

SFR 0001

Victor Theodore Birdseye II

Oregon Agricultural Education Foundation

Sesquicentennial Award Application

Date Aug 3, 07

Type of designation (please check) Farm Ranch

Legal owner / Applicant name Victor Theodore Birdseye II (Tad)

Mailing address of Legal Owner / Applicant Redacted for Privacy

Telephone Redacted for Privacy E-mail address _____

Contact name (if different than legal owner) _____

Mailing address of Contact _____

Contact Telephone _____ Contact E-mail address _____

Location of farm or ranch (which is the subject of this application):

County Jackson

Distance 2 miles from nearest town Rogue River, Oregon

Township 364 W Range 34000 Section 1100, 900, 100,

364 W of the farm or ranch (which is subject of this application): Redacted for Privacy

The Rogue River borders the property on the North; Birdseye Cr on the East, and Birdseye Creek Rd on the West forming a triangle on the south

GPS (Global Positioning System) Coordinates, if known: _____

have and leased ground,

Sesquicentennial Award Application – Continued

History of crops or livestock raised on farm or ranch – Cont'd:

What are crops / livestock raised on the subject farm or ranch today?

Now cattle hogs & X, $\frac{1}{4}$ horses.
Also sheep until 2 yrs ago
Hay & pasture.

How many acres does the subject farm or ranch include today?

260

How many acres are in agricultural use today?

200

The Family:

How many generations live on the farm or ranch today? /

Please list names and birth years:

Ted Bindsage 1953

Please include a narrative of your family history. Please also submit historical & current photos of the property & family, as available. If photos can be provided in digital format at a high resolution appropriate for publication (300 dpi or greater), it would be appreciated.

Types of information to include in your family history narrative:

- From which city, state, or country original owner moved.
- Generational transfers of the farm or ranch property.
- Significant events in the family (births, deaths, marriages, etc).
- Any major changes to operations (methods of production, etc.).
- Additional information on crops, buildings, other changes from the original farm or ranch.

16,
when my son went into the army I got a round
baler & a bale grinder. The best thing I ever did
from a labor stand point.

(Please continue application on next page.)

Statement of Affirmation

I, Victor T. Birdseye II (Ted),
hereby affirm and declare that the farm or ranch which I own at Redacted for Privacy

Redacted for Privacy, in the County of Jackson

has been owned by my family for at least 150 continuous years, as specified in the qualifications for the Century Farm & Ranch Program / Sesquicentennial Award, on or before December 31 of the current calendar year. Further, I hereby affirm that this property meets all other requirements for Century Farm or Ranch / Sesquicentennial Award honors, including that the farm or ranch has a gross income from farming or ranching activities of not less than \$1,000 per year for three out of the five years immediately preceding making this statement. I understand that the application materials will become property of the Oregon Historical Society Library and be made available for public use. By signing below, I understand that I am consenting to the use of both information and photographs.

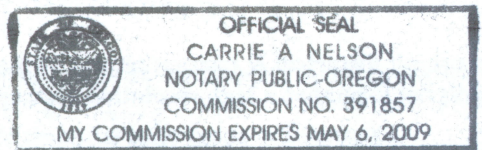
Ted Birdseye _____ Aug 3, 07
Signature of Owner Date

Certification by Notary Public

State of Oregon
County of Jackson

Be it remembered, that on this 10 day of August, 2007, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said county and state, personally appeared the within named Victor Theodore Birdseye II, known to me to be the identical individual described in and who executed the within instrument and acknowledged to me that He executed the same freely and voluntarily.

In Testimony Whereof, I have set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year last above written.



Carrie A. Nelson
Notary Public for Oregon
My Commission Expires May 6, 2009

Fees
Application Fee (includes one certificate) \$ 25.00
Additional Certificates (\$15 each) \$ _____
Total enclosed \$ 25.00
Make checks payable to:
Oregon Agricultural Education Foundation or OAEF

For office use only
Date Received 8/07
Century Farm or Ranch ID No. if on File CFR0733
Not on File _____
Application Approved? Yes No
Authorization GM
Century Farm & Ranch Program Coordinator
OHS Library
MSS 1604 Program ID No. SFR0001

Clarissa -

Her Family & Her Home



*A Story of the Birdseye House
by Effie and Nita Birdseye*

PART II — THE HOUSE IS BUILT

It was 1856, and now that the Indians were gone, David and Clarissa could start their house. In January, the new baby would arrive, and Clarissa wanted to be into the house before the new baby came. She was not to make it. The first two Birdseye children were born in the fort.

