

CFR 0828

Mrs. Alda Scharf

POLK

APPLICATION FOR CENTURY FARM HONORS

Deadline for filing applications - May 1, 1985

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT:

Your name (Mr., Mrs., Ms.) Mrs. Alda Scharf

Your address: 7695 Tucker Road Amity 97101
Street, Route, or Box Town Zip

Location of Farm: 8540 DeJong Road Amity Polk
Address County

To qualify as a Century Farm, a farm must have not less than 10 acres with a gross income from farm use of not less than \$500 per year for three out of the five years immediately preceding application for Century Farm Honors. Does your farm meet this qualification? Yes

Name of family member who was founder or original owner of farm _____
Noah F. Gregg

Year founder settled on farm 1884 Where did he come from? Ohio

Who farms the land today? My sons - John and Jay Scharf

Relationship to original owner? Great grandsons

Are any of the original buildings still in use? If so which ones? No

If you know crops or livestock raised on farm one hundred years ago, please list:
Grains, hay

What do you raise on farm today? Wheat, oats, clover, alfalfa

How many generations live on the farm today (Names)? Two We have greatly expanded the original farm. A son, daughter and my husband and I live on the S. E. corner.

How many times has the original farm been divided? Twice

Do you declare that the statements made above are accurate and correct to the best of your knowledge? Yes

CFR0828

Please return form to:

Elizabeth W. Buchler, Field Historian
Oregon Historical Society
1230 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon, 97205

1. Alda Scharf Signature of Owner S
2. Robert E. Scharf Husband
3. John E. Scharf Son
4. Jay B. Scharf Son
5. Amelia M. Scharf Daughter

CERTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP OF CENTURY FARM

I hereby certify that the farm for which Mrs. Alda Miller Scharf

7695 Tucker Road Amity, Oregon 97101
(owner's Name and Address)

is applying for Century Farm Honors has been in ^{her} ~~his~~ family
continuously for one hundred or more years.

Gunda Dawson
(County Recorder/Clerk)

2-1-85
Date

X

DID YOU KNOW?

Almost everything starts on a farm . . .
soap, insulin, textiles, food dyes,
lawns, garden seed, paste, insulation,
paper, cornstarch, putty, etc. . .



Dear Elizabeth W. Buehler:

Enclosed are the papers you
requested filled out to the best of my
ability. If these are not adequate please
let me know.

Our farm has an interesting story,
if you would like to hear about it.

Will be interested in knowing
ahead of time when the "Recognition Day"
will be. My husband and I have a tour
planned out of State during State Fair.

I'm a Life Member of the Polk
County Historical Society.

Very truly,

Edna Scherf

Telephone: 843-2899

OREGON WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE

Century Farm has history of dedication

By Mary Parkinson
Of the Statesman-Journal

PERRYDALE — The alert border collie waited patiently in the back of the pickup, unaware of soaking mist of the gray Oregon morning.

"Did you tie him up?" Alda Scharf asked her husband, Bob, when conversation turned to the dog.

"Sure did."

"That dog loves to work," Bob Scharf said. When the dog isn't needed, "we tie him up so he doesn't go out and round up some animals — including the neighbor's horses."

The collie's love of work comes naturally, Bob Scharf said.

The same could be said of residents of the white farm house outside this small Polk County community.

Bob and Alda Scharf, both in their mid-60s, have dedicated their lives to the farm. Her parents and grandparents did the same.

This year, 210 acres of what is now a 1,200-acre operation were recognized as a Century Farm by the Oregon Historical Society.

Actually in its 101st year, the farm was established in 1884 by Alda's grandfather, Noah Greg. Coming from Preble County, Ohio, he bought the land for \$37.50 an acre, Alda said.

He married Caroline Conner, whose parents were pioneers in the area. They had six children and built a 12-room house for their family.

Of Noah Greg's 18 grandchildren,

only Alda remained on the farm.

Before her grandfather died, she said, he divided the land into six sections — one for each of the children — and established lifetime leases on the parcels.

"He wanted to be sure all the children had a place to have a home," Alda said.

As circumstances would have it, all of the six Greg children weren't interested in living there.

Elona Greg Miller, Alda's mother, and her husband, Edward, however, stayed and eventually purchased two of her brothers' pieces of land. With Elona's portion that added up to 112 acres.

After Alda and Bob Scharf were married, they were able to obtain the remaining three parcels from family members to bring the original farm back to a whole.

