

CFR 0891

Pauline Isabelle (Woodell) Howard



APPLICATION FOR CENTURY FARM HONORS

APR 30 1993

Deadline for Filing Application - May 1, 1993

Oregon Historical Society

(Please type or print)

Telephone #: Redacted for Privacy

Your Name (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss) Pauline Isabelle (Woodell) Howard

Your Address Redacted for Privacy

Street, Route or Box # City Zip Code

Location of Farm above address (Grande Ronde Valley, Union Co.)

To qualify as a Century Farm, a farm must have no fewer 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: James Lorenzo Woodell

Founder gained ownership of farm in (Year) 1868  
(ATTACH VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION, See Rule 9).

Founder came to Oregon from Bladensburg, Wapello County, Iowa

Who farms the land today? Pauline I. Howard

Relationship to original owner Granddaughter

Are any of the original buildings still in use? Yes

If yes, which ones? Farmhouse built in 1875; Barn - 1899

If you know crops or livestock raised on farm one hundred years ago, please list: reference attached pages copied from "History of Union and Wallowa Counties" published 1902.

What do you raise on the farm today? grass seed; a few acres of alfalfa

How many generations live on the farm today? Two

Please list names: Pauline Woodell Howard; daughter: Jean Howard Massie

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

Pauline I. Howard  
Signature of Owner

Please return forms to: Century Farm Program  
Oregon Historical Society  
1200 S. W. Park Avenue  
Portland, OR 97205-2483



of our subject, and he attended the country schools in his native place until he was twelve years of age, and then was taken by his father to Washington county, Wisconsin, the year being 1848. There the son finished his education in the public schools and remained a member of the parental household until he was twenty years of age. At that age he started in life for himself, going first to Janesville, Wisconsin, and taking up the stone mason's trade, together with plastering. Two years were spent there and then he repaired to St. Joe, working there at his trade for three years. In 1861, when the call came for men, staunch and true, to stand for the Union and assist in putting down rebellion's minions as well as to assist in protecting our western frontiers, our subject went to Omaha, Nebraska, and enrolled his name on the list. He accepted in Captain Crofford's company and was one of the first escorts that came across the plains to Walla Walla. Arriving here, the Indians not being as bad as was expected, he received honorable discharge, and his attention was then turned to the pursuits of private life. Florence was then in her palmy days and thither went our subject searching for treasures of the soil; not being successful, however, he went to teaming, continuing at this remunerative employment until 1868. In that year he was in shape to purchase land and secured a quarter section from the state and went at once to subduing it. He gave some attention to raising stock, and soon after purchased another one hundred and sixty acres of land. This last place is where he now resides, being three-fourths of a mile north from Island City. He handles his estate in a manner becoming good husbandry, and abundant crops are annually his reward. He has a fine orchard, and ships several hundred boxes each season. His buildings are commodious and comfortable.

In 1874 Mr. Shafer married Miss Emma J. Hotchkiss, whose parents, Corless F. and

Rebecca (Miles) Hotchkiss, reside in Carthage, Missouri. To our subject and his estimable wife, there have been born seven children, as follows: Allie M., wife of William Pearson, of Wallowa valley; Frederick C., married to Vena Booth and living in Wallowa; Minnie A., wife of Barney Oldenburg, living in Lagrande; Margaret A.; Isaac M.; Clara J.; Oscar, deceased. Mr. Shafer is a man that has always stood for progression and advancement and has toiled faithfully for that end, giving proper attention to the matters of politics and demeaning himself in a becoming manner to an intelligent, upright and capable citizen.

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JAMES L. WOODELL. — A volume which purports to give in review the careers of the leading and prominent builders and residents of Union county, would be sadly incomplete were there failure to incorporate within it an epitome of the salient points of the life of the esteemed gentleman who has wrought so faithfully here since the early times and who is named at the head of this article. Mr. Woodell is a man possessed of staunch qualities, is capable and upright, and has achieved a commendable success in our midst, while he has maintained an unsullied reputation and shows a well rounded character, and is dominated by wisdom of a high order and manifests keen foresight and practical sagacity with perseverance which have attended him constantly.

