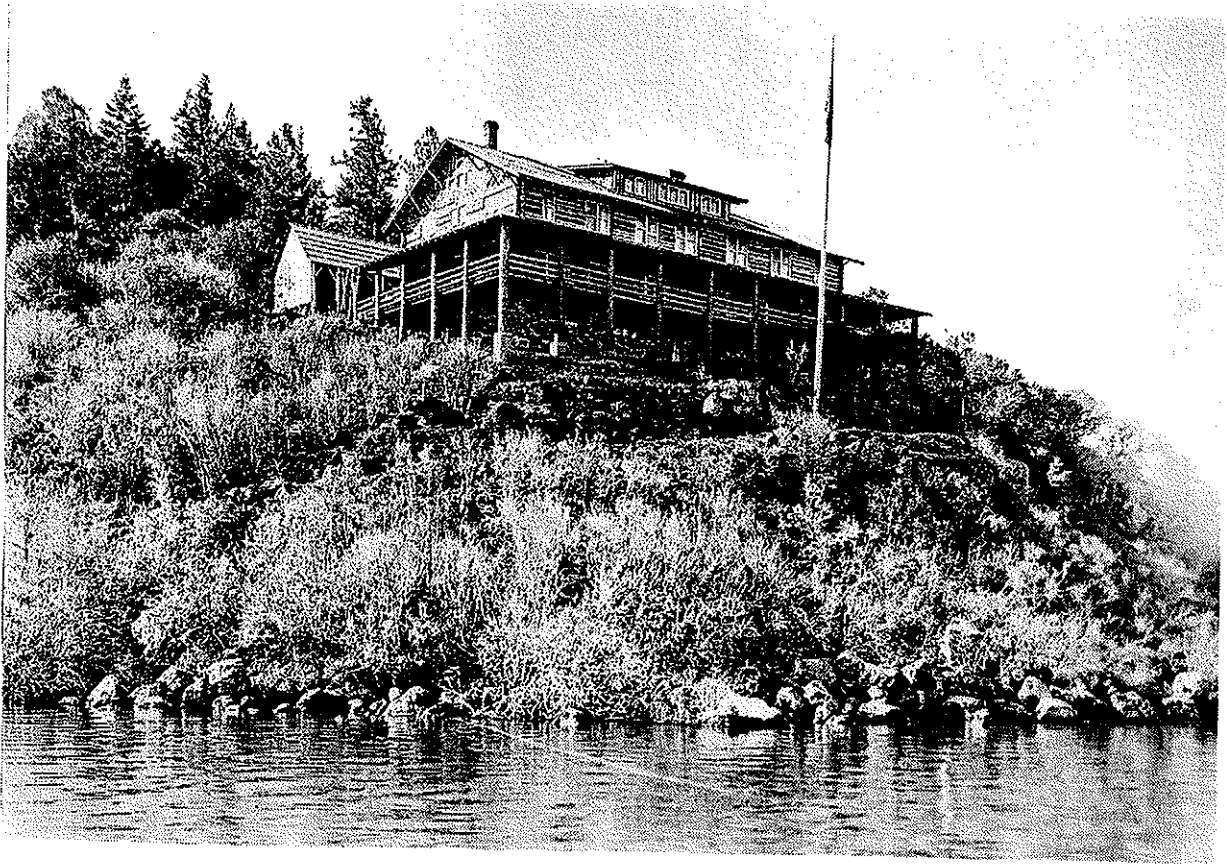


# HISTORICAL RESOURCE SURVEY

RURAL  
KLAMATH COUNTY, OREGON



Ward Tonsfeldt August 1990

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FOR RURAL AREAS IN  
KLAMATH COUNTY, OREGON

Ward Tonsfeldt Consulting  
Bend, Oregon

August 1, 1990

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This survey was begun in October of 1989 and completed in July of 1990. The project was sponsored by the Klamath County Planning Office with grant-in-aid assistance from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Data collected in the survey will help the Planning Office make informed decisions about historic resources within the rural areas of the county. An important goal of this and similar projects is the hope that a better understanding of Oregon's cultural heritage will stimulate people to appreciate it and take steps to preserve it.

The survey includes two parts--an inventory of potentially significant resources located throughout the rural areas of the county and an analysis of 60 sites previously identified by the County Planning Department as potentially significant.