Putting the pieces back together, though, was once only a dream, Bob said.

"Over the years that land had been cut up," Bob Scharf said. "I feel we've been able to accomplish something by bringing the farm back to its original size."

Instead of the Century Farm getting smaller, "we've actually been able to make it grow," he said.

Bob Scharf is now retired. He has turned over the farm operation to sons John and Jay and daughter Pam.

Wheat is the primary crop, but the Scharfs raise about 12 crops, including grass and clover seed, corn silage, filberts, alfalfa and oats.

Four ponds have been constructed on the property, Scharf said. Two are used for irrigation, and the state Game Commission leases two for wildlife refuges.

The Scharfs moved into their current house in 1963. It doesn't stand on the Century Farm land, Alda said. The 12-room house her grandfather built burned down years ago, she said, before her mother inherited the property on which it was built.

The Scharfs have been in agriculture-related activities, including the Oregon Wheat Growers League, Oregon Wheat Commission and Oregon Cattleman's Association. Bob has served on the board of directors for Rickreall Farm Supply. In 1983 they won the Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District award as conservationists of the year.

Alda's memberships are numerous: Women for Agriculture, Polk County Historical Society, elections board, Rickreall Christmas Pageant, 4-H and Polk County Saddlelites, a horse riding club.

"Is that why I never see you?" asked Bob.

Though he's retired, Bob, described by Polk County Extension Agent John Burt as one of the best farmers around, keeps busy "running errands and helping out neighbors," he said. "I've found that if you can do things and have a little spare time, you can find something to keep you busy."

"There's no sense in sitting around."

Oregon Historical Society lists 900 Century Farms

The Century Farm program was born in 1958 just before the Oregon centennial.

Originally it was a cooperative effort between the Oregon Historical Society and the state Department of Agriculture. Since 1973 the program has been administered solely by the historical society.

The announcement of this year's century farms brings the number to 900, said Chick Wellman, historical society spokesman.

To qualify for the honor, at least 10 acres of the original farm must have been owned by members of the same family for 100 years. During that time the farm cannot have been sold or rented. Only heirs living on the farm and farming the land can

have the farm designated.

In addition to the Noah Greg (Scharf) farm in Perrydale, others in the Mid-Willamette Valley receiving the Century Farm designation this year are:

Linn County: Thomas J. Henness farm, founded in 1864, owned by Clare D. Henness, Lyons; Samuel T. Crooks farm, 1877, owned by Leslie Hofer, Albany; Thomas Fleming Smith farm, 1875, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Smith, Halsey; Allen Gilkey farm, 1881, owned by Roy and Marian Goar, Scio; Henry Davidson farm, 1852, owned by Jeffrey H. Davidson, Halsey; Thurston Davidson farm, 1852, owned by Robert and Phyllis Davidson, Shedd.

Marion County: Jesse Herschel Hadley farm, 1871, owned by Dennis Hadley, Silverton; Martin Doerfler farm, 1877, owned by Mr. and Mrs. David A. Doerfler, Silverton; Asa B. Simmons farm, 1866, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Simmons, Silverton; Dr. Benjamin Davenport farm, 1851, and Peter Goodknecht farm, 1881, both owned by Robert L. Riches, Silverton.

Polk County: Mahlon Guy farm, 1875, owned by Edward Guy, Dallas.

Yamhill County: James Dundas Jr. farm, 1879, owned by Roy W. Dundas Jr., Dundee; Christian Zimmerman farm, 1883, owned by Gordon N. Zimmerman and Celia R. Dromgoole, Yamhill.



Alda and Bob Scharf have dedicated their lives to their farm.

Statesman-Journal photo by Dean Koepfler

Salem OR
Statesman
Journal

NOV 14 1985

GREGG - MILLER - SCHARF CENTURY FARM

My grandfather Noah F. Gregg was born January 12, 1852 in Ohio, and moved to Oregon as a young man. He worked as a surveyor, spent one term in the legislature, and was a partner in a hardware store in Dallas, Oregon. This store specialized in selling the first bathtubs in Polk County. Our first bathtub was a hand-made metal one with a wooden lid which served as a "sofa" when the lid was closed.

But farming appealed to my grandfather apparently, because he worked for a farmer by the name of Henry Gable. When Mr. Gable decided to sell his farm, my grandfather purchased it. He paid \$6,000.00 for 160 acres - or \$37.50 per acre. That was when a dollar was really worth something. Later he purchased 53.40 acres more for \$1,973.33 or \$36.95 per acre, giving him a total of 213.40 acres. This was farmed with horses, and he had a stable of 17 which included some for pleasure-business riding and driving. He also rented farm land near by.

