

# The Historacle

October 2005

## *The Official newsletter of the* Talent Historical Society

---

206 East Main Street • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, OR 97540 • 541-512-8838

---

### Beeson Diaries “Coming Home”

Due to the generosity of Dag Wilkinson and Caroline Beeson, the Welborn Beeson diaries are “coming home”. When THS failed to get the desired grant from Oregon Cultural Trust to microfilm and transcribe the diaries, Beeson family members stepped forward and offered to fund the microfilming. As soon as THS can purchase a microfilm reader/printer we will start transcribing as rapidly as possible. Recently, an article in the Mail Tribune generated interest in the transcribing project and three new people have offered to help. We could still use more; if you are even slightly interested call 512-8838 and talk to Jan about ways you can be of assistance. Last week, THS sent out another grant proposal, this one to Oregon Heritage Commission asking for funds to purchase a microfilm reader/printer. If we get that grant we can purchase a brand new machine. If not, we have devised other plans and will go forward regardless. Copies of the transcriptions will be distributed to schools, libraries, historical societies, and individuals as soon as they can be printed on paper and on CDs. The micro-filming has begun at the University of Oregon and they promise to finish the filming within 3 months.

#### Inside this Issue.....

Sherman letter	2
Enos Conger	3
Did you know?	4
Letters from the front	5
Nurse Clayton	6
Camp Baker	7
Membership	8

#### Civil War Issue

This issue is devoted to those men and women who participated in the War Between the States. Because Oregon was far from the frontlines of the Civil War, some assume that Oregon played no part in the drama. However, Oregon citizens lacked nothing in passion and emotions when it came to issues of the Union, slavery and the rights of the states. Keep reading to find out how local people contributed to the politics and conflicts of the day.

# Letter Echos Today's Concerns

As many fathers do, Salisbury Sherman prepared his family before he left home and became soldier. He brought his family to the photographer to make sure they would remember what he looked like and carefully penned a poignant letter to his newborn daughter to explain why he had to go. Faced with the possibility that he might not return, he wanted his child and a wife to know that he loved them and provided for their needs as best he could. With a heavy heart he left his home in Iowa to fight the rebels, abolish slavery, and restore the union. He would travel to Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia, suffer fatigue, pain, hunger, and homesickness until his discharge in Louisville, Kentucky. After the war, the family moved to Dakota Territory and then in 1877 journeyed to Wagner Creek to live the remainder of their lives.



This photograph was taken just before Salisbury left to serve in the Union Army. It shows baby Luella, Mary Jane and Salisbury Sherman SOHS #19496

*"Our home" Near Castalia, Iowa*

*Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> 1861*

*Luella May Sherman,*

*Dear Daughter.*

*It is with feelings of Gratitude to God for giving me a human being whom I am proud to address thus.*

*You was born the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1861, and at a time when the Liberties of the people and the union of these United States of America were in perillous circumstances: although, an immense Army of true-hearted Northern men are already in the field of battle, arrayed against the Southern rebels; our government is still calling for more men.*

*Under the foregoing peculiar & hazardous circumstance, I, your loving Father, volunteer to go and take up arms in defense of those Glorious, though hazardously achieved Human Rights, which your Dear Mother & Father have to this time enjoyed & which it is our earnest desire to perpetuate to you and all our posterity. I leave you regretful, as only a Father can. But, may God grant that I may return safely and with my object attained, is my earnest prayer. If I return not, Dear Luella obey your Mother while you both live, and strive to meet me in Heaven is my counsel to my only Daughter.*

*Your Father*

*Salisbury Sherman*



**Enos Conger** was just a teenager when the war between the states broke out. His mother probably begged him to wait it out but finally, he and his brother, John, enlisted in Davenport Iowa on the 13th of July 1864 in the 47th Iowa Infantry. He was marched to Arkansas and served for 100 days. All 57 men lost in the regiment died of disease not from war wounds or battles.

Enos came to the Rogue Valley and settled near Phoenix in 1877. His son became the Jackson County coroner and an undertaker. Conger Funeral home was established by this family.

### **Four Civil War musicians play at an Ashland Parade** SOHS #5708



Old soldiers were revered regulars at parades and gatherings. Imagine the stories they could tell! In this photo the two musicians on the right were Jesse Adams and E. E. White from the Talent/Phoenix area. Adams Road in Talent was named for Jesse Adams.

# Did you know?

- Abraham Lincoln turned down the Governorship of Oregon Territory? Southern sympathizer, Joe Lane was appointed instead.
- That Oregon had 6 companies of Cavalry in 1861?



- That the following U.S. Generals were posted in Oregon and Washington before the war?

**For the North:** U.S. Grant, Philip Sheridan, George McClellan, Joseph Hooker, A. J. Smith and Isaac Stevens. Both Sheridan and Smith abandoned their Indian mates and children when the war began.

**For the South:** George Pickett, J.J. Archer, John Bell Hood, C.S. Winder, & W.W. Loring

# Civil War Letters at THS

Last year, some historic Civil War letters were donated to Talent Historical Society. It is well worth a trip to come by the office to read them. Frederick Thompson Campbell, an ancestor of the Holdridge family of Talent, joined the 23rd Regiment of Iowa Infantry just weeks after his marriage to Mary Hayden.