On April 22, 1849, the memorable year of California gold, the subject of this sketch was born in Wapello county, Iowa, to James E. and Mary (Yeager) Woodell, natives of Virginia. The father was a farmer of Iowa, and while our subject was still young the mother died. It was in 1862 that the father gathered his substance together and commenced the weary and arduous journey across the dreary plains that

*An Illustrated History of  
Union and Wallowa Counties*

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ended when their conveyances halted in the fertile Grande Ronde valley. The father took a homestead near Summerville, and there wrought faithfully until the time of his departure in July, 1892. Our subject was educated in the district schools of the valley, and as early as 1866, went to freighting from Umatilla Landing to the mines in Baker county and the Boise Basin. Two years were spent in this hard labor, then he engaged in general labor on a farm, and rented a farm until 1870. Meanwhile, in 1868, he had purchased his present place, securing one hundred and sixty acres at the first purchase. His farm is located three miles northwest from Alicel, and he has increased the acreage from the quarter section to four hundred and eighty acres, besides eighty acres of timber land, three miles west from Summerville. Mr. Woodell has his farm all fenced with hog tight fence and everything about his place is kept in excellent order, demonstrating him to be a progressive and intelligent stockman and agriculturist. He handles three hundred acres in grain and hay, the balance being the pasture of the estate. The pasture land is covered with the native grasses, having never been disturbed. And it is interesting that across the same run the old Indian trails of years gone by, a landmark of other days and times. Mr. Woodell has between one and two acres in orchard, raising the hardy apples, and plums. He takes great interest in fine stock, having some excellent registered Shorthorns that were imported, also had a Clydesdale stallion that cost twelve hundred dollars and was imported from Scotland. Since the range has been limited, Mr. Woodell has not raised so many head of stock, but has a goodly number, however. His horses are Clydesdale, Percheron, and Hambeltonian.

On August 20, 1870, the marriage of Mr. Woodell and Miss Isabel, daughter of Duncan and Grace Murchison, natives of Scotland, was solemnized, and to them have been born the

following children: James D., in Wallowa; Hattie N., wife of William ~~Glaine~~ in this valley; Junius E.; Rosa Etta; Claude S. Mrs. Woodell's mother died in 1854. Mr. and Mrs. Woodell are highly esteemed citizens of our county and valuable members of society. Mr. Woodell is not seeking personal preferment in political realms, although he accepted the nomination for sheriff from the Populist party, and while he ran ahead of his ticket, the Democratic candidate was elected. He has frequently done good service on the school board. He is affiliated with the I. O. O. F., Farmers' Lodge, No. 49, of Summerville, joining in 1874, and has held all the chairs. He is also a member of the encampment and affiliates with the Rebekahs, Jewell Lodge, No. 96, of Summerville. Mr. Woodell has had a rich experience in pioneer ways, and in contrast to his fine barns, one built in 1870, which is in good condition, and one built in 1899, and his elegant eight room house, there is standing on his place the cabin of the pioneers that was erected in 1864, and which is an interesting landmark of those days of sturdy men and noble women.

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HIRAM McDONALD.—The venerable and well known gentleman, of whom we now have the pleasure of speaking, is one of the builders of Union county, having the gratification of carving for himself a fortune and a name in this county, while also he labored for the advancement of the section and the development of its resources, being at the present time one of our most substantial and enterprising farmers and orchardists, while in the long period of his residence here he has manifested those sterling qualities of worth that characterize the real pioneer and typical man and which have won for him the encomiums of his fellows and the regard and esteem of all.



**Rick Read - Published Woodell Century Farm Article by Trish & Dave Yerges**

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**From:** "David Yerges" <Redacted for Privacy >  
**To:** "Rick Read" <Redacted for >  
**Date:** 11/16/2000 12:50PM  
**Subject:** Published Woodell Century Farm Article by Trish & Dave Yerges

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## **The Woodell Century Farm**

By Trish Yerges

IMBLER - If you have ever noticed the "Woodell Lane" road sign, you might have thought it represented just another pioneer name, the sole remnant of some long forgotten life. Not this time. Thought the early Woodells are indeed gone and nearly all their farms with them, one farm stands out as a sole survivor of time, the James L. Woodell "Century Farm" established in 1868.

James Lorenzo Woodell was one of this area's early pioneers who lived the American dream, and with hard work and good business sense, he left significant legacies to the Grande Ronde Valley and to his family. Some of these legacies still stand today as visible testimonies to his civic interests, such as the beautiful trees and chapel at the Summerville Cemetery and the establishment of the annual Union County Fair. The rest of his civic contributions are recorded in the annals of local history, such as his school board service, his nomination for sheriff, and his membership in several local organizations. Woodell even served one term in the State legislature in 1915. More important than any of these achievements were his family and farm.