Caroline "Carrie" Conner, the Oregon born daughter of two 1847 pioneers, became the wife of Noah and the mother of 6 children: Elona who was my mother, Roy, Henry, Azora, Carl and Bryan. Along with the growing children they also raised: wheat, oats, hay, strawberries, hogs & other crops.

My grandfather died in January 1919 before 10 of his 18 grandchildren were born, including me. He left a unique "will". He wanted his children to have the use of the land during their lifetime, and always have a place to build a home. Because of distrust in one child's mate, he made it impossible for the grandchildren's legacy to leave the family until they reached the age of 21. He gave the land to his children ONLY as long as they lived - a "life lease", and when they died it went directly to the living grandchildren. When my mother died, my remaining sister and I inherited 45 acres. Fourteen of the 18 grandchildren are still living, and 2 daughters-in-law.

My husband Bob and I ~~were~~ married in the fall of 1945, and my parents rented us the land of my grandfather's estate they were farming. During the years that followed, we bought land of our own connected to the rented Gregg-Miller land and started to buy out the Gregg-Miller heirs one by one. We now own approximately 1000 acres in this one block, as well as other land, and in 1984 earned the Century Farm title.

Of the 18 grandchildren - I'm the only farmer. Of our 3 children - sons John and Jay are farmers, and our daughter Pam is a farmer-secretary. I feel that it is an honor to be a farmer - to raise the one commodity the world can not do without, and a great honor to be the recipient of the Century Farm Award.

Alda Miller Scharf

Alda Miller Scharf

DID YOU KNOW?

Almost everything starts on a farm . . .
soap, insulin, textiles, food dyes,
lawns, garden seed, paste, insulation,
paper, cornstarch, putty, etc. . .



Hi:

Things are getting busy here on
the farm, and no prospects of a Portland
trip for some time. Wanted to get the
enclosed information to you before it got
lost under a pile of papers.

Hope you enjoy the story of our
farm - I wish I could have known my grand-
father. My grandmother died when I was
around 18, and she had lived with us off &
on so I knew her quite well.

Sincerely,

OREGON WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE

Amity, Oregon
June 21, 1984

Oregon Historical Society
1230 S. W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97205-2483

Dear Elizabeth Buchler or Thomas Vaughan:

Laura Crosiar informed me that you would be interested in knowing that our family farm has this year reached a "Century Farm" status. I have contacted several other people but have heard nothing from them concerning this information.

The original farm was purchased by my maternal Grandfather - Noah F. Gregg in 1884, and is located in Polk County, Oregon.

Any help that you can give me will be greatly appreciated.

I've been a life-time member of the Polk County Historical Society for several years.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Alda Scharf

7695 Tucker Road
Amity, Oregon 97101
Telephone: 843-2899

Polk

February 20, 1985

Mrs. Alda Scharf
7695 Tucker Road
Amity, Oregon 97101

Dear Mrs. Scharf:

Thank you so much for your Century Farm application. Yes, we would love to have the story of the farm. If you could write it out for us, it would become a permanent part of our Century Farm archives and would be available for researchers and others interested in the agricultural history of Oregon.

I am not sure just when we will have the award day, but it won't be during State Fair week since we will be working with Polk County historical organizations rather than the State Fair people. I have to check to see when the Polk County Fair would be - if you know you might let me know.

I look forward to seeing you during the time the award is made. In the meantime, we would love to have information about the Noah F. Gregg farm.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth W. Buehler
Field Historian

Amity, Oregon
April 23, 1985

Oregon Historical Society
1230 S. W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97205

Dear Elizabeth W. Buehler:

This has become a "different" year. There has hardly been a "breathing space" - and the year is almost 1/3 gone.

In your letter of February 20th you stated that the award day for the Century Farms had not been set. I do so want to be present for that event, so thought I'd better write and tell you about our plans, hoping we can prevent "duplications".

The Polk County Fair will be held on August 15 thru 18.

We are planing a trip to Alaska with 2 other couples to leave sometime the first of August and return by the middle of September.

Hope to finish the story of the Gregg-Miller-Scharf farm after the 3 carpenters finish repairing our house. Will try to deliver it to you in person.