Huge pine trees were cut across the creek, dragged over to the building site, and a broad axe used to make them smooth. A man named Sam Steckel was hired to hew the logs, and to dove-tail them so that they fit together like a set of toys, making unnecessary the use of nails, which were hand-forged, and therefore very expensive. It took all summer to get the logs ready, and resulted in a small mountain of chips. As soon as the logs were prepared, a house-raising was held to erect the walls. A daubing mixture was made of lime, animal hair, sand, and milk. After the cracks were filled with pieces of bark, small pieces of twigs, and anything else that came to hand, the mixture was tamped in and smoothed off to make as flat a surface as possible. When the house was restored in 1982 and '83, chemical analysis was used to determine the content of the daubing material so that it could be duplicated authentically.

A house raising was a social event, and everyone from miles around came to participate in one way or another. Women brought huge quantities of food. The host was expected to furnish the whiskey, and David, always the gracious host, saw to it that there was plenty for everyone. By the end of the day, the whiskey was gone, and the eye of the workmen anything but true. Five generations later, historic preservationists were to go to great pains to achieve that precise degree of crookedness that lends to the house its character.

A man named James Campbell was hired to make the doors, the window frames, the wardrobes in the bedroom, and the bookcase in the living room. The downstairs of the log structure consisted of a kitchen-living room where food was prepared, cooked, and eaten. The only other room on the first floor was the large bedroom with the adjoining baby's room. Sturdy logs divided the upstairs into two sections with no connecting door. One side was for the family, the

other for travellers, considered necessary because travel was slow, and there were no other accommodations for many miles around.

A saw mill was built on Williams Creek by the time David was ready to enlarge the house, and he drove horses and wagon to get boards enough to build a lean-to for a kitchen and dining room. Two days each way were required for the trip. It is unclear why the floor of the new room was not made of the sawed boards, but instead was made of logs split vertically, and laid bark side down. This was called a puncheon floor. It made a very cold floor, and indeed, Clara had her toes frozen. Rugs were braided of worn-out clothing to stop the cold from coming through, and to cover up the splintery logs. It also added beauty and color to the room.



School books used by several generations of Birdseys. Bookcase was built the same time the house was constructed.

Clara loved the beautiful, and was determined to make her new house as homey as circumstances would permit. Whenever possible, she would send to Portland or back east for a piece of furniture of as good quality as she could afford. A gold-framed mirror now over the fireplace was such a piece, and added to the beauty of the room then, even as it does today. Her hand work was everywhere. She used common wrapping string for her crocheting when she had

nothing else to use. Later when fine thread came to Portland from the east coast, David would bring her a supply whenever he went north.

By Christmas of 1856, Catherine had married Edwin Magruder and moved to Jacksonville. They built for themselves a cozy one-bedroom home a few doors east of the Presbyterian Church. Clara enjoyed having her mother in Jacksonville. She now had a place to stay and to leave the baby when she went to town on business or for political meetings or social events.

Clarissa's brother, Wells, who scattered weed seeds over the farm to avenge David who thought his brother-in-law lazy. The farm was finally free of wild mustard after a hundred years or so of hand pulling by all members of the family.



Wells, in the meantime, had found work in Portland. David was not sorry to see him leave, for the two were constantly at cross-purposes. Wells was frankly lazy, which was difficult for David to tolerate. He also was vindictive, and found endless ways to get back at David. For instance, Wells knew that David took great pride in controlling weeds on the farm land, and was especially eager to prevent the spread of wild mustard. Where Wells ever obtained such a great supply of mustard seed, no one ever knew, but find it he did, and sowed it liberally throughout the farm. For over a hundred years the family was to walk the fields each spring,

shining when he got off the stage coach across the river.

In his absence, Clara had been busy. She had decided that she needed a sunny spot in the house to winter over her plants, so she instructed the men to cut out the east side of her bedroom to make a bay window in which to place the flowerpots. None of them knew anything about support beams, and the result was that there was such a sagging that great gaps resulted. She had sent to Portland for three glass windows, so the effect was quite charming, but she had not counted on the resulting gaps for cold to enter in winter, heat in the summer, and also for shoots of the vines to come into the house. Nor could she know that the walls were to remain in that precarious condition for over a hundred years before a new and



Bay window built by Clara and a hired man during the three year period that David was gone. Neither Clara nor the man understood structural support, and as a result, the east side of the house sagged badly until it was repaired during the restoration in 1982.

the back of his head so that his curly hair showed above his forehead, and calling out a friendly greeting to everyone he saw on the streets of the little town. It made no difference to Wes whether one was young or old, he just loved people, and if they were not friends in the beginning, it was not long until they were.



Wesley Birdseye and Effie Cameron about the time they met at a dance in Woodville, late in the 1890s.

the state capital were required before the papers were finally signed and legal rights obtained. He also built a reservoir on the upper part of the land, so that water could be brought from the creek by gravity flow. Finally the entire farm was under irrigation, and most of the upper land cleared, so that crops could be raised.

With most of the farm irrigated for pasture, Glenn could then bring heifers, as soon as they were weaned, from the dairy to raise until they were ready to calve, leaving the land near the dairy for pasture for the milking herd, and for cash crops.