General provisions for the project include the following:

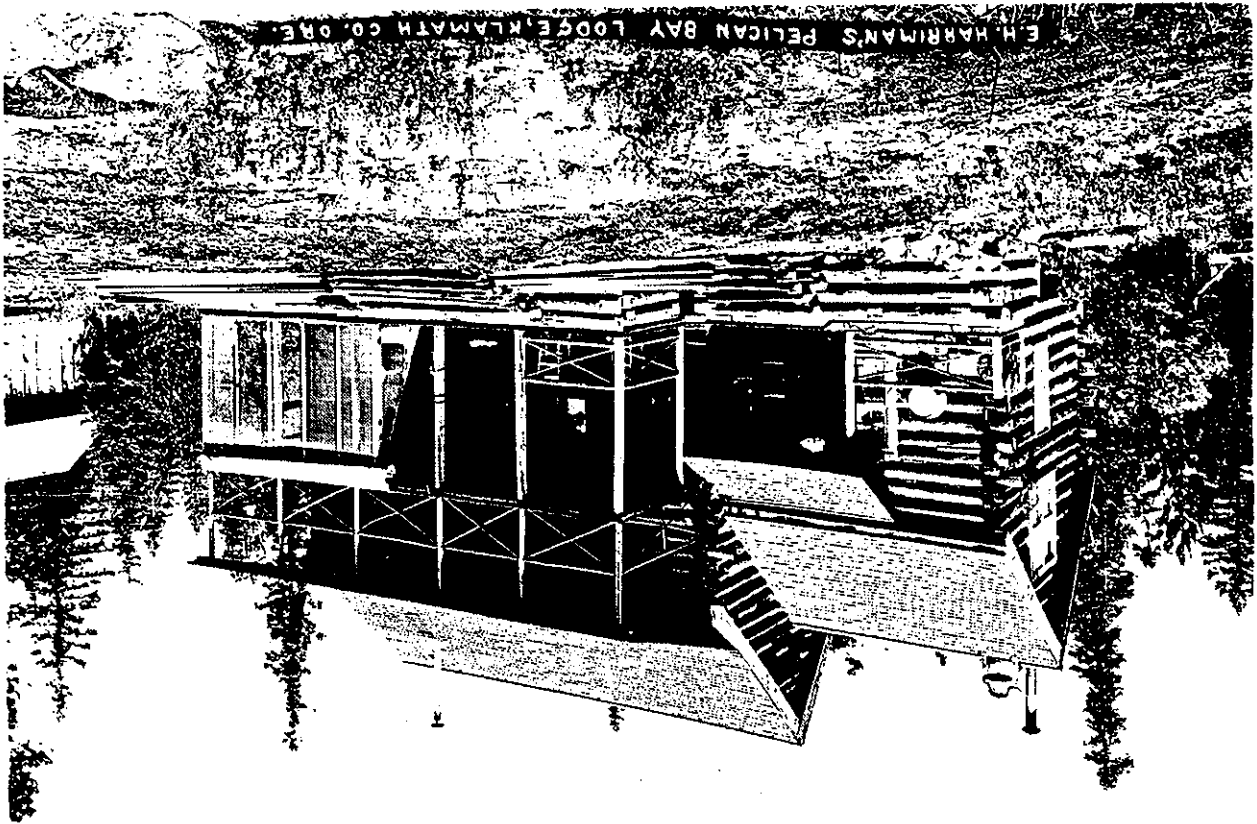
- a) The survey is limited to above-ground resources
- b) The survey is limited to resources located on private land in unincorporated portions of the county
- c) The survey should not duplicate the work of previous surveys

Rural projects like this require the cooperation of many people who are willing to share their knowledge of local history. I would like to extend special thanks to the following people for their cooperation: Pat McMillan and the Klamath County Historical Society, Wendell Thompson and the Klamath County Landmarks Commission, Fred Daniel, Rush Coffin, Gerda Hyde, Verland Huff, Leonard Johnson, Roy Gooding, Louis Hill, Amelia and Adolph Cacka, Lincoln and Frank Gabriel, Dan and Mary Jane Danforth, and Cole Fitzhugh.

I would also like to thank the project team, including Kay Atwood, Jeff McAllister, Ed Gray, Mary Anteaux, and Jean Tonsfeldt and Kathleen Williams.

Ward Tonsfeldt

Fig. 1 E.H. Harriman's Lodge on Pelican Bay (OHS photo #84463)



## INTRODUCTION

This survey of historic resources in Klamath County, Oregon, has analyzed the "built environment" that lies within the temporal and spacial boundaries established for the project. "Built environment" here means permanent structures built by people in Klamath County. Ordinarily this includes such structures as houses, stores, mills, churches, lodges, office buildings, barns, schools, and other buildings. It also includes bridges, canals, viaducts, railroads, highways, dams, and electrical transmission systems. In short, any fixed product of human activity that remains above ground comes under scrutiny.

The survey has, however, excluded structures that are no longer extant. Buildings that have been demolished or burned-- however important to the county's history--have not been included in survey unless their site has some special significance of its own.

Resources chosen for inclusion in the inventory must meet at least one of the general criteria of National Register for Historic Places definition of "historic." The NHRP criteria include four basic points. The resource in question must have an association with (a) events or (b) persons significant to the broad pattern of local history, or (c) embody distinctive design or construction techniques, or (d) be likely to yield information important to our understanding of history or prehistory.

