs underneath where the water was going out. That was pretty crude, but they got their hay up and wintered their cattle.

In the Summer of 1913, we got our first car. A Willy's Overland. Went to The Dalles, Oregon to get it. There weren't many garages in those days. This was not the end of the overland trips with four-horse teams and wagons. The four-horse teams and wagons didn't go out of existence. We all had to go out before haying and get a wagon load of groceries and bring in the crew to put up the hay and in the Fall before Winter, go out and get the Winter's provisions. So the wagons didn't go out. We got a truck somewhere. It was around 1925, I imagine. It was a Model "T" Truck with an eight-foot bed on it.

We then rented the Swede Ranch about 4-1/2 miles north of Silver Lake and we went in a single horse and buggy. Ol' Moosum took us to school a lot of years. The Spring and Summer of 1913, we moved up to the Wardwell place, which was about 1/2 mile east of the cemetery.

In the Fall of 1914, we moved to Summer Lake and went to school there, 1914, 1915 and 1916. I graduated in the Spring of 1916 from school there. This was about a 4-1/2 mile drive in horse and buggy in those years from Summer lake.

In 1916, and the Spring of 1917, we boarded with the Columbus Porter's in Silver Lake and went to school there that year. All of 1917, we went back to Corvallis. Marie and I boarded with the Hornings. Marie belonged to a sorority house after the first year. From then on through college, Mother was there some years and some years boarded out rooming houses. I have forgotten the details of where we were and what years she was there. I graduated from college in 1925. Father left Summer Lake in the Spring of 1917. Went to Klamath Marsh and that Summer built the house at Kirk Ranch. A big lovely spring there and the next year there were earthquakes and all the springs dried up on the south side of the marsh. They haven't come back yet.

In the Spring of 1917, we built a new house. Uncle Hank and I hauled lumber from the mill between Kirk and Chilikuin. One day down load up, next day come back, next day rest our teams and get unloaded and get the wagons greased and get ready for the next trip. A year or two after the springs dried up, Father decided to move the house over on the point where it was located, it burnt down and a new one was built in its place.

For several winters they had to go up when the swamp was frozen and had to use teams and a capstan most where they were going to pull it with horses, but they couldn't because it was too heavy. After three winters, they finally got over there.

On the north end of Silver Lake, the feed would dry up, so we'd take the cattle up to Antelope and get them all in there and then which ever year it was, everybody got a forest service permit at Bear Flat Draws and Jack Creek. Then we'd go to Antelope and round them up and separate the cattle we were going to take up to Bear Flat Draw and Jack Creek and then take them up there. The rest, we took to Klamath Marsh. Our neighbors mixed up their cattle with us and we had a big turnout. Usually we called Cul Hamilton. He had a bunch and we'd take care of his cattle and he did the cooking. That helped out immensley.

In the Fall of 1914, we'd taken our cattle to winter them at Summer Lake at the River Ranch and did thereafter as long as we were in the business. One Spring, I don't know which one it was, but I made four trips from Summer Lake to Klamath Marsh with a little bunch of cows, usually heffers and little calves. Very monotonous trips. There was a little mix-up between Vi and I on the year we bought the ranch at Summer Lake. She said it was 1914 and I said it was 1913. I believe she we correct. Anyway, it won't make much difference now.

Marie and I went to school at Summer Lake the Fall of 1914 and all of 1915 and graduated in the Spring of 1916. In the Summer of 1916, we started building a new house at Summer Lake. Old Charlie Morrison was the carpenter and he had one of the Hannon's from Paisley that helped him. We finished in the early Winter and lived there the rest of the Winter of 1916 and the Spring of 1917, then moved to the Marsh and started building a house on the Kirk Ranch.

In the Summer of 1918, we bought out Gene Childer's and his horses. He had leased allotments and had the best hay meadows there was in the North Marsh, which more than doubled our winter carrying capacity there. Then in about 1926 or 1927, we bought Kay Loosley out on the west side of the Marsh and that more than doubled our Summer grazing.

