

CFR 0310

Creighton B. Jones

(Application missing)

Mission Bottom Farm Grows With Irrigation

Where Marion County agriculture has been, where it is now and where it might be going can be visualized on the well-known Creighton B. Jones Century Farm in Mission Bottom, 10 miles north of Salem near the Willamette River.

An area of little prairies on which individual families used to sustain themselves, Mission Bottom and the Jones farm have gone over to commercial operation with a wide variety of crops grown on the Chehalis soil. Jones speculates that the future will find the land devoted to truck crops to feed the growing Salem area.

When Jones' great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Silas and Sally Jones, settled their land in 1849, they used only enough of the 640 acres—perhaps only 1/10 of it—to provide the family and its horses with a living. Grains and meadow hay were the prime products.

Mill Nearby

The grains were taken to the nearby mill of the French-Canadian miller, Gervais (then pronounced Ger-vay' instead of the present Jervais) to be ground into flour. Among those using this facility were Indians from French Prairie, who forded the river in the Mission Bottom area.

Silas also was a noted horse fancier, a carry-over from his days in the East and from Gervais to the north of his farm, where he had originally settled. His race horses competed in the first State Fair in 1861 and were winners then and

thereafter.

After Silas' death, T. B. Jones—Creighton's grandfather—bought the farm from his mother and the other children. He and his wife, Ollie, ran it until 1917.

T. B. added hops to the land, thus becoming one of the first to grow that crop.

Creighton Begins Farming

W. L. Jones, T. B.'s son, took over the place in 1917 with his wife, Jessie, but W. L. died a year later, leaving the operation of the farm up to the widow and young Creighton and Rosalie, now Mrs. Cecil L. Rhoades of Salem.

The family carried on together until Creighton was graduated from Oregon State College in 1934, when he took over the place. Creighton's most likely successor is stepson John Stephen Crane, 19, who will be entering college this year, possibly to major in agriculture. There are also a daughter, Mrs. Mary Walker, and 2 stepdaughters, Lucinda and Beverley.

Creighton and his wife, Lenora, now operate on 620 acres of which 200 is from the original land claim and the remainder is from the Alson-Beers land claim. Beers was once the blacksmith for the Jason Lee community.

Irrigation Produces

Most of the acreage is under cultivation, unlike earlier days. Creighton credits irrigation's arrival in 1930 for the land's versatility, not to mention irrigation from the brow while grubbing out hundreds of acres to make them productive.

Limelight On 94th Annual State Fair

(Continued from Page One)

plement dealers.

Century Farmers

Farmers living on farms founded at least a century ago will be honored in 2nd annual Century Farm day ceremonies on Sept. 8. This year 44 farmers will receive the Century Farm parchment from Gov. Mark Hatfield.

Another feature that day will be a hog calling contest, sponsored jointly by the fair and the Oregon Swine Growers Assoc.

Kids' Day is Sept. 10 when all rides are reduced in price and a free Shetland pony will be given to some lucky child. And as an added feature the kids will compete for prizes by trying to find 10 needles in a haystack.

Mayors of Oregon cities will be honored guests of the fair on Sept. 12, the closing day of the fair.

Field corn was Creighton's largest acreage this year. He also has substantial acreages in Pennlawn red fescue, spring barley, strawberries and winter barley and pieces in crimson clover, sugar beet seed and filberts.

While speculating that truck crops are the crops of the future for the Mission Bottom area, Creighton says that 3 years ahead is as far as he can plan his plantings, so if he's right about the truck crops he won't be ahead of anyone. But in the meantime, he's making a solid, productive farm out of what used to be a family garden.

Modern Techniques 'Lift' Century Farm

The same place, some of the same buildings, some of the same products from the land—but what what a difference there is between the Harold Mendenhall ranch and the farm that Harold's maternal great-grandfather, Charles E. Fendall, settled 100 years ago in the Willamina Creek valley just north of Willamina in Yamhill County.

The difference is that, while the Fendalls and Mendenhalls down through the years wore out the land as they used it over and over for the same crops, Harold is restoring it through modern land use methods.

It's the story so typical of agriculture everywhere. Harold credits legumes and, to some extent, irrigation and fertilizer, for the fact that his 181 acres, all from the original donation land claim, are so productive of feed for his cattle and sheep herds.

And Hard Work

He could also credit another ingredient that was obviously added, judging from his heavily-muscled arms and shoulders—hard work. He and his brother, Glen E., who from 1945 until this year shared in rebuilding the farm, had to put a lot of sweat into their family farm to make it what it is today.

This is not to say that great-grandfather Charles E. Fendall, grandfather Riley Yates Fendall and father Claude E. Mendenhall

and the other Mendenhall brothers didn't do their best with what they had. It's just that techniques weren't refined then as they are now.

Charles E. had no picnic when he settled his 325.86 acres in the little valley snuggled into the Coast Range. The winter of 1860 was the worst in known history for the area and he lost all his livestock that he had painfully driven all the way from Kentucky.

He Built a Barn

Charles E. learned a real lesson from that, apparently, because he put up a barn that was a barn. In fact, it still is. Harold and his 17-year-old son, Mike, have been tearing out portions of it to put in a concrete floor and possibly to expand it. It's all they can do to take it apart.

The framework doesn't have a nail in it. Huge, almost knot-free timbers 12x12 and over 40 feet long are mortised together and pegged so tightly that when the building jack lifts one, others clear across the barn come up, too.

The few spikes, used for flooring, are about 6 inches long, square and tapered from head to a blunt point and they're harder to pull than teeth.

Up on the hill, 4 houses have been built around Charles E.'s old fireplace stone. Two were lost by fire and the 3rd has been remodeled by Harold.

Rangeland Limited

One of the reasons Harold and Glen, who bought another place this year, had to practice good farming was because their rangeland was limited to their own property.

In earlier days, cattle and sheep could range as far as they wanted. When the feed ran out or was choked by brush, they simply moved on.

Harold and Glen had the place seeded by airplane and now the

property is lush. Harold grows as a feed but storer. He also

Centennial Calendar

- 4-5 Oregon Shakespearean festival, Ashland
- 4-6 Wheeler County Fair and Rodeo, Fossil
- 4-17 "The Oregon Story," Portland
- 4-7 San Francisco Opera, Portland
- 5-7 Lake County Amateur Rodeo, Lakeview
- 5-7 Illinois Valley Miners' and Lumbermen's Jubilee, Cave Junction
- 5-7 Lake County Fair, Lakeview
- 6 Floras Lake Boat Races, Port Orford
- 6-7 Lake Lytle Water Sports, outboard racing, Rockaway
- 6-7 Baker County Fair, Baker
- 10-13 Harney County Fair, Burns



BACK-TO-SCHOOL

W. CRANT'S

Marion

Mission Bottom Farm

Capital News

Grows With Irrigation

9/2/59

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