Beyond these considerations, the resources should be at least 50 years old and retain their integrity; that is, they should not be modified too far from their original form or materials.

Since a sense of the "broad pattern of local history" is central to this survey, a set of historic contexts provides additional guidance. The historic contexts are not meant to exclude resources that do not "fit" specific patterns, but rather to provide a systematic basis for interpreting the rich and complicated network of historic resources that Klamath County offers.

### Temporal Boundaries of the Study Unit - 1826 to 1940

Klamath County is a political unit in south-central Oregon that was established in 1882. The geographical area that comprises the county was previously included in Lake County, before that in Jackson County, and originally in Wasco County.

The "history" of the Klamath Basin--in so far as we take the term in its literal sense of "written record"--begins in 1826 with the first contact between Euro-American and Native American groups. Following this, subsequent contacts occurred during the 1840s and the 1850s which led to the establishment of Fort Klamath and the Klamath Treaty in the 1860s. The next decade saw Euro-American settlement in the Basin and the beginnings of community life.

The second boundary, 1940, is set by the NRHP 50-year minimum for historic resources.

### Spatial Boundaries of the Study Unit

The spatial boundaries of the study unit are set to include all private rural lands within the county. Areas of the county within incorporated towns or public lands managed by in Federal or State agencies have been excluded. Incorporated towns include Klamath Falls, Chiloquin, Bonanza, Merrill, and Malin. Public lands managed by Federal agencies include the Winema National Forest, and portions of the Fremont, Rogue River, and Deschutes National Forests.

Lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management include the range lands in the northern and eastern portions of the county and the Oregon and California (O.&C.) railroad grant lands in the south eastern portion of the county. Klamath County lands managed by the National Park Service include portions of 12 townships surrounding Crater Lake and Mt. Mazama. Additional public lands managed by the State or by the Bureau of Reclamation are also excluded from the survey.

The western boundary of Klamath County follows the Cascade summit from the California border north to a point in T. 23 S., R. 6 E. near the Willamette Pass. From that point, the northern boundary extends east to the northeast corner of T. 23 S., R. 11 E. The county's eastern boundary then extends south to T. 32 S., R. 12 E., where it turns to the east to the north east corner of T. 33 S., R. 15 E. It then descends to the California border. The county's southern border runs west along the state line to its juncture with the western boundary in T. 41 S., R. 5 E.

The arrangement of private and public lands within the county is complex. Generally, 70% of Klamath County is in public ownership.

Beginning at the north, the area surrounding the communities of Little River, Gilchrist, Crescent, and Mowich is private, but national forest lands extend from border to border on both sides.

Farther south, the central portion of the county, bisected by Highway 97 and extending from Chemult south to the Williamson River is also private. West of this portion lies Crater Lake National Park and The Rogue River National Forest. East of this portion lies the Fremont National Forest and the Winema National Forest.

North of Upper Klamath Lake, an area of private land extends from Fort Klamath south to the Lake itself. South of the lake, private land prevails. At the southwest corner of the county is the Weyerhaeuser West Block of timberland, and at the southeast corner are public rangelands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Historic geographical areas among the private lands in the south and southeastern portion of the county include the following:

- Swan Lake Valley
- Sprague River Valley
- Yonna Valley
- Poe Valley
- Langell Valley
- Lost River Valley
- Lower Klamath Lake

#### Historical Contexts for the Study Unit

The temporal boundaries of the project include the following standard contexts of Oregon history, with their dates adjusted to the circumstances prevailing in central Oregon:

##### 1826 - 1865: EXPLORATION AND CONTACT

This period begins with the first recorded contacts between Native and Euro-American cultures, generally made by explorers, trappers, and fur traders. As the two cultures come into regular contact, friction arises between them, leading to treaties, the establishment of reservations, and hostilities.

##### 1865 - 1885: SETTLEMENT TO INDUSTRIALIZATION

This period begins with the first Euro-American settlement in central Oregon's Great Basin and lava plains regions, and in eastern Oregon's Great Basin and Blue Mountains regions during the 1860s. The Indian wars conducted during the 1870s impacted settlement. By the mid-1880's, the influence of transcontinental



railroads and their attendant industries was apparent, although the railroads did not enter the region until ca. 1910.

#### 1885 - 1912: RAILROADS AND INDUSTRIAL BEGINNINGS

This period begins with the influence of the transcontinental railroads--the Union Pacific in eastern Oregon and the Columbia Gorge, and the Southern Pacific in northern California and southern Oregon. The livestock industries grow during these years, mining technology changes from placer to quartz processing, and lumber firms from the midwest begin to acquire their vast holdings of timber land. Towns like Lakeview and Linkville are founded as commercial centers. Railroads enter Klamath Falls in 1909, Bend in 1911, and Lakeview in 1912.