In the late Spring of 1917, the neighbors and us bunched up our yearling steers and sold them to a man in Idaho and we drove them to Bend for shipment. I guess there were three or four of us boys in the crew. I drove the lead cow, which was the choice job. Burt Gerkins was the ramrod of that trip. After about three days, that old cow started out on the road track and she'd walk right along. I'd stop and then she'd stop and her calf would walk along on the shade side of my horse. It wasn't much for Burt to come by once in a while and say, "You're going a little too fast, slow down", or "speed up a little" or motion to me. We got up to what is now Sun River, to the old Shawnquist Ranch. In those days we had a field to keep them in at night and it turned out that that was the start of the war and there was no cars got in there, and we were held in there seven or eight days, so we herded them out there in the timber and put them in the pasture at night. We were about due to arrive in Bend, so when we started out and counted them, there were 14 short. Bill Hamilton and I were sent back to find them and we did. When we got into Bend we didn't even know where the stockyards were. They explained to us that it was right close to the road. We got in there about 11 o'clock at night and thought well, we'd have trouble getting them into the corral, but they left the gate open and they went to bawling and we come in there and trotted in with our cattle. They just crowded in the open gate and went right in. We didn't have any problems, we just manufactured them.

About this time we got into a law suit with our neighbor, George Mayfield over the water and to settle that, we bought him out. What he had done was to go up the river and put in some dams to raise the water level up and it just ran out the river banks and disappeared. Then he went and put another one in down river at the Jackson place and the same thing happened. So after we bought him out, we just went up and tore those dams out and let the river go back to its normal channel.

In 1928, we leased the Sod House over on the Blitzen River, which was part of the old French Estate and moved the cattle there

in the Spring of 1928. If I remember, it was about a ten or eleven day trail. I didn't make that trip. My job was to go out and get the permission from Z X to use their trolls and start their pumps and water our cattle as we went across.

I believe it was the next year we bought about nine head of bulls up on the Hay Creek Ranch, which was East of Madras, maybe a little northeast. I haven't been back there since. Then we bought another bunch, six or eight head down at the town of Post. We took Uncle Hank and a saddle horse up there in a little old Ford Truck and he picked them up and drove them clear across to the Sod House. He had a good bed, a place to feed for him, his horses, and bulls. He never missed a meal, all the way across there which is pretty desolate and isolated country. They even packed him a lunch everyday. All he had with him I think, was a plug of Star Chewing Tobacco. Uncle Hank was with us from 1910 until he died in 1957. He was one of the best hands in breaking work horses I ever saw. I saw a lot of them work, but he could do the best job. When the horse was brought to the corral, why six or eight men would go in there and go to putting halters on their horses all at the same time. Not in a round corral, but in a square or rectangular corral. In a round corral, they just seem to keep moving and couldn't do much with them.

In 1929, we didn't have enough cattle for the Marsh, so we went over and bought about 1,500 to 1,700 head of yearling steers and drove them back to Klamath Marsh, then repeated the same operation in 1930. In 1932, we'd outgrown the Sod House rights and tried to rent some other property but couldn't, so we moved the cattle back to Summer Lake to winter them. Before Spring, they rented us two sections - Diamond and Buena Vista. We moved the cattle from Summer Lake back there, plus a few more and stayed there until they sold the ranch and we had to move. In the meantime, we bought the M.C. Ranch which was a great break for us.

In 1936, we sold Bixby and Hoffman of Alturus a thousand head of cows we had on the Diamond Ranch and moved them across in March

to the South end of Goose Lake - another long drive trail. We delivered them and went back to the Sod House got them ready and rounded the cattle up we had at Klamath Marsh and took them out to Wagontire. Bill Gouldin and his group took them off our hands there and we went back to the Sod House and Diamond and went to moving those cattle to the range down in Warner Valley, which was 40 or 50 miles. We left them there a couple of years in the Warner Valley and the third year we went over and got them and put them in a pasture, then sent them over to Bill Gouldin. He marketed them so we didn't have to chase them anymore.