At Woodell's death on October 1, 1931, the farm was handed down to son, James Duncan, and upon his death in 1963, the homestead was inherited by his daughter, Pauline Woodell Howard. Today, Pauline, 96, and her daughter, Jean Massie, live on the homestead together. Jean, a member of Union County's Historical Society, initiated the Century Farm application as a gift to her mother, and in 1992, the family was honored to have their farm officially registered as one of Union County's "Century Farms".

The development of the James L. Woodell farm is a noteworthy piece of local history and one major event in an equally interesting pioneer story. Woodell was born in Wapello County, Iowa, on April 22, 1849, the son of farmers, James Erwin and Mary (Yeager) Woodell, both originally from Virginia. His mother, Mary, died in 1854 when he was about five years of age. His father was greatly affected by her death. "Great-Grandad (James E. Woodell) was never happy there in Iowa after his wife died," explained Pauline Howard.

The year 1861 introduced a wild political climate. The Civil War erupted and Iowa had made its stand with the other Union states. Then in 1862, new homestead laws for the settlement of the West were enacted, and this news was a strong deciding factor in the Woodell migration west to Oregon. Oregon, though faithful to the Union, was too distant to be of major importance in the Civil War; consequently, Woodell saw Oregon as the family's ticket out of the Midwest and harm's way.

Their migration began in Illinois on April 9, 1862. The Woodell party included James E. (father) and sons: Williams, 21, Joseph, 19, James L., 13, Junius "Doon", 9; daughter Eliza and her husband, John Quincy Wallsinger, along with their 3 week old infant, Sallie, and four year old, Maggie. Friends urged Eliza not to leave with such a young infant, reasoning that the baby would not survive such a hard journey. In spite of their pleadings, Eliza did not want to be left behind by her family, so she prepared to leave with the others. Only her married sister, Mrs. William (Mary Margaret) German, stayed behind, taking occupancy of the home place.

"You can imagine that with Eliza being the only woman in the Woodell party, she had a lot of work to do cooking and washing on the trail for all those men in addition to taking care of her babies," remarked Massie. Their wagons were filled with supplies and jars of food for the trip. "We still have the flour bin that they



brought with them on the trail and a pottery jar that I think is from that era too," Massie added. On the bottom of this half gallon sized jar was imprinted the words, "Peoria Pottery". Its flat pottery lid was sealed in place by paraffin and contained foods like apple butter and prune butter.

The entire Woodell party arrived safely with their train to the Grande Ronde Valley about September 12, 1862. They had intended to continue westward to the Willamette Valley, but it was growing late in the year, and they were tired. The trip across the bleak, sage brush wilderness between Boise and Ladd Canyon was discouraging. "To see such contrasting grasslands in the Valley was like heaven to them," said Massie. Consequently, Woodell and his family decided to homestead in the Valley, at least for the winter, they thought.

It was with the help of another settler names Reaves that Woodell finally found a spring in the area where he wanted to file his claim. Meanwhile eldest son, William, took some oxen and the largest wagon to The Dalles, returning two weeks later with food supplies for the winter. The rest of the Woodells set up camp at their new homestead and busied themselves scything the tall grasses for winter feed for their stock. A log cabin was erected and in late fall, Williams made a second trip, this time to Walla Walla for supplies and parts for a plow since they had decided to stay and plant crops the following spring.

Woodell's son, Jimmy (James Lorenzo), was 13 years old when he came to the Valley with his father and siblings. At 17 years of age, James L. began working in the freighting business, but after two years he returned to farm work. He rented a farm until 1870. In the meantime, in 1868 at the age of 19 years, he purchased his first 160 acre farm for \$200, and in 1870 he erected his first barn on that property. He also acquired 80 acres of timberland three miles west of Summerville.

He was a single man when he bought the farm, but in 1870, he married Isabelle Murchison, who arrived in the Valley with her parents, Duncan and Grace Murchison, on the Scot's train in 1863. Their marriage was blessed with nine children: Frank Albert, James Duncan, Hattie, Rose Etta, Junius Edward, Claude Silvester, Mary and two other babies. Frank, Mary and the two babies all died during the 1876 diphtheria epidemic. The surviving children grew to adulthood, and in later years, his three sons: James D., Claude S. and J. Edward, each received one quarter section of the James L. Woodell estate. "James Duncan was given the home place," explained Massie.