#### 1912 - 1930: INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

This period marks the development of the industrial system in central Oregon both as a mode of production and as a force in social organization. Farming declines, ranching stabilizes. Lumber mills are built throughout the region, with mills of 250+ mbf capacity in Bend and Klamath Falls. Towns grow as displaced settlers enter the urban labor pool. Internal combustion and electrical technologies challenge steam technologies. Hallmarks of the "Progressive Era" are apparent in the development of educational institutions, civic institutions, and such social programs as Lakeview's Daly Fund.

#### 1930 - 1942: THE DEPRESSION AND THE MOTOR AGE

With the national depression, the central Oregon lumber industry slows until 1935, when pine production rebounds to 1928 levels. Internal combustion technology replaces steam technology in industrial and domestic applications. Highway development in central Oregon includes State Highway 97, U.S. 395, the Yellowstone Cutoff, and new routes to the Willamette Valley, especially the Willamette, Santiam, and Wapinitia passes

### Broad Themes within the Study Unit

The temporal and spatial boundaries of the study unit, together with the specific details of Klamath County's history, suggested at the outset that the study would encounter the following broad themes embodied in Klamath County's historic

resource types:

EXPLORATION - evidence of trails, monuments, and sites associated with 19th century exploration

MILITARY - structures and other resources relating to military presence and activity

NATIVE AMERICAN SETTLEMENT - buildings and other structures associated with settlement on the reserved lands (reservations) or the management of those lands.

EURO-AMERICAN SETTLEMENT - evidence of the first permanent habitation pattern developed by Euro-Americans

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION - technologies related to equine, railroad, water, motor, or air transport, and print or electronic communication media.

COMMERCE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT - resources related to towns and trade

INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING - technologies of producing durable goods or consumable goods.

GOVERNMENT - tangible evidence of local, state, or national government

CULTURE AND ARCHITECTURE - resources such as residences, churches, fraternal organizations, or private schools

Resource Types by Broad Theme

The following list of resource types indicates resources typically associated with the broad themes identified above.

<u>Broad Theme</u>	<u>Resource Type</u>
EXPLORATION	trail survey monument camp site marked tree
MILITARY	camp or garrison military wagon road battle site blockhouse
NATIVE AMERICAN SETTLEMENT	agency school reservation mill reservation farm residences
SETTLEMENT	ranch complex residence fencing barn corral cabin private water development trail Carey Act canal
TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION	livery barn farrier shop remuda corral stage station stage road wagon road railroad depot railroad roundhouse railroad shops railroad grades railroad bridges docks navigation canals, locks, cuts garages gasoline stations petroleum distributing highways

highway bridges  
highway maintenance facilities  
airports  
telegraph facilities  
telephone facilities  
broadcast facilities  
newspaper printing plants

COMMERCE AND URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT

stores  
offices  
restaurants  
rooming houses  
hotels  
banks  
doctors' offices  
saloons  
dance halls  
laundry  
lumber yards  
slaughter houses  
woodyards, coalyards  
warehouses  
elevators  
utility buildings  
water, sewer structures  
hospitals (private)  
fairgrounds

INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING

mills  
factories  
foundries  
creameries  
breweries  
brickyards  
sand, gravel, concrete plants  
stockyards  
hydro-electric dams

GOVERNMENT

federal agencies' buildings  
military installations (recent)  
Bureau of Reclamation canals  
post offices  
state offices  
asylums, hospitals, prisons  
state militia armories  
county courthouse  
county agencies' buildings  
city hall  
city agencies' buildings  
public schools  
fire station

CULTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

residences  
churches  
private schools  
theatres  
fraternal organizations, lodges



*Fig. 2 Walker Ranch, near Bly (OHS  
photo #49094.)*

## Klamath County Historical Overview

### I. 1826-1865:

#### Exploration and Native American/Euro-American Conflict

Although its climate and geography are harsher than other areas of the Pacific Northwest, the natural resources and productive capacity of the Klamath Basin exercised a powerful attraction to both Native American and Euro-American groups.

#### Native Americans

The Klamaths and Modocs, who lived in the Basin when the first Euro-Americans came, were distributed along the shores of the lakes and marshes. Separate groups of Klamaths occupied sites on Klamath Marsh, the Williamson River, Pelican Bay, the east shore of Upper Klamath Lake, and Sprague River. The Klamath Marsh group was by far the largest of the tribelets, numbering more than the others combined.

The Modocs were generally distributed south of the Klamaths, with concentrations on Lower Klamath Lake, Lost River, and Tule Lake. Estimates of the total number of people in these groups vary, but a probable range is 1200-2000 for both groups, with the Klamaths the larger by a factor of two.<sup>1</sup>

Each group had matched its needs to the Basin's resources. The wokus or pond-lily provided a staple food in the form of seed pods gathered in August and consumed through the winter. Fish in the lakes--including salmon, trout, and chubb--were a reliable source of protein. Concentrations of migrating wildfowl, and productive areas for hunting deer and elk were added inducements to permanent settlement.

