Benton County, Oregon
Historic Context Statement
1846 - 1945

Reviewed by the Benton County Historic Resources Commission
October 28, 1996

Compiled by
Liz Carter and Michelle Dennis
Historic Preservation Consultants
1995-1996
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Acknowledgments

The Benton County Historic Context Statement was researched and prepared by historic preservation consultants Michelle Dennis and Elizabeth Carter, in conjunction with the Benton County Development Department and the Benton County Historic Resources Commission. The Benton County Context Statement presents an overview of Benton County History which is meant to assist the reader to better understand Benton County’s development history. The document attempts to identify the types and quality of historic resources that remain within the unincorporated areas of the County. It also provides an outline of possible preservation activities that might be undertaken in the future to expand the knowledge of history in the County. This document was reviewed by the Benton County Historic Resource Commission on October 7 and October 28, 1996, and by the Benton County Board of Commissioners on October 23, 1996.

Benton County Historic Resources Commission
as of August 1996

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October 29, 1996

Ms. Kimberly Dunn  
Mr. David Skilton  
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
1115 Commercial Street NE  
Salem, OR 97310

RE: Benton County, Oregon, Historic Context Statement, 1846-1945

Dear Ms. Dunn and Mr. Skilton:

The Benton County Historic Resources Commission in its October 28, 1996 meeting voted to accept the current draft of the historic context statement. The approval was granted primarily on the basis of the document's well-crafted evaluation and treatment sections, which provide a good point of departure for the commission's future work.

The commission determined we must go on record regarding the current context draft. We want no misunderstanding. This work is adequate, hence our acceptance. The commission reached a consensus, however, that the document retains serious deficiencies. This is particularly true in the Historic Overview section. In accepting the context we underscore our conception that it represents a work-in-progress.

Many of the commissioner's concerns were communicated to staff and the consultants at our early October meeting. However, practical considerations, including the end of the grant cycle, and inability for our consultants to incorporate substantial change, weighed heavily in our decision to accept the context.

Several commissioners spoke to specific deficiencies. The Historic Overview section relies heavily on a limited number of secondary sources; correspondingly, the overview perpetuates inaccuracies from these sources. A number of the dates recurrently cited in the text are simply wrong. Some commissioners felt important aspects of the county's development were left unaddressed, including northeast county development, the significant impact of Camp Adair, and that significant twentieth century figures go unrecognized. The lack of good quality maps tied to narrative themes was felt to be a serious deficiency. Lastly, but importantly, the entire draft would profit from a thoroughgoing editing. Good editing would have promoted consistency in citations, section headings, and references to previous survey documentation. The commission is aware a historic overview is not to be seen as a comprehensive history. Nonetheless, as it stands, the commission feels the historic overview section is flawed as a planning tool.

In contrast, the value of this document lies in its second half. The consultants provide useful tools for further identification, evaluation, and strategies for commission preservation efforts. Their work will enable the commission to enter the next year with clearer vision of options.
available to us in promoting preservation in Benton County. This is no small accomplishment, and does credit to the consultant's work.

Consultant Liz Carter also provided a useful suggestion. Given the commission's concerns, she suggested we add revision of the Historic Overview to our Historic Research initiatives in the next year. This recommendation was readily embraced by the commission.

With our acceptance of the context we enter a new phase in our work. It is now up to the commission to undertake the initiatives and strategies outlined in the context.

Sincerely,

George B. Wisner, Chair
Benton County Historic Resources Commission

c Benton County Historic Resources Commission
Benton County Board of Commissioners
Benton County Development Department
Preface

This draft of the Benton County Historic Context Statement is the culmination of several months of work involving the Historic Resources Commission, Benton County Staff, the Benton County Historical Museum, and the historic preservation consultants. The Benton County Historic Resources Commission, the Benton County Historical Museum, and the public provided comments that were incorporated into this document.

Because history is a process, this document should be seen as a work in progress, to be reviewed, updated, corrected and brought up to date when necessary. Some inexact information may have been used inadvertently in the preparation of this document. An errata page will serve to correct any inaccuracies that may be discovered.
Introduction

Purpose

This document provides a summary of the history of Benton County, and is an important tool for county-wide preservation planning. It may also serve the public as a tool in learning about local history, and where historical and archival information may be located.

The Benton County Historic Context Statement describes in broad terms the historical patterns of growth and development as they pertain to the built environment. This includes architecture, landscape features and engineering. It identifies the significant historical patterns that individual historic properties represent, and through this identification helps to form the cornerstone of preservation planning. Some of the key themes addressed in this document are settlement, development of agriculture, the influence of the railroad, government activities, the timber industry, education, religion, and residential, commercial, and industrial development. The framework for the document was provided by the thematic categories and chronological periods established by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the National Park Service, and the Oregon Statewide Inventory Historic/Cultural Themes List. This framework was slightly manipulated to accommodate the unique chronology and patterns of development in Benton County.

Scope of Project

This is a geographically based study which focuses on the historical development of the built environment in the unincorporated areas of Benton County, Oregon. The Context Statement provides a brief historical overview of the area and identifies resource types that may be found within the county. This will be used as a framework to evaluate the significance of historic resources. Suggestions for future preservation activities that could expand the knowledge of Benton County history, as well as preserve the significant historic resources that remain, are also included.

The Historical Overview section is organized in sub-sections, and is prefaced by a general historical overview that describes national and statewide trends and events that influenced the development of the county. This is followed by more detailed historical background descriptions for five dominant themes within Benton County: Agriculture, Transportation, Commerce and Industry, Government, and Culture and Communities. Following this, the Resource Identification section describes the types of resources likely to be found in Benton County, and relates them to the themes addressed in the Historical Overview. The Evaluation section provides a basis for evaluating properties that were identified in the Resource Identification Section. Included in this section is a copy of the evaluation form used by the County, a list of the resources that are currently included in the Benton County Historic Resource Inventory, a list of Benton County Landmarks, and properties currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Treatment section of this document describes potential future research projects and future preservation activities that were identified during the course of this study.

Limitations on this project included time and financial constraints, which resulted in a relatively narrow scope for the study. Therefore, archeological and historic archeological elements, Native American lifeways, detailed study of landscape features, significant discussion of various racial or ethnic groups, and more in-depth study of agriculture methods and crops were not included in this study. These topics are important in the history of the county, and could be addressed in future projects.
Temporal Boundaries: 1846 -1945

The temporal boundaries of this context are from 1846 to 1945, the fifty year threshold for the evaluation of historic resources. The Pre-Settlement period is discussed briefly for context, but is not a major component of the study. This span will be divided into chronological periods that roughly follow those outlined in the Oregon Historic Preservation Office document, "Historic Preservation Planning in Oregon." The beginning and ending dates of these periods have been manipulated to fit trends and events in Benton County history.

Spatial Boundaries

This study area includes the unincorporated areas within the current boundaries of Benton County, Oregon. In sections describing the earliest years of the county’s history, narrative may include areas that are no longer part of Benton County, but which were within its bounds at that time. Benton County’s original borders “...began at the intersection of Polk County and the Willamette River [and] ran as far south as the California border and as far west as the Pacific Ocean. Later, portions of Benton County were taken to form Lane, Douglas, Jackson, Lincoln, Josephine, Curry and Coos Counties...”

Currently, the county’s eastern boundary is the Willamette River, and the area includes valley grassland, as well as Coast Range mountains to the west, which form the western boundary. The principal industries include agriculture, lumber, research and development, electronics, and wineries.

Geographic Description

Benton County is located in the central Willamette Valley on the west side of the Willamette River, and encompasses an area of 679 square miles. It has a population of 75,400. The county seat is Corvallis, located at an altitude of 224’. The landscape is characterized by flat flood plains and terraces to the east, with the rolling foothills of the Coast Range to the west. Several waterways traverse the county, the principal two being the Willamette River and the Mary’s River. Smaller tributaries, such as the Long Tom River, Oak Creek, the Luckiamute River and the Alsea River are also located within the boundaries. All of these waterways were important to the agricultural, industrial, and transportation development of the County. The proximity to the river and the decades of silt deposits from annual flooding make the region excellent for farming, and the rich alluvial soils continue to provide prime agricultural land today. The climate is characterized by mild temperatures ranging from an average of 39_ in the winter to 65_ in the summer. Extreme hot and cold temperatures are rare. Average annual precipitation is 42.55".

Methodology

This study focuses on the built environment within the study area, its changes over time and the influences that resulted in those changes. Themes that were particularly important to the development of the area were emphasized, with particular attention given to agriculture, architecture, transportation, industry, government and culture.

The Historical Overview and Identification sections of document were compiled from information gathered during the 1984-86 Benton County Historic Resources Survey, as well as other sources of existing material. The Benton County Historic Resource Inventory, the Oregon State University Library System, the University of Oregon Special Collections, Oregon Historical Society, various maps (Sanborns, cadastrals, Metzkers), historic photographs, and
various books, reports, theses and dissertations and State Historic Preservation Office files were also consulted.

A bulk of the work on this project involved the development of evaluation methods and treatment strategies for the County’s Historic Preservation Program. The Evaluation and Treatment sections were developed in consultation with Benton County Development staff and the Benton County Historic Resources Commission (HRC). Previous evaluation methods were revised and updated following National Register criteria. The Treatment section was compiled from ideas presented by the HRC and through the identification of areas in which further research is warranted.
Map of Benton County Oregon, 1920. Note locations of towns, roads, and railroads.
Endnotes

"High view of Monroe," looking north, no date.

Courtesy Benton County Historical Museum #985-120

Historical Overview
Historical Overview

Regional History

1812 - 1845: Exploration, Fur Trade and Mission to the Indians

The Landscape and the Native People

The Willamette Valley in its natural state was comprised of Upland Forests found in the foothills (Western hemlock, Douglas fir, White oak); Open Woodland found along valley flats or gently sloping land (isolated groves of Douglas fir and White oak surrounded by prairie); and the primary vegetation type, open Prairie land. "The Prairie extended from the floodplain margins up onto the bordering hillsides of the valley. In some areas the prairie was open grassland and in others it existed in combination with the isolated groves of trees in the Open Woodland vegetation types. Prairie comprised most of the Willamette Valley's vegetation. Indeed, the most striking feature of the Willamette Valley at the time of the 1850s [Benton County] survey was its openness (Towle, 1982)." Other types of native flora and fauna included Oregon ash, cottonwood, oak, alder, willow, and big leaf maple, Oregon Grape, salmonberry, elderberry, rose, hardhack, ninebark and cascara.

Prior to discovery and exploration of the Pacific Northwest region by various European and American groups, the land was home to a multitude of native peoples. Numbered in the tens of thousands, there were nearly 100 different band and tribes. The Kalapuya occupied the Willamette Valley south of Willamette Falls (at Oregon City) to the Umpqua River Valley in the proto-historic period. They lived in small bands of twenty to five hundred individuals, and in the Willamette Valley, each band usually had a permanent camp along a river that was tributary to the Willamette. The Chepenefa (Mary's River) band of the Kalapuya occupied the valley of the Mary's River. The Kalapuya were hunter-gatherers who followed the cycles of the seasons gathering plant and animal resources that were abundantly available to them in their broad range that spanned most of the valley. During the summer and fall, tribes would split into several smaller mobile groups, moving from one source of food to another gathering stock for the winter months. When the weather turned cold, they returned to their permanent winter villages.

The seasonal cycle of hunting and gathering continued for thousands of years, and ended abruptly with the arrival of European and American explorers and trappers to the area. The newcomers unknowingly brought with them deadly diseases and viruses for which the Native people had no natural defenses. The natives throughout the Oregon Territory were seriously affected by smallpox and malaria as early as the 1780s, nearly half a century before the arrival of white settlers to Oregon.

The Kalapuya population was decimated by this series of epidemics. The reduction of the Kalapuya population allowed some of the Klickitat Indians, who normally lived in the Columbia River Region, to migrate south. By the time early Euro-American settlers reached the current Benton County area, they found limited numbers of both Kalapuya and Klickitats in the region. Their numbers and strength diminished, the native people posed little threat to the pioneers.
Exploration and Fur Trade

A Spanish expedition traveling from Acapulco, Mexico is attributed with making the first sighting of the Oregon Coast, having reached the mouth of the Rogue River in southern Oregon in the Spring of 1543. The first description of Oregon was given by Spaniard Martín de Aguaílar in as a result of his expedition in 1603. Starting in the late 1700s, explorers began searching for the elusive Northwest Passage, a waterway that was believed to exist connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The great river of the west, now known as the Columbia, was also sought.

"American and British traders became interested in the fur resources of the Pacific northwest coast after the publication in 1780 of British Captain James Cook’s journal of his voyage to search for the Northwest Passage. The journal noted the Columbia River’s potential as a transportation corridor for extraction of resources from interior regions."6

While numerous ships passed what they suspected was the mouth of the river, none were able to land due to high winds and stormy seas. Finally, in 1788, American Captains Kendrick and Robert Gray were sent by their Bostonian backers to Oregon to explore the regions potential for fur trade. Upon reaching the coast, Captain Gray became the first American to land on Oregon soil, near present-day Tillamook. After trading with the natives, they departed for the Orient then returned to Boston. Several years later, in 1792, Captain Gray returned to the Oregon Coast in search of the river, and sailed his ship the Columbia Rediviva into its mouth braving the treacherous winds and sandbars. His discovery of the river we now know as the Columbia would later provide basis for American, rather than British claim of the territory.7

In part as a result of the reports by early explorers, President Thomas Jefferson in 1804 requested an overland expedition be undertaken. The purpose of the journey was threefold: to determine a route between the Missouri and Columbia Rivers which would facilitate trade and travel; to report on the flora, fauna and geography of the region; and to establish friendly relations with the native people.8 Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were appointed to the expedition, and they reached the Oregon coast in 1805. Although they did not succeed in finding the Northwest Passage, their trip revealed the riches of the Pacific northwest, and contributed greatly to the knowledge of the flora and fauna, the native people, the landscape and geography.9 This aroused America’s interest in claiming land that was remote, but desirable for expansion. The Lewis and Clark Expedition created another basis for American claim of the northwest region over the British.

Both Britain and the United States sent exploration parties to the region in an attempt to claim the territory. The Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), chartered by King Charles II in 1670, was a fur-trading company that was also interested in claiming the Pacific Northwest region for Britain. John Jacob Astor, a New York financier, was the primary force behind the formation of America’s Pacific Fur Company in 1810. In March of 1811, the first Pacific Fur Company party to reach the Oregon Territory entered the mouth of the Columbia River. In April 1811, construction was commenced on the fortifications that would become Fort Astor (later Astoria), the first American settlement in Oregon.10 The fact that this first settlement was American constituted yet another justification for the United States claim to the region over Britain.

In part because of the difficulties between the British and United States governments, Fort Astor was sold to the British North West Company in 1813, and was renamed Fort George. This supplanted the American position in the Willamette Valley for the next two decades. Since British and United States claims could not be reconciled, it was agreed in an 1818 Treaty that the region be open to citizens of both countries until 1828, when it would be re-addressed.11

The fur trade period began in the 1780s and lasted until settlement of the region began in earnest in the 1840s. Fur trade in the region was under the leadership of the North West Company until
1821, when it was absorbed by the Hudson's Bay Company, and Fort George became the site of the regional headquarters for the HBC. Dr. John McLoughlin served as chief factor for the HBC Columbia District from 1824 until 1846. In 1828, shortly after his assignment to the Columbia District, the Fort George site was abandoned and the new HBC headquarters became Fort Vancouver (in present day Washington State). Hudson's Bay Company interest in the Pacific Northwest was not political, but driven by the current fashion of beaver hats. Settlement in Oregon actually began with French Canadian trappers who had worked for the HBC, not with American pioneers as is commonly believed.

Numerous expeditions into the Willamette Valley were undertaken in the early to mid 1800s. Many early explorers were associated with fur trapping companies such as the North West Company or the Hudson's Bay Company. John Work, Peter Skene Ogden, David Douglas, and Alexander McLeod all made expeditions during the 1820s and 1830s. Other expeditions were undertaken by missionaries, scientists or independent fur trappers. Exploration within the bounds of present-day Benton County occurred primarily along a route that became known as the Hudson's Bay Company, or the Oregon-California Pack Trail. "The pack trail, which wound along the base of the foothills of the Coast Range, passed through the general vicinity of the current Willamette Valley towns of Lafayette, Dallas, Corvallis-Philomath, and Elmira. South of the Willamette Valley, the road continued to the Umpqua River region, then south to the present Grant's Pass-Jacksonville area and across the Siskiyou Pass into northern California." 

The Missionary Initiative

The next movement of Europeans and Americans into the Pacific Northwest region was by missionaries, most actively from the 1830s to the late 1840s. Nathaniel Wyeth brought the first missionaries and scientists to the territory. The perceived spiritual help needed by the Indians was one reason for the increased missionary activity in the Pacific Northwest. Methodist Jason Lee was one of the first to answer the calling, establishing a mission near Salem in 1834. In 1836 four Protestant missionaries - Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and Henry and Eliza Spalding - traveled with trapping parties to Oregon. They founded their mission near Walla Walla and Lewiston.

Roman Catholic involvement dates to about 1839 with the organization of two missions by Francis Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers. The first of these missions was north of Fort Vancouver (in present-day Washington state), and the second was on the Willamette River near Jason Lee's post (near Salem). Pierre Jean DeSmet later continued Catholic missions in the Pacific Northwest. "These outposts of Christianity existed for varying lengths of time at more than thirty sites in the early Pacific Northwest. There were six Methodist mission sites, four American Board, some two dozen Roman Catholic, and one Mormon." 

Despite their intentions, or perhaps because of them, the missionaries' impact on the native population was devastating. Division of the native people into Christian and non-Christian factions created strife among the tribes, and the arrival of Euro-American settlers brought disease and disruption to the previously balanced lives of the native people. Confusion about the various Christian beliefs left the natives questioning the validity of their evangelizing neighbors. By 1844, Jason Lee was removed from his mission and many others were foundering. The Whitman massacre of 1847 ended a generally peaceful period between white settlers and native people. The Cayuse War resulted, and what followed were decades of conflict, culminating in brutal wars, the removal of Native Americans from their land and the occupation of that land by white settlers. In 1855 and 1856, treaties forced the Indians to be colonized on reservations, which were often located on land that was undesirable to both whites and Native people. Most native people were moved to reservations far from their native land, often with tribes that had traditionally been enemies. Some were sent to Southern Oregon, others to the Coast or smaller reservations such as Grand Ronde.
Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

During the 1840s and 1850s, the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio River valleys were among the most depressed areas of the country. This, coupled with the promise of free land, gave rise to a mass westward migration. Many emigrants had already moved from eastern states to the midwestern region, and the desire to continue west drove them eventually to Oregon. In 1840 the first family made the trip to Oregon expressly to establish a home. Dr. Marcus Whitman led the “Great Migration” in 1843, which consisted of nearly 900 people and 100 wagons. One year later over 1500 people emigrated to the Oregon Territory, with even greater numbers migrating in the following years. Most of emigrants were families, almost all were Protestant, few were of means and very few were impoverished. A great majority were farmers.

The early settlement period saw significant developments in city, county and state governments in Oregon. The Oregon Territory initially encompassed all of present-day Washington, Oregon, and Idaho and portions of southern British Columbia. The settlers of the Willamette Valley formed a Provisional Government for the Oregon Territory in 1843 at Champoeg, even though the territory was claimed by both the United States and Great Britain until the boundary dispute was resolved in 1846. The provisional government served Oregon until 1849.

In March of 1848, Congress designated Oregon a Territory of the United States, and with this designation came the establishment of individual counties. In that year, General Joseph Lane was sent by President Polk to Oregon City where he proclaimed that Oregon was officially a Territory of the United States, and that the residents were now under the protection and authority of the U.S. Government. In 1853, the northern portion of the Oregon Territory was detached by an act of Congress, and became the Washington Territory. After voting down statehood three times, Congress finally approved statehood in 1859, and the ship Brother Jonathan sailed into Portland with the news that Oregon was the 33rd state in the Union.

Euro-American settlers began arriving in the Willamette Valley in earnest in the 1840s. Embarking on the trip from Independence, Missouri (prior to 1850) or from Council Bluffs, Iowa (after 1850), emigrants started their trip in the spring, which afforded them good grazing for livestock, and reasonable weather for crossing the mountains. Crossing the Rocky Mountains at South Pass, the travelers met their final challenge at the rugged Cascade Mountains near Mt. Hood. Until the Barlow Toll Road was completed in 1846, emigrants had to complete the eighty mile trip from The Dalles to Fort Vancouver down the Columbia River in crude rafts. Many lost their lives on this last leg of the journey, and many travelers lost what few belongings they had managed to retain on their journey. With luck, the trip to Oregon took six to seven months, and they arrived at their destination in September or October.

Initially, permanent settlement occurred along the Columbia River near Fort Vancouver, Washington and at various points in the lower Willamette Valley including Oregon City and Portland, Oregon. Oregon City became the first platted town in the Oregon Territory when it was formally laid out in 1844, and was one of the first town sites that settlers reached once landing in the Oregon Territory. The completion of the Barlow Toll Road in 1846 provided a direct route to the town, allowing settlers to avoid the treacherous trip down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver before traveling up the Willamette River to Oregon City. New arrivals would often overwinter there before dispersing throughout the rest of the Willamette Valley. Oregon City served much of the region as a source for goods that could not be purchased or obtained by settlers in newly formed communities. People would travel from as far as Eugene to bring wheat to be milled, to buy supplies and to receive news from the east. Once the outlying areas established their own mills and markets, Oregon City’s importance as a supply outpost declined.
In 1846, the South Road, or Applegate Trail was scouted by a party of men under the leadership of Levi Scott, Jesse and Lindsey Applegate, and David Goff. Branching off of the main route of the Oregon Trail at Fort Hall, this route provided a southern entrance to the Willamette Valley, avoiding the treacherous Columbia River and Barlow Road. Through Benton County, the Applegate Trail followed portions of the Oregon-California Pack Train route.

Emigrants arriving from the north gradually moved southward as land in the lower valley was claimed. The Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 allowed each single white male settler who arrived prior to 1850 to claim 320 acres, or 640 acres (one square mile) if married. Subsequent to 1850, settlers could claim 160 acres if single or 320 acres if married, thus men who might otherwise have remained single sought to marry. In order to fulfill the terms of the claim, they had only to reside on the land and cultivate it for four years.

The claim settlement period of 1846-1860 was the first lasting settlement pattern for the area. The pattern was determined by the 320 and 640 acre claim sizes (one-half or one square mile), which initially had irregular boundaries because early claims were staked to conform to the topography of the land. Once government surveys were conducted (circa 1850), subsequent claims followed the grid pattern of the survey, resulting in regular, geometric patterns. By the end of the primary period of settlement (the 1860s for the purposes of this study), all of the most desirable land in the Willamette Valley had been claimed, and subsequent settlers had to buy land, usually in smaller parcels than what had been offered by the government in the 1840s and 1850s.

Settlers generally took claims near a year-round water source, such as the Willamette River or smaller tributary, such as the Mary’s River or the Long Tom River, and chose to build their first homes on sites that were slightly elevated to avoid flooding. Ideal claims included a combination of good farmland and some wooded area for use as fuel and building material. Some of the earliest settlement in Benton County occurred in and near the foothills where the requisite water, woodland, and farmable open land was readily available in single claims. As the foothills were settled, homesteads appeared in the open plains of the valley floor.

Because shelter was the first necessity to attend to, the first claim houses were usually rough, one or two room log structures that were erected quickly with the help of neighboring claimants. Once the family was more settled, more permanent buildings were constructed. “The social character of neighborhood settlements had an impact on Oregon’s buildings, as there was a tendency for sub-regions to take on distinct traits; often reflecting a conservatism towards the area from which they migrated.” These traits included physical characteristics such as building styles and town development, and social and cultural attributes such as political and religious beliefs. Early settlers nurtured the sense of community that was so important to the success of a frontier town. Town sites were platted, commerce and industry established, and social organizations were founded in the traditions of those familiar institutions that had been left behind.