"My Dad (James D. Woodell) was a good farmer. He had the best crops in the area, mostly wheat, alfalfa and pasture," recalled his daughter, Pauline. "Our farm stock included cows, chickens and horses. We grew raspberries, and had an orchard of apple trees, plum trees and prune trees. We did our own canning of fruits and vegetables and butchered only when we needed meat. For the rest, we bartered with our neighbors. I would like to live back in those years again!" Pauline said.

James D. Woodell was a farsighted agriculturalist. He had one of the earliest grass seed farms along with his friends, George Royes and Howard Wagner. Wagner brought seed over from the Willamette Valley where farmers were already growing grass seed crops, and sold some of the seed to Woodell and Royes. With some experimenting, these three farmers introduced the grass seed business to this Valley.

Perhaps Woodell's keen business sense was the result of his college education. Massie hinted to this as she displayed a rare group photo of graduates from the Carper's College dated circa 1895. James D. Woodell was in that photo along with fellow classmates: Verty Woods (or Tuttle), Bill Wade, George James, Anna Choat, Ed Sanders, Anna McKenzie, Elmo Sanders, Thelbert Choat, Aletha James, Tom Eubanks, T.A. Rinehart, Gertie Bledsoe, John Murchison, Jim Eubanks, Arthur Berry, Charles McGuyer, John Morelock and Dave Osbern.

At the peak of Woodell's farming career, he had a farm with a house and about six other buildings on it including a storage barn, a horse barn, a pump mill, some sheds, the original log cabin and of course, a smokehouse. About it Pauline said, "Oh that always smelled so good! We often smoked our ham and bacon out there." Behind the smokehouse there also used to be a huge garden.



In the not-so-golden-years of advanced life, James D. Woodell solemnly contemplated the future for the Woodell homestead. Sitting on his front porch in a rocking chair, he said to his granddaughter, Jean, "I guess we ought to sell and move into a retirement place." Jean responded, "No, I don't think you should ever sell. It belongs to the family." He was pleased, Jean thought, to hear that his love for the farm was shared by his descendants. James D. Woodell and his wife, Isabelle, both died in 1963 leaving the farm to Pauline.

Though Pauline remains silent as to the disposition of the farm after she is gone, Jean thought that one of her three sons would appreciate having the homestead. And so it goes. The Woodell Century Farm will survive the passing of another generation, and a younger Woodell descendant with a love for the family farm will become its keeper until it is his turn to make an estimation of hearts among his own children.

Photo#2 James L. Woodell Farm with Pump Mill

Photo#3 James L. Woodell Family: (clockwise from top left) Rose Etta, Hattie, Edward, James Duncan.  
Center: Isabelle, Claude, James L. Woodell.

James Lorenzo Woodell, Farm Owner from 1868-1931.