Mary faithfully wrote to him but he was probably unable to care for her letters while he fought in the war.

She carefully tucked away all the letters written from the battlefields in St. Louis, Vicksburg, Indionola, Morganza, New Orleans, New Madrid, and Mobile. His letters echo a soldiers fears and frustrations and his longing for home.

In September of 1863 he appears to have been separated from the rest of his regiment at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri and wrote“ *...I think I shall go to the regt soon, for I am getting tired of this place, and another thing they live better thare than they do at this place, thare is everything done here to get at soldiers money for which he gets nothing in return, ... thare is no justice done here, I feel sometimes like giving vent to my feelings but I know that it will not do for all the satisfaction I would get would be to be put in the guard house...our country will be more corrupt after the war is over than it was before...*”

Frederick lived through the war and returned to his bride in Iowa. There he built a new home and raised a large family. When he died his letters were divided among the children and are now spread all over the country. Forty one original letters are in the Talent Historical Society.

*“our country will be more corrupt after the war is over than it was before...”*

## **Annual Membership Meeting & Chautauqua Program**

Don't miss this exciting program: *Where the Buffalo and the Camel Roamed: Oregon's Earliest High Desert Occupants*

presented by Dennis Jenkins from the U of O Museum of Natural History

Saturday, November 19th

1:30 - 3:00 pm at the Community Hall in Talent

Learn about the latest investigations of Oregon's oldest known archaeological sites, funded by *Oregon Council for the Humanities*.

# Women Served Too

“Sometimes I think I never was a little girl” said Mrs. Sue Clayton. “Even now in my mind when I can’t sleep well, it is all so clear in my mind: it seems that I can hear those boys calling Sue, bring me a drink! Sue bring me a wet rag.”

A Talent resident recalled her service during the Civil War as a very young war nurse. She was only ten when the war broke out and her father joined the Union army in Missouri. While her father fought, the family moved back to Indiana for safety.

From home she could see the “boys” drilling and shooting cannons and adjusting to the cramped army camp. Some of them were sick from disease and poor nutrition. She set about helping them before she was 15 years old.

She met her husband after the war in Kansas where she ran a millinery and sewing shop and years later ended up in Talent.



Mrs. Sue Clayton on the porch of her Talent Home (Medford Mail Tribune

Photo 25 Apr 1940)



## **Civil War Outpost- Camp Baker**

“As our company contained many neighborhood boys, some of them pretty wild and the drilling did not occupy as much of their time as it ought, many of the neighborhood hen roosts and pig pens suffered from night visits of foragers. No one was ever arrested or punished tho the tables in several of the mess houses were loaded with food not issued by our commissary. One man in our company Stephen T. Hallack, by name would never eat of the foraged provisions and used to remonstrate with the boys against the practice of foraging with great vigor and sincerity. He was a quiet man of about forty years of age, a native of New England, a sincere Christian and of strong convictions. He had a mining claim near Colemans ... and was well liked. He met a sad death the winter of 1865 and 66 returning from the valley where he had been on furlough and froze to death in sight of the fort the morning of April 1<sup>st</sup>. He was the only death in our company during the nearly three years of our service”....  
Orson A. Stearns

[Camp Baker was located near Camp Baker Road between Colver and Coleman Creek Roads about a mile west of Phoenix, OR. Now on private property, there is an historical sign there to mark the spot. Read more about it in the Hobart Taylor journal written while Hobart was a soldier at Camp Baker during the Civil War.]

The *Historacle* is published quarterly by the  
**Talent Historical Society**  
P O Box 582/ 206 E. Main St.  
Talent, OR 97540

### **Board of Directors:**

President: Bob Casebeer  
Vice Pres: Karl Slack  
Secretary: Katherine Harris  
Treasurer : Ralph Hunkins  
Directors: Alice Burnette  
Bob Casebeer  
Joe Cowley  
Lynn Newbry  
Bob Wilson  
Alternate : Helen Seiber

### **Museum Staff:**

Museum Director : Jan Wright  
Volunteer Office Assistants:  
Ralph Hunkins  
Alice Burnette  
Katherine Harris

### **Titled Volunteers:**

Oral Historian: Joe Cowley

Comments & letters may be sent to the Editor, The *Historacle*, by mail or by email to casebeer@jeffnet.org. Members of the Society receive the *Historacle* free with membership. Board meetings are at 6:00 pm at the Talent Library on the 2nd Monday of each month.

**In the 1890** census of Jackson County, four confederate soliders were listed as follows:  
Jacob S. Aid  
James Haskill  
Samuel Morgan  
John C. Praytor

# Membership Fees Are Due

It's time to renew your membership

Please use this page of the newsletter to send in your renewal.

Membership assures you the newsletter and notices of coming events and helps THS preserve local history.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

email\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Circle One:

Individual \$10.

Family \$15.00

Sponsor \$20. and up

**Talent Historical Society**

P.O. Box 582 • Talent, OR • 97540-9766

541-512-8838 • [talenthistory@jeffnet.org](mailto:talenthistory@jeffnet.org)