The arrangement proved to be practical, and when the dairy sold in 1975, money was available to bring to reality the dream of restoring the old house.

THE RESTORATION

In May of 1974, the Birdseye House was added to the National Register of Historic Places, making it eligible for a matching grant from the National Historic Preservation Fund, administered at the state level by the Oregon Historic Preservation Office. Professor Philip Dole of the University of Oregon School of Architecture was hired to draw plans for restoration, and at his suggestion, a former student, Gregg Olson, now a specialist in Historic Preservation, was selected to restore the damaged logs, and to supervise the project.

The Logs were found to be surprisingly well preserved. Only on the southeast corner of the house where generations of Birdseyes and their hired help repeatedly threw water after washing their respective hands and faces was any major repair required. To obtain suitable logs, the surrounding hills were searched for pine trees that matched those used in 1856. The skillful hands of Restoration Specialist Gregg Olson used a broad axe to cut the boards to proper size for the giant veneer job. The boards were then fastened into place with dowels and glue. Only the most discerning eye can detect the places logs were chiseled out, and the new wood put in.

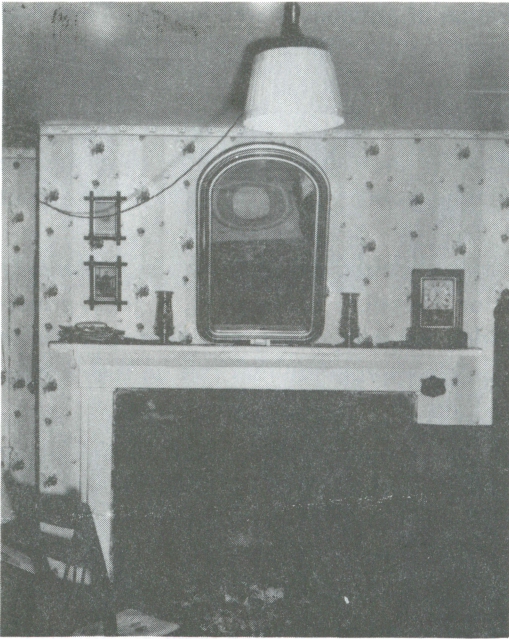
Another major project was the repair of the fireplace. Twice during the lifetime of the house, water from the river backed up into Birdseye Creek and surrounded the house. The fireplace originally did not have a sturdy foundation. Only rocks had been laid on the

The logs were put together by Dovetailing. No nails were used.



ground for the bricks to rest on. Mortar was applied, bricks laid, more mortar, then more bricks until the chimney was as tall as the workmen deemed necessary. The result was that when the floodwater receded, a great sagging was found to have taken place, causing cracks in the chimney. That it stood the strain of all this without falling down was itself a miracle. When time came for restoration to begin, workers first thought that the bricks would need to be numbered, carefully taken down and a proper foundation built for them to rest on. But then Newton Elder, a long time family friend and a very resourceful man, came up with the idea that hydraulic jacks might be used to lift the chimney, and a steel plate inserted to support its weight. It was a plan that worked, though not without difficulty, for at one point, the wall of the house began to move with the chimney. Ways were found to overcome the problem, and the task was successfully completed. The chimney was then lined with stainless steel and finally certified for safety by the building inspector.

Only three pieces of furniture in the house have been added during the restoration. Most of the furniture was very old, having been used by generations of Birdseyes, and showed the ravages of



Birdseye living room
before the restoration.



Birdseye living room
after the restoration.

time. To the rescue came Mr. and Mrs. Walter Larsen, whose skill and expertise in restoration of antiques is well known. They had great interest in the project, for their daughter Sheri, is the wife of Victor Theodore Birdseye II, and together they will inherit the home they now occupy.

In only one room has the floor been replaced, and that is the kitchen, which says something about where past generations spent most of their time.

Nearly three years were required before the house was ready to be occupied by Victor Theodore Birdseye II, a great grandson of the original builder, his wife, Sheri, and their son, Victor Theodore Birdseye III. It is appropriate that this be their home, for they will inherit the farm.

On August 15, 1982, an open house was held for family members, close friends, and all who had contributed to the project. The grant calls for the house to be open twelve times each year for a period of ten years, and the schedule placed on file in the State Historic Preservation Office each January 1.

It is sad that the restoration could not have been accomplished before Effie's death in May of 1966. The entire family realizes that but for her dogged determination and willingness to live a life of self-denial to keep intact her treasured home, the farm would no doubt have been sold little by little, and covered with buildings. As it is now, the wide and beautiful fields are cherished by the family, and admired by passersby.



The Birdseye House over the years: Note the rail on the porch in the top left picture. The top right shows Clarissa and her Granddaughter. It was taken in the 1800's. The middle left picture was used as a guide to restoration of the garden. The picture to the right was taken just before Restoration. The bottom picture from the 1880's shows the Virginia Creeper Vine.