Photo#4 James Duncan Woodell, Farm Owner 1931-1963

Photo#9 Pauline Woodell Howard, 96, Farm Owner 1963-Present





Woodell  
Century  
Farm





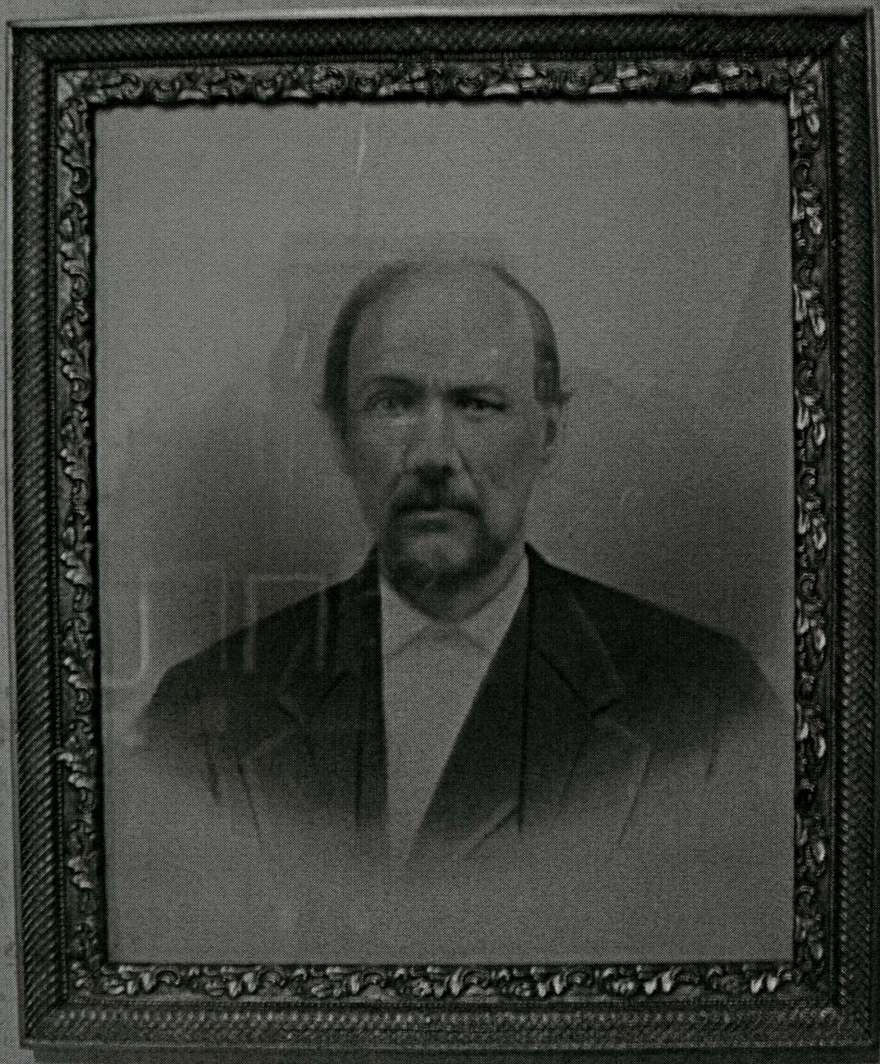












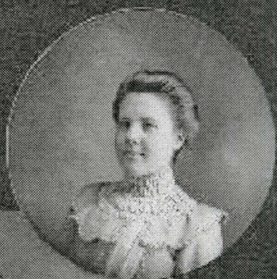








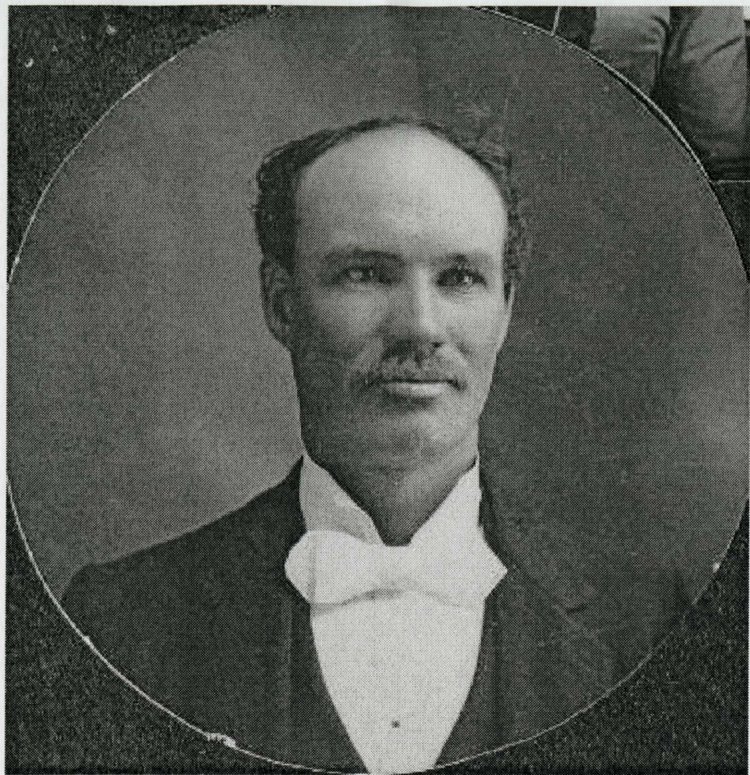






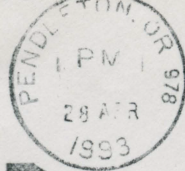








MRS. PAULINE T HOWARD  
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