Sincerely,



Alda Scharf

POLK

May 27, 1985

Mrs. Alda Scharf
Amity, Oregon

Dear Alda:

Thank you so much for sending along your farm's history; we will preserve it carefully in our archives. Your grandfather ~~ahh~~ does indeed sound like an interesting man with a forceful personality.

We have made special arrangements for presentation of the Century Farm awards at the general membership meeting of the Polk County Historical Society in October, so that should not conflict with your Alaska trip.

Thank you again for sending the history, and we wish you bon voyage on your exciting cruise.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Buyaler
Field Historica

EWB:cw

Additional details should be available from the Polk County Historical Society as we get nearer the date.

Life

Conversation: 2C.
Community: 3C.
Classified: 9-14C.

History of dedication

By Mary Parkinson
Of the Statesman-Journal

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TREES SHADE the old farmhouse now rented out by Bob and Alda Scharf, who still farm the surrounding land.

PERRYDALE — The old 12-room farmhouse burned down in 1891 and the ground is no longer tilled with a team of horses, but one thing remains constant on Bob and Alda Scharf's farm — they're still here.

Unlike most of the constantly moving throng which has become the norm of American society, the Scharfs still work the same farm Alda's grandfather homesteaded 100 years ago.

To mark the historic anniversary, the Scharfs have been given the "Century Farm Award" by the Oregon Historical Society. Since starting the century farm awards more than a quarter of a century ago, the society has awarded more than 800 Oregon farms with the honor.

THE SOCIETY GIVES out the award every five years and designated 85 new century farms this year. Morrow County had 10 farms recognized this year, the most in the state. Polk County had one other century farm named this year, owned by Edward Guy of 565 James Howe Road.

Bob and Alda Scharf are the third generation to farm on land that Alda's grandfather, Noah Gregg, came to from Ohio in 1884. About two miles south of Ballston, the farm is situated in the rolling hills of the area.

Their sons, John and Jay, also live and

Scharfs join century club of Oregon's farm families

Story and photos by Kraig Bohot

farm in the area and their daughter, Pam, has worked at the Polk County Extension Office and is helping with the wheat and oat harvest this summer.

Gregg, like many others in the Midwest, was told to "Go West, young man," to start a life for himself, Alda Scharf said.

"HE WAS ADVENTUROUS and wanted to see what it was like out here," she said of her grandfather, who died before she was born. "He stayed, so he must have liked it."

After Gregg died and left life-time leases for all of his children, one parcel of the original farm went to his daughter, Elona Gregg Miller, who was also Alda Scharf's mother.

Alda Scharf remembers her mother, who taught at Ballston School, carrying water by hand to the old school house. When she was attending school, Alda would carry a large container of milk from the family cows to the man at the

milk stand down the road. The milk then went to the creamery, and Alda would pick up the empty container when she came home from school.

When they were married, Alda and Bob Scharf first rented the Gregg property and continued farming it until they eventually bought the land. Though they moved to a newer house in 1963, the farm has continued to be worked by the Scharfs.

Before she married, Alda Scharf tried out life in Washington D.C. and Chicago as an employee of the U.S. Treasury Department. Two years was long enough to convince her that living on the farm beat life in the big city.

"THAT'S WHY I'M BACK here," she said. "They're (cities) nice to visit, but I don't want to live in one."

But time and modern technology have also changed life on the farm, as Noah Gregg's team of 17 horses have been replaced by the Scharf's team of combines.

"What he could do in one day we can do in one hour," Alda said.

The house that Gregg built to replace the original farm house that burned down is now rented by a family who works in the city. Gone are the three barns, the hog house and the chicken coop, the machine shed and the bunk house.

The Scharfs now have large storage warehouses and two man-made ponds for irrigation. Instead of prune, filbert and walnut trees as well as hops, the family farms wheat, hay, clover and alfalfa.

BOB'S SON, JOHN SCHARF, said that times have also made it much more difficult to make a profit in farming. In the early 1950s, a farmer could build a house with profits from the previous year, he said. Profits have dropped to about a fifth of that, Scharf said.

Then why, as a fourth-generation member of the family, did he decide to keep farming?

"Lack of education," John Scharf joked, then added, "I wouldn't want to do anything else. You get to match wits with the large companies and the bankers."

As for the next 100 years, Bob Scharf is optimistic.

"I think agriculture will have a turnaround," he said. "Just when it's going to happen, that's only a guess."