The contrast between settlers from the northeast and those from the border states was clearly reflected in the culture, political attitudes and religious beliefs that were brought to the new community. Many emigrants had traveled to Oregon to escape the slavery “question”, whether they supported or opposed slavery, although there appears to have been a significant number of Union supporters. As the Civil War approached, a distinct pro-southern bias emerged and several events illustrated this division. In the 1850s, contradictory laws were passed in Oregon which at once prohibited slavery and supported laws that would protect slave owners. In addition, voters elected a pro-slavery governor and representative to Congress. In 1857, Oregon citizens voted against slavery and also voted to prohibit the residence of free blacks, a provision that was rendered invalid after the Civil War. Despite these events, Oregon officially maintained its allegiance to the Union.

Regional Overview
Most of Oregon’s early agricultural activity occurred in the Willamette, Umpqua or Rogue Valleys, and a majority of settlers in Benton County came to farm. The 1849 California gold rush transformed Oregon’s subsistence agriculture into a profitable export, supplying the needs of miners. Despite the fact that nearly two-thirds of Oregon’s men departed for California, a market was now open for Oregon products, and wheat was soon the primary export crop from the Willamette Valley. Subsequent gold fields were discovered in the Rogue River Valley in Southern Oregon in 1850, and in Baker and Grant counties in 1861-1862. The economy of the whole state benefited from the millions of dollars in gold taken from the mines during these years.

Later farming endeavors took place in eastern Oregon, where wheat farming and cattle ranching dominated. Cattle were driven across the Cascades to the abundant grasslands of Eastern Oregon; cattle ranching was soon challenged by sheep, and both were eventually supplanted by wheat farming. Today Oregon continues to be a top wheat producing state in the Northwest.

The Willamette River provided much of the early transportation throughout the valley. Transportation of heavy loads within the immediate area and later to outside markets was much easier via river than the poorly constructed and often impassable wagon roads. The river also formed a viable link between the settlements along its banks. Steamers regularly plied the waters as far south as Corvallis for many years. When water was high, boats could travel even further upstream, sometimes as far as Eugene.

Because of the wet conditions of the valley floor, land transportation routes were unreliable. In many cases roads provided secondary, supplemental transportation to the river until road building technology improved. Many of the land transportation routes established during this period are still in use today throughout the Willamette Valley.

Transportation methods diversified as the population grew and the need for more efficient and far-reaching routes increased. Early transportation was provided by the river, the stage and eventually the railroad. The transmission of information and transportation routes were closely related, and in 1864 the telegraph replaced the stage as the primary method of long distance communication. The telegraph was soon followed by the railroad.

In 1868, the first north-south rail lines were commenced in Portland on either side of the Willamette River. The East Side Line was completed first, reaching Roseburg in 1872 and eventually San Francisco in 1887. The settlements on the east side enjoyed the benefits of direct rail access as early as the late 1860s and 1870s, but the communities on the west side of the river were without direct rail service until the 1870s and 1880s.

**Railroads and the Progressive Era: 1880-1913**

The period of Railroads and the Progressive Era was pivotal in Oregon’s history. In the state’s infancy, agriculture, transportation and industry were very closely connected. With the arrival of the railroad in the 1860s, agriculture, industry and transportation soon formed an important triangle of commerce for the state. Built from north to south from the late 1860s through the 1880s, the railroad brought greater economic flexibility, opening the market for the shipment of crops and goods, as well as increasing the number of permanent residents in Western Oregon. Rail travel came to Benton County during the 1870s and 1880s, with much effort being directed at connecting to Yaquina Bay. By the turn of the century, nearly all of Oregon was integrated by rails. Industrial development continued to expand, and by the 1880s there were numerous mills and commercial enterprises throughout the Willamette Valley.

Progressivism was a national movement which spanned the years around the turn of the century, ending just prior to the beginning of World War I, in 1913. As its name suggests, this period was
marked by a rising interest in social reforms and humanitarian activities throughout the state, which resulted in the organization of numerous aid societies as well as progress in industry and commerce. The Oregon Grange movement began in the 1870s in response to the high freight rates set by the railroads. Progressive labor legislation resulted in the establishment of over 20 trade unions by the 1880s. In 1912 a suffrage amendment was added to the state constitution giving women the vote, and in 1913, a workers compensation law was enacted, providing the first effective minimum wage, maximum hour law for women in the nation. Overall, it was a period of growth and prosperity, although the country experienced economic depressions in the 1890s and again in the late 1910s.

In the early 1900s, the automobile was introduced to Oregon, and within twenty years it would challenge the railroad as the dominant form of transportation. Motorized farm equipment would also change farming methods, allowing even more acreage to be planted and harvested. This farm machinery also required new types of farm structures, such as garages and machine sheds. Other inventions altered the landscape, including the development of barbed wire in the 1870s which resulted in the decline and eventual disappearance of rail fences on the agrarian landscape.

Though agriculture continued to prosper, particularly in the Willamette Valley, the timber industry was well on its way to becoming the primary economic enterprise in Oregon.

The Motor Age: 1914-1940

The Motor Age was a period of profound growth and change in Oregon, and these changes were reflected in the built environment still seen today. Although the first automobiles in Oregon began to appear around 1900, for the purposes of this document the Motor Age begins in 1914 just prior to the beginning of World War I and ends with the entrance of the United States into World War II in 1940. During the years between these two pivotal and traumatic events in world history America experienced the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression. The automobile became the dominant form of transportation, prompting the development of extensive highway systems and the establishment of the Oregon State Highway Commission in 1913. One of the first highway projects was the Columbia River Highway, and later the major north-south route, the Pacific Highway was constructed from Canada to Mexico.

Airplanes began to land at the newly established Corvallis Municipal Airport, providing the community with a new and exciting form of transportation. Movies, now with sound, became a popular form of entertainment. In urban areas, significant changes in streetscapes reflected new technologies such as electric lighting and the telephone. In rural areas, the use of new technology was reflected in farming practices and the advent of mechanized farming equipment.

Despite these changes, Benton County retained its agrarian character, and agriculture remained the economic backbone for the area. Soil depletion soon required the diversification of crops, and output varied from wheat, potatoes, and grapes to orchard horses, sheep and cattle.

The War Years: 1941-1945

The World War II Era was dominated by the involvement of the United States in the wars in Europe and the Pacific. The war effort was all-consuming, and very little new construction or development occurred during these years. Oregon's contribution to the war included labor, wood products and flax. While the men were fighting, many of the women labored in industries such as shipbuilding. The War Era in the Willamette Valley, as in most of the country, was a period of slow growth, with little new construction.
The Willamette Valley was in the fortunate position of being able to contribute significantly to the war effort. In Portland, shipyards provided hundreds of ships for use in the Pacific. In the mid- and southern Willamette Valley, flax was grown successfully for use in parachute and rope materials for the military. One such site in Benton County was the Benton County Flax Cooperative. At Camp Adair, north of Corvallis, thousands of men trained for combat between 1942 and 1945.
Endnotes

1 A more detailed description of the landscape of Benton County, particularly that of Kings Valley, can be found in Nahani Stricker’s “Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodgett Regions of Benton County, Oregon” written as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey, 1984-86. For general information about the Kalapuya people, see Kathryn Anne Tuelpel’s, “The Western Interior”, The First Oregonians: An Illustrated Collection of Essays on Traditional Lifeways, Federal-Indian Relations, and the State’s Native People Today, (Portland, Oregon: The Oregon Council for the Humanities. 1991).
2 Stricker, 7-10.
3 Stricker, 8.
4 Mary Katherine Gallagher, Historic Context Statement: City of Corvallis, Oregon (Corvallis, Oregon, 1993) 2.
5 Oregon Blue Book, 1995-96 (Salem, Oregon: Secretary of State), 376.
6 Vancouver Historical Study Commission, Vancouver National Historical Reserve Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment, Final Report (April 1993), 20
12 Koler/Morison Planning Consultants, Multnomah County, Oregon Historic Context Statement (Prepared for Multnomah County, Oregon Division of Planning and Development, 1990), 10.
13 Gallagher, Corvallis, 4.
14 Schwantes, 82.
15 Schwantes, 81.
16 Schwantes, 112-122.
22 Schwantes, 103.
24 A.G. Walling, An Illustrated History of Lane County compiled from the most authentic sources (Portland, Oregon: A.G. Walling Publishers, 1884), 361.
Agriculture

This section is based heavily on the area contexts developed in conjunction with the 1984-86 Benton County Survey. Other related works which were consulted include Lou Ann Speulda’s *Oregon’s Agricultural Development: A Historic Context 1811-1940* (Salem, Oregon, 1989), Mary Gallagher’s *Historic Context Statement: City of Corvallis, Oregon*, and her work on the Historic Resources Inventory for Benton County. The two volume set *Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America* (1977) was also referred to, particularly the works by Philip Dole regarding Willamette Valley farms.

As the primary economic endeavor in Benton County, agriculture and horticulture have been especially important in the growth and development of the area. Initially consisting of small subsistence farms and garden plots, agriculture soon grew into a commercial pursuit. From the earliest period of settlement in the 1840s, agriculture has been closely tied with transportation and industry. Successful commercial agriculture depended on reliable transportation routes, which were established on the Willamette River and in local roads and railroads. Industries such as grist and woolen mills, packing plants, and in the later years, defense, all depended on the raw agricultural goods produced in the county. Continuing to shape development, land use patterns, industry, transportation and architecture throughout the county, agriculture remains a dominant theme today. Understanding the success of agriculture and the farmers close relationship with the land requires an understanding of the landscape in its natural state, prior to manipulation by settlement activity.

Within the current bounds of Benton County are broad alluvial plains, as well as foothills along the base of the Coast Range Mountains.

The Kalapuya significantly altered the surrounding natural landscape by setting fire to the prairie during the autumn of each year. Burning helped create better hunting grounds, allowed for easier gathering of root and grass crops, and the roasted grasshoppers that were left behind by prairie fires were considered a delicacy. As a result of the annual burning, the landscape during this period was one of open grasslands with scattered oak groupings on the valley floor, and open forests on the lower hillsides surrounding the valley.

Dense forests were located along the banks of the Willamette River and within the foothills, where the land did not burn. Evergreen species that were present during this period included California black oak, Oregon white oak, Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, incense cedar, madrone and big leaf maple. Deciduous species included willows, cottonwoods, and alders, all of which grew in riparian areas. Understory species such as California hazel, vine maple, black hawthorn and elderberries grew on higher ground in the foothills.

**Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879**

Most of the early settlers in Benton County came to Oregon with the intention of farming. Reputed to have fertile soil which would grow anything, the Willamette Valley was one of the primary destinations in Oregon. The landscape the settlers experienced when they arrived had been regularly manipulated by the native American practice of prairie burning. "On the prairie land and the foothills, the area the first Euroamericans settled, the land was kept clear of brush so long as the Indians were burning." Once this practice ceased, heavy brush and scrub oak undergrowth began to flourish, encroaching on the open farmland and changing the
appearance of the landscape. In an attempt to control this undesirable growth, settlers set loose Angora goats and hogs to graze on the vegetation.

The earliest and most ideal land claims were taken along the foothills, often near a tributary. These were considered the best claims because they included some good farming land, a water supply, and some trees for firewood and lumber for the construction of houses and outbuildings. The early claims often took odd shapes in order to accommodate all of these necessary features, and because they followed the topography of the land. After government surveys started in about 1850, claim boundaries followed straight lines oriented to the compass points. Flat prairie land was settled only after the prime land near the foothills was claimed. Land claims, up to 640 acres for a married couple, were often larger parcels than could be reasonably farmed by one family, and much of the land remained uncultivated until it was parcelled off in later years.

"The first Donation Land Claim settler [in Benton County] is generally acknowledged to have been T.D. Reeves, who in late 1845, built a cabin on his claim three miles north of Monroe where he spent the winter." Upon arriving, settlers would stake a claim, and start recreating the agrarian landscape that was familiar to them. This included preparing land for cultivation, building necessary outbuildings and fences, and planting trees and gardens that would provide them with food.

Before their plots were producing, settlers depended on the wild landscape to provide them with food. "From early descriptions of Kings Valley comes a picture of rich farm and pasture land surrounded by timber and provided with a wealth of natural foods." Elk, deer, and fish, as well as an abundance of wild strawberries, gooseberries, blackberries, currants and other wild fruits, as well as a few hazel and chestnuts, supplied this early Euroamerican population with a variety of foods. In the earliest years, other provisions were purchased from Oregon City, and later from local merchants.

Agriculture in the earliest years of settlement was mainly intended to provide food and clothing for the family. Subsistence farming continued as the primary mode of farming until dependable transportation systems (roads and river travel) were established in the 1850s and 1860s, opening a market for goods produced on the farm. This subsistence farming included cultivation of vegetable gardens and orchards, as well as raising any livestock that had survived the trip across the Oregon Trail. Cattle provided milk and meat, and sheep supplied wool for clothing. Little remains of these earliest agricultural endeavors. Several early barns and outbuildings, as well orchard remnants exist scattered throughout the county.

Despite the generous size of farms during the settlement era, the absence of motorized farm equipment meant that the number of acres a family could put into “production” was relatively small. Plowing, planting and harvesting were accomplished by hand with the help of farm animals and the aid of neighbors. As technology improved, production would increase, allowing farmers to take better advantage of their large land holdings.

Initially, "...wheat was the primary [horticultural] crop, but the difficulty of transporting grain to a market, plus the suitability of the grasslands to stock-raising, led to the early predominance of cattle, swine and horses as farming enterprises." Wheat, barley, flax and sorghum were also grown. Several well improved farms were operating in Benton County by the late 1840s. These included several in Kings Valley, where sheep and cattle were predominant. “With the advent of steamboat traffic on the Willamette in the early 1850s, farm products could be marketed more broadly. By the 1860s ... grain warehouses were constructed along the Willamette River to store wheat for shipment by steamboat.”

The California Gold Rush of 1849 drew many of Benton County’s men south to try their luck at prospecting. While the men were away on an oftentimes unsuccessful economic adventure, their
wives kept the farms producing at home. Women often turned a greater profit at home than that obtained by their spouses in California, a testament to their fortitude. Oregon agriculture enjoyed an early boom as a result of the California gold rush, which created and inflated the market for wheat and other goods. Wheat was shipped south in great quantities by pack train to feed a prospecting population that included many Oregon men who had caught the "gold fever". Those who remained in Oregon found a growing market in California for wheat, horses and cattle. As roads improved and transport via the Willamette River became more feasible, crops and livestock were sold in large quantities to supply the California gold fields. This was the beginning of commercial agriculture for Benton County farmers.

Agriculture-related industries developed soon after housing and food supplies were established. Joshua and Elizabeth Herbert built the first grist mill south of Rickreall (west of Corvallis) at Inavale on Beaver Creek around 1847. The mill was located on County Road #1. Until the construction of the Herbert gristmill in 1847, Benton County farmers had to transport their wheat to Oregon City for milling. The Herbert gristmill was soon followed by Matzger’s mill in 1854 and J.C. Avery’s mill in Corvallis for the mid-1850s.

During the 1850s and 1860s, settlers continued to arrive in the valley, and eventually all of the prime farmland had been claimed. Later arrivals purchased land from the early settlers, who began to parcel off their large claims. By the 1870s, agriculture was a mainstay of the county’s economy. "During [the decade from 1869-1879], the rural Benton County economy was supported by grain, cattle, lumber and orchard products. Many of these items were stored, processed, traded or sold in Corvallis markets." Important products included sheep (and wool), cattle, horses, beans, peas, carrots, parsnips, turnips, potatoes, barley and oats, as well as strong wheat production.

"Fruit raising assumed more importance regionally with the incorporation of the Alden Fruit Preserving Company in 1874. The purpose of this company was the ‘...preservation of fruits, vegetables, and meats and herbs, and preparing of the same for market...’ (Articles of Incorporation, August 29, 1874 and March 6, 1875.) The ‘Alden process’ probably refers to the Alden fruit drying apparatus (Fagan, 1885: 442)." Apples, pears and some peaches, as well as prunes were grown. Buying and selling centers were set up in Albany, Junction City and Corvallis for the purpose of gathering fruit for export.

Early agricultural practices did not take into account the effect of planting the same crops on the same plots year after year. This resulted in a decline in the quality and quantity of some crops due to soil depletion, and crop rotation and diversification soon became necessary. In coming years, the use of fertilizers and soil enhancements would also help compensate for the decline in soil nutrients.

**Railroads And The Progressive Era 1880-1913**

This era was marked by improvements in transportation with the arrival of the railroad in 1880, which in turn opened markets for the abundant agricultural goods grown throughout the county. The California Gold Rush gave the agriculture industry in the Willamette Valley an early boost, and agriculture continued to be the staple of Benton County economy into the early twentieth century. Growing populations supported greater production of wheat, fruit and livestock, and the market for goods remained steady.
Residence and Flour Mill Property of J.S. Felger, 1 Mile West of Philomath, Benton County Oregon. From David Fagan, History of Benton County, Oregon, 1885.
Farms decreased in size, being divided in a piecemeal fashion as families sold off portions of larger claims. However, agricultural output continued to rise as farmers increased their productivity by diversifying their crops. "As the original family Donation Land Claims were divided among heirs of the original claimants or sold to newcomers, the size of farms in the Willamette Valley declined. In 1860 the average farm size was 388 acres; by 1900 the average farm was only 170 acres."  

Diversification involved the production of more than one type of crop on a single farm, such as fruits, vegetables and grain, rather than a single yield such as wheat. As valley farmers became less able to compete with large-scale wheat production in eastern Oregon, emphasis shifted to vegetable and orchard produce, although some other grains were grown.

Fruit was profitable, especially prunes, which were dried in the fruit dryers of the Corvallis and Benton County Prune Company (established 1890) and the Excelsior Fruit Company (established 1892). Many of the early orchards were located in the northern portion of Benton County, particularly in the Fairmount area.

Hops became important in the Willamette Valley in the early 1880s and proved to be a good crop for the region. The first hops in Benton County were probably raised by Ellis Hammer at Alpine about the turn of the century. With the exception of a brief period around 1900 when pest problems threatened market stability, hops production continued to increase until W.W.I when embargoes were imposed, prices dropped, and production became risky business.

In 1912, one of the largest hopyards in the Willamette Valley was producing within a mile of the Corvallis city limits (Corvallis and Benton County, Oregon 1910: 30). Located just to the south of the Crystal Lake Cemetery, the site of this hopyard is within the current city limits [of Corvallis]. In 1929, it was owned by the Seavy family. Hop kilns stood on this site until recently. Other hopyards were located north of town, including the Butler hopyard and hopyards owned by the McFadden family.

Several hop yards operated until the 1930s, when Downy Mildew, a fungus disease, struck hops throughout the valley, resulting in a significant decrease in production.

Dairy cows slowly began to replace beef cattle on the farm, and the Corvallis Creamery was established in 1897. Dairy production did not become prevalent until the 1910s and 1920s, when wheat and hops declined in favor.

Farmers still encountered problems in transportation, high freight costs, and fluctuating prices. In response, the Oregon State Grange was established in 1873 to help farmers collectively address issues and combat problems. "The Mountain View Grange No. 429 is considered to be a continuation of the Locke Grange No. 14 which began in 1873. The Mountain View Grange was officially established in 1911."

Advancements in transportation provided expanded markets for farmers, improving their ability to export goods. The arrival of the railroad, as well as the improvement of wagon roads were the two main developments in land transportation which not only improved the market for most farmers, but prompted an increase in production. These modes, coupled with continuing steamship transportation, provided diverse and effective transportation for many years.
The Motor Age 1914-1940

Agriculture was significantly diversified by the early twentieth century, and steps were taken toward recognition of the inevitable need for soil conservation and modern agricultural practices. Commercial fertilizers were used on a larger scale than before, and in the mid 1930s use of chemical pesticides became standard practice. The first attempts at irrigation were made in 1937, but efforts were restricted to bottom lands where large acreages were planted. The arrival of the automobile impacted farm life in that mechanized farm equipment soon became more commonplace. Tractors were used to plow, plant and harvest, increasing agricultural output on many farms. The first use of large earth-moving equipment on farms also occurred during this period.

Fruit, sheep and dairy cattle, grass seed and timber production increased as wheat production decreased to 127,825 bushels in 1938 from a high in 1900 of 548,000 bushels. Hops entered a decline brought about by a combination of circumstances including downy mildew, prohibition, and a decline in demand. Replacement crops for wheat and hops on the flood plains were row crops, at first primarily spinach seed and beets, and later potatoes. In other places alfalfa, hay and vetch were grown. Fruits, especially berries increased in importance; they were sold fresh or processed in canneries located in Corvallis.

The grass seed industry was still in its infancy, but receiving gradually increasing acreage. During World War II several warehouses were built along the railroad track south of town to process and ship grass seed. Grass seed remains a dominant crop in the Willamette Valley.

Dairy farming dominated along Greasy Creek and on Kiger Island, and by 1934, dairying was the leading industry in the county. The Oregon Apple Company (OACO) was established in 1909 by a group of Corvallis businessmen. A group of farms west of Corvallis were purchased and planted to apples, and this was called West Ranch. Apple packing plants were erected in Monroe and Alpine. The Corvallis Gazette-Times reported that in 1923 OACO had shipped 75,000 boxes of apples. However, the orchards were soon abandoned because of lower than expected production levels.

Between 1920 and 1940 poultry farming became big business in Benton County. "Largely because of the college and presence of several prominent individuals in this field, Corvallis was recognized as a poultry breeding center. In 1930 Corvallis was the largest shipper of baby chicks in the State of Oregon (Corvallis Chamber of Commerce, 1930: 3)."

The Neuman Winery was established as the first winery in Benton County and the third winery in Oregon in 1934. It operated until 1960. Founded by Czechoslovakian Hugo Neuman, the winery produced a number of different fruit wines that were shipped around the country. Wineries now dot the landscape throughout Benton County, which has produced award-winning wines.

Lumbering became firmly established in the Benton County economy during the 1920s and 1930s. Foothills forests, which were grasslands when settlers arrived in the 1840s, were now covered with marketable timber, and numerous mills sprang up throughout the county. These twentieth century mills were operated by steam power, and no longer needed to be located proximate to streams for waterpower. (More information on early lumber mills can be found in the section on Industry) Peavy Arboretum was established in 1926 on lands acquired by the School of Forestry of Oregon Agricultural College (now OSU) with the help of George Peavy. Students had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in forestry by working on the land, which ultimately encompassed 11,000 acres. One of the largest timber interests in the County was the Hull-Oakes Lumber Company, still in operation on Dawson Road, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
Insert Photo: **Farm Team.** Horses were used for farm work until the twentieth century in some areas. Motorized equipment such as tractors allowed large scale farming possible, and much more profitable. Photo Courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum #985-32.
The War Era 1941-1945

Despite the intense war effort and the great numbers of men going to fight on both fronts, agriculture remained a strong element in the Benton County economy during these years. One of the primary crops was flax. Flax had not been cultivated in large quantities in the United States since before the mid-nineteenth century. In the 1890s, the United States Department of Agriculture began experiments to see where flax grew well, and found that Michigan, Minnesota, and Oregon were possibly good production sites. The USDA eventually focused its revival of the flax industry in Michigan, and in 1932, moved the project to Oregon. The Benton County Flax Growers Cooperative was incorporated in 1942, by Joe Rickard, E.E. Smith, Paul Baxbaum, Keith Crocker, and George Bailey.22

By 1943, there were fourteen flax processing plants in Oregon, largely in response to the war.

The Benton County Flax Cooperative is representative of an economic activity once very important to Oregon and the Nation. Flax was specifically grown and processed at this complex for linen thread for parachute harnesses, fire hoses, and sewing thread for leather shoes for the army and navy during World War II.

While output of other crops may have decreased during the war, agriculture continued to be an important item during the War in Benton County. Farmers were asked to increase farm production during the war as part of the collective nation-wide war effort. The lack of farm labor had decreased significantly because of the need for "manpower" in the battles on both fronts. Lack of available help could also be attributed to the competition from higher paying defense industry jobs such as shipbuilding. This, coupled with the increased production, created serious trouble for the agriculture industry.

As a result, congress passed the Farm Labor Supply Appropriation Act in 1943, for the purpose of assisting "...farmers in producing vital food by making labor available at the time and place it was most needed."23 The Oregon State College Extension Service established the Oregon branch of the Emergency Farm Labor Service (EFLS), and between 1943 and 1947 assisted in over 900,000 placements on Oregon farms. The program was administered by J.R. Bock, and consisted of several different factions.