In those two years at Warner Valley, we drove the yearlings up Plush and across the head of Abert Lake and over to Paisley and up around the East side of Summer Lake to River Ranch. Bill Gouldin got them there when the marsh was ready for them.

In the next two or three years, we drove the cattle to Lakeview and shipped them on the train. But after that, the trucks got cheaper and handier so we trucked all of them. That was the end of the cow drives.

The first home we built in Corvallis was discussed earlier and was sold to Professor Edwin T. Reed. The next one we built was in 1916 in Summer Lake in the Fall of 1916. We lived there during the Winter of 1916 and Spring of 1917, then Mother and Father moved to Klamath Marsh and in that Summer started to build a house there.

The next house we built was in Warner Valley for Oscar to live in. That was the best of all the houses we lived in. After finishing the house Mother and Father moved to Klamath Falls never to return to the ranches to live again.

After these long drives, the only ones we had were moving the cattle to the desert in the Spring. At the M.C. Ranch, we turned them out the first of April. Two or three days before that, we'd start out taking about three or four days for the drive which varied from year to year with a herd of 4,000 to 5,000 head. That was the cows and the calves and would take five or six days as a rule. Then it would be just a matter of getting some of the heffers and calves,



but they were usually over to the Coleman Ranch. They were right on the range, so it was a matter of just opening the gate and letting them out. In the Fall, some of the higher drier range would get short and we'd have to move them down into Guano Valley. If we didn't move them down, they'd come down themselves. When that was pretty well cleaned up, the boys would go out to the Dorthy place, kick them over the hill to the ranch in one day, so it was a very easy operation. In the month of June, the cowboys would go out on the desert and round up a little bunch and brand them wherever they found them, then go on and round up another little bunch and they would brand up over half the calves out there that one month. The cowboys liked that a lot better than in a corral and chute.

#### A REPORT ON SOME OF THE DUCK HUNTING I HAVE SEEN

When we went to Summer Lake in 1914, to go to school, Mother and we three kids were there and Father was in the Marsh taking care of cattle, so we didn't see him, so, if we had any fresh meat, it had to be ducks. Very seldom any geese. When I'd get home from school, Mother would say, "we'd better have a mess of ducks, don't you think son?" I had about a three or four mile walk down there and about three or four places where I could get up where I could get maybe one, two or three ducks with one shot. I'd pull off my clothes and go out in that alkali water and retrieve them. If there wasn't any ducks to be had, I'd get my .22 and get out in that fresh water on the Anne River and shoot those mud hens through the neck, which I usually could at very close range and in that fresh water they were good. Kept us all the time we were in Summer Lake going to school.

The best time I ever had was with a man by the name of Mr. Pauly. Jolley  
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1990 He was editor of the newspaper in the little town of Crescent. He'd get in his buggy and come over to Summer Lake to hunt. He'd hunt around there all day, and sometimes after I'd get home from school, he'd have a bunch of birds he wanted flushed up. He'd get in his stand and I'd get around where he wanted me to and I'd flush them over to where he was. He was a fine gentlemen. He'd usually leave me a box or two of shells and these were a premium piece of merchandise in this little boy's life.