For the Klamaths, the year's activity began in the spring with fishing, continued into the wokus-gathering in the summer, and ended with hunting and raiding parties in the fall. As the contact with outsiders became more frequent during the 1800s, the fall journeys became more ambitious, including expeditions down the Deschutes as far as The Dalles, into California's gold fields, and across the mountains to the coastal valleys. Relations between the Klamaths and Modocs were apparently cordial, with intermarriage relatively common and at least one group, the gumbatwa band, was comprised of a mixture of members of Klamath,

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<sup>1</sup> Leslie Speir, Klamath Ethnography. (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1930) p.5; Theodore Stern, The Klamath Tribe and Their Reservation. (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1965) p.6.

Modoc, Pit River, and Shasta tribes.

### Euro-American Explorers

Early contact between Klamaths and whites came in two forms. European and American explorers entered Klamath territory and Klamaths ventured beyond their basin to seek outside contact. The first explorer to record meeting the Klamaths was Peter Skene Ogden, who was a trapper for the Hudson's Bay Company. On November 30, 1826, he wrote in his journal that the Klamath village on the Williamson River had twenty lodges with stone foundations, that the inhabitants were wretchedly clad, and that they possessed no firearms and only one horse.<sup>2</sup>

Seventeen years later, in December of 1843, John Charles Fremont led a party through the Basin, stopping at Klamath Marsh, but missing Upper Klamath Lake. Fremont found the Klamaths helpful and reasonably prosperous, with more horses than one.<sup>3</sup> During the same year, missionaries in the Willamette Valley reported that the Klamaths did some exploring of their own, crossing the mountains to sell slaves to the Kalapuya near Oregon City.<sup>4</sup>

In 1846 a basis for more regular contact between the Klamaths and Euro-Americans developed as Lindsay and Jesse Applegate established the route for the South Road from Fort Hall across southern Oregon to the Rogue River Valley. The Applegate brothers had immigrated to the Willamette Valley in 1843 and established residences there. Their idea for a southern route across Oregon was perhaps prompted by their hardships on the conventional northern route. Although the Applegate party was well received by the Modocs, immigrants who followed the South road in subsequent years did not fare so well.

After 1846, relations between Indians and whites in Klamath Basin deteriorated. Fremont's second expedition to the Basin in 1846 went badly; Klamaths killed three members of his party, and he responded with a reprisal raid on a Williamson River village. In 1847, several Klamaths and Modocs joined with Crooked Finger and his band of Northern Molalas in the Molala War. In subsequent years, Modocs attacked immigrant wagon trains passing through the

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<sup>2</sup> T.C. Elliott, ed. "The Peter Skene Ogden Journals." OHQ (2: 1910) p.210-222.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Jackson and Mary Spence, eds. The Expeditions of John Charles Fremont. (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois, 1970) p.587.

<sup>4</sup> Stern, p.23.

Basin, accounting for perhaps 300 casualties by 1863.<sup>5</sup>

The California gold rush increased traffic and tensions on the South Road, as it offered a route to the Sacramento Valley. In 1852 citizens of Yreka, California, formed a company under the command of Ben Wright and set out to protect a wagon train reported to be nearing Modoc country. In one of the most bizarre episodes of this series of reciprocal atrocities, Wright apparently attempted to poison the Modocs with strychnine-laced beef and when that failed, attacked them by more conventional means.

A few years later in 1855, a significant but rather uneventful expedition had passed through the Basin from south to north. This was the Pacific Railroad Survey, sponsored by the Federal government and conducted by two Army officers, Lieutenant Henry Abbot and Lieutenant R. S. Williamson. At the lower end of the Basin they found "a party of men that had come from Yreka to meet and escort an expected emigrant train."<sup>6</sup> At the upper end, they encountered the Klamaths:

August 22. This morning the Indians came into camp. they were all well-dressed in blankets and buckskin, and were armed with bows and arrows and a few fire-arms. Their intercourse with the Oregon settlements had taught many of them to speak the Chinook, or Jargon language, and one had a slight knowledge of English. They owned many horses, some of which were valuable animals. No offer would tempt them to sell any of the latter, although they were eager to dispose of a few miserable hacks...(p. 60).

Abbott's private journal records a slightly different impression of the day's events: "Aug. 22, Wed. Many Indians in camp. Tried their food. Had to march back 17 miles and camp on a level prairie. Many Indians & squaws in camp."<sup>7</sup>

Comparing Williamson and Abbott's description of the Klamaths in 1855 with Peter Skene Ogden's 1826 description reveals that the tribe had changed. Their increased contact with the outside world had brought them more material goods--clothing, firearms, horses--

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<sup>5</sup> Estimates vary here. See C.J. Shaver et al., An Illustrated History of Central Oregon, (Spokane: The History Company, 1905).