The Women’s Land Army consisted of women, most of whom lived at home and traveled to farms to work each day. Mabel Mack had statewide responsibility for this program. Between 1944 and 1946 over 3,500 prisoners of war (POWs), most German, also worked on Oregon farms. They were responsible for the harvest of 3.8 million pounds of hops in the Willamette Valley.

Victory Farm Volunteers (VFV) consisted of youth, ages 11-17, who constituted one of the largest single groups in the EFLS. Over 270,000 VFV placements were made on Oregon farms and food processing facilities.

Other workers involved in the EFLS included white collar workers who would work after hours in the farm fields, soldiers on leave from Camp Adair, Mexican Nationals (through the Bracero Program) and Japanese Americans who had been sent to detainment camps. Housing for farm labor consisted of camps run by the Extension Service which were “tent cities” erected to house 50 to 100 people.

By 1943, farm production was threatened by a lack of labor for harvest, so the provided Benton County with needed workers.
Endnotes


2 The Rogue Valley in Southern Oregon was another desirable location to settle and was more easily accessible after the establishment of the Applegate Trail in the 1840s.


4 Nahani Stricker, “Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodget Regions of Benton County, Oregon (Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey, Benton County Historical Society, Philomath, Oregon, 1984-86), 19.

5 Stricker, 19-20.

6 Patricia Johnson, “Historical Overview of Corvallis’ Fourth Precinct and the Philomath Precinct of Benton County, Oregon” (Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey, Benton County Historical Society, Philomath, Oregon, 1984-86), 4.


8 Carter and Dennis, 32.

9 Gallagher, *Corvallis*, 38.


14 Carter and Dennis (1996), 56.

15 Gallagher, *Corvallis*, 130.

16 Read, 8.

17 Johnson (1984), 12.

18 Stricker, 36.

19 Barclay, 20.


21 Read, 10.


23 On-line exhibit “Oregon’s Emergency Farm Service,” Oregon State Archives/Oregon State University Archives World Wide Web Homepage: http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/osuhomepage.html. All information on the Emergency Farm Labor Service was taken from this source.
Transportation Development

The theme of Transportation is a crucial one in the history of Oregon and of Benton County. The development of other aspects of culture and society depended heavily on the establishment of reliable modes of transportation. Historically, periods of increased growth often coincided with improvements in transportation, and at various stages in Benton County history, the steamship, the railroad and the automobile all played pivotal roles in the advancement of agriculture and industry.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Land Transportation

When settlers first arrived in the valley, the only existing, established travel routes were the footpaths of the Native Americans. These often followed the contour of the foothills, avoiding the sometimes extremely muddy conditions on the prairie during the winter, and were likely used by the Hudson's Bay Company and other early explorers or trappers during the first half of the nineteenth century. Eventually, many grew into wagon roads and became routes for travel and transport of goods by permanent settlers. Native trails also provided early routes west from Benton County across the Coast Range; an 1851 map indicates a "trail to Yacoohnah Bay" beginning at the home of Rowland Chambers (in Kings Valley) and proceeding across the Coast Mountains.

Roads and paths were soon worn between houses and claims, creating a more complete, if crude, local transportation system. The paths established by the native Americans were later improved; some are still in use today as roads or railroad routes. As the population grew, road systems became better developed, as early as 1851 there was a stage line running between Corvallis and Eugene, stopping at Booneville, the Baker homestead and Bruce along the way.

The Oregon-California Trail, the main early north-south route through the Willamette Valley, developed from the old Hudson's Bay Pack Trail, which may have started as a Native American footpath. The Corps of Engineers laid out Territorial Road in 1852, and it ran in a relatively straight line from Corvallis to Monroe then south to the Umpqua. The road, also known as the Portland and Umpqua Valley Road and as the Portland to Marysville Road, became impassably muddy in the winter. Near the present-day Willamette Grange, "...it was said to be a mile wide by spring, as each traveler detoured around the places marked with a stake by those who had mired down there earlier." This was the route used by the California Stage Company, the first stage line from Portland to San Francisco, which began running in 1860. Stages running north from Corvallis included Stuart's Express (1857) which provided service to the Washington Territory, and the Pioneer Line which ran from Corvallis to Oregon City. Stage lines provided both passenger service and mail and freight transportation, and were thus an important form of transportation and communication for the early settlers.

In eastern Benton County, in the Alsea valley region, little is known about early (1850s-1880s) transportation routes. The region was somewhat remote from both the coast and the valley, requiring roads through hilly terrain to the east and the west, a difficult endeavor in the early settlement period. A horse trail led from the town of Alsea to the coast along the Alsea river; a wagon road connected the Alsea Valley west to Corvallis roughly following the present-day route of Highway 34.

Soon a secondary pattern of minor routes that fanned out from convenient bases (settlements) that were established where water and overland routes met. In time, the secondary lines from the
several settlements in the county were joined and became major radial routes. This suggests that in some cases, roads were built to supplement the primary mode of transportation, the rivers.

Building reliable roads in Oregon quickly proved to be an important though difficult task. Construction was slowed by the exodus of men to the gold mines in California starting in 1848, as well as by the expense of building roads that would be functional year round. In more metropolitan areas, plank roads, while costly, were the earliest attempts to provide year round land transportation routes. In Benton County, dirt roads prevailed. Cardwell Hill Road was one such example. The wagon road was established in the 1850s, and served as the primary route between Fort Hoskins and Corvallis. Steep terrain made construction and passage difficult, and the road has experienced little improvement to this day.

"In 1863, the Yaquina Wagon Road Company took advantage of government land grants of up to three miles on either side of the proposed road to build a toll road between Corvallis and the coast through a gap in the Coast Range. Stage stops were established at Philomath and Felger's Mill. Another stage route was established along Greasy Creek to Alsea." "

River Transportation

The rivers posed both an obstacle and a ready mode of transport. Before construction of bridges, ferries were used to ford the rivers. Ferries connected Benton County to other Willamette Valley communities, and would later provide access to rail transportation, which initially developed on the east side of the Willamette River. The Peoria ferry crossed the Willamette about seven miles south of Corvallis, and was in operation as early as 1852. The Long Tom was crossed by Aaron (Doc) Richardson's ferry, which was located about two miles north of Monroe. Ferries were also in operation at Corvallis and north opposite Albany.

"Moving about the country and transporting their crops to market was one of the biggest challenges faced by the pioneers and some of their earliest efforts at road building did not remedy the situation appreciably." 10 The river provided the most economical means of transporting large quantities of wheat to outside markets, and it became the focus of transportation when regular steam service began in Corvallis sometime between 1851 and 1853. Sources conflict as to whether this first steamship to navigate as far as Corvallis was the Canemah or the Mulnomah, but Corvallis was established as the head of navigation on the Willamette, a position it held for several years. 11

Marysville was established as the navigable headwaters of the Willamette in the early 1850s, and served as a principal shipping port for the region. In 1856 the James Clinton plied the Willamette as far as Eugene, and soon landings were located all along the river to the north and south of Corvallis in Benton County. Farmers no longer had to transport their goods to Corvallis for shipping, but could load from the nearest landing. "Many of the farmers along the river had wharves and there were several commercially operated public facilities in Benton County. Among the earliest of these was the Hamilton warehouse, later known as Finley's, located in Irish Bend, about five miles northeast of Monroe." 12
Ferry and Residence of A. Pierce, Opposite Albany, Benton County, Oregon.
Small settlements often grew up around these landings, though few survived to become significant points of shipping or commerce. In Benton County, early steamboat landings included:

- Bower's Rocks. On the north side, about one and one-half miles above Albany.
- Half Moon Bend and Landing. On the east side about five miles above [sic] Corvallis.
- Eckland's Landing. On the north side, half way between Half Moon Bend and Corvallis.
- Corvallis. On the west side. [Benton County]
- Orleans. Across the river from Corvallis.
- Fisher's Mill. At the mouth of the Mary's River on the west side. [Benton County]
- Burlington or Stalbush's Landing. On the east side, four miles above Corvallis.
- Booneville or Booneville Slough. On the west shore. [Benton County]
- Coon's Landing, Centennial Chute. On the east side.
- Peoria. On the east side, about ten miles above Corvallis.
- Irish Boy's Landing. Mouth of the Long Tom River, on the west side. [Benton County] 13

Booneville was one of the landings that was developed early in the history of steamboating on the upper Willamette. Thomas Norris platted a town site on his Donation Land Claim in 1853. The surveyor's records recorded at the time of platting that "...the Town of Booneville [subsequently spelled Booneville], is situated on the west channel of the Willamette River in sections 26 and 35. The town as yet does not amount to much, but the location is a good one. Steamboats have been up to it in high water." 14 At that time Booneville consisted of a storehouse and unoccupied blacksmith shop, and most likely the dwelling of Thomas Norris. A minor flood in 1875 re-routed the main portion of the river channel to the east, and Booneville was left with lessened flow. It was subsequently known as Booneville Channel. 15

In the 1860s, steamboat transportation on the Willamette was at its height. Wheat had become a commercial crop and the railroad had not yet made inroads into the valley. Several steamboat companies were operating on the Willamette in the 1860s and 1870s. The most prominent were the People's Transportation Co. and the Oregon Steam Navigation Co. In the 1870s, the Willamette Transportation Co. operated steamboats from Portland to Harrisburg. 16

Steamboats continued to ply the Willamette River from Oregon City to Corvallis until the 1920s, with service slowing with the low waters of the late summer months.

Steamboats on the river and rough roads through the countryside formed the basic transportation network. Many of the roads were yet trails, though the outline of the present-day road system was evident. The major north-south route was the Territorial Road, and major east-west routes included the County Road No. 2, also known as the Kings Valley Road, and the Road to Yaquina Bay.

Corvallis' early status as head of navigation, and its strategic location along the route to the California mines meant that other Benton County settlements remained satellites to Corvallis. The transportation network that developed has primarily directed people to (and from) Corvallis. 17

**Railroad Transportation**

In the 1860s in Portland, rival railroad companies were planning the construction of rail lines on either side of the Willamette. These lines were to be the major north-south rail lines in the state.

*Overview: Transportation Development*
The west side line, named the Oregon Central Railroad West Side Company, was supported by Portland merchants. The east side faction was named the Oregon Central Railroad East Side Company, and was backed in part by California financiers. A federal land grant of twenty square miles for every mile of track went to the first faction to complete 20 miles of operational track. In April of 1868, both sides broke ground. The east side faction won the contest, which in effect delayed the arrival of the railroad to settlements such as Corvallis, which were located on the west side of the Willamette.

Railroads would not be a major element of the Benton County transportation system until the 1880s and 1890s. There were efforts in the 1870s, however, to establish rail lines from the valley to the coast. One such effort was the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Railroad, on which construction started in 1874.

**Railroads and the Progressive Era 1880-1913**

This period of transportation history in Benton County was dominated by efforts to establish and build rail lines through the county and to the coast. River travel continued to be effective until the railroads took strong hold, and the road systems were expanded and improved.

**Land Transportation**

As in many other Willamette Valley towns, roads saw little improvement during this period. Rural areas tended to be isolated, particularly in the winter months.

The county was divided into road districts and the County Court appointed a road supervisor in each district. He apportioned labor to be done in his district according to the valuation of taxable property owned by each person owning or residing on real property in the district at a ratio of one day of work per year for each $2,000.00 of assessed valuation. People began gravelling the back roads in haphazard fashion about 1893-95...a few loads of gravel would be hauled onto the worst places...

Despite these efforts, many county roads remained in poor condition for many years. Some less utilized routes remain unimproved today. Stage lines continued to provide transportation to other cities and states, but would soon be eclipsed by the automobile.

The first autos in Corvallis were sold in the first decade of the twentieth century. Within only ten years, by 1910, the automobile had gained statewide acceptance. Initially considered a toy for the rich, Henry Ford’s affordable Model T made cars obtainable by nearly everyone. This ultimately resulted in a decline in rail service and the complete demise of river transportation.

**River Transportation**

"Because the roads were so bad, efforts to use the rivers for travel and commerce continued and attempts were made utilize the Long Tom. The first effort by a corporation called the Long Tom Transportation Company had been made in 1869." This group brought the steamer Ann as far as Monroe in that year. In 1897 the Long Tom was made more navigable by deepening of the channel, straightening of bends, and removal of two bridges. The Pfouts Bridge was replaced with a ferry, and the Bundy Bridge was replaced with a drawbridge.

Due to unreliable water levels, transport along the Long Tom came to an end in the first years of the twentieth century.

However, freight did continue to be shipped from Monroe by way of the Willamette. On Wooley Slough, an old channel of the Willamette just east of Monroe, was a landing...
originally known as Bob Nichols Landing which was later owned by Guy Lewis and called Liverpool Landing. Later Adam Wilhelm built Wilhelm Warehouse on the same slough nearer to the Willamette. 24

**Railroad Transportation**

The railroads not only provided transportation for passengers, but opened economic markets for the sale and purchase of goods that had been previously closed.

The west side line of the Oregon and California Railroad (the north-south line) entered Benton County from the north in 1879 and arrived in Corvallis in 1880. In 1881 it became the Oregon and California Railroad, Westside Division. The Northern Pacific Railroad finally reached Portland in 1883, establishing the first transcontinental railroad in the country. This had enormous impacts throughout the state, as it opened the eastern market to west coast goods. Timber and agriculture in particular would profit.

"The railroad which runs from Corvallis to Yaquina Bay has gone by many names. A company to build this line was first incorporated in 1867 (Fagan, 1885) under the name Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Railroad Company. In 1874 the company was reincorporated under the name Willamette and Coast Railroad Company. In 1880 it became the Oregon Pacific Railroad Company. 24 Begun in 1874, the line was first used in 1885. The route chosen closely followed the old Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Wagon Road. It ran west from Corvallis past the old lumber mill at Conroy, through Philomath (a train order station operated in Philomath between 1915 and 1932), to Flynn. It follows the Mary's River, passing the old mill at Noon, Wren, Alder and Blodgett and finally to Summit."

Built under the leadership of Colonel Thomas Egerton Hogg, the Oregon Pacific was meant to connect with the Oregon and California line, which arrived in Corvallis in 1879 (west side line), "...providing central Willamette Valley with a direct route to the seaport at Yaquina Bay, a common stopping place for cargo carrying ships at this time. Great hopes were held for creating a major seaport at Yaquina Bay. This would allow the area to bypass Portland and thus end that city’s monopoly on trade in and out of Oregon. (WPA, 1942)." 35 Shortly after its completion in 1884 a rail line between San Francisco and Oregon was completed, taking the freight and passenger service with it.

The Corvallis and Alsea Railroad Company was begun under the direction of Stephen Carver. The line started in Corvallis, which now had a branch line to Albany, and went south to Monroe, Alpine and Glenbrook. "In 1911 Alvadore Welch purchased the road with the intention of building an electric railroad from Portland to San Francisco. He called his line the Portland, Eugene & Eastern Railway and began building...he sold the PE&E to Southern Pacific in 1912." 28

A railroad station was built in Monroe in 1913, and small way stations were built at every road crossing between Monroe and Corvallis. The line was finally put into operation and has operated ever since as the only railroad line in the south Benton region.

In the early twentieth century, the Oregon Electric Railway began operating between Eugene and Portland, with stops in Salem and Albany. Although the Oregon Electric did not pass through Benton County, its convenience as a passenger service would certainly have been utilized by residents of the county.
Corvallis Logging Co. railroad at Dawson, 1913. Railroads were built into the hills for easier access to raw materials, and for ease of shipment out of milled wood to outside markets. Photo Courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum, #982-02P7.
The Motor Age: 1914-1940

The Motor Age saw many advancements in transportation, particularly in the popularization of the private automobile. In addition, communications were advancing.

Radio became an important form of communication during the 1920s, and the radio station KOAC was established in 1922. The KOAC transmitter on Granger Road has been listed as a Benton County Landmark.

Land Transportation

Road conditions in the rural county remained poor during the 1920s and 1930s. Road construction and maintenance was focused on primary travel routes into and out of Corvallis and other towns rather than on rural routes. Some Benton County roads remain unpaved today.

Mark Rickard began selling automobiles in Corvallis in 1904 or 1905. The growing popularity of the auto forced road improvement plans to be taken seriously. “With the popularity of the automobile came the era of construction projects to create an all-weather road network. The National Good Roads Movement was launched in 1902. In 1913, Arthur Clarke, president of the [Corvallis] Commercial Club, stated in a speech that ‘Good roads annihilate distance and cancel space. They bring the farmer nearer the market and the city man in closer touch with nature.’”

In the rural county, efforts were continued to gravel and grade roads. Roads which connected to ferries or led to commercial centers were of particular importance. It was during this time period that a state system of highways was established, impacting transportation in and out of Benton County. In 1913, the Oregon State Legislature took the first official step in developing this system by designating a route from Portland to the California state line. The Pacific Highway north-south route eventually allowed auto travel through three states from Canada to Mexico, and the Oregon portion was completely paved by 1923.

Garages, gas stations and car dealerships were new buildings that were necessary during the Motor Age. Garages and gas stations could be found scattered along the Pacific Highway, as well as in the small towns of Benton County. Car dealerships were limited to bigger towns such as Corvallis. In 1929, Southern Pacific ran a motor stage service in Corvallis, and offered 50 stages per day into and out of Corvallis.

River Transportation

Unlike many other areas in the Willamette Valley, steamboats continued to operate in Benton County until about 1920. They ceased to be an important factor in the export of farm products once the railroad was well established, which also occurred at a relatively late date, because of Corvallis’ location on the west side of the Willamette.

Rail Transportation

The Southern Pacific’s Red Electric line, an interurban electric passenger train, began service along the west side line from Portland in 1914, and extended to Corvallis in 1917. The Red
Electrics provided passenger service directly to Corvallis, giving Benton County more access to interurban rail travel than the Oregon Electric Railroad. The line was popular until the automobile began to eclipse all other forms of transportation in popularity. Red Electric service was discontinued in 1929.²⁶

While the main rail lines ran north-south through the valley from Portland to California, various other smaller lines were being built in Benton County. These lines were built to provide access to timber lands or to create shipping lines to the coast. One of these was the Valley and Siletz Railroad, which was built starting in 1913 by Jonathan Cobbs and William Mitchell from independence to Valsetz in order to access timber holdings in western Polk and eastern Lincoln counties. The line was completed in 1917, and covered over 40 miles of track. “Soon after World War I, the railroad’s effect on the logging and milling industry was felt. A lot of small sawmills were built along the Valley and Siletz line. The railroad built spurs to these mills, dumping off empty cars in the morning and picking them up full of lumber in the evening.”³⁰ During the 1950s, the line began to falter, and the track was finally removed between 1979 and 1983.³¹

**Air Transportation**

Airports were constructed to accommodate growing interest in air transportation. Prior to the construction of an official area airport, private airstrips located in fields or other open spaces provided landing and takeoff points for aviators. Between 1931 and 1937, a 720 acre airport was located at a site south of Corvallis, and included two runway and two hangars. The airport moved to Herbert Road, west of Highway 99, where it operated from 1937 to 1942. In 1943, the Corvallis Municipal Airport was completed with help from the Army Air Corps.³²

**The War Years: 1941-1945**

These turbulent years saw little development in transportation methods in the County, as most of the community’s energy was focused on the War Effort. One exception was the completion of the Corvallis Municipal Airport in 1943.
Endnotes

1 Nahani Stricker, "Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodget Regions of Benton County, Oregon (Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey, Benton County Historical Society, Philomath, Oregon, 1984-1986), 20.
2 Patricia Johnson, "Historical Overview of Corvallis' Fourth Precinct and the Philomath Precinct of Benton County, Oregon Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 5.
3 Stricker, 20.
8 Johnson (1984), 7.
9 Barclay, 8.
10 Barclay, 8.
11 Gallagher, 24. Phinney (1942) states that the first trip to Corvallis was made by the Canemah, and the Corvallis Gazette (November 13, 1900) claims that the Multnomah was the first to reach Corvallis.
12 Barclay, 9.
14 Comings, 160.
15 Comings, 161. "An article on 'Early Steamboating', appearing in the Covallis Gazette, February 12, 1894, stated that at that date Booneville was still a shipping point." By this time, the railroad had taken hold as the preferred method of transportation, and steamboating soon disappeared from the mid- and upper Willamette.
16 Comings, 126.
17 Johnson (1984), 5.
19 Barclay, 15.
20 Barclay, 16.
21 Barclay, 17.
22 Stricker, 32.
24 Stricker, 33.
25 Barclay, 19.
26 Johnson (1984), 11.
27 Gallagher, 124.
28 Gallagher, 124.
29 Austin & Dill, 222; and Edwin D. Culp, Early Oregon Days (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers Ltd., 1987), 63-65.
30 Stricker, 38.
31 Stricker, 38.
Commerce and Industry

Early industrial and commercial development generally occurred near roads and rivers or creeks out of necessity for transportation and power sources. By the same token, most early industry and commerce was related to the business of creating permanent settlements and taking care of families. The earliest industry and commerce in Benton County were sawmills and gristmills. As settlement became more permanent, commerce and industry grew and developed in new directions in response to changing needs.

The railroads in Benton County had a significant impact on commerce and industry in two key ways. First, a number of new communities sprang up and others grew when the railroad began to offer freight and passenger service in the county. These towns often developed small commercial businesses as they grew. Second, the railroad offered opportunities for improved access to timber resources, thereby greatly enhancing the development of the timber industry in the county.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Several sawmills were established in the early 1850s, shortly after pioneer settlement in Benton County began. Sawmills provided much needed sawn lumber for houses and outbuildings. Some of these earliest mills were manpowered, while others were powered by water. Most were located by a water source, which allowed for transition to waterpower as well as expansion to include other mill facilities. Millraces diverted water from a natural stream to a millsite where its force turned a waterwheel which in turn powered the mill. Two of the earliest recorded sawmills in the county were in the Monroe area. The earliest sawmill in southern Benton County, 1.2 mile south of Alpine, was built by Lorenzo Gilbert on Muddy Creek in 1852. It was an old style, manpowered, jigsaw mill. A second Monroe area mill known as Leneve's Mill (later called Andrew Jasper's Mill) also was built in 1852. By 1853, two additional sawmills were operating in the rural county, providing lumber for buildings to several families. Squire Ryckraft, a carpenter in the Aisea area, built a sawmill in 1853 with partners John Fudge and Henry Clark. Henry VanPeer built and ran a Kings Valley sawmill starting in 1853. This mill was located on the Luckiamute River, across from the town site of Hoskins.

Farms soon began producing grain, grist or flouring mills were needed to process the grain into usable flour and feed. Prior to the establishment of local mills, farmers traveled as far as Oregon City to have their grain processed. The first recorded gristmill in rural Benton County was built in 1853 by Rowland Chambers in the Kings Valley area. It was built at the site where the Luckiamute River naturally drops four feet and provided a good source of power. From locally grown wheat the mill produced top quality flour for more than fifty years with French grinding stones which were "shipped around the Horn."

At least three more sawmills were operating by 1854; two of them also had gristmills as part of their operation. Ichabod Henkles Mill was located on Greasy Creek in Pleasant Valley and run by the Henkle family. Matzger's Mill, built on the Marys River west of present day Philomath by Hartless and Matzger, was both a sawmill and a gristmill. This mill became Felger's Mill and eventually included a tannery. The third sawmill, located on Beaver Creek, was built by Foster and Bryant and also included a grist mill. Foster and Bryant went on to take over the White Mill in Monroe, built on the Long Tom River by Joseph White, where they moved their grist mill operation in 1857.
Farm Residence and Mill of I.B. Henkle, 4 Miles Southwest of Philomath, Benton County, Oregon. From David Fagan, History of Benton County, Oregon, 1885.
Mill development continued through the 1860s and 1870s. Three were located along Greasy Creek, including the Huffman Mill founded in 1865 at the confluence of Rock Creek and Greasy Creek, the Hawkins Mill founded in 1870 on Greasy Creek and Gellatly Way, and the Logsdon Mill located at confluence of Greasy Creek and the Marys River. A sawmill built in 1868 on the upper South Fork of the Alsea River by H.A. Belknup was purchased in 1869 by D.W. Immon and became known as the Inmon Mill. The first grist mill in the Alsea Valley was built in 1873 by David Ruble and by 1875, a second sawmill in Kings Valley was in operation. The Kings Valley Saw and Planing Mill, located on the Luckiamute River, was run by S.P. Frantz and P.F. Stone. A third sawmill in the Kings Valley area may have been run by A.B. Alexander, but the location of the site has not been determined. Two sawmills in the Monroe area, the Newhouse Mill on Beaver Creek and Rickard's Mill in the Inavale vicinity, also may have been built sometime in the 1860s or 1870s.