I can remember shooting grandfather's 12 gauge Marlin pump gun with a hammer, and it was a kicking bruiser! If I happened to get a little over-balanced pulling the trigger, I'd land right on my back! I did that in the water one day and that made me a little more careful in what position I was in when I pulled the trigger on that old bruiser. It was a good game getter! One thing I remember in Klamath Marsh - we had cattle down on Wocus Bay and we had to go down there every day. There was poison parsnip down in that swamp and when we found the first of the dead cows, we got behind them and brought them all out of there. But I'd seen along there where somebody had built a set of mud skis I guess - about three feet 2 X 4's with a toe strap on it, thrown down on the bank, so I just appropriated them, come back with my shotgun and went out there on the swamp. Well, if you happened to step out of them, why you went up to your waist in that muck where the water lillies grew. The Indians called it Wocus. They picked it for food and simmered it for rice I guess. A few of them were still picking Wocus when I was there; I saw them doing it. There was also a number of old dugout canoes rotted out and laying along the bank on Wocus Bay in those days. I went out in the swamp with the pair of mud skis I borrowed and got out there where the mallards were coming south right down over the top of the tullies. They wouldn't be eight feet over my head and I'd shoot them as quick as I could so I wouldn't have to go so far to retrieve them. I was never one to hunt with a bird dog. I got the birds gathered up and started home. Put them on my duck strap and loaded them on my shoulder. Well, I was too weighed down, so that didn't work. So then I took them off my shoulder and tried to drag them, but that was no better. I finally had to discard ducks. By the time I got out, I had four ducks! I never went back there any more. There was an easier way than this!

In 1955, I went back to Klamath Marsh and went over to the Loosley place and set me up a little hunting camp in the cabin there. At one time there were lots of ducks in the marsh and there would be about eight or ten inches of snow. Well, that night the ducks all come up and landed in the spring creek. It was a pretty good creek and the next morning for about a three mile stretch of water or a little more, there were thousands of them. They were as thick in

that creek as they could get. I didn't walk out to the creek to see them, but it was a mess! The fatest ducks I ever killed in my life were those Gadwells coming out of Wocus Bay. They'd come up there I guess to get some fresh water and a little sand or gravel grit, which they have to have. When I was riding around there, I'd see a place where the ducks were starting to work, and that afternoon, I'd get in my car and go out there and shoot them. I was right there on the ground all the time and knew where they were. Very few people ever come in there to hunt, I don't know why.

Prior to this in Warner Valley, we reclaimed 7,000 acres of swamp and put it into grain. It was right there at the start of the war and we had enough machinery to put it in, but we didn't have enough combines or trucks. There was one or two years where we left as much oats on the ground as we got. Why did we grow oats? Well, with new green raw land you could probably grow oats when you couldn't grow anything else. The buyers said that was the heaviest task weight of any big lot in the United States. In that Warner Valley was the greatest mass of ducks and geese anywhere. One of the Federal Fish and Wildlife people come up there, he was a counter, and said there was 12 million of them. I don't know, but there was an awful lot of them.

In the 1930's the grasshoppers came into Klamath Marsh so thick they about took the whole marsh. That's when Nick and I got into the turkey business. We could keep them up there on those grasshoppers with about 1,200 to 2,000 turkeys, feed them about a sack of grain a day and the grasshoppers, which were probably as rich a protein feed as you can give a bird. We kept them there until the grasshoppers began to die out pretty fast. Then we'd truck them to Tullie Lake and put them on the stubble field and increase their feed and get them fat and get a lot of them to the market back east before Thanksgiving. I think I was in that about four years, but it was a good business. We made about \$1.00 or \$1.25 a head on those turkeys and in those days that was a fortune!