<sup>6</sup> R.S. Williamson and H.L. Abbott, Pacific Railroad Reports. (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1856) p.66.

<sup>7</sup> Robert W. Sawyer, Henry Larcom Abbott and the Pacific Railroad Survey. (Portland: OHS, 1930) p.21.



as well as an increased sophistication. The net result was a society in flux:

In the changing conditions of the early nineteenth century the Klamaths were caught up in currents generated from within. The advent of horses and firearms made it possible for the tribes of the east-central Plateau, the eastern Salish, and the eastern Sahaptin to cross the Rocky Mountains, to hunt buffalo, and to enter into relations, both peaceful and bellicose, with the tribes of the Plains. As they came under the Plains influence...the Klamath were attracted to these new goods and the clothing at least came to replace or supplant traditional forms of wealth.<sup>8</sup>

#### Treaty with the Klamaths and Modocs

By 1862, Lindsay Applegate had been elected to the Oregon Legislature and had secured enough influence to introduce legislation creating a military post in the Klamath Basin. The result was Fort Klamath, garrisoned by the Oregon Volunteers, Troop C, First Oregon Cavalry, under Captain William Kelly. After the Civil War, regular army troops were assigned to Ft. Klamath, which was active through the 1870s, but was abandoned in 1889.

In October of 1864, treaty negotiations between the native groups and the U.S. were concluded at a site not far from Fort Klamath. J.W.P. Huntington, Indian Agent for Oregon, represented the U.S.; Lindsay Applegate and W.C. McKay (of Warm Springs) interpreted for the Indians. The resulting treaty established for the Klamaths, Modocs, and Piutes--perhaps 2000 people--the vast tract of "Reserved land" that became known as the Klamath Reservation. In exchange for the Indians' claims to other lands in the Basin, the government was to pay \$115,000 over 15 years, "these sums to be applied... under the direction of the President ...to promote the well-being of the Indians, advance them in civilization, and to secure their moral improvement."<sup>9</sup>

More than the Modocs or the Piutes, the Klamaths accepted the treaty and the Reservation system. In Theodore Stern's analysis, it was their rate of cultural change and level of relative success that led them to take a more conciliatory attitude than their neighbors.

Thus the frontier condition...gave the Klamaths...exposure to the whites, largely outside the

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<sup>8</sup> Stern, p.33.

<sup>9</sup> Charles J. Kappler, ed. Laws and Treaties Vol. II. (Washington DC: USGPO, 1904) p. 866.

Klamath homeland. In the awareness of new ways of life beyond the limited range of which their fathers had been conscious the Klamath...became diversified in outlook. Enriched with new goods, Klamath culture prospered, although in comparison with the level achieved by the whites it seemed poorer than ever. (p.28).

Establishing Fort Klamath and the Reservation, then, set the boundaries within the Klamath Basin. The grasslands south of the Upper Lake were available for Euro-American settlement or passage while the forest and marshlands further north were to remain in the hands of the native peoples. Later, the Modoc war tested this arrangement and confirmed it.

What the Pacific Railroad Survey had quietly demonstrated, however, was that the Reservation lands lay along the path of progress. Although the railroad that Williamson and Abbott envisioned was not completed until seventy years later, the explorers' perception of the Klamath Basin as a crossing point for east-west and north-south routes proved prescient. During the nineteenth century, the Klamath Basin was as obscure as any place on the continent; during the twentieth century, its location became more and more strategic.

### The Modoc War

The final episode in the process of exploration and "Americanization" of the Klamath country was the Modoc War, which capped a period of hostilities between the settlers in the Lost River Valley and the band of Modocs led by Captain Jack. At issue in the conflict was the traditional residence of the Modocs on Lost River. This area was not included in the 1864 treaty and was consequently not reserved from the public domain. As it was well-watered and grassy, it attracted settlers, who contested the Modocs' proposal for a separate reservation in the valley.

The Modoc's efforts at settlement on the Klamath Reservation had led to clashes between the Modoc and Klamath groups. As a result, the Modocs left the Reservation and returned to their former home in the Lost River Valley.

According to Shaver's account, the initial conflict was exacerbated by the businessmen of Yreka, California, who had enjoyed a lively trade with the Modocs and wanted them to remain in the Lost River Valley.

The war itself began in the Modocs' Lost River camp on November 29, 1872 with hostilities between the Modocs and a detachment of cavalry under Captain James Jackson, who had come to move the Modocs back to the Reservation. The Modocs subsequently

attacked settlements in the Tule Lake area, killing 14 (or possibly 18) settlers on November 29 and 30. The Modocs then entered the lava beds south of Tule Lake in California. Here they withstood the repeated attacks of the U.S. Army, the Oregon militia, and the Warm Spring Scouts. Several pitched battles ensued, with the Army getting the worst of each conflict. In one remarkable incident a negotiating team consisting of General Canby and Rev. Thomas were killed, while a third member--A.B. Meacham, the Klamath Agent--was scalped, although he survived.

