

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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DATE: TUESDAY APRIL 10, 1984⁴ 7:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Amity United Methodist Church, Nursery St., Amity, Oregon
POTLUCK: Bring your own service
PROGRAM: History of the Amity area

MUSEUM NEWS

We had a couple from Yamhill visit last Sunday and they were real impressed with our collection. The little home next to the museum has been rented to a young couple. He has built a deck on front, as the steps were very poor and needed to be fixed. A stove was purchased with all parts operating.

We received from Mr. Pekkola estate an old 1882 fanning mill manufactured in Salem. We seem to be in agreement to postpone publishing the family history book until fall or until we get more interest. We will soon have a three month break in the meetings too.

We still have plenty of Schools of Old Yamhill for sale. They are \$11.00 postpaid and \$10.00 at the museum and at various locations throughout the county.

ROMA SITTON

RICHARD WILLIAMS FAMILY

Part 2

The Oregon-bound emigrants of 1841 included two families--those of Richard Williams and Samuel Kelsey. On their way toward the Columbia River, the group stopped at the Whitman Mission on the Walla Walla River where Mrs. Whitman was astounded to see Keziah Williams with her large family. Mrs. Whitman later wrote to her parents in the east:

"About twenty-five emigrants have gone past this fall from Missouri to settle on the Willamette. Two families with children, one of them very large, six in number--the parents upwards of forty years old. It was very pleasing to me to see such a mother with so many children around her having come so far--such a dreadful journey....These immigrants were entirely destitute of every kind of food when they arrived here and we were under the necessity of giving them provisions to help them on."

It is interesting to note that Samuel Kelsey, father of one of the two Oregon-bound families, had married Lucretia (Lucy) Applegate in Cole County, Missouri in 1835. She was a member of the Applegate family, many of whom came to Oregon in 1843.

When the Williams reached the Willamette Valley, they settled on land near the Tualatin River. Richard Williams gave the date of this settlement as October 16, 1841. The Williams were not the first to settle on the Tualatin Plains. About a year before a group of American mountain men had begun to move into the area, establishing what they called the Rocky Mountain Retreat. These men had all worked as trappers for the fur trade and all had acquired Indian wives during their stay in the mountains. Also moving onto the Tualatin Plains shortly before the Williams came were several independent missionaries and their wives who had arrived in the Oregon Country a year or so before--none brought children with them. Harvey Clark, Alvin T. Smith, and J.S. Griffin were three of these missionaries. The Williams closest neighbors were the J.S. Griffins and their own daughter and son-in-law, the Isaiah Kelseys.

The Williams family soon became a part of the community life of the area. In December of 1842 the settlers on Tualatin Plains met at the Williams home to take into consideration the making of a road from the Plains to the Willamette River. In July of 1843 the neighbors helped Williams raise his barn. The family befriended a Swiss fur trapper by the name of Jacob Green. Green had been one of the builders of the Star of Oregon, the first clipper-type boat built in Oregon. He had gone to California as a member of the crew of the boat and had returned overland with the cattle drive to Oregon in the spring of 1843. In 1844 Green decided to return to California for more cattle, but before he left he made out a will saying in part: "I give and bequeath all the Property of every description belonging to me in America left after my Decease and burial, to the now unmarried children of Mr. Williams, a near neighbor Mr. Griffins." I do not know if Green returned to Oregon with cattle, but I do know that he was in California in 1848.

The Rev. J.S. Griffin kept a record of some of the early happenings on Tualatin Plains. Next time we will give you the parts that pertained to the Williams family.

(to be continued)