Once the business of building houses and grinding grain was taken care of, attention could be turned to additional industry and commerce. General stores sold provisions such as dry goods, farm tools and implements, fabric, and other necessities, eliminating the need for long trips to larger communities. The California Gold Rush opened markets for Oregon wheat and other goods, giving a boost to the Willamette Valley industry and agricultural economy very early.

Although most commercial development did not begin in earnest until the 1880s in the rural county, there are a few examples of some very early isolated stores. In 1852, a general store was operating at Starr's Point near Monroe and in 1853, Robert Irwin opened a grocery store at the short-lived townsite of Jennypolis. Tampico, located in the northeastern portion of Benton County, was a thriving service center for the area. In the 1850s, it reportedly had a store, two saloons, a boarding house, and a race track.

The existence of sheep in the county necessitated appropriate industries for processing the wool for use in clothing and blankets. These goods were usually made by hand, but the wool was initially processed by the Horning and Groves carding mill, established in 1865 on Oak Creek. Cottage industries in the county included the manufacture and sale of shingles, shakes, fence posts, butter, cheese and leather gloves. The first store in Kings Valley was opened in 1868 by C.G. Nelson. Following a fire in 1919 that destroyed the original store, it was rebuilt and continued to serve the community.

**Railroads And The Progressive Era: 1880-1913**

During the early years of this time period, industrial technology changed little. Technology remained much the same, with most mills being water powered and including sawmills, grist mills, tanneries, carding mills, and planing, sash and door factories. Blacksmiths, wagon builders and harness makers provided other necessary products for transportation and agricultural work. The railroad arrived in Corvallis in 1880, and brought with it new settlers. The county population was growing, and the result was greater need for more buildings and hence more lumber. The 1880 Census indicated eleven sawmills in Benton County. Felger's mills and tannery (formerly Matzger's Mill), the Huffman Mill, the Henkle Mill, the Hawkins Mill, and the Kings Valley Saw and Planing Mill all continued to thrive during this period of expansion.

In 1884, a new grist mill called the Lone Star was built at the confluence of the Alsea River and Mill Creek and was operated by C.C. and W.B. Chandler. In 1890, Guy Laws built a new grist mill, the Liverpool Flouring Mills, on the Long Tom two miles north of Monroe. A small settlement began to develop near the mill and was called Maudeville. Adam Wilhelm, a prominent businessman in Monroe, did not want a nearby town to pose a threat to his business enterprises in Monroe, so he immediately began to rebuild the mill in Monroe and he built the first concrete dam on the Long Tom to replace an earthen one that had deteriorated. The dam

*Overview: Growth of Commerce & Industry* 32
later provided Monroe with its first electricity. Wilhelm eventually purchased the Liverpool Mill and moved it to Harrisburg, in Linn County. During the 1890s there were also a number of small sawmills around the county, including Gleason's and Irwin's Mills on Beaver Creek, and J.W. Walters' Mill on the South Fork of the Alsea, most presumably started in response to the need created by railroad development.  

Not all industry prospered during the 1880s and 1890s. By the turn of the century, the availability of factory-woven cloth resulted in the closing of the Horning and Groves carding mill when home weaving became a thing of the past.  

After the turn of the century, new industries began to develop. The timber industry got its start when the development of railroads made transporting lumber from the forests more feasible. Several sawmills developed in the 1910s including the Noon Brothers mill (on Woods Creek), the Best Saw Mill, and the Castles Mill. In 1913, Fred Malcom started first mill at Dawson. And in about 1912, the Monroe Brick Works began making brick, drain tile and building blocks. Brick was used for chimneys, commercial buildings, and occasionally for residential buildings. Extensive fires which destroyed commercial areas in many towns resulted in new construction of brick buildings. Brick was considered to be more fire resistant, as well as giving the appearance of greater stability and permanence, and was therefore preferable to wood.  

Commercial development also continued between the 1880s and 1913. By 1880, the town of Kings Valley had grown to include three stores, a saloon and grocery, a hotel, a blacksmith shop and the town of Hoskins had a store. The town of Summit, located on the old Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Wagon Road, became more fully developed with the arrival of the Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Railroad (later called the Oregon Pacific Railroad) in 1885. By the 1890s, Summit had a general store and a boarding house/hotel. These buildings remain standing in Summit today. Wren and Blodgett, which also developed as the result of the railroad, both had stores by the 1890s.  

The town of Alsea, platted in 1908, had become the service center for western Benton County and had a general store, a bank, and a gas station by the 1910s. Alsea was an important commercial point in this part of the county because of the relative isolation of the Alsea Valley from the eastern portions of Benton County. In the southeastern portion of the county, Monroe continued to develop into the commercial center for the Bellfountain, Alpine, and Willamette areas. By 1911, Monroe was reported to have a bank, a department store, two hotels, liverys, a machine shop, as well as several orchards and the mill. Much of this growth occurred due to the efforts of entrepreneur Adam Wilhelm.  

The Motor Age: 1914-1940  

The Motor Age saw a decline in industries associated with the settlement period and the railroads and progressive eras. The gristmills, a stronghold during the earlier periods, underwent a gradual decline so that by the late 1930s, they were used only to grind feed for livestock on surrounding farms. At the same time, Benton County experienced one of its most important industrial and commercial development when the timber industry grew to be the largest industry in the county.  

Although an established Benton County industry by 1910, the timber industry began experiencing noticeable growth in 1914 or 1915, which continued to about 1920. For about the next twenty years, except for the Depression years, the timber industry remained at about the same level. Even during the Depression, the timber industry provided a number of jobs. By 1937, the county had forty mills, production continued to increase, and by 1940, it was one of the largest industries in the county.
Chambers Grist Mill (1853), circa 1900. Early mills were man powered or, in this case, water powered. Buildings were built of timber framing and wood siding in very utilitarian style. Photo Courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum.
Sawmills were often located in the foothills, close to the timber source upon which they depended. A proliferation of sawmills began to appear in the 1920s, many clustered around the town of Philomath. The first Griswold and Greer Mill was built in the early 1920s on Decker Road at Greasy Creek. In 1926, the Best Saw Mill was constructed at the foot of Alsea Mountain. In the late 1920s, the Duckworth (later Clemens) Saw Mill was erected west of Philomath. Also in the 1920s, the Alsea River Lumber Company opened a large mill at Glenbrook, the Gragg Brothers opened a mill north of Bellfountain, and a small mill, owned by C.P. Milne, was operating at Greenberry. W.J. Miller established a mill on Nichols Creek, two miles west of Alpine in 1920. In 1922, he leased some land and augmented an existing small mill at Dawson.

Despite the Depression, mills continued to operate during the 1930s. Griswold and Greer Mills built a complex at the junction of Highways 34 and 20 in the early 1930s, and the Ott Papky Mill on Decker Road at Greasy Creek began operations in the mid-1930s. The Ervin Mill on Decker Road, Albertson's Saw Mill at the Woods Creek junction, the Marvin Coon Mill and the Rose Brothers mill were all operating by the end of the 1930s.

Perhaps some of the most significant mills developed during the 1930s were those operated by Ralph Hull. In 1934, Hull leased the Gragg Brothers mill near Bellfountain for seven months before moving on to Monroe to lease the Tom Carpenter mill. This mill was located on north edge of Monroe and was powered with electricity - one of the first of its kind in the country. The mill burned in July or August of 1935 and Hull built a mill four miles north of Bellfountain which also burned (both fires caused by refuse burners). In 1938, Hull built a steam powered mill at Dawson. This mill is still running today and is the only steam powered mill in Oregon and one of only a few still operating in the United States. It was recently placed on the National Register of Historic Places and is being considered for designation as a National Historic Landmark.

Although the country experienced a period of economic prosperity following World War I and communities in the county continued to grow and develop commercially, the Depression brought a halt to commercial development. Banks experienced closures, businesses went out of business, farms were abandoned.

In the midst of the Depression, however, a new industry was born in Benton County. In 1934, Hugo Neuman became the first commercial wine maker in the Benton County when he opened the Hugo L. Neuman Winery at his farm in the south central area of the county. His winery was the third in the state of Oregon and its success contributed to the local economy until 1960, when at age 81, Mr. Neuman retired from the wine making business.

War Era: 1941-1945

As was the case throughout the nation, Benton County turned its attention to the war during these years and experienced a standstill in growth and development in many commercial and industrial ventures. War-related business included some commercial enterprises to cater to the troops stationed at Camp Adair, significant agricultural output, and the establishment of the Benton County Flax Cooperative. The Benton County Flax Coop was an agriculture-related industry which thrived during the war years. Flax was important in the production of parachutes and other equipment for the war effort, and the Flax Coop provided the raw materials for this purpose.

Businesses such as the Lake Park Roller Rink certainly experienced good business from the troops stationed at Camp Adair. The timber industry certainly experienced some success during the war years by providing lumber for the construction of sites such as Camp Adair around the country.

Following the war, commerce and industry in the county again experience a period of intense growth and development.

Overview: Growth of Commerce & Industry
Endnotes


3 Nahani Stricker, "Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodgett Regions of Benton County, Oregon," Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 21.

4 Stricker, 21.

5 Patricia Johnson, "Historical Overview of Corvallis' Fourth Precinct and the Philomath Precinct of Benton County, Oregon," Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 5-8.

6 Barclay, 6.

7 Johnson (1984), 8.

8 Reynolds, 6.

9 Stricker, 29.

10 Barclay, 6.


13 Johnson (1984), 8.

14 Stricker, 30.

15 Stricker, 28.

16 Johnson (1984), 10; Stricker, 32.

17 Reynolds, 8.

18 Barclay, 14-15.


21 Stricker, 34.

22 Reynolds, 9.

23 Barclay, 18.

24 Stricker, 37.

25 Stricker, 37.


27 Johnson (1984), 14.

28 Barclay, 24-26.

29 Johnson (1984), 14; Barclay, 26.


Communities and Culture

This section contains information about the development of communities and culture in Benton County during the period from 1846 to 1946. Early communities often began as nothing more than a number of settlers locating their Donation Land Claims in close proximity to one another, such as the King Family or the Belknap clan. Some of these settlements evolved into towns which served the residents of the surrounding area. Others were deliberately started as distribution centers, in part due to their strategic locations near transportation routes. Some of these early towns prospered and grew and survive today; many did not. Those that succeeded became the social, cultural and commercial centers for geographically related settlements, and were often closely tied to the development of the railroad, agriculture or industry. Although Corvallis now serves as the primary commercial center for the county, small towns such as Monroe or Summit were once booming centers of commercial and social activity.

Culture is one of the themes identified in the Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties identified by the State Historic Preservation Office. It includes a number of specific topic areas that together create an image of the culture during a given time period or within a geographic area. Topic areas discussed here include education; religion; funerary practices and monuments; fraternal, social and patriotic movements; humanitarian and social programs; ethnic groups; recreation and social life; and architecture.

Pioneer Settlement and Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Communities

Settlement began in earnest in Benton County when J.C. Avery staked his claim in 1845 at the confluence of the Marys River and the Willamette River. In 1851 he platted the town of Marysville which was renamed Corvallis by the legislature in 1853. In 1855, Corvallis was designated the County seat of Benton County. Corvallis quickly grew into the major city in the county and a regional trading center, in part because of its strategic location along the Willamette River, which became a significant transportation route. Oregon Agricultural College (OAC), later known as Oregon State College (OSC) and later Oregon State University (OSU), got its start in 1868 when the Oregon Legislature designated it as the Agricultural College for the State of Oregon.

Smaller communities outside Corvallis began forming early in this period. Initially residences were scattered, the distribution depending on the size and configuration of the Donation Land Claims and the placement of houses within the claims. As settlement continued, clusters developed, and some eventually became the beginnings of a town. The patterns of distribution of buildings within a town site were clearly very different than those in a rural area. Towns were more compact, with (usually) linear development patterns, whereas rural development was much more open with houses sometimes miles apart. Towns grew from one or two houses to contain mills, warehouses, stores, stage stops, blacksmiths and post offices. Some of these towns survived and others did not, but evidence of these small community centers can be found throughout the county.

The Kings Valley area in northwestern Benton County was first settled by members of the Nahum King family in 1845 and 1846. By 1854, the settlement was known as Kings Valley. The Kings Valley post office opened in 1855 and served the community until the 1960s. The town had a mill, a cemetery, a store and residences, some of which remain today.
Settlement in the vicinity of Philomath began in 1846. The United Brethren Church founded Philomath College in 1865, and in 1867 the founders of the College platted the town of Philomath. The town prospered and eventually became the dominant commercial center along the Marys River, eclipsing the small settlements of Mt. Union to the south and Felger’s Mill.

Another early settlement was the Belknap Community, located west of Monroe in the present day Bellfountain-Alpine area. Settled in 1847 by members of the Belknap clan, it had of the earliest schools (Ebenezer School, 1847) and churches (Simpson Chapel, circa 1860) in the county.7

A post office was established at Starr’s Point in 1852, with Samuel Starr as postmaster. The community of Starr’s Point already had a stage stop and a store at this time. Approximately one-half mile away, a sawmill was established at the site of Monroe, and in 1854, the two communities consolidated at the Monroe location, which was also known as White’s Mill or Brookville until 1866. By the 1870s, Monroe had grown into a bustling town of industry and trade, and held a position of importance in the southern portion of Benton County into the twentieth century.8

The first permanent settlement in the Alsea Valley occurred in 1852. By 1855, most farmland in the upper valley was claimed. The current site of the town of Alsea was probably always the focal point of the community due to its central location, although there is no record of a post office or store there during this early time period.6

There were several small towns that were started with optimism, but were not able to survive economically due to the competition of other towns. The town of Booneville was laid out along the Willamette River in 1851 by Thomas Nelson. Although it was an important shipping point for the transport of local wheat, it consisted of only a warehouse, a blacksmith, and a few residences, and never developed further.9 Jennyopolis was established in 1852 on the west side of Winkle Butte. At that time it consisted of a post office, a store, and a stage stop, and it was a precinct polling place in 1854. The post office was discontinued in 1857, and the town lasted only about ten years before its demise.9 The town of Boonville also did not survive. Settlement in the Soap Creek Valley and Tampico vicinity, in northern Benton County, produced a thriving population center between about 1847 and 1867. The Soap Creek post office was established in 1854; one month later it was closed and re-opened the same day as the Tampico post office. The town of Tampico was platted around 1857. It was situated along the Territorial Road, and had a store, a stage stop, a boarding house, a livery stable, a horse racing track, and two saloons.10 The town of Tampico is also no longer extant.

Initially residences were scattered, the distribution depending on the size and configuration of the Donation Land Claims and the placement of houses within the claims. As settlement continued, clusters developed, and some eventually became the beginnings of a town. The patterns of distribution of buildings within a town site were clearly very different than those in a rural area. Towns were more compact, with (usually) linear development patterns, whereas rural development was much more open with houses sometimes miles apart.

Education

In the early years of the settlement period, children were schooled at home, and received their education from their parents when time permitted. The earliest schools were often held in the homes of families with children in which the mother or a daughter was willing to teach without pay. Chloe Donnelly Boone may have been the first teacher in Benton County, giving instruction at the Boone home near Greenberry in the winter of 1846-1847.11 Most of the teaching would have been conducted orally, as there was little money for books, paper or writing tools.
In 1848, Oregon was the first U.S. Territory to have land in every township allocated for the purpose of education. This provision, allowing for the establishment of a system of common (public) schools, was revised in 1853 and again in 1854. In 1852, Benton County began to organize a school system by dividing the county into twelve districts which each elected boards. A “two mills percent” tax was levied for school purposes by the County Court, and in 1853, $617.13 was collected.

Located within reasonable distance from settlements and farms, school buildings were often the first community center in a rural area. They doubled as a church or meeting hall prior to the construction of additional community buildings, and entertainment, social or political gatherings, dances, and holiday celebrations were often held in school buildings. Early schools and early churches were often very similar in appearance, the churches being slightly more embellished. Starting with log buildings, schools evolved into one or two room school houses, and if the population grew significantly, these were replaced with larger, multi-room buildings.

The Lloyd School was the earliest recorded school in Benton County. Located on the Reeves Donation Land Claim, the log structure was built circa 1848. In response to the greater numbers of settlers throughout the valley, numerous other schools were built during this time period. These included schools at Soap Creek (1847), Kings Valley (1848), Monroe (1848), Blodgett (circa 1852), Oak Grove (1860), Summit (1860) and Irish Bend (pre-1875) among others. None of these early school buildings remain, many having been replaced with more recent structures.

Religion

Religion was another important part of life in the early years of settlement, as it provided stability and cohesiveness to the small, scattered communities. Churches were organized quickly, although for lack of formal church buildings, the earliest settlers initially set up religious meetings in their homes, and circuit riders came periodically. John McKinney was a circuit rider who preached to the members of the Belknap Settlement once a month during the summer of 1848. The Belknap Methodist congregation first met in a grove of trees near a spring on Orin Belknap’s land. Their first camp meeting, held in 1851, was so successful that it continued as an annual event for many years. Initial settlement in the 1840s brought several different religious groups to the county, including Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, and Evangelical.

By the 1850s, the Methodist congregation had become so large it divided into two groups - one meeting at Ebenezer School, and the other at the Bellfountain School. In 1860, plans were made to build a church large enough to accommodate both groups as a single congregation. Brothers George and Squire Rycraft built the Simpson Chapel midway between Alpine and Bellfountain, and in 1862, the reunited congregation began meeting in their new building. In 1865, the first Methodist church building in Monroe was constructed and some of the Simpson Chapel congregation began attending services there.

Beginning in 1850, revival meetings were held at a camp near Philomath and was similar to the Bellfountain camp. The United Brethren met at Union High School in 1850 and established Bethel Chapel in 1857. Baptist services were also organized in the 1850s, and one congregation met at the auxiliary School circa 1853. The North Palestine church, in northern Benton County, organized in 1856 as a division of the Corvallis Baptist Church. This congregation met in local schoolhouses until the construction of their own church building.

Records indicated that Roman Catholic services were held in private homes as early as 1853. St. Rose Catholic Church was organized as a mission in 1877, but did not build a church until 1881. Presbyterians were meeting in the Oakridge area of Benton County by the mid-1850s. In 1879, the Oakridge Presbyterian Church was located on Bellfountain Road, where services continued to be held until 1927.
Other religious groups were likely present in the county during these years, but perhaps their numbers were not sufficient to support the construction of a church or temple, and are therefore not enumerated here.

**Funerary Practices and Monuments**

Early cemeteries were often simply small family plots located on the family donation land claim, such as the King Family plot and the Emerick Cemetery. Some family plots were later developed for use by the community, such as the Wren and Monroe Cemeteries. Other cemeteries were not family plots but were associated with churches, such as the North Palestine and St. Rose Cemeteries. Determining the exact dates of establishment of cemeteries is imprecise without accurate records, but according to the earliest marked graves, several were established in Benton County during this time period.

Early burials were not well marked, but in later years they were often delineated by wrought iron fencing or by stone curbing. The small cemetery at Winkle Butte contains some well-preserved iron fencing, and curbing can be seen at many of the larger cemeteries in the county. Orientation of the graves seems to vary with each cemetery. Headstones, which can be identified as some of the county’s first public art, range in style from simple to ornate, of wood or stone.

The earliest marked grave identified to date in Benton County is located in the Reeves-Edwards Cemetery, and is dated 1848. While earlier burials likely occurred, these may have been either unmarked, or memorialized with wooden markers which have since deteriorated. Other burials may remain on private property in now unmarked family plots which were never developed into formal cemeteries. Cemeteries that were established in the 1850s include Kings Valley, Monroe, and Alpine, among others. The King Family Plot, located in Kings Valley, is There are approximately eighteen cemeteries that were established during this period, each in varying condition and level of use. A listing of cemeteries and their dates is located in the Resource Identification section.

**Fraternal, Social, and Patriotic Movements**

Fraternal, social and patriotic gatherings provided support systems and entertainment for men and women of similar beliefs and interests. In many cases, these organizations had religious or political tones. In organizations such as the Grange, the purpose was to provide a united front against unfair practices. Farmers in Oregon began experiencing problems in transportation, high freight costs, and fluctuating prices during the late 1860s and early 1870s. In response, the Oregon State Grange was established in 1873 to help address issues and combat problems, and by the end of that year there were 175 grange organizations in Oregon. The Locke Grange (near Lewishburg) was Number 14, and was the first built in Benton County, completed in 1873.

In Corvallis in 1859 was the “...first meeting of the friends of agriculture in Benton County [organized] for the purpose of affecting a permanent organization.” The group adopted the constitution and by-laws from the Lane County chapter, and the first fair was set to take place in October of 1859.

Fraternal groups commonly found in frontier communities included the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), the Order of the Free and Accepted Masons, Temperance organizations, various aid societies, and numerous other groups. During the Civil War, Ladies Aid societies were established to render aid to the war effort. These groups typically met at homes of the members, schoolhouses or church buildings until lodge or meeting halls were constructed.
The contrast between settlers from the northeast and those from the border states or the south was clearly reflected in the culture, political attitudes and religious beliefs that were brought to Oregon. Many emigrants had traveled to Oregon to escape the slavery "question," whether they supported or opposed slavery, although there appears to have been a significant number of Union supporters. In 1857, Oregon citizens voted to ban slavery, yet exclusion laws prohibited the residence of free blacks in the state.\(^27\) Despite these efforts, there were still documented cases of people being enslaved in Oregon.

Although some distance from the actual fighting, Oregon was not exempt from the political upheaval of the Civil War. The "Copperhead Party", active in the early 1860s in the area, consisted of southern sympathizers, including many in Benton County. However, Oregon officially maintained its allegiance to the Union.

**Recreation and Social Activities**

Recreation and social activities were initially centered around the church and school. Entertainment in the form of concerts, debates, socials, dances, and church and school programs were fairly commonplace. Residents of the rural county would make occasional trips into town to attend special events. Horse racing was popular during this period, as evidenced by the existence of the Bennett Track southwest of Corvallis and the track located at Tampico. As transportation routes improved, recreation outside of the immediate area became more popular, including trips to picnic or camping areas or to the beach.

**Ethnic Groups**

Although the majority of people who settled in Oregon were Americans of European descent, there were people of other ethnic backgrounds present during this time period in Benton County. The most obvious were those who were native to the land prior to settlement. Government treaties send most of the remaining native people to live on reservations by the late 1850s, making settlement in Benton County relatively unchallenged.

African Americans, despite the exclusion laws, did come to Oregon both free and enslaved. Reuben Shipley was an early black settler, land owner and farmer in Benton County. Born a slave in Kentucky around 1800, he left a wife and children and traveled to Oregon in the 1850s with the Shipley family in exchange for his freedom.\(^28\) After working for Eldridge Hartless, Shipley purchased 80 acres of land between Corvallis and Philomath.

In 1857 he married Mary Jane Holmes, who had traveled to Oregon with her parents in 1844. "Typical of the way many black people came to Oregon during this time, they traveled overland in the company of another black man, Scott, as slaves of Nathaniel Ford and his family."\(^29\) The Holmes children were the subject of a court case involving their status as either free (to live with their parents) or enslaved (by their former owner). The court finally gave custody of the children back to their parents, and in 1857 Mary Jane married Reuben Shipley.\(^30\) Nathaniel Ford, the Holmes family’s former owner, demanded that he be paid for Mary Jane, and against the advice of his white friends, Reuben reputedly paid Ford $700.00 for the freedom of his wife.

Together, they built a cabin, farmed, and raised six children. They were well-liked members of the Plymouth community, where they attended a nearby church. Shipley donated two acres of his land to the county for use as a cemetery on the condition that black people could be buried there. The transaction was completed in 1861.\(^31\) Reuben Shipley died in 1873.

Chinese people came to the United States because of "...agrarian distress, foreign penetration, and domestic rebellion..." in their home country, and most came with the intention of making money and then returning to China.\(^32\) Most evidence suggests that the emigrants came as free
laborers and not as indentured servants or slaves. "The initial period of Chinese immigration to the United States can be defined precisely: significant migration begins with the California gold rush of 1849 and ends with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act on May 6, 1882."  