To back up a little ways, in the 1920's, Pat Mahaffy, who was

the general manager of the Central Oregon Bank in Bend, and our banker through these years, decided to have a duck hunting party down at the River Ranch in Summer Lake. He invited a bunch of banker friends and what not from San Francisco up there and I guess they had a grand time. That didn't last for many more years, because when Pat died, that died too. They didn't take any boys down there and I was away at school anyway, so I never got to a duck party at that time. But then some years later, Dick Smith from the First National Bank in Eugene and Baz Williams, a baker, decided that they would put on a party. Right after the 4th of July, they'd get a load of lumber in their pickup and come over and build blind. I think they built six blinds - two to a blind, so that was 12 hunters and that was enough for what accomodations we had. It was a great thing that party! The night before the season opened, we'd done a little drinking, a little talking and when dinner was over and the place was cleaned up why then we'd have the big drawing. For every blind, there were two numbers and you drew in the pot. You didn't know who your partner was going to be until the drawing took place. I remember the first time down there, when the drawing was over, I had Dick Smith. Dick would draw me, or I would draw Dick. These blinds were alright. There was a space between to dump shells and we'd shoot until they were gone and we'd empty another one in there. When we emptied the first box and it was gone, we looked out on the pond and we didn't have a damn bird of any kind! Dick said, "Jesus, lay your gun down". I did, and he reached down in the tullies there and come up with a bottle of old moon. We took a couple three snorts of that and filled up our guns and from there on we couldn't miss! N. M. Long and Doc Carter from Corvallis had the blind across the pond from us and they finally quit shooting and came over and said, "you silly bastards, we never saw anybody shoot so crazy as you were!" But I know what the other side is. One time Dick took us down to his private club out in Eugene and he'd been bragging on what good shots Dick and I were. We went down there and I remember we never hit a damn bird I don't think all day! I never could explain why. Whether it was the altitude, or the birds flying a little slower, I have no idea what the answer to that one was. As far as I know, I'm the only living one left of the big parties at Summer Lake.

A very unusual thing. There was a bend in the Williams River, up on the Mayfield place and about 3:30 in the afternoon, the geese mainly, and a lot of ducks, they'd come right in and land right in that pond. You'd just shoot your heart out. When I mentioned it to Don Kenyon and he and Bill Gouldin went up there and found it and thought it was the greatest thing they ever saw. As far as you can see, the birds looked like they were coming right from the Sycan into that one bed into the river. I saw the same thing over on the Loosley place. There'd be one bend in the river where they'd come in to feed. Whether the gravel was better or grittier or what, I do not know.

#### A FEW UNUSUAL THINGS

In the Spring of 1915 or 1916, in Summer Lake, we had a rabid Coyote. Mother wanted a little garden fenced with chicken wire and Charlie Hupp was working for us at that time. He was building the fence around this little plot and he'd set a post and was standing there with a shovel in one hand and a post in the other when he looked up and here come a rabid coyote about 3 feet from him. He just kicked him right under the chin, rolled him over backwards and before the coyote could get up, he had the shovel and killed him right there. Well, that was the end of Charlie Hupp. He had a homestead up around Arrow, Oregon, which was out east of Silver Lake. He said, "I'm going back where I come from" and we never heard from Charlie Hupp again. Although Mrs. John Foster, she was looking through the old Lakeview papers and she saw that mentioned in there.

A while before this, Father heard a big rucus outside and he got up to go out and look and there was a rabid coyote out there. He went back in and got his gun and killed him. I do remember we got one rabid hog, a horse or two, and three cows. That was all we lost out of that. Mother had two dogs, but he never got either one of them.

In the Spring of 1924, Bill Lane and us went out east of Fort Rock and rented two wells there. We stayed there until about the first of June, then went up to the Dericks. I believe that's what the people's name were. Got those cattle and got them down to the Gerkins well. When we got there the wells broke down and their cattle hadn't had anything to drink and ours had been on the trail all day without any, so we just got behind all of them and moved them into the desert and started out for Silver Lake and Klamath Marsh for water. We stood guard that night and the next morning, I was in the lead just going over into the Silver Lake Valley. There was some water going in the upper end of it, and it was just at daybreak. There was just a little movement of air come in there and those cows all stopped, and just for a split second, wherever a foot was up in the air, it just froze there for the shortest time. The boys in the back of the herd, they didn't see, but the two of us up front, we both saw it.

The longest horseback ride I ever made, I think it was in 1924. Somebody told Father they saw some cow tracks up in Sellers Marsh. That's over the hill east of Crescent. So I left the Kirk Ranch one morning at 4:30 and there was about four inches of new snow there and I run into about eight or ten inches before I got up to Sellers Marsh. Never saw a cow track, never saw a thing until I stopped to eat lunch. Just as I stopped to eat, why I looked up and here up on a limb was a camp robber. I threw him part of my lunch and that was the only living thing I saw and finally got into Bear Flat at 11:30 that night.