Captain Jack and his associates were captured on June 3, 1873, and executed at Fort Klamath on October 3, thus ending a singularly grim episode in the Klamath country's history.

## II. 1867-1885: Settlement

Shortly after their successful survey of the South Road, the Applegate brothers reportedly promoted a scheme to settle the Klamath Basin. Known as the "Klamath Commonwealth" project, the plan involved a party of Willamette Valley residents who crossed the Cascades in 1848 but diverted south to California after much dissention within the group.

Settlement of the Klamath Basin proceeded slowly after the establishment of Fort Klamath. Even then, few whites lingered in the Basin during the 1860s. There had been some tentative residents in the late 1850s, including two stockmen, Wendolin Nus and Judge Adams, and a trapper from Yreka, Martin Frain. These people were essentially sojourners rather than settlers, however.

The distinction of being the first real settler is usually given to Wendolin Nus, who returned to the Basin in 1866, remaining until he became one of the first casualties in the Modoc War. In 1867 several more settlers entered the country, including George Nurse, O. A. Sterns, and Arthur Langell. The following year saw more settlement and the beginnings of agriculture. Although the altitude and soil conditions made much of the Basin unsuitable for farming, stock prospered. Judge Adams had brought the first cattle--a herd of 2000--to the Keno area on the Klamath River, where they fattened on the riparian grasses.

Dicken and Dicken find evidence that the years between 1855 and 1869 were favored with more precipitation than normal.<sup>10</sup> If

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<sup>10</sup> Samuel and Emily Dicken, The Legacy of Ancient Lake Modoc. (Eugene: Univ. of Oregon, 1985) p.2-4.

this is correct, the effect of these wet years would have produced more feed on the range and thus encouraged winter grazing.

The 1860s were years of rapid settlement throughout Oregon, and especially in the new country east of the Cascade mountains. The state's census returns show an increase from 52,645 in 1860 to 90,923 in 1870--an increase of 73%.<sup>11</sup> The first wave of settlers located in the western valleys, but the second wave lapped back across the mountains to settle the vast empty lands in the central and eastern parts of the state. During the 1860s settlers targeted Baker in the Blue Mountains, Canyonville in the John Day Valley, Prineville in the Ochoco country, and Linkville in the Klamath Basin as jumping-off points for the surrounding country.

Some of this relocation was stimulated by the gold strikes. Baker and Canyonville were gold camps first, and gold prospecting in southwestern Oregon and northern California had an effect on the Klamath Basin. The Robbins Letters in the University of Oregon archives, for example, record the activities of a family who located in central Oregon during the late 1860s. Their business was stock raising, which they pursued in the grasslands of Crook County. Their livelihood depended, however, on trailing their stock to market each fall in the gold camps of Oregon and Idaho. Thus, the effect of the gold "rushes" was widespread throughout the west.

Klamath settlers in 1867 included the following:

O. A. Sterns  
Lewellyn Colver  
O.T. Brown  
Arthur Langell  
Dennis Crawley  
H.M. Thatcher  
C.C. Bailey  
A. J. Burnette  
William Hicks  
George Nurse  
Edgar Overton

Settlement through the 1870s in the Basin was slowed by the Modoc War in 1872-3, but tax roles for 1875 reveal settlements at the Klamath Agency, Sprague River, Fort Klamath, Linkville, and Lost River. With the exception of Fort Klamath and the Agency, most settlement was concentrated southeast and southwest of Linkville. This was the area left open to settlement by the

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<sup>11</sup> For an excellent analysis of the relation between settlement and population trends, see: Jerry O'Callahan, Disposition of the Public Domain in Oregon. (New York: Arno Press, 1979) p.19.

Klamath Treaty, and the area best suited to stock raising. Early reports mention the richness of the grasses in such areas as the Lost River Valley and the Sprague Valley. By the 1880s, the possibility of raising small grains occurred to the settlers. Early yields of barley were as high as 36 bushels/acre.<sup>12</sup>

### Land Disputes

Most of the settlers who stayed in the Basin took advantage of pre-emption and homestead claim procedures to make their settlements permanent. Later, title to timbered land was obtained in the form of "commuted" homesteads, Timber and Stone Act claims, swamp lands, or the state lands offered for sale. Title to desert land was available through the various irrigation acts which began late in the 1800s.

To accommodate the land-hungry, a branch of the U.S. Land Office was opened in Linkville in 1872. The same year saw regular mail delivery and the beginnings of a stage line to Ashland and Lake City, California. In 1874, Linkville was the seat of newly-formed Klamath County. Two years later, a general election would move the county seat east to the more populous Goose Lake Valley and the town of Lakeview.