The 1860 census indicates that at that time there were approximately 425 Chinese people in Oregon, some of whom likely lived in Benton County. The Chinese were largely responsible for the construction of railroads in the west, and their arrival in Benton County likely coincided with rail construction in the late 1870s and 1880s.

**Architecture**

Domestic and commercial architecture during the settlement period reflected the styles and methods of architecture that the settlers had known in their former homes. The brought with them the styles they knew; many had come from the border states where classical influence was strong. The Classical Revival style was also en vogue in the east and midwest, and therefore influenced early Oregon architecture.

The first buildings, however, were simple log cabins or “pens,” often hastily constructed in an attempt to provide shelter for the first winter. These were considered temporary shelter until more permanent hewn-log or frame buildings could be constructed. Once housing was established, even if only a log cabin, the tasks related to industry, agriculture, education, and religion could all be more easily pursued. Log pens or hewn log houses were replaced with frame houses when sawn lumber became available. The earliest houses using sawn lumber often employed heavy timber framing, and were clad in sawn siding. In Benton County, this was in the early 1850s. Families who arrived subsequent to the establishment of a sawmill often enjoyed having lumber houses as their first homes in Oregon.

In addition to the Classical Revival style, Gothic Revival and Vernacular Gothic styles were employed in Benton County. The Federal style could also be found, as well as simple vernacular houses that demonstrated no particular stylistic influence. Further discussion of styles can be found in the Resource Identification section.

**Railroads and the Progressive Era: 1880-1913**

**Communities**

Many communities in Benton County were well established by 1880. Kings Valley had grown to include three stores, a saloon and grocery, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, a gristmill and a post office.  

In the 1890s, the northern part of the Belknap settlement became known as the town of Dusty. With the establishment of its post office in 1902, it was renamed Bellfountain. In the southern portion of the Belknap community, the town of Alpine developed. Known originally as “The Crossroads” it grew to about the same size as Bellfountain, opened a post office in 1912, and was a local cultural center with two opera houses in its history.  

Boonville became less important in the 1890s after a shift in the channels of the Willamette River left the town with limited access to navigable water. Jennyopolis no longer existed, but several other small communities in the vicinity opened post offices. Inavale post office was established in 1896, Glenbrook in 1898, and Bruce in 1900. All closed with the arrival of rural delivery routes in 1905.
Kings Valley, 1914. Even into the twentieth century, small rural towns retained the character of nineteenth century frontier towns. Note the false-front commercial building, houses, a barn and the covered bridge. Photo courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum.
After 1900 Monroe became the center of the county’s apple industry. The first Monroe newspaper, the Leader, reported in 1911 that the assets of Monroe included a bank, a large department store, the county’s largest flouring mill, two churches, six orchard companies, a sawmill, two hotels, liveries and a machine shop.  

Although settlement in the Alsea area started in the 1850s, the town of Alsea was not platted until 1908. It developed as a much needed service center for this relatively isolated region with a general store, a bank, and a gasoline station. Near Alsea, the Lobster Valley area established a post office in 1883; it closed in 1896. 

In the Soap Creek and Tampico area, the town of Wells established a post office in 1880 and a post office for nearby Granger appeared in 1888. The growth of both of these towns was connected to the development of railroads; Wells along the Oregon and California line, and Granger along the Corvallis and Eastern. 

Not originally related to the development of the railroad, the community of Hoskins in during the 1880s was little more than the Frantz family mill (1875) and a general store (1880s). A post office was established there in 1891. The development of operations for the Valley and Siletz Railroad at Hoskins, including shop buildings, a roundhouse and superintendents quarters, spurred the town’s growth during this period. 

Four new towns were the result of construction on the new Oregon Pacific railroad which began to haul freight and passengers from Corvallis to Yaquina Bay in 1885. Summit, Wren, Blodgett, and Harris were all situated on the line and served as stops or stations. Small communities already existed at these sites, but the railroad gave impetus to the significant growth and development of each. 

Summit, located at the highest point of the railroad on the old Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Wagon Road route, was platted in 1885 by William Post. The Post House (late 1880s) may have served as a boarding house or hotel for travelers and railroad workers. (Later owner of the house, the Strouts, did board railroad workers.) The Summit Store (extant) was opened circa 1890, and the post office in 1898. Summit became the headquarters for the Oregon Pacific Railroad, and grew to include a depot, a loading dock, barns for horses used in railroad construction, and a church built in 1906 (extant). Between 1912 and 1913, the local school’s student enrollment increased from 28 to 63. 

Wren, named for early settler George P. Wrenn, established a post office in 1887 and had a passenger station and a store in the early 1890s. Blodgett also had a store, and its post office opened in 1888. The post office was called Emerick before being changed to Blodgett. Harris had been the site of a sawmill since at least 1854, and the mill was still operating in 1884. The post office, opened in 1893, was discontinued in 1898. Several miles southeast of Summit was a mill town called Devitt. It was located on the Oregon Pacific Railroad, but was established in the early 1900s solely to provide support for the Devitt Brothers Sawmill. 

Education

The increasing population resulted in the opening of several new schools, as well as the enlargement of existing ones. Most of those constructed during this period were small frame buildings of the rectangular, gable roofed form. By 1880, there were 55 school districts in Benton County, a testament to the county’s growth. The school year consisted of four months, two in the spring and two in the fall. Nearly twenty new schools were established in the 1890s alone, with at least five more opening in the first decade of the 1900s. These were in addition to the schools which had already been established throughout the county.
Religion

The settlers depended on their faith to carry them through the difficulties they encountered while establishing a new life in the wilderness. As communities became better established in the evolving landscape, various faiths were able to fulfill their need for a house of worship.

Several new churches were built during this period, including the McFarland Church. This Methodist-Episcopal congregation was organized in the 1860s, and had been meeting in a nearby schoolhouse until the new McFarland church was built four and a half miles north of Monroe. The first Sunday school was held in 1882, and the church was dedicated in 1896.

In 1900, the congregation of the Simpson Chapel divided again and annual camp meetings came to an end. A new church was built at Bellfountain in 1899 (extant) and a new Simpson Memorial Chapel was built in 1904 at Alpine. The old Simpson Chapel was torn down, and materials reused in the new church. Numerous other church buildings were constructed throughout the county, including the St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Monroe (1883), the North Palestine Church in Wells (1885), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Alsea (1888), and a Methodist church in Monroe (1911) among others.

Funerary Practices and Monuments

Only a few new cemeteries were dedicated during these years. All appeared in the 1880s. As was characteristic, some started as small family plots, while others were associated with a community or a church. Those that were initiated as private family plots included the Ridders Cemetery (circa 1880) and the Powell Cemetery (1884); the Lone Fir cemetery was a community cemetery which served people from as far as five miles away; the St. Rose cemetery was associated with the St. Rose church.

Fraternal, Social and Patriotic Movements

Organizations associated with fraternal, social and patriotic interests continued to be popular into the twentieth century. The Grange was still the predominant organization in the agrarian communities of Benton County, and retained its importance as a strong voice for the fair treatment of farmers. The grange was also important socially. “In 1892, John Mitchell (postmaster Inavale P.O.) wrote that Muddy Creek went ‘past the gallant granger’s hall / Where farmers and their thrifty wives may call / And a good old fashioned, social time / Unmarred by high-life etiquette or crime.’” The first grange hall located on Greenberry Road near Muddy Creek burned circa 1920. A new hall, the present-day Willamette Grange, was built in 1923 at the corner of the Pacific Highway (Highway 99W) and Greenberry Road in the Georgian style.

The Fairmount Grange was organized in 1891, and the first Fairmount Grange Hall was built in 1892. This building burned in 1929, and was replaced with the current building, which was constructed in 1930. The Mountain View Grange No. 429 was organized in 1911, and was considered a continuation of the 1873 Locke Grange which had disbanded. Their hall was the former Lewisburg Hall and Warehouse Company, which is extant.

The I.O.O.F. built a new hall in Alpine with money donated by J.W. Walters. Walters also set up a trust fund, in the care of the I.O.O.F., for the maintenance of his family plot in the Alpine cemetery with the excess to be used to maintain the remainder of the cemetery. Fraternal groups often provided money for the establishment or maintenance of cemeteries, resulting in identification of cemeteries as I.O.O.F or Masonic cemeteries.
Lodge Halls were built as community centers, and often provided space for meetings or entertainment activities, in addition to lodge or fraternal meetings. They varied in style from very simple vernacular buildings to more ornate, stylistically influenced structures, depending on the wealth of the chapter.

**Recreation and Social Life**

The railroad brought with it new recreational opportunities. Excursions to Newport via the Oregon Pacific Railroad had begun in 1885. Improvements to the transportation system within Benton County made travel to Corvallis for entertainment more feasible. Outdoor recreation also grew in popularity, and Sulphur Springs near Soap Creek was a favorite camping and picnic area in the 1880s and 1890s.54

Chautauqua was another form of entertainment that was popular during this period and the years that followed. The Chautauqua movement was born out of concern for the direction of nation’s youth following the horrors of the Civil War. Chautauqua included grand orators, preachers, musicians, jugglers, and dancers and the movement provided a place for people to gather for education and entertainment.55 Initially established in 1874 at Lake Chautauqua, New York, the movement reached the West in the 1890s. The Willamette Valley Chautauqua Association organized in 1894, and met annually at Gladstone, Oregon.56 The Chautauqua Building at Gladstone was reputedly the third largest in the United States.57 While there is little mention of Chautauqua events taking place in Benton County, it may be presumed that some residents made trips from this area to Gladstone to attend events.

One of the largest events in the history of Oregon took place in Portland in 1905. The Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition extended from June 1 to October 15, 1905 at a cost of five to seven million dollars. “The principal exhibit palaces [bore] the names Forestry, Oriental, European, Agriculture and Manufactories, Liberal Arts and Varied Industries . . .”58 The fair was successful in promoting the northwest as an ideal location for residence, agriculture or industry, and Benton County was represented in the Agriculture pavilion.

**Architecture**

Architecture reflected the changing tastes and times, though more slowly in rural Benton County than in bustling towns and cities. House styles popular during this time ranged from Italianate and Queen Anne to Stick/Eastlake and the Bungalow. The vernacular form of the Gothic continued to be used into the late 1880s. Houses were built almost exclusively of wood, due to its abundance. Commercial buildings in small communities were still being built of wood, although brick soon became preferable as a more substantial and fire-proof building material.

**The Motor Age: 1914-1940**

**Communities**

Most of Benton County’s communities were well established. Several factors influenced growth during the Motor Age, the most significant of which was the continued development of transportation routes and methods. Communities in the northwestern portion of the county were impacted by the construction of the Valley and Siletz Railroad. Its headquarters were located in Hoskins, which by 1920 was described as the trading point for Kings Valley. At its peak, Hoskins had a school, a post office, a store, a sawmill, a bank, a hotel, many houses and several railroad buildings.
William Peacock House. This large house, which doubled as a taxidermy business, was constructed in the 1880s in the Italianate style. Photo courtesy Benton County Historical Museum #985-32.25AD.
In Summit, school enrollment in 1925 had grown to 96 students and in 1930 a new school was built. This building is currently a residence in Summit. Wren now included a general store, a post office, a boarding house, a church, a school, a railroad depot, a lumber dock, and a saw-and-planing mill. In the late 1930s, a community hall was built in Wren.

Harris was also actively growing. Its first post office had closed in 1898, but by 1918 it had reopened as Elam. The town continued to be known as Harris, but the postmark was Elam because the post office didn’t want confusion with Harrisburg in Linn County. The Elam/Harris post office closed in 1928. Bellfountain enjoyed growth and prosperity until the Depression years. Devastating fires in Alpine in 1918 and 1924 nearly destroyed the community, and Alpine never fully recovered. These smaller towns served surrounding areas, but Corvallis remained the primary center of commerce for the county.

The 1929 Metzker Map identifies other communities for which information has not been located. It is likely that these communities were logging camps, and may not have survived beyond the productive years of logging in their immediate areas. Alder was located two miles south of Blodgett, Conger was one mile northwest of Blodgett, Cain was one mile southeast of Summit, and Kopplein was five miles northwest of Hoskins.

Education

Although county population continued to increase, only four new schools were constructed during the Motor Age. These were the Fairplay (1914), Lincoln (1915), Devitt (1915), Eureka (1917), and Farm Home (1925) schools. Some school consolidation occurred, and a few schools were closed, but for the most part, the roster of schools remained the same.

The Oregon Agricultural College impacted much of rural Benton County. In 1926, the School of Forestry at the college, under the guidance of George Peavy, managed to acquire lands for use as a forest reserve where students could have “hands-on” experience in forestry. Peavy Arboretum, located in the northeastern part of Benton County, was dedicated in 1926. Land acquisition eventually grew to 11,000 acres. In 1930, Mrs. Mary McDonald donated funds to the College to purchase 75 percent of the present-day McDonald Forest in Peavy Arboretum is located.

Funeral Practices and Monuments

By this time, most cemeteries in Benton County had been established. The Hendrix-Lobster Valley Cemetery was established in 1917 in western Benton County. The United States experienced World War I during the 1910s, and headstones of veterans from that war can be found in cemeteries throughout the county.

Fraternal, Social, and Patriotic Movements

The Grange continued to be active in Benton County, and the Marys River Grange was constructed in 1934. The new Fairmount Grange built in 1930. Other existing granges provided education, social activities and services to rural communities.

Fraternal groups such as the I.O.O.F., the Masons, and the Knights of Pythias continued in popularity. In 1935 the Knights of Pythias purchased forty acres on Marys Peak and built a large log cabin with two fireplaces. It was a popular meeting spot for fraternal groups, the Boy Scouts and fraternities, until in was destroyed by fire.

In 1919 the Oregon Chapter of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) began a campaign to create a home for orphans and dependent children. In 1922 the 245-acre Asbahr
Farm, three and one half miles north of Corvallis, was purchased and construction began on the Children’s Farm Home. The Farm Home was established to provide comfort, education, and assistance to homeless, neglected, and abandoned children. One of the primary considerations of the WCTU was to establish a self-sustaining and healthy farm environment from which the children could gain a sense of values through hard work. For many years, entire families of children grew up together in the cottages at the Children’s Farm Home. The need for education was another important part of the Children’s Farm Home premise. Originally, children attended school in Corvallis, but in 1924 the State Legislature appropriated money for the construction of a school at the Farm. The site was developed through the 1920s with buildings to house children and staff; farm buildings, a swimming pool, a shelter home and a school completed the complex. The Children’s Farm Home continues to provide services to children today.

Recreation and Social Life

Automobiles greatly enhanced the ability of people to recreate away from home. Camping and picnicking, and weekend trips were now more common. Moving pictures provided an entirely new form of entertainment, with theatres located in Corvallis. The Lake Park Roller Rink, located north of Lewisburg, was built in the 1920s, and was a recreational destination for the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, as well as for students of the Oregon Agricultural College and local residents.

Hops was a successful crop during this period, and hops picking seems to have been a popular summer social activity where family and friends would camp out for several days while participating in the harvest.

Architecture

Architectural styles utilized during this period varied greatly. While many farms continued to use their turn-of-the-century houses, many of which still stand today, small towns and the city of Corvallis saw the influences of historic period revival styles such as the Dutch Colonial, Tudor Revival and Norman Farmhouse. Many style were popular during this period throughout the state, though their use was comparatively limited in the rural areas of Benton County.

The War Era: 1941-1945

During the years of World War II, the focus of the entire nation was on the war effort. Growth was aimed at furthering this effort, and Benton County was able to oblige not only with the increased production of agricultural goods, but with the development of Camp Adair. Camp Adair was located north of Corvallis, and at its completion was essentially a new community in Benton County. Thousands of men trained there, and the site encompassed an area of 52,000 acres, 13,000 of which were in Benton County. More detailed discussion of Camp Adair can be found in the section on Government Activity.
Endnotes


3 Nahani Stricker, "Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodgett Regions of Benton County Oregon" Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 15.


6 Sekora, 45.

7 Susan P. Reynolds, "Historical Overview of the Alsea/Lobster Valley Region of Benton County, Oregon," Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 4-9.

8 Richard T. Read, "Historical Overview of the Soap Creek, Fairmount, and Corvallis 1 Precincts of Benton County, Oregon," Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 5.

9 Janice Barclay, "Historical Overview of the Willamette/Bellfountain/Monroe Regions of Benton County, Oregon," Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 10; Sekora, 45.

10 Sekora, 45.


13 Barclay, 10.

14 Barclay, 4-5.

15 This list was compiled from Marlene McDonald's work *When School Bells Rang*..., which contains more detailed information regarding Benton County's schools.


17 Barclay, 5.

18 Barclay, 11.

19 Sekora, 49.

20 Read, 4.

21 Sekora, 49-50.

22 Barclay, 11.


24 Read, 6.


26 Himes, 327.


28 McLagan, 81.

29 McLagan, 33.

30 McLagan, 34-35 and 80-81. "The conditions under which they [the Holmes family] came [to Oregon], whether slave or free, were disputed in the court case over the custody of their children..." This case commenced in 1852, and lasted several years, resulting in the Holmes' winning custody of their children.

*Overview: Communities and Culture*
Overview: Communities and Culture
Government Activity

Government Activity is a broad theme which includes aspects of history related to governments, politics and military activity. Various forms of government activity have been a part of Benton County’s history since its beginning. Benton County has always been subject to governmental activity on the Federal level and was decidedly impacted by military activities in the 1850s and the 1940s. Prior to Oregon’s statehood, Benton County was subject to Territorial Government interventions; following statehood, the State government took the role that the Territorial Government once had. With the creation of Benton County as a governmental unit in 1847, there was also county level government activity. As communities developed, several adopted local governance as well.

This section focuses on the major government-related activity that have helped to shape Benton County’s history.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Benton County was created 1847 by an act of the Territorial Government of Oregon. Originally encompassing 4,076,000 acres, Benton County extended from Polk County on the north to California on the south, from the Willamette River on the east to the Pacific Ocean on the west. Between 1851 and 1893, several other Oregon counties were created out of portions of Benton County, including Lane, Douglas, Jackson, Lincoln, Josephine, Curry and Coos counties. Eventually Benton County was left in its current configuration with 433,280 acres.1

Following its creation, the county set out to establish its own government which was organized in 1849-50. The county seat was Marysville (Corvallis), and the first Benton County courthouse was constructed there in 1855; a jail was built in 1856. Samuel Starr, an early pioneer in the county, was one of the first county sheriffs.2 By the time Oregon was granted statehood in 1859, Benton County was well established.

The Federal government also had an early role in Benton County’s history. The 1850s Indian Wars in southern Oregon resulted in the governmental policy requiring the relocation of Native Americans from their homelands to reservations created on public lands. One of these reservations, the Siletz Reservation, was located in what was then Benton County (west of the current county boundary in present-day Lincoln County). The reservation was located on the coast and in the coast range, approximately 125 miles long and 25 miles wide. Fort Hoskins, established to protect the Reservation land from settlement by Euro-american settlers, was built in Kings Valley to guard one of the central entrances to the reservation.3

Fort Hoskins, the first military establishment in Benton County, was founded in 1856 on land leased from Henry VanPeer. The first buildings were constructed in 1857 and eventually the facility included quarters for officers, quarters for soldiers, a hospital, a storehouse, carpenter and blacksmith shops, a store, a bakery, laundries, barns, and gardens. There was also a guard house and a magazine, but the fort was a fort in name only, as no blockhouse was constructed and there is no record of any other fortification being constructed. Under command of Capt. C.C. Auger, it operated until 1861 with regular U.S. Army troops and until 1865 with volunteers from Oregon, California, and Washington. It was abandoned in 1865. The fort was named for Lt. Charles Hoskins who died in the Mexican-American War in 1846.4 The Fort Hoskins site was acquired by Benton County in 1992 and is currently under the management of the Benton County Parks Department.
Benton County Courthouse. This is the oldest courthouse in Oregon still used for its original purpose.
The building at the left is the jail, and is no longer standing.
Photo courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum #981-98P25.
Government activities on the local level occurred as communities developed into towns and cities and established local jurisdictions. For information about the development of communities, please refer to the "Communities and Culture" section of this report.

State-level government activities began shortly after Oregon became a state in 1859, although most of the significant contributions historically fall within the time periods that follow.

**Railroads And The Progressive Era: 1880-1913**

With county government established and local jurisdictional development in progress, State and Federal level government programs came to the forefront. In 1907, the first efforts to systematically manage public forest lands by the U.S. Forest Service began in Benton County with creation of Siuslaw Forest. Most forests were on private land and not subject to conservation and management as a resource. By 1920, the Siuslaw Forest encompassed 2500 acres.\(^5\)

In 1911, the State Game Commission was formed. Lewisburg was chosen as the site for the State Game Farm. Gene Simpson of Corvallis was made the manager of the farm and his ring-necked pheasant raising operation was moved to the Lewisburg site. The State Game Farm was later relocated to former Camp Adair site circa 1951 and renamed the E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area.\(^6\)

**The Motor Age: 1914-1940**

The State Game Commission continued their involvement in Benton County through the creation of the Alsea River Trout Hatchery between 1934 and 1936. The hatchery is located in the Coast Range on the north fork of the Alsea River approximately three miles east of the town of Alsea. The complex consisted of several circa 1930s houses and duplexes built as worker housing, the main hatchery building, the feed room, the concrete raceways, rearing ponds, settling ponds, display ponds, and a fish ladder. More recently, new ponds and a new hatchery building have been added to the original complex. The Alsea River Trout Hatchery was built for the Oregon State Game Commission as part of the Depression-era Federal Works Projects (part of the New Deal program).

The Great Depression took its toll in Oregon as well as other states. In response the nation's economic crisis the Roosevelt Administration created several relief programs in 1933, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration, and the Federal Emergency Relief Act. Of these New Deal programs, it was the CCC which was best known for their work in Benton County.

During the 1930s, there were 75 CCC camps at various locations in Oregon. The men from Camp Arboretum (established in 1933 and located within Peavy Arboretum) were responsible for several work projects in and near Benton County. The CCC was responsible for the construction, improvement, and/or maintenance of over 100 miles of road in Benton County, many of which were located in the McDonald Forest. They maintained a rock quarry two miles south of the camp where they crushed rock for use on these projects. They were also involved in clearing and maintaining fire breaks and were responsible for constructing at least seven guard cabins, three fire lookout towers and two fireguard stations in the area. The work crews also provided assistance in fire fighting efforts in the forests. During the seven years of the CCC at Camp Arboretum, the Oregon Forest Nursery became a major supplier of seedlings for reforestation after CCC crews constructed or remodeled eight nursery buildings, constructed Cronemiller Lake and developed an irrigation system.\(^7\)
They were also responsible for several short-term projects including the construction of the State Forestry Department Headquarters in Salem, the clearing of recreational sites such as Sulphur Springs, and the construction of the Fred J. Schreiner monument at Peavy Arboretum. The camp was designated "sign headquarters" and a sign shop was constructed in 1936. Numerous "rustic" wooden signs found throughout western Oregon were created by CCC crews at Camp Arboretum.  

Camp Arboretum was vacated in June 1942. During the seven years of its existence, four companies were stationed there. Junior Company 697 arrived on May 18, 1935 and departed one year later. Veteran Company 1922 arrived in June 1936 and remained at the camp until December 1937. On December 20, 1937, Junior Company 3503 arrived and was stationed at the camp until July 1940. The final company was Junior Company 6418. They arrived July 12, 1940 and departed when the camp was closed nearly two years later. After the camp was vacated, the facilities were used for training fire crews for a while. It is also reported that at least the officers' quarters were used for housing at one time. Today, most of the camp buildings are gone.  

**War Era: 1941-1945**

Government activity in Benton County during the war era was focused on the development of Camp Adair. In 1941, the U.S. War Department began to survey potential west coast training camp sites suitable for cantonments, airplane fields, and munitions depots. In June 1941, a site north of Corvallis referred to as the "Airlie Site" was chosen as one of two in Oregon. Camp Adair named to honor Henry Rodney Adair, a descendant of an Oregon pioneer family and graduate of West Point, who was the first Oregonian killed in the 1916 Mexico border clashes.  