Despite the enormous amount of public domain land available, the settlement period endured several land scandals. The most notable of these was the "swamp land" scheme. Federal legislation had granted lands declared to be "swamp lands" to the states to manage, since they were presumably unfit for settlement. In Oregon, as elsewhere in the arid west, the swamp lands were in fact especially valuable. The state government disposed of these well-watered tracts for \$1.00/acre to unscrupulous parties who obtained title to lands already settled by legitimate entrymen.

In a second scandal, the state obtained title to alternate odd-numbered sections three sections deep along the proposed route of a wagon road from Eugene, over the Willamette Pass, and across the Klamath Reservation. In 1864, the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road (as the route was named) was built, and in 1865 the land was deeded to the builders, the Oregon Central Company. In 1876 they sold the grant to a California firm, the Pacific Land Company.

Approximately 500,000 acres of the land were located east of the Cascades, and of that portion, 110,000 acres were located on the Klamath Reservation. In 1905 the Booth-Kelly Lumber Company interests, who had purchased the grant from the Pacific Land Company, consolidated these scattered sections into a single

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<sup>12</sup> Shaver et al. p. 971.

tract. This was segregated from the Reservation as an 87,000-acre block in the northeast corner. The exchange gave the timber company a block of potentially valuable ponderosa forest in trade for scattered lodgepole holdings. Since the Klamaths had not known about the road grant when they signed the treaty, they did not accept the segregation, and the legal controversy lasted until 1936.<sup>13</sup>

During the 1880s, the Klamath Basin began to "settle up" in earnest. Klamath County was divided from Lake County in 1882, and Linkville became the new county seat. Linkville got a flour mill, a lumber mill, and a newspaper during these years, although it was not to get a bank until 1900.<sup>14</sup> Communities in the south-central portion of the County flourished, as ranching and dry-land grain farming proved viable activities.

### Irrigation and Reclamation

The final thrust of settlement in the Basin came as a result of the complex of irrigation projects known collectively as the Klamath Project. Attempts to irrigate portions of south-central Klamath County began in 1878 with the construction of the Ankeny Canal in Linkville. Four years later, the Van Brimmer ditch diverted water from Lower Klamath Lake to the Tule Lake, irrigating 4000 acres along the route.

In 1902, the U.S. Reclamation Act opened the possibility of federally-managed reclamation projects. According to a history of the Klamath Project prepared by I.S. Voorhees in 1912, the Reclamation Service was invited into the Klamath Basin by citizens of "Klamath Falls, Merrill, Bonanza, and adjacent valleys."

The Service prepared surveys and plans for a complex system, and began construction of the Main Canal from the head of Link River in 1906. Construction progressed slowly as the engineers cut through the basalt to complete the canal and its distribution system. Before the railroad reached Klamath Falls in 1909, materials, equipment, and personnel had to be shipped in by rail to Thrall and then by team over the Topsey Grade to Klamath Falls.

By 1912, the system was irrigating 24,000 acres; by 1940, it

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<sup>13</sup> O'Callahan, p.50-52.

<sup>14</sup> Rachael Applegate Good, The History of Klamath County, Oregon. (Klamath Falls, 1940) p. 63-64.

was irrigating 181,870 acres.<sup>13</sup> The impact of the system on the areas it irrigated was profound. Prior to irrigation, the stockmen and dry-farmers of Klamath County had land that was reasonably productive, but not remarkably so. Small grain yields of 35 bushels/acre were considered remarkable. After irrigation, wheat yields increased by a factor of three or four, and row crops--especially potatoes--were very successful.

Irrigation also affected settlement in the county. The population of Klamath Falls increased from 500 to 5000 in the ten years between the start of the project in 1906 and 1912. Not all of that growth was attributable to the irrigation project, of course, but the project provided the town's first visible "boom."

### III. 1885-1912 Railroads and Industrial Beginnings

#### Hill and Harriman

The westward progress of American industry arrived slowly in south central Oregon, which remained pre-industrial as late as 1910. At the turn of the nineteenth century, however, the area became a battlefield in one of the nation's great commercial and personal rivalries. This was the conflict between E.H. Harriman and James J. Hill--two railroad builders whose ambition and energy shaped the U.S. west of the Mississippi.

By 1900, Harriman and his associates in New York had control of the Southern Pacific railroad in California, and the transcontinental Union Pacific and Central Pacific lines. James J. Hill and his associates in Minnesota had control of the transcontinental Great Northern and Northern Pacific routes.

Hill wanted to extend his lines south from Portland to tap the lucrative California markets. The best route lay through the Willamette and Sacramento valleys, but this was the Southern Pacific's route. The next best choice ran from the Columbia Gorge south through the Deschutes Valley and the Klamath Basin--the central Oregon corridor. As Hill coveted this route and began his plans to build, Harriman began planning to forestall him by building his own line north from Weed, California, to Klamath Falls.

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<sup>13</sup> I.S. Voorhees, A History of the Klamath Project. (Klamath Falls, 1912) p. 122; see also, Good, p.106.