The construction of Camp Adair had a profound impact on the Soap Creek and Fairmount areas of Benton County. In order to make way for the large training camp, family farms were purchased, graveyards were relocated, railroad tracks re-routed and the community of Wells was abandoned. Records indicate that 414 bodies from seven different locations in Benton and Polk counties were disinterred, transported to and reinterred in the New English and New Smith cemeteries, both in Polk County and created specifically created for the reinterments.  

Camp Adair was officially dedicated on April 27, 1942. It encompassed a total of 52,000 acres, of which 13,000 were in Benton County. Four infantry divisions were trained at the camp for overseas duty. They were the 70th "Trailblazers", the 91st "Powder River", the 96th "Deadeye", and the 104th "Timberwolf" divisions. In early 1944, camp property was declared surplus by the Army and the hospital was turned over to the U.S. Navy. It was enlarged to accommodate 3600 and from March 1945 through April 1946 casualties from the Pacific Theater were treated and recuperated at Camp Adair. A portion of the camp was used as a detention center for Italian and German prisoners between August 1944 and April 1946. Camp Adair officially closed on May 23, 1946.  

The Camp Adair land was divided by various agencies and branches of government. About 45,000 acres were sold to private individuals with former owners having first preference. Oregon State College received about 4500 acres of forested land which was added to the McDonald Forest in 1948; this section is known as the Paul Dunn Forest. Portions of the camp were used by Oregon State College and Oregon State Game Commission during the late 1940s and 1950s for various activities, including the relocation of the State Game Farm from Lewislburg (the farm was renamed the E.E.Wilson Wildlife Area). In 1957, the U.S. Air Force acquired some of the property for use as a SAGE (Semi-Automatic Ground Environment) base. It was closed in 1969. No buildings remain on this site from this era.
Endnotes

3 Gallagher, 22.
4 Nahani Stricker, "Historical Overview of the Kings Valley/Summit/Blodgett Regions of Benton County Oregon" Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 24-25. A report prepared in 1994 by David R. Brauner and Nahani A. Stricker entitled "Cultural Resources Overview and Preliminary Interpretive Themes for Fort Hoskins County Park Benton County, Oregon" is an excellent source of further information pertaining to the history of the Fort Hoskins site. A copy of this report is available for review at the Benton County Development Department.
5 Patricia Johnson, "Historical Overview of the Corvallis Fourth Precinct and the Philomath Precinct of Benton County, Oregon" Prepared as part of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (Philomath, Oregon: Benton County Historical Society, 1984-1986), 12.
7 Thomas, 53-56, 63.
8 Thomas, 58-59.
9 Thomas, 69-82. Further information about Camp Arboretum and the legacy of their work in Benton County can be found in Camp Arboretum: The Dynamics of the Civilian Conservation Corps in McDonald Forest and Surrounding Areas by Karen Thomas. This book takes a comprehensive look at camp life and the nature of CCC work projects, as well as providing statistical information about Camp Arboretum and the CCC.
10 Read, 13.
12 Read, 13.
13 "Camp Adair" pamphlet.
14 Read, 14.
Significant People
Significant People

Information for this section was taken from the Benton County Historic Resources Inventory Context sections, the Benton County Register of Historic Resources, Lewis L. McArthur’s Oregon Geographic Names, David Fagan’s History of Benton County, and the Portrait and Biographical Record of the Willamette Valley, Oregon. There may be inaccuracies in dates or spelling of names, which can be corrected with an errata sheet when discovered.

Avery, Joseph C. - Avery was a Pennsylvania native and pioneer of 1845 who established one of earliest land claims in Benton County near the mouth of the Marys River. He laid out the town site of Marysville, later called Corvallis, and established first store on the site of Corvallis in the late 1840s. He served as a member of the first Territorial Legislature for Oregon, and was a Postal Agent under the administration of President Buchanan.

Barclay, James E. - Born in Missouri in 1827, James Barclay arrived in Benton County in 1851 and settled on a 320 acre Donation Land Claim south of Corvallis in 1853. He married Mary Herron sometime after 1876. James Barclay died in 1897, leaving the farm to his wife. The house and outbuildings are currently owned by the Barclay family, and are listed in the Benton County Register.

Barclay, William - Born in 1805 in Missouri, William Barclay arrived in Benton County in 1851 with his seven children, having lost his wife on the Oregon Trail. Settled on a Donation Land Claim south of Corvallis. His son, William D. Barclay, married Eliza Reeves, daughter of early settler Thomas Reeves, and became a prominent Benton County farmer.

Belknap, George and Ketturah - The Belknaps were pioneer settlers of 1848 who were part of the Belknap clan who settled in the Bellfountain-Alpine area. Both were devout Methodists who were active in the establishment of the Methodist community in Benton County.¹

Belknap, Ransome A. - Ransome Belknap was a Kentucky native who arrived in Benton County in 1847, and after passing some time in Corvallis, took up his Donation Land Claim about two miles west of Monroe. His original property of 640 acres increased to 750, where he engaged in general farming. In 1842 he married Mahala Starr, and they had nine children: Lucinda J., Sarah M., Keziah B., Webster C., Lewis Franklin, Adeline and Angelina (twins), Samuel G., and Edward H. Belknap.

Blodgett, William - A New York native who arrived in Benton County in 1848, William Blodgett settled a claim in 1850 in the valley that was called Blodgett’s Valley. The town of Blodgett was name for him.

Boone, Chloe Donnelly - Chloe Donnelly Boone is said to be first woman teacher in Oregon outside mission schools. She taught school in 1846-1847 on the Boone Donation Land Claim on Greenberry Road.

Brimner, Ernest - E.E. Brimner designed and built a number of distinctive barns in the southeast portion of Benton County. Mr. Brimner, a native of Canada, was a carpenter in Monroe, Oregon between the years of 1897 and 1918.

Bruce, Major James - Born in Indiana in 1827, James Bruce arrived in Oregon in 1852, when he took up merchandising in Jacksonville. He enlisted as a private in the Indian War of
1853, and was promoted to Major by the 1856 close of the War. Married Margaret Kinney in 1857. Major Bruce moved to Benton County in the mid-1860, where he purchased a 320 acre farm then miles south of Corvallis.

Carter, Tolbert - Born in Illinois in 1825, Tolbert Carter was one of the earliest residents of Benton County, having arrived in 1846 from Missouri. He settled on 590 acres. In 1872 he was selected to represent Benton County in the State Legislature, and was re-elected to that office in 1878.

Cauthorn, Thomas E. - Benton County State Senator in 1882-1886 who introduced the bill to make Corvallis College a state institution; one of leading merchants of Corvallis, and Mayor of Corvallis in 1883. Born in Missouri in 1849, Thomas Cauthorn arrived in Benton County with his wife and five sons in 1865.

Chambers, Rowland - Rowland Chambers was the son-in-law of Nahum King, having married Sarah King. He migrated to Oregon with the King family in 1845, and established a gristmill in Kings Valley circa 1853 which was one of the earliest grain milling sites in the county. The Isaac King House, located in Kings Valley and listed in the National Register of Historic Places and in the Benton County Register, is still owned by the Chambers family.

Chapman, Ralph - Ralph Chapman invented “Chapco board”, a wood by-product construction material which was the basis for the development of particle board.

Connor, Milton J. - Well known resident of Kings Valley, who came to Oregon from Indiana in 1852. He engaged in farming, and in the spring of 1874 opened a general merchandise store in Kings Valley, which he ran for nine years. In 1884 he was selected to serve as Benton County Representative to the State Senate.

Cooper, James - Born in Virginia, James Cooper moved with his parents to Indiana, and then to Missouri, where he married to Scena A. Evans in 1852. Arrived in Benton County in 1854, and lived in Kings Valley for several years before moving to the Philomath vicinity. Later moved to a 320 acre farm two and a half miles west of Corvallis. The Coopers had five children: Thomas H., Francis M., George W., Robert E., and Mary F. Cooper.

Currier, Jacob M. - Born in 1827, Jacob Currier was a Vermont native who eventually moved to Oregon in 1846. After moving several times within Polk and Benton Counties, as well as serving in the Indian Wars east of the Cascades and traveling to the gold mines in California, Jacob Currier took up a claim about ten miles south of Corvallis where he engaged in farming and stock raising. Currier served as a commissioner of Benton County when Oregon was still a territory, and later served in other public capacities. He was director of the Willamette Valley and Coast Railroad Company, and his farm was one of the largest in the area. The Currier-Thompson House is located on the Currier Donation Land Claim, and is the second frame house on the site. The house is currently owned by Jacob Currier's granddaughter, and is listed in the Benton County Register of Historic Resources.

Davis, Caleb - A native of Pennsylvania, Caleb Davis was born in 1826. He was married to Eliza Henkle in Iowa in 1855. After years of travel in the midwest, California and Oregon, Davis settled in Benton County circa 1866, when he purchased 326 acres four miles southwest of Corvallis.
Davis, David D. - Davis was responsible for the naming of the now defunct town of Tampico, where he had a store and stage station.

Felger, Jacob S. - An Ohio native, Jacob Felger arrived in Oregon in 1851. He married Nancy E. Mitchell in Lane County in 1855, and moved to Benton County in 1867. He purchased and ran the well-known Felger Mills on the Mary's River.

Finley, W.A. - W.A. Finley was appointed first president of Corvallis College.

Fisher, Ernest W. - Born in Germany in 1815, Ernest Fisher settled in Corvallis in 1852, and opened a saddle and harness shop, a trade he had learned in Germany. He then manufactured the first harness and saddles made in Benton County. He eventually married Amelia Dillard, and settled a 480 acre farm two-and-a-half miles north of Corvallis.

Gallatly, Andrew - Born in Scotland, Andrew Gallatly traveled to the United States at age 15, and then to California by steamer. He lived in Nevada for eight years before moving to Benton County, where he purchased a 400 acre farm two-and-a-half miles west of Philomath.

Gilbert, Lorenzo - Lorenzo Gilbert built a very early, man-powered sawmill in southern Benton County in about 1852.

Gingles, James - A native of Pennsylvania, James Gingles traveled to Benton County in 1850. He took up a 640 acre claim one mile south of the Polk-Benton County line, known as Wells Station. He was elected to the State Legislature in 1864, 1868, and 1876, and was also a member of the Benton County Board of County Commissioners for ten years.

Gird, William - Gird was an Ohio native who arrived in Benton County in 1853. He purchased a 540 acre farm in 1857, which was known in early days as the Twelve Mile House, as it was used as a stand for the Oregon and California Stage line, and was located twelve miles south of Corvallis.

Hammer, Ellis - This son of Jacob and Hannah Hammer is attributed with raising the first hops in Benton County around the turn of the century.

Hanson, Jess - Jess Hanson started his poultry business in 1914. The Hanson's Leghorn Breeding Farm ultimately grew to 350 acres, and Hanson became recognized as one of the world's foremost poultrymen.

Hartless, Eldridge - A native of Virginia who arrived in Oregon in 1846. Settling in Benton County in 1848, he worked with a Mr. Matzger operating grist and sawmills near Philomath which were erected in 1854.

Hawley, Willis Chatman - A grandson of settler Chatman Hawley, W.C. Hawley, in his later life, served as the president of Willamette University, as a United States legislator from 1907 to 1933, and as a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. The house of his childhood, which was built for his father Sewell Hawley, remains standing on Williams Road.

Henkle, Ichabod B. - Ichabod Henkle was born in 1810 in West Virginia, and came to Benton County in 1853. He staked a claim four miles west of Philomath and ran a sawmill there for several years. He was one of the original incorporators of the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Wagon Road Company, and was later Director of the Willamette Valley and Coast Railroad.
Herbert, Joshua and Elizabeth - Joshua Herbert built first grist mill south of Rickreall at Inavale on Beaver Creek, about 1850, providing a more local mill to farmers could bring their grain for processing.

Hogg, Thomas Egerton, Colonel - Hogg was the driving force behind the financing and development of the Corvallis and Yaquina/Oregon and Pacific Railroad. He was also president of the Oregon and Pacific Railroad.

Holmes, Mary Jane - Mary Jane Holmes Shipley was an early African American settler in Oregon. She came with her parents as a slave, and along with her siblings was the subject of a protracted court case over her status as a free person or a slave. She eventually gained her freedom, and was married to Reuben Shipley.

Hoskins, Charles L.t. - namesake of Fort Hoskins; died in Mexican-American war in 1846

Hull, Ralph - Ralph Hull built a steam powered lumber mill near Dawson in 1938 which is currently one of the last steam-operated mills remaining in the country.

Irwin, Richard - Richard Irwin arrived in Benton County in 1851, and soon thereafter took a 640 acre claim near the claims of the McBees, John Harris, John Foster, Major Bruce, John Rickard, and numerous other early settlers. He served as postmaster at Jennyopolis, located south of Corvallis near Winkle Butte, also known in the past as Irwin Butte. It was established in 1852 and discontinued in 1857.

King, Nahum and Sarepta - Patriarch and matriarch of the King Family clan, which traveled to Oregon in 1845 and settled in Kings Valley. The 26 members of the King family traveled in five wagons and included: sons John and wife Susan (Cooper), Stephen and wife Anna Maria (Allen), Isaac, Amos Nahum, Solomon; daughters Hopestill and husband Lucius Norton, Sara and husband Rowland Chambers, Louisa, Abigail, Lydia and Rhoda Ann.

McDonald, Mary - In 1930 Mary McDonald donated the funds necessary to purchase a large portion of present-day McDonald Forest, an Oregon State University Research Forest.

Martin, James - Born in County Down, Ireland in 1822, Martin emigrated to America in 1847, settling in Benton County in 1852. One biographer gives James Martin the distinction of raising and shipping the first wheat in Benton County. Supposedly, the captain of the ship which received this wheat named the section of the river in this area Irish Bend, in honor of James Martin's nationality. This information has not been substantiated. The James Martin House, built in 1885 remains standing in Irish Bend.

Mulkey, James L. - Born in 1797 in Tennessee, James Mulkey arrived in Benton County in 1845, and built a small house about two miles northwest of Corvallis. He lived with his family on this farm for the rest of his life, and filled several important positions in Benton County, including membership in the first Territorial Legislature and served as census taker in 1850. He died in 1855.

Nash, Wallis - Nash instigated the incorporation of the Oregon Agricultural Company in 1878, and also served as Vice President of the Oregon and Pacific Railroad, and on the Board of Regents of the Oregon Agricultural College.

Neuman, Hugo - Hugo Neuman was born in Czechoslovakia in 1879, and came to the United States at the age of 17. In 1914 he moved to Oregon with his wife Anne and their five children, and settled in Benton County in 1919. In 1934, Neuman established Neuman Winery, the first winery in Benton County and the third bonded winery in the State of
Oregon. Neuman used his own formulas, having learned winemaking in Czechoslovakia. The winery produced twelve varieties of fruit and grape wines which were sold at the winery, at a store in Corvallis owned by the Neumans, and throughout Canada and the United States. He continued to operate the winery until 1972.

**Nichols, Henry B.** - Born in Connecticut, Henry Nichols arrived in Benton County in 1852, and proceeded to teach school in the Belknap Settlement for nine years. He established a 1200 acre farm four miles west of Monroe.

**Noon Brothers** - The Noon Brothers owned and ran a successful sawmill west of Philomath.

**Peavy, George** - George Peavy, namesake of Peavy Arboretum, was Head of the School of Forestry at Oregon Agricultural College from 1910-1940, and was President of the Oregon Agricultural College from 1932-1940.

**Pitman, William M.** - Born in Ohio in 1827, William Pitman arrived in Benton County in 1851. He lived in Kings Valley until 1871, and is attributed with building the Isaac King House and the Watson House, both early settlement era Classical Revival houses located in Kings Valley. He worked in the mill of Hartless and Matzger during these years, helping produce the first sawn lumber in the county. He moved to Corvallis in 1871, and in 1875 built his sash and door factory.

**Post, William and Katie** - The Posts platted the town of Summit in 1885. One of the oldest standing houses in Summit was likely built for the Posts, and they are also attributed with building the Summit Store, both of which are still located in Summit.

**Read, Thomas** - One of the first settlers in the county, New Hampshire native Thomas Read was born in 1812, and arrived in Benton County in 1846. He settled a claim about six miles north of Corvallis, where his house still stands. In 1846 he married Nancy White and they had six children: Therese, Perry, Clara, Columbia, Sumner, and Charles. Mr. Read owned a large estate, and was and active community promoter.

**Reeves, Thomas** - Thomas Reeves is attributed with occupying the first Donation Land Claim made in Benton County in 1845. The claim was located about three miles north of Monroe, and now contains the Reeves-Edwards Cemetery.

**Richardson, Aaron (Doc)** - Aaron Richardson operated one of the few ferries across the Long Tom River about two miles north of Monroe.

**Rickard, John** - John Rickard was a North Carolina native who settled on a 640 land claim twelve miles south of Corvallis in 1854. He engaged in farming and stock raising, and was one of the founders of the Benton County Flouring Mills.

**Rickard, Peter** - Peter Rickard was a prominent Corvallis public servant and farmer who owned a large tract of land southwest of Corvallis from 1875 until 1916. He served as county commissioner from 1892-1896, and from 1902-1908. He also served as sheriff and was an active member of the Knights of Pythias Lodge in Corvallis.

**Russell, Thomas** - Born in England, and arrived in Oregon in the 1870s. He is attributed with having established the Alsea Valley post office, and served as first post master.

**Rycraft, Squire L.** - An Ohio native, Squire Rycraft arrived in the Alsea Valley area of Benton County in 1853. He built a saw mill on the south prong of the Alsea River, and by 1860
was engaged in stock raising and farming. Squire Rycraft also built several of the earliest barns in the County. In 1858 he married Sarah Hawley, and they had eleven children.

**Rycraft, Joseph C.** - Joseph Rycraft was the son of Squire Rycraft, and served as Alsea postmaster from 1907 to 1914. He was the first to have a motorized vehicle for carrying mail between Philomath and Alsea. Joseph C. Rycraft’s house in Alsea is listed in the Benton County Register of Historic Resources.

**Scott, Prier** - In 1847, two years after arriving in Benton County, Prier Scott opened the first blacksmith shop in the County. He was one of the first settlers to arrive in the area in 1845, and was an Indiana native.

**Shipley, Reuben** - Reuben Shipley was one of the first African American settlers in Benton County. He was born into slavery and traveled to Oregon in the 1850s in exchange for his freedom. In 1861 he donated land to the county for the establishment of the Mt. Union Cemetery under the condition that African Americans could be buried there.

**Smith, Green Berry** - Born in West Virginia in 1820, Smith made an arduous journey to Oregon in 1845, finally arriving in the Luckiamute River region of Benton County in 1846. He was one of the early donation land claimants in the Soap Creek area, locating his claim some twelve miles north of Corvallis. He engaged in farming and stock raising. Smith later lived in Corvallis, and then removed to a farm south of Corvallis, then back to the city. He was one of the county’s most prosperous residents, owning some 8,000 acres in Benton and Polk Counties. Married twice, once in 1849 to Eliza Hughard, who died two years later. His second marriage took place in 1851 to Mary Baker.

**Starker, T.J.** - Starker was a member of the faculty at the Oregon State College School of Forestry, and owned large tracts of timber in Oregon.

**Starr, Elizabeth** - Elizabeth (Calhoun) Starr was the wife of Moses Starr, who died shortly after reaching Oregon in 1853. Elizabeth established a farm, maintained a large family, and was considered the community physician for many years.

**Starr, Jeremiah** - Virginia native Jeremiah Starr was born in 1794, and arrived in Benton County in 1847. He took up a donation land claim in the Belknap Settlement, where he remained for many years.

**Starr, Samuel F.** - An early settler, Starr established one of earliest post offices in southern Benton County at Starr’s Point in April 1852, and served as postmaster. He also served as an early county sheriff.

**Stewart, John** - John Stewart was born in Virginia in 1799. He was elected captain of an 1845 wagon train to Oregon in which were many of the prominent and early citizens of Benton County. He remained on his 640 acre land claim until his death in 1885.

**Vanbeber, Lazarus** - One of the earliest settlers in Benton County, Mr. Vanbeber arrived in Kings Valley in 1846, where he owned a farm of 350 acres.

**Walters, J.W.** - Walters was benefactor to the town of Alpine; he gave money for the construction of the first I.O.O.F. Hall in Alpine.

**Whiteside, Samuel** - Samuel Whiteside brought his family to Benton County in the 1890s from Iowa. His sons, George and Sam, were pioneers in the motion picture industry in the
county, opening the first moving picture theatre (The Palace Theatre) in Corvallis before 1910.

**Wilhelm, Adam and Elizabeth** - Adam Wilhelm was a German immigrant who arrived in Monroe in 1879 where he raised wheat and stock. He became a successful mill owner and businessman in Monroe, owning over 900 acres.

**Wilhelm, Bennett** - This son of Adam and Elizabeth Wilhelm was the publisher of the *Leader*, the first newspaper in Monroe.

**Wilson, Bushrod Washington** - A Maine native, Bushrod Washington Wilson was born in 1824. He “chose the sea-faring life”, spending eight years traveling by ship until 1850, when he traveled to California to try his luck at gold mining. In the early 1850s, he took up a claim in Benton County, seven miles outside of Corvallis, and engaged in contracting and carpentry work. Wilson ran a keel boat along the Willamette River between Oregon City and Corvallis, and engaged in the warehouse business. He was the owner of the one of the first grain warehouses on the Willamette River, one of the incorporators of the Corvallis to Yaquina Bay Railroad, served as County Clerk for many years.

**Winkle, Wiley** - The Winkle family arrived in Benton County in 1848, and settled a claim south of Corvallis. The land holding was eventually increased to over 700 acres, in cultivation.

**Work, John** - agent of the Hudson’s Bay Company of Great Britain; made two trips through the northeastern portion of Benton County in 1832 and 1834.

**Wrenn, George P.** - Namesake of the town of Wren, George Wrenn settled a Donation Land Claim in 1852 near the town.

**Wyatt, William** - William Wyatt was born in Buckingham, England in 1816, and accompanied his parents to the United States in 1836. In 1847, with his wife and children, he started for Oregon, arriving in Benton County via the Applegate Trail in the fall of that year. In 1850, he took a claim one mile north of Philomath, gradually adding to his land holdings until he had over 3,000 acres in his ownership. The Wyatts were instrumental in the establishment and erection of Philomath College, donating both time and money to its advancement.
Endnotes

2 Gatke, 267.
Resource Identification

Agriculture

This section does not attempt to describe specific resources in detail. Information on many of Benton County's historic farms can be found in the Benton County Inventory and in the Benton County Register of Historic Resources. The Survey of 1984-86 did not comprehensively address non-dwelling agricultural resources. A survey of such resources would further describe and evaluate buildings, sites, structures, and features associated with agriculture in the county, and provide knowledge about a significant part of Benton County history.

The primary resource type associated with agriculture in Benton County is the farm group. Made up of a minimum of a house and a barn, farm groups could grow to include dozens of buildings, depending on the productivity level and type of agriculture that was practiced. These complex groups included an assortment of structures, buildings, landscapes and archaeological features, some of which are identifiable today. In order to identify and evaluate farm groups as a resource type, it is necessary to understand the evolution of the grouping. The following excerpt is taken from Lou Ann Speulda's Context on Oregon Agriculture:

The following three tiered division of a farm group simplifies the definition of a farm and follows a format used by historian Steven Dow Beckham (Harbour and Beckham, 1982):

1) Basic Farm: house and one outbuilding, usually the barn.

2) Multi-Unit Farm: the Basic Farm with the addition of other outbuildings

3) Isolated Agricultural Buildings: only one remnant farm building from the original ensemble, such as a single barn or residence.

The overall configuration of the farm grouping also follows a patterned response to either topographic, farming particular, or ancestral influences. The multi-unit farm is usually designed in a linear or rectangular arrangement. (Harbour & Beckham, 1982; Dole, 1965; Carter 1941):

1) Basic Farm: A perpendicular setting, barn-back-of-house. The distance between the two buildings is usually between 15-200 yards.

2) Multi-Unit Farm: (distance between house and barn remains the same as in the basic farm format.)

   a. Linear: Farm buildings are arranged along a road way, or strung out in a linear fashion, with the density of buildings highest close to the house.

   b. Rectangular: Farm buildings arranged around the perimeter of an open yard. 'The total overall length of a large size but typical farm's building group might be 500 feet along a width of 150 feet which would include paths and the road or yard off which were serviced the successive buildings' (Dole, 1965: 41).
All of the above types might be found in Benton County. Many basic farm groups grew from two or three buildings in the settlement period to several structures and features by the Motor Age. Alternatively, a settlement-era Multi-Unit Farm may have dwindled to one or two isolated agricultural buildings on a farm, due to crop failure or sale of the property.

Agricultural groups as a whole were utilitarian in nature, with little ornamentation applied, except perhaps to the house. Nonetheless, stylistic elements are evident as new farming techniques allowed for greater productivity, thus changing the character of the buildings. In addition, there were several prolific barn builders in Benton County, whose signature marks are clear once identified.

Pre-Settlement: 1812-1845

The only agricultural-related resource type that may remain from this time is the historical archeological site. These may include of Hudson’s Bay Company sites, as well as the site of Fort Hoskins in Kings Valley. Any of these sites may contain historical archeological remnants of agricultural resources such as farmhouses, barns, or storage buildings.

Pioneer Settlement and Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Development of the Farm Group

Farm group development occurred in stages, according to what type of structure was most needed at a given point in time. According to historian Philip Dole, there was a clear sequence to the construction of buildings on a farm during the settlement era. The log pen-hewn log house-barn-frame house sequence relates to the necessities of the working farm as well as the availability of finished lumber to the settler. Once these steps were completed, additional buildings, such as smokehouses, pumphouses, granaries, or hog barns, as well as fences, wells, and irrigation canals were added to the farm group.

Dwellings

The first building on a farm was a small, utilitarian log pen or cabin. This building was usually constructed quickly, and was meant only for temporary shelter until a larger more permanent house could be built. The second, hewn log house was more substantial and carefully built with square logs up to 6” thick, with flat inner and outer walls.

The third house built on a farm was generally a frame house, built with sawn lumber, and of a style influenced by eastern styles. The most common styles during the earliest settlement years were the Classical Revival, Federal, and the Gothic Revival. “However, the occurrence of a ‘high’ style house in a rural area was rather unique, the more common arrangement was to apply architectural details to a vernacular farmhouse. Construction of the ‘lumber house’ was usually predicated on the availability of shipped mill work or local saw mills.” A more detailed description of these styles can be found in the section titled “Culture and Communities”.

Barns

The most important structure in the group was the barn, which was built soon after a suitable house was completed. Early barns utilized hand-hewn heavy timber framing with mortise-and-tenon joinery, and were clad with vertical board siding of varying widths. Characterized by their rectangular shape, low-pitch gable roof, and often lean-tos, early barns had a broad, low appearance. The low roof pitch of early barns reflects two important facts. Because farms were not yet producing hay and grain in great excess, barns did not need the extra storage provided by
**Isaac King Barn.** This 1860s side-opening barn has a hand-hewn timber frame. The barn is listed in the National Register along with the adjacent Isaac King house and attendant outbuildings. Photo courtesy of author.
the steeply pitched roofs seen in later years. Also, local technology in the early years did not allow for the construction of elaborate truss systems which resulted in the higher pitched gable or gambrel roofs. They were constructed with side openings, and used as livestock barns with some hay storage. In some rare cases, barns were built on hillsides, resulting in double-deck buildings.

Several settlement-era barns remain in Benton County, including, the Watson Barn in Kings Valley (1860s), the King Barn in Kings Valley (1860s), the Edwards Barn and the Rhinchart Barn.

Outbuildings

Subsequent to the construction of the house and barn, other farm structures were built. These may have included livestock buildings, a smokehouse, a pumphouse, a machine shed, fruit houses, a second barn, a field barn, a granary or a frame house. Granaries were particularly important as wheat production increased, as they provided separate storage for the grain.

By the 1880s, the farm group (of buildings) had often grown to include numerous buildings that were built over a span of 20 to 40 years. These attendant farm buildings were utilitarian in character, usually with little decorative detail. Earlier buildings had hewn frames with mortise-and-tenon joinery and sawn siding. When sawmills were established, sawn lumber was utilized. Structures were functional, and their uses were often reflected in their design. Doors were constructed by hand and hardware was simple, sometimes forged by the local blacksmith or on the farm.

There are few intact farm groups remaining in the county from the settlement period. Reflecting the continuing use of the farms, both of these groups also contain more recent structures. The Roland farm group includes an 1860s barn, a pre-1900 blacksmith shop, a pre-1900 smokehouse, a fruit house and a hog barn. Although the original farm house has been replaced with a contemporary building, the Roland farm group is rare for the number of buildings remaining from an early farm, and for the highly developed barn plan, unusual for Benton County. At the time of the inventory in 1984-86, there were several old farm implements and wagons on the property.

The Isaac King farm retains the 1860s farmhouse and timber framed barn, a pre-1900 field barn, various outbuildings and orchard remnants. In this group, the house is severely deteriorated, but the outbuildings continue to be used for farming and ranching purposes.

Landscape Features

In addition to the buildings, landscape features were (and still are) integral to the farm. Significant features in the rural landscape in Benton County included rail fences, hedge rows, orchards, farm fields, irrigation canals or ditches, and field barns. In later years, vineyards and kitchen gardens appeared. There were at least three types of fences on the farmstead. The "...picket fence around the front garden of the house; board fences for the barnyard and for areas near the house; and miles of Virginia rail fencing zigzagging along pastures and meadows."

Landscape features which may remain in the County which were not identified in the 1984-1986 Survey may include significant orchard remnants, early irrigation canals or ditches, or fencing. Settlers often planted trees around the farmhouse to provide shade in the summer. Many of these trees have outlived the farm buildings they once surrounded, and serve as visual landmarks of both existing farms and of those that have been lost. These are elements of the agrarian landscape which, if extant, are important to the interpretation of early agricultural practices, and should be documented.

Resource Identification: Agriculture
Barns and farmhouses are the most common surviving structures associated with early farm groups. None of the earliest log houses have been identified as extant in Benton County, though historical archeological surveys could result in more definitive identification of these early sites. It was not uncommon for early log or timber framed buildings to be incorporated into later, larger houses, or added onto. Older log buildings were sometimes converted to other uses, such as livestock shelters after the construction of the frame house. Despite their sturdy construction, most have been lost to deterioration or demolition.

**Railroads and the Progressive Era 1880-1912**

From 1880 to 1910, the number of farms increased two- to three fold in most Oregon counties. Farm groups continued to grow and change according to need. Many of the agricultural buildings in use during this period were carried over from the settlement period and were retained until they were either no longer needed or had deteriorated beyond repair. The types of buildings that were found on farms included stock and hay barns, hops barns, flax dryers, as well as the smaller outbuildings found in farm groups such as cellars, woodsheds, outhouses and pumphouses. The utilitarian character of these structures remained very similar to those in the settlement period.

**Dwellings**

Farm houses continued to change and houses replaced. Many were remodeled to reflect the current architectural trends, retaining their older hewn framing, but losing older configurations to additions and new second floors. Others were replaced altogether.

Architectural styles that were popular during this period included the Gothic Revival (1880s), the Italianate (1880s), the Queen Anne (1890-1905), the American Foursquare (1900-1915), and the bungalow (1910-1930). Detailed descriptions of these styles can be found in the section on Culture and Communities.

**Barns**

By the 1880s and 1890s in Benton County, agriculture had become more sophisticated, production increased, and the population was growing. All of these factors resulted in changes in farm groups and structures. One of the most obvious changes occurred in the design of barns. The low, broad shape of the early barns gave way to larger barns with higher roofs in which larger amounts of hay could be stored. Many of the barns constructed during this period were end-opening barns, rather than side-opening.

Barns had evolved into larger buildings with more steeply pitched gable roofs and more highly developed floor plans. These plans accommodated multiple uses, including hay storage, stalls, threshing floors, and implement storage. One of the most prominent barn builders in the county during the turn of the century was Earnest Brimmer. Responsible for the design and construction of several barns in the area, his buildings (often horse barns) are distinguished by the scalloped sidealls on the barn's hood.

**Outbuildings**

By the turn of the century, wheat was being challenged as the dominant crop by fruit production and livestock raising. Older farm groups were augmented with fruit houses, hog barns, horse barns, dairy barns, and creameries. Hops was introduced, resulting in the construction of unique hops barns which dotted the landscape throughout the county.
Farm Residence of John Rickard, 12 Miles South of Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon. 640 Acres. Note house, barn, numerous outbuildings, and system of fences which together represent a well developed farm group. From David Fagan, History of Benton County, Oregon, 1885.
Specialized Farm Buildings

As agriculture diversified, new buildings appeared. These included hatcheries, chicken barns, hops barns, silos, and dairy barns. Other structures, such as processing plants or fruit dryers also became necessary for the success of local farms.

Generally, farm buildings are threatened by lack of use. Structures such as outhouses and pumphouses became obsolete when modern plumbing was introduced, and they were often left to deteriorate. Many barns and other large outbuildings have survived on parcels that have not been totally divided and sold because they were not exposed to development pressures. Decline in crop production or shifts in farming can result in the loss of specialized buildings such as chicken barns, hops barns or granaries.

Representative farm groups from this period include the Peter Rickard farm. This farm was established in 1875, but the buildings that remain date to the 1880s-1890s and include the architect-designed house (1890), a smokehouse, orchard remnants (1870s), and a kitchen garden/flower garden.

The McBee House and outbuildings consist of the vernacular Gothic style house (circa 1896), the barn (circa 1900), a woodshed (or possibly summer kitchen, circa 1896), a shed, and a machine shed. A complex of fences, pens and cattle chutes are located behind the house and barn area, but the dates of these features is not known.

The James Martin farm dates to the late 1880s, and most of the original outbuildings have been destroyed. The buildings that remain include the Italianate farmhouse (late 1880s), a hand hewn smoke- or fruit house, a granary, and an old pear tree.

Landscape Features

Landscape features from this period may include irrigation canals, fences, or orchards. Barbed wire was invented in the 1870s, and it soon replaced deteriorating wood rail fences from the settlement era.

The Motor Age 1913-1940

The Motor Age was a time of change for the agricultural industry in the Willamette Valley, and in Benton County. As diversification continued, new crops were planted which required various structures for their storage or processing. Resources that may be expected include livestock barns (cattle, sheep, horses), dairy barns, milkhouses, hop dryers, granaries, fruit dryers, and others. In addition, mechanization of agriculture meant that storage for tractors and other mechanized equipment was now necessary.

Dwellings

As larger land claims were divided, children and grandchildren of settlers began farming their own land, new farm groups with new houses appeared. Architectural styles of the Motor Age are numerous, and included the bungalow (1910-1930), and various revival styles. Few houses of the twentieth century were surveyed in the 1984-1986 survey, and few have therefore been identified. More information on the residential styles of this period can be found in the section on Culture and Communities.
**Anthony Barn.** The Anthony Barn, built circa 1918, displays an impressive T-shaped gable roof. The higher roof allowed for storage of more hay. Photo courtesy of the author.
**Bush Dairy Barns.** These barns have the distinctive "gothic" roofline that became common in the 1920s and 1930s. The Bush Dairy Barns were built in the 1930s. The smaller building of similar style in the foreground is the milk house. Photo courtesy of the author.
Barns

Dairying was popular throughout the county, and numerous dairy barns still stand. Dairy barns in Benton County are identified by their round or elliptical roof shape, small multi-paned windows, concrete floors (for cleanliness), and whitewashed interiors. The "flared curvilinear" roof form found on the barns was made possible in the 1920s and 1930s by the use of lighter trusses and plank framing. Many of these barns have numerous windows, as well as an adjacent milkhouse constructed of hollow clay tile, a common building material for agricultural buildings during this period. The Bush Dairy Barns, in Kings Valley, are particularly good examples, and are still accompanied by a matching milkhouse and a silo.

Stock and hay barns had lost the low-slung appearance of the settlement era, and now were often built with steep gable or gambrel roofs, which allowed for substantial storage in the large hay mow. The Anthony Barn is a prime example of a large, T-shaped, gambrel barn that was typical of the period. Built in 1918, the Anthony Barn is accompanied by numerous outbuildings including a machine shed, pumphouse, granary, and other sheds. While these smaller buildings may pre-date the barn, they are important in the farm group as a whole.

Specialized Farm Buildings

Hops was an important crop during the twentieth century which had a specific building type associated with its processing. The hop dryer was a tall, square or rectangular building with a vent at the top and a raised floor inside. Numerous hop dryers dotted the Willamette Valley during the 1890s through the 1930s, but few remain today, due to a drastic decline in hops production in the 1930s.

The Neuman Winery is a rare example of a nearly intact early winery complex. The buildings associated with the business are all vernacular in style, and exhibit both wood and concrete construction. The windows have iron bars on the windows, as required by state law for places where alcoholic beverages are made. Many of the outbuildings original to the circa 1900 farm group were demolished to make room for the winery buildings. The grouping currently includes a small workers cabin, the early farmhouse (c. 1900), the first winery building (converted from an existing shed in 1934), press rooms (both wood and poured concrete, circa 1935), and the last building constructed for the winery (1938), and other winery-related structures. Landscape features that remain include early twentieth century fruit trees (pear and apple), some grape vines, a small section of picket fence that may be contemporary with the house, and various yard plantings.

Poultry raising also became more popular during the 1920s and 1930s, as evidenced by the success of the Hanson Incubator. At one time, Corvallis shipped huge numbers of chicks all over the country. Both chickens and turkeys were raised in relative large numbers. The DeMoss Turkey Farm, formerly the Whiteside Farm, retains a large turkey barn on the site. This long, single-story, gable-roofed building has a series of small windows along each side, and a central "corridor."

Landscape Features

One of the most visible landscape elements that remains from this period is the orchard. Fruit growing was extremely popular during the mid-twentieth century, and many of the orchards are still intact.
The War Era 1941-1945

Because most Americans were contributing to the war effort, little new construction that was unrelated to that cause occurred during this short period. What construction did occur, happened primarily in relation to supporting the United States in the war.

One such project was the Benton County Flax Cooperative. The buildings associated with the Benton County Flax Growers Coop were built in the early 1940s, probably 1942. Seven of the original nine buildings remain, and include three large storage buildings, the processing plant, the office and scales, the boiler house, and the machinery shed. According to the 1984-85 Survey, the layout of the buildings is generally intact, and most of the design changes consist of additions to existing buildings. The structures have been altered to accommodate dairy farming and later to accommodate stock raising.
Endnotes

2 For more information on early settlement architecture in the Willamette Valley, see Philip Dole’s work in Thomas Vaughan and Virginia Guest Ferriday’s *Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America*. Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, 1974.
3 Speulda, 40.
4 For detailed information on barns, their history, construction, and various types, refer to Mary Gallagher’s Linn County Barns Historic Context Statement. This document was unavailable at this writing, but is expected to be complete in 1997.
5 Speulda, 42.
6 Speulda, 44.
Transportation

Transportation related resource within the context of the entire county may consist of wagon roads, stage stops, ferry or boat landings, railroad lines, railroad-related buildings, and other such resources. Many of the early roads and rail lines remain in use, having been improved and updated for modern use. Others have been abandoned because of lack of use or difficulty in improving or maintaining the route. Ferry and steamboat landings have all but disappeared. Auto related resources such as gas stations or car camps have not yet been identified in the rural portions of the County. Because this study focuses on the unincorporated area of Benton County, there are fewer examples of buildings related to transportation than would be found in a town or city.

1812 - 1845: Exploration, Fur Trade and Mission to the Indians

Some of the routes traveled today were first established as native American footpaths. These were later used by trappers or explorers, or the Hudson’s Bay Company, and eventually by settlers. While none of these early paths have been identified in their pristine state, it is likely that some of the roads traveled today follow these same routes.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Roads

The primary resource types related to transportation from this period are roads. Wagon roads, such as Cardwell Hill Road, provided transportation within the county. Other routes, such as the Applegate Trail or the Yaquina Bay Wagon Road, were used to travel into or out of the county from more distant destinations.

Some of the early roads that were identified in the 1984-1986 Benton County Survey include the Alsea Wagon Road, Cardwell Hill Road and remnants of the Applegate Trail. It is known that the Applegate Trail passed through what is now Benton County, but definitive identification of specific remnants of the road was not made during the 1984-86 survey. Parts of Cardwell Hill Road may retain a high degree of integrity, but definitive identification of the route has not been made.

A systematic survey of roads, addressed as historic resources, has not been undertaken by the county to date. There are numerous early roads in Benton County; some are still in use and others have been abandoned. A more comprehensive survey and definitive identification of early travel routes would be a valuable in understanding more thoroughly the settlement history of the county.

River

Ferry landings and shipping ports were also developed during the Settlement era, though little remains of these resources. Roads leading to the river’s bank often marked the location of a ferry. Present day bridges have replaced the ferry crossings, but many are in the location of early crossings.

Shipping ports and warehouses were located in numerous places along the Willamette River through the early twentieth century. Some of these buildings were rendered useless when floods caused significant changes in the river channel. None were identified in the 1984-1986 survey.
Corvallis is the Head of Navigation on the Willamette River. Regular steam service began in Corvallis sometime between 1851 and 1853, providing much needed transportation for the people of Benton County, and for the abundant agricultural goods grown throughout the area.

Photo courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum #986-79.13.
Railroads and the Progressive Era 1880-1913

Roads

The road system continued to develop during the Railroad era, though transportation development was dominated by the arrival of the railroad to Corvallis in 1879. A systematic survey of roads, addressed as historic resources, has not been undertaken by the county to date.

River

Other small communities grew up around the river as a result of steamboat traffic, but most did not survive. Archeological investigation of these sites may yield information about early settlement and transportation at these locations.

Bridges were constructed during this period, many to replace ferries or cross smaller streams. Small truss bridges were common, several of which were identified in the 1984-86 Survey, including the Bower Slough Bridge, and a small pony truss bridge now located on private property.¹

Railroad

The most important development in transportation during this period was the arrival of the railroad. Although rail lines were established in Benton County during the 1870s (the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Railroad Company), trans-state lines did not reach Corvallis until 1880 (Oregon and California Railroad). Other than the actual track and bed associated with the Oregon and California Railroad, there have been no other resources directly associated with this line identified in Benton County. Stations often consisted of stops along the line, and actual depot buildings were not built at every stop. Communities did grow up around particular stops, however, such as Lewisburg.

The town of Summit grew around the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Railroad line, later known as the Oregon Pacific Railroad. This line closely follows the Corvallis-Yaquina Bay Wagon Road in sections, and was completed in 1885. The town of Summit retains several buildings that, while not directly related to the railroad, were certainly built because of the presence of the line and the prosperity it brought to the settlement. The line was sold to Southern Pacific in 1907, and has since served as a branch line for them.²

Smaller lines were built to accommodate timber harvests and help ship sawn lumber to outside markets. Some of these lines are still in use, but have not been specifically identified or evaluated.

The Motor Age: 1914-1940

Road

Transportation in the Motor Age was dominated by the automobile, and numerous new types of related structures and buildings resulted. Gas stations, rest stops, major road projects, and bridges all appeared during the Motor Age. One of the most significant transportation projects was the completion of the Pacific Highway in Oregon in the 1920s. This north-south route ran from Canada to Mexico, and continues to function today as a major transportation corridor.

Several covered bridges were constructed during the Motor Age. These structures were built of timber framing, with wood plank decks and truss roofs. The Hayden Covered Bridge (circa
1918), the Harris Covered Bridge (1929) are good examples of such structures. Both are listed in the Benton County Register of Historic Resources and in the National Register.

Attendant facilities included gas stations and repair shops, but none were identified in the previous survey. A more comprehensive survey of twentieth century architecture may identify some of the resources related to auto transportation from this period.

River

River travel slowly declined as the road and rail systems advanced. By 1920, steamships had disappeared from the Willamette River in Benton County, and ferries were being replaced with bridges.

Railroad

Rail transportation continued to grow as a major component of the system of travel and transport in the County. Lines were laid in many locations, some for transport of timber and others for passenger service. The Southern Pacific electrified its west side line from Portland to Corvallis, reaching Corvallis in 1917. This line is extant, but no longer electrified.

The Valley and Siletz Railroad, completed in 1917, which serviced many small sawmills and timber interests, fell into disuse in the 1950s, and has been dismantled.

The town of Summit continued to prosper in the Motor Age. A train order station was maintained there from 1915 until 1932, but the station building has since been removed.³ (Austin & Dill, 218)

The War Years: 1941-1945

Little new construction occurred during the war years. The Corvallis Municipal Airport was completed in 1943 with the help of the Corps of Engineers. A survey of the site would identify resources which may be significant in interpreting World War II and Post-War architecture related to air transportation.
Endnotes


Commerce and Industry

Commercial and industrial resources in Benton County tend to be related to the development of communities, agriculture, the railroad and the timber industry. Early industrial resources included small sawmills and gristmills which were later followed by larger mills. In addition to numerous mills, a brickyard provided another form of industry and manufacturing in the county. Industrial buildings were often added to as output increased and businesses grew, sometimes accommodating more than one process in a single mill.

Commercial resources started as trading posts or as small stores located in communities that were distribution points and service centers for the surrounding area. As the communities grew, commerce and trade became more established and resources became more permanent. Most resources in Benton County are related to the distribution of goods through stores and specialty shops, and the provision of services through resources such as hotels and banks.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Industrial resources from this time period include mills, millraces and power production sites. There are no identified industrial buildings from this time period remaining in rural Benton County. Portions of a millrace associated with the Herbert Gristmill is extant and was surveyed during the 1984-86 county-wide survey project. The sites of Matzger's (later Felger's) Mill and the Horning Groves Carding Mill were also identified. Other early industrial sites have not been surveyed and included in the Benton County Inventory of Historic Resources. Early mill buildings were utilitarian in character, often with timber framing and vertical board and batten or horizontal wood siding. Fenestration was minimal, and doorways were large, to allow for loading and unloading of raw materials and processed goods. Mill buildings were often added onto, and rarely remained in their original formation for very long if the mill was successful. Growth of the business could be reflected in the growth and metamorphosis of the mill building itself.

The typical commercial structure from this time period was usually a simple, wooden frame building often with false-front parapet which hid a gable roof. A simple porch protected the entrance, which was flanked by large display windows. Living quarters were often located upstairs, where the shopkeeper and family lived. By the late 1870s in many towns in the Willamette Valley, brick became the primary material for commercial structures, which were also embellished with cast iron storefronts. In the rural areas, however, brick was used much later, and usually without the cast iron. No remaining commercial buildings from this time period have been identified in Benton County. The sites of some early service centers have been generally established, but there has been no systematic investigation of below ground resources which might yield information about the history of the town. Town sites identified during the 1984-86 survey included Boonville, Starr's Point, Jennyopolis, and Tampico.

Railroads And The Progressive Era: 1880-1913

Industrial buildings associated with this time period include flouring mills, tanneries, carding mills, door and sash factories, broom and handle factories, and brickyards, some of which have been identified and documented in Benton County. The Monroe Roller Mill and Dam (1890s) and the Monroe Brickworks (c.1912), both located in Monroe, are two examples. Other resources from this time period may also be extant, but have not been inventoried by the County to date.
Commercial buildings from this time period evolved from simple, vernacular, wood frame buildings to more elaborate, permanent structures of brick. Simple mercantile stores were soon joined by business blocks, financial institutions, hotels, blacksmith shops, and specialty stores.

The primary change in commercial architecture prior to 1900, was the use of masonry construction which was more permanent and less susceptible to fire.

Stylistic elements were adopted from both the Italianate and the Gothic. The Italianate style was easily adapted to commercial architecture, both in wood and masonry, and was most commonly used in the 1880s and 1890s. Stylistic features included elongated, two-over-two or one-over-one double hung wood sash windows, sometimes elaborate window surrounds, and a cornice displaying a decorative frieze and brackets. Brick commercial structures displayed corbelled brick cornices and large arched windows on the upper stories. Commercial buildings may have also exhibited gothic elements, though the purest forms of this style were reserved for churches and residences. Gothic elements were similar to the Italianate, without the bracketed cornice. Storefront windows grew larger as glass blowing technology allowed for the production of larger single panes of glass. Entrances were recessed, and transom windows allowed light further into the buildings, which were often not well lit. Metal awnings provided protection from the weather. Cast iron storefront elements continued to be used in more urban areas, though none have been identified in rural Benton County.

The Monroe Hotel building may date back to the 1880s and the Summit Store was built in the early 1890s. These are the only late nineteenth century commercial buildings that have been identified and inventoried in the county (outside of Corvallis).

Starting in about 1910, new commercial buildings in Benton County became somewhat more streamlined, losing the smaller, more elaborate details of earlier years. The idea of a transparent storefront was evident in the large, single paned display windows that replaced the multi-paneled windows of previous years. Strips of metal soon began replacing cast iron or wood for structural framing of the display glass. The transom windows were more integrated into the main display section, and metal awnings were replaced with canvas. This trend toward a simpler commercial style is well represented in the Monroe Bank Building of 1910, listed in the National Register.

Early twentieth century commercial structures that have been identified include the Kings Valley Store in Kings Valley, the Price Store, the Longbottom and Cathcart Store, and the Alsea State Bank in Alsea, and the Carpenter Store and Monroe State Bank (listed in the National Register) in Monroe. All were surveyed and inventoried in 1984-86. The Price Store in Alsea has since been demolished.

**The Motor Age: 1914-1940**

The primary industrial resource types during this time period continued to be mills. The boom in the timber industry resulted in numerous mills being constructed during the 1920s and 1930s throughout Benton County. Hull-Oakes mill at Dawson was the only lumber identified and surveyed during the 1984-86 survey. No systematic historic survey has occurred to date to located and evaluate other timber related resources.

Commercial buildings continued their trend toward a more streamlined appearance, gradually giving way to the influences of the Chicago school and Art Deco. Neither of these styles were well developed in buildings in rural Benton County. The Craftsman and Bungalow styles also influenced commercial architecture, and were more easily adapted to simple architecture. Outside of incorporated areas in Benton County, there have been very no commercial resources identified from this period to date.
War Era: 1941-1945

Industrial resources associated with this time period are represented primarily by timber related sites. A systematic survey would identify which mills were in operation during this time. The only resource surveyed by the County in 1984-1986 was the Hull-Oakes mill. Other types of industry and manufacturing during the war were limited and no additional resources have yet been identified.

Commercial development during this period also slowed and few, if any, new commercial buildings were constructed in the rural parts of Benton County. No commercial resources associated with this time period have been identified or surveyed.
Communities and Culture

Several types of resources are associated with the themes of Communities and Culture. This section examines some of the types of resources that would be expected for each of the themes and sub-themes. Because extensive survey work has been done, only representative examples are provided, rather than a comprehensive listing of all resources identified in each category. Further information about previously identified resources can be obtained through the Benton County Development Department and the Benton County Historical Museum. Both have copies of the survey and inventory data.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Communities

Extant communities that began during this time period may provide historical information, although many built resources from this time period are no longer standing. Historic resources which have been identified are mentioned in the sub-theme categories below.

Most abandoned townsites no longer include above ground resources and should be considered historical archaeological sites. Early sites such as Booneville, Starr’s Point, Jennyopolis, and Tampico may yield significant historic artifacts which would further our understanding of early commerce in the County.

Education

The earliest education-related resources were private homes or log schoolhouses. When sawn lumber became available, small frame buildings were built. As communities grew and stabilized, these early schoolhouses were usually replaced with larger frame structures that were typically rectangular in form with a gable roof and banks of windows along the sides. Some had entrance vestibules or porches, and bell towers. Horizontal wood siding was common, and most were vernacular in style. Depending on the population served, this type of school building may have been retained and utilized into the twentieth century. To date, there have been no early schools identified from this time period in the county.

Religion

Early churches were typically Classical or Gothic in style. In either case, the small rectangular buildings had gable roofs and the main entrance centered on one of the gable ends. A small vestibule often protected the entrance. While the Classical style was generally horizontal in character with multi-paned windows, the Gothic expressed verticality in elongated windows, tall steeples, and a steep roof pitch. Churches built later in this period may have had stained glass, a belfry, and more well-developed interior detail.

Only two resources associated with early religious activities have been identified to date. Bellfountain Park, the site of the early Methodist camp meetings in the 1850s, is a significant resource, even though there are no structures related to the early meetings on the site. The

Simpson Chapel Site was also included in the 1984-86 Survey and Inventory. The Simpson Chapel was built circa 1860, but is no longer extant.
Benton County Schoolhouses. A representational collection of early schoolhouses in Benton County. Photo courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum #981.121.
Funerary Practices and Monuments

Several early county cemeteries have been surveyed and documented, and have been dated according to their oldest marked grave. The Reeves-Edwards Cemetery (1848) is the only cemetery which dates to the 1840s, and it is located on private property. At least nine cemeteries from the 1850s have been identified, as well as five from the 1860s and three from the 1870s. Two additional cemeteries may date from this early historical period, although no information has been found to confirm the dates of their establishment. These are the Peak Cemetery and the Wilkinson-Dunn Cemetery. Other early burial sites which served as family burial grounds may remain in the county, but these have not yet been identified.

Ethnic Groups

Resources expected with this sub-theme would be any buildings, structures, objects, and sites associated with early arrival or residence of various ethnic or racial groups in Benton County during the years 1846 to 1879. These could include Native American sites, sites related to Chinese immigration, or farmsteads which were settled by African-Americans or other groups, though only two resources from this sub-theme have been identified and surveyed. They are the Reuben Shipley cabin site and the Mt. Union Cemetery, both associated with the African American community.

Architecture

The earliest domestic building type was the log (rail) pen or the hewn-log house. Ketturah Belknap described an early log pen in her memoirs (the following is copied exactly):

...they had made boards and split out Puncheons for a flore for a house, had got forks and put in thefound and heavy poles in the forks and stood the Puncheons up on end for a wall and covered it with the shakes that they had made for A House, the wall at the eaves just high enough for a man to stand strait under the Roof, the ground for a floar a fireplace in one end and a blanket for a dore...'

She further describes a rail pen as "... the length of a rail in wethd and two rails long so it was ten by twenty feete [with] a fireplace stick chimney and ground flore..." - and this housed a family of eight. There are no known examples of log or hand-hewn houses remaining in Benton County. Subsequent to log construction, frame houses were built. The architectural styles which were common in early rural Benton County are described below, with examples of specific identified buildings included.

The Classical Revival style is characterized by a one or one-and-a-half story rectangular main mass with a low-pitched gable roof. Six-over-six, nine-over-nine, or twelve-over-twelve wood double hung windows were arranged symmetrically, with simple surrounds. Paneled doors were surrounded by simple detail, and occasionally with sidelights. The houses were clad in horizontal weatherboard, and usually had a broad porch with simple classical supports. Buildings of this style displayed a full entablature, including an architrave, frieze and cornice, as well as pronounced eave returns. There are at least five houses with Classical Revival stylistic elements remaining in Benton County. Examples include the James Watson House (circa 1850), the Isaac King House (circa 1852), and the John Feichter House (1855-1857), all listed in the National Register. The Classical style was popular in the area from the time of settlement in the 1840s through the mid-1860s.
Farm Residence of James Cooper, 2½ Miles Southwest of Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon. From David Fagan, *History of Benton County, Oregon*, 1885.
The Gothic Revival or Vernacular Gothic style began to appear in the county during the late 1870s, and endured through the 1880s. The Gothic Revival was made popular by Alexander Jackson Davis’ 1837 book Rural Residences, and by Andrew Jackson Downing’s promotions through various publications such as Cottage Residences (1843) and The Architecture of Country Houses (1850). In Benton County, the Gothic style is found in simplified, vernacular form common in Oregon farmhouses. The style is characterized by an asymmetrical, one-and-a-half to two story mass with a distinct vertical emphasis. A steeply pitched intersecting gable roof, tall two-over-two or four-over-four windows, and jigsaw eave or porch embellishments were typical.

Vertical board and batten was common in the Revival form, while horizontal wood siding was utilized in the Vernacular form. Representative examples include the Charles King House (circa 1860), and the Caleb Davis House. The Gothic styles were popular from the late 1860s through the 1880s in Benton County.

The Federal Style is represented by one house in Benton County, the Sewell Hawley House (1870s). The Federal style is characterized by a rectangular mass with a gable or hipped roof, multi-paned double hung wood sash windows arranged symmetrically on all facades, and classically influenced detailing. On the eastern seaboard, these buildings were often constructed of brick, and were also known as “Adam” style houses, after the English architects the Adam Brothers. On the west coast, the style is rare, and in the case of the Sewell Hawley house, very vernacular. The opulent detail is pared to a minimum, and the style is recognized by the shape and configuration of the house, the arrangement of the windows, and the roof line. It is distinguished from the Classical Revival in its lighter qualities, including the absence of heavy eave returns, slightly more vertical emphasis, and a smaller or non-existent porch. The Federal style in Oregon is rare, but would have been used from the 1850s through the early 1870s.

**Railroads And The Progressive Era: 1880-1913**

**Communities**

Several communities from this time period still exist today. Expected resource types within these settlements would include any buildings, structures, objects, or sites located within the area of development during this historic period. In addition, archeological resources associated with these communities may also exist.

**Education**

Schoolhouses remained much the same in the rural county during this period, once frame structures had been built. Population growth prompted the enlargement of many schools, and some were replaced with newer, larger buildings. Stylistically, however, schools remained vernacular in character until the 1920s.

The Evergreen School and the Beaver Creek School both date from the nineteenth century, and are typical of the period in design and construction. Both have horizontal wood siding, gable roofs, and abundant windows. The Bellfountain School (1908) replaced an 1870s school on the same site. The associated gymnasium building was constructed in 1913. The Bellfountain School is typical of larger wood frame school buildings in rural areas, displaying elements of the Craftsman style, including horizontal wood siding, banks of windows, a hipped roof, and exposed rafters.

**Religion**

Churches continued to be constructed in the Gothic vein during the 1880s, though around the turn of the century Queen Anne, Stick/Eastlake and bungalow influences can be seen. Rural
Gothic-influenced churches generally were less embellished and exuberant than urban church buildings, but still often had some stained glass, gothic arch windows, vaulted ceilings, and belfries. Queen Anne and Stick/Eastlake influences are evident in the Union Church at Dusty. This building makes use of several types of siding, has a prominent steeple with an interesting roof shape, and elongated windows. The bungalow style was more subdued and simple than the Gothic, and displayed a less vertical emphasis. Decorative brackets, a low pitched gable roof, and simple horizontal wood siding were common. The Alsea Methodist Church is a good example of a religious building which utilizes the bungalow style. The Summit Church also displays elements of the bungalow style, in combination with Gothic features.

Several nineteenth century churches from this time period were identified and surveyed. They were the North Palestine Church, the Kings Valley Evangelical Church, and the Union Church at Dusty (Belfountain).

Three early twentieth century churches from this time period were identified and surveyed. They were the Alsea Methodist Church (circa 1920), the Summit Church (1906), and the Monroe Methodist church.

**Funerary Practices and Monuments**

There were six cemeteries from this time period that were identified and surveyed. They were the Oakridge Cemetery, the Powell Cemetery, the St. Rose Cemetery, the Henderson Cemetery, the Ridders Cemetery, and the Lone Fir Cemetery. All date from the 1880s.

**Fraternal, Social, and Patriotic Movements**

Fraternal lodges and meeting halls were the most common structures associated with this theme. During this period, such buildings made use of the simple lines of the Vernacular Gothic or the more elaborate Italianate, and were usually built of wood. Later lodge halls may have been constructed of masonry.

Only one resource associated with this time period has survived. The Mountain View Grange (1911; also known as Lewisburg Hall) was surveyed and inventoried during the 1984-86 survey, and is listed in the National Register. This simple frame building is two stories in height, with horizontal wood siding and elongated windows, all of which were typical features of fraternal and social buildings in rural areas at the time. There is also a lodge hall in Summit that was surveyed, but not included in the 1984-1986 Inventory due to compromised integrity.

**Recreation and Social Life**

Resource types related to this theme include early social halls, theaters, auditoriums, fairgrounds, campgrounds, picnic grounds, and trails.

There were no resources identified or surveyed associated with this sub-theme from this time period in the rural county. Many of these types of buildings were located within the city limits of Corvallis, which served as the cultural and commercial center of the County. For more discussion of these building types, see Mary Gallagher’s *Historic Context Statement: City of Corvallis, Oregon* (Corvallis, Oregon: City of Corvallis, August 1993).

**Architecture**

Resource types associated with this sub-theme include domestic dwellings built between 1880 and 1913.
Country Churches. Examples of some Benton County churches, including vernacular, Gothic, and Queen Anne influences. Photo courtesy of Benton County Historical Museum #981.121.
There are several architectural styles associated with this time period discussed here in detail, all of which have examples existing in Benton County. Other styles also appeared during this period, but have not yet been identified in the County. These are listed at the end of this subsection.

The Gothic Revival and Vernacular Gothic styles continued to be popular during the late nineteenth century and representative examples in Benton County from this period include the McBee House, the Kennedy-Dull House, and the Brown House.6

The Italianate style began to appear in Benton County during the late 1870s, and endured through the 1880s. The Italianate appeared in the United States in the late 1830s, and was popularized by the books of Andrew Jackson Downing. Downing had also promoted the Gothic Revival style. Defining features of the style include a two story, irregular mass with a shallow hipped roof pierced by brick chimneys. The broad overhanging eaves are embellished with a wide frieze board, decorative brackets and bed molding. Windows, arranged singly or in pairs, are one-over-one or two-over-two double hung wood sash, sometimes with segmental or full arches. Window surrounds vary from simple to elaborate, and may include hooded architraves. Italianate houses are clad in wood, either horizontal shiplap or wood scribed to look like stone. Porches can be small or full-width, and are detailed in a similar manner as the main portion of the house. There were twenty-five Italianate style houses identified in the 1984-86 survey. Examples include the William Peacock House (1880s), and the Woodcock House (circa 1880).

Two additional popular styles during the late nineteenth century and very early twentieth century were the Stick/Eastlake style and the Queen Anne style. Examples of each exist in Benton County and some houses incorporated both styles. The Stick/Eastlake style actually had its beginnings in the late 1860s in the eastern states. It is defined primarily by its decorative detailing. Identifying features include a steeply-pitched, cross gabled roof with decorative trusses at the apex of the gables; overhanging eaves, usually with exposed rafter tails, wooden wall cladding interrupted by patterns of horizontal, vertical, or diagonal boards (the stickwork) raised from the wall surfaces for emphasis and porches with diagonal or curved brackets. Eastlake detailing (decorative panels above doors and windows, sunbursts, and spindlework) was sometimes incorporated into the ornate detailing of the Stick Style house. The Nichols House (circa 1899) is a good example of the Stick/Eastlake style in Benton County.

Similar to the Stick/Eastlake style, the Queen Anne is easily recognized as a highly decorated type of architecture. It is characterized by an irregular building shape with a steeply pitched roof (often with a front-facing gable), several siding types including patterned shingles, cutaway bay windows, several porches (often extending along one or both side walls), and one-over-one double hung wood sash windows. The style was exceedingly common during the 1880s through 1900, and numerous examples were built in Benton County during this period. Among them are the Mary Barclay House (1896), and the Augustus Buckingham House (circa 1894), and the Farley Kirkham House (circa 1909).

The Foursquare house form was utilized from the late 1890s through the 1910s. As its name implies, it is characterized by a simple, square, two story form with a hipped roof. Porches were full-width, and often wrapped around two or more sides of the house. The windows were typically one-over-one double hung wood sash, arranged symmetrically. This style was common in rural areas, and adapted to both the influences of the Italianate and later the Craftsman styles.

The Colonial Revival style was also used during this time period, although there are few Benton County resources identified as this style. The style appears to have been used more as a decorative style than a style in its own right. The Henshaw House is a good example of a Craftsman home adorned with Colonial elements.
Summit School. The Summit School was built in 1930, and was clearly influenced by classical styles.
Photo courtesy of the author.
The Motor Age: 1914-1940

Communities

Resources associated with this theme are the same as during the previous time periods, but would be associated specifically with significance from this time period between 1914 and 1940. By the Motor Age, most of the communities in Benton County had been established. The timber industry produced short-lived communities that were established to support logging in various regions around the state. More detailed study of logging-related settlements, their locations, and their longevity, would provide information on communities that were established in Benton County during this period, even if only temporarily.

Education

School buildings from this period were varied in style and size, depending on the size of the population they were to serve. Even into the twentieth century, one- and two-room schoolhouses were being constructed in rural areas. The Soap Creek School (circa 1929) is listed in the National Register. This is a one room schoolhouse of bungalow influence, with a gable roof, banks of multi-paned windows, a full-width front porch, horizontal wood siding, and a small belfry. Despite its 1929 construction date, this building is similar to school buildings being constructed in the mid to late 1900s.

Larger school buildings from the twentieth century in Benton County include the Irish Bend School (circa 1914), the Children's Farm Home School (1925-1926), and the Summit School (1930). Each of these buildings has a distinct style and character. The Irish Bend School is a two story wood frame structure with a hip and gable roof and several rooms. Influenced by the bungalow style, this school is simple in detail.

The Children’s Farm Home School, built in 1925-26, is perhaps the County's best example of Georgian Revival architecture. The building is H-shaped with a rear gymnasium wing. It has a combination hip and gable roof with overhanging eaves, and a centrally located octagonal, louvered cupola with a dome roof. The School is constructed of red brick in a common bond with corner bricks patterned to suggest quoins. On the west elevation of two wings is a square area of brick laid in a basket weave pattern. The original windows are now covered with boards, but the primary window type is six-over-six double hung sash with transoms, grouped two to a bay. The central pedimented portico features Tuscan columns, a broken pediment, an elliptical fanlight and sidelights, and double leaf entry door. The School houses six classrooms, an auditorium/gymnasium (in the rear wing), and a large basement.

The Summit School is a one story wood frame building with a central entrance portico flanked by classroom wings. Its design was clearly drawn from classical influences, as evident in the multi-paned windows and the hipped roof with gabled entrance portico.

The Peavy Arboretum and the McDonald Forest are education-related resources which provide “on-site laboratory” experience for students of forestry and botany. There are buildings located within these sites which are not related to education, including Civilian Conservation Corps-related structures.

Funerary Practices and Monuments

Funerary practices changed little during this period, and most cemeteries were well established. The Hendrix-Lobster Valley Cemetery was established in 1917 in the Lobster Valley region. In the earliest cemeteries, wood markers would have begun to deteriorate and disappear. There are
numerous examples of new headstones marking old graves where original wooden markers had been lost or removed.

Several memorial markers from this time period have been identified, including the Herbert Gristmill & Inavale Post Office granite marker, the Applegate Trail sign, and the Kings Valley granite marker.

**Fraternal, Social, and Political Movements**

Grange and community halls constructed during the Motor Age were often more elaborate than their predecessors. The Willamette Grange on Greenberry Road (1923) is a good example of the Georgian style, with its symmetrical facades, hipped roof with gable projections and eave returns, central entrance, and classical detailing. The Fairmount Grange (1930), and the Marys River Grange (1934) are additional examples of simpler fraternal buildings in the County.

**Humanitarian & Social Programs**

The Children’s Farm Home is the primary resource in the county related to this theme. The Children's Farm Home was established in the early 1920s, and the first building, now demolished, was constructed in 1922. The significant early buildings and features that remain in the complex were constructed between 1923 and 1926. These buildings/features include three "cottages" (c1923), the Farm Home School (1925-26), the circular drive (1920s), and a row of Black walnut trees, probably contemporaneous with the establishment of the school.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was active in Benton County during the 1930s, and were responsible for the construction of several structures. Camp Arboretum was established in Benton County on June 26, 1933. Located completely within the boundaries of Peavy Arboretum, the permanent camp facilities were completed on May 18, 1935 and were designed to accommodate 200 men. It was the largest camp in Benton County and consisted of a complex of 39 buildings constructed in what is commonly referred to as CCC "rustic" style. These simple frame structures were sheathed with board and batten siding, painted brown with lighter brown trim and "modernized" with electricity, heat, and flush toilets. The layout of Camp Arboretum was typical of CCC camps with centrally located administration offices, mess hall and kitchen, and infirmary surrounded by the barracks and auxiliary buildings (such as the recreation hall, barbershop, and camp store). The outlying buildings consisted of the garages, shops and storage facilities.

**Recreation and Social Life**

Resource types related to this sub-theme may include early social halls, theaters, auditoriums, fairgrounds, campgrounds, picnic grounds, trails, and specialty areas. The Lake Park Roller Rink (circa 1924), and Pleasure Acres were both developed during the Motor Age are recreational sites. The Lake Park Roller Rink is a rare example of an early roller rink, and was built in the vernacular style.

Many of the buildings related to this theme are located in Corvallis. Other potential sites related to this theme which may be located in the rural county include parks, trails or campgrounds.

**Architecture**

Resource types associated with this sub-theme include domestic dwellings built between 1914 and 1940. Several styles can be found in Benton County, including the Craftsman, Bungalow, Norman Farmhouse, Dutch Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival.
The Craftsman and Bungalow styles appeared after the turn of the century, and became popular during the 1910s and 1920s. In Benton County, numerous Foursquare and Bungalow houses were constructed using Craftsman detailing. The Craftsman style was inspired by the work of designers such as Gustav Stickley and the California architectural firm of Greene and Greene. The style is influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, and is often a term used to denote a decorative style as well as a house type. It was most often applied to bungalow house forms, but also appears in others. The Craftsman style was characterized by a horizontal emphasis, an irregular shape, banks of windows, broad open porches and the use of local materials. The interior of the Craftsman house was very distinctive for its open floor plan, abundant use of naturally finished wood and a connection to nature through the many windows and porches. The true Craftsman style house has low-pitched, gabled roofs with wide unenclosed eave overhangs, exposed roof rafters, decorative beams or braces under the gables, battered porch columns often on pedestals or massive piers that extend to the ground level. Shed or gable dormers are common; wood clapboard and wood shingles are the most typical wall claddings.

The Bungalow house form was exceedingly popular between 1900 and 1930. In their purest form, bungalows are one story with a low pitched gable roof with broad eaves, exposed rafters, large porches, and banks of windows, and are constructed of local materials. During the peak of their popularity, bungalows appeared in many different forms. Most houses of this style are one or one-and-a-half stories with shed or gable dormers, decorative beams or braces under the gables and wood clapboard and shingle wall cladding. The use of stone, brick, concrete block and stucco are also found, especially on chimneys and foundations. Bungalows may exhibit Craftsman features or elements of other styles such as Classical or Colonial. Decoration is usually simple, limited to braces and beams under the gables and/or decoratively sawn rafter tails. Porches are large and sometimes wrap around two or more sides of the house.

Representative examples include the Risley House (Craftsman, 1914), the Currier-Thompson House (Villa style with Craftsman interior, 1911), the Dodge House (Bungalow, circa 1910), and the farmhouse at Sunny Mount Ranch (Bungalow with Craftsman influence, 1917).

The Dutch Colonial Revival style was popular between about 1920 and 1940, and is found primarily in urban areas. As a revival style, the Dutch Colonial is actually a subtype of the Colonial Revival, but is distinguished primarily by its gambrel roof. The side gambrel, often with elongated shed dormers, was a predominant form built in the 1920s and 1930s. Most of these houses include the characteristics associated with the Colonial Revival houses of the period. The Boger and Francis Elizabeth Cottages at the Children’s Farm Home are good examples of 20th Century Dutch Colonial architecture, and are in fair condition. The cottages were built to accommodate 20 children and house parents each, and Boger Cottage, built in 1923, housed some of the boys. One of these two cottages is closed, and the other is still in use. The two story, gambrel roof buildings are clad in shiplap siding, and display multi-pane, double hung sash windows. Both buildings have central portico entrances with Tuscan style porch posts, and front doors with sidelights. The Hanson House (1920s) is also a good example of this style.

The Norman Farmhouse style is well represented by the Thomsen-Shroyer House. The term is generally used to describe the rural, vernacular manifestation of the French Provincial style and is characterized by a gabled roof, sometimes with flared eaves, and doors set in simple arched openings. Typically constructed of wood, sometimes with masonry cladding, it is common to find a front gabled entrance with one side of the gable extended into a flare. Both the high style and vernacular may have either double-hung or casement windows. The Norman Farmhouse and French Provincial styles were most popular during the 1930s and 1940s.

The Georgian Revival style is also a subtype of the Colonial Revival styles popular between 1920 and 1940. Georgian is often considered the "high-style" of the Colonial Revival and examples often include elaborate detailing associated with the earlier Georgian period, such as
decorative doorways and cornices and Palladian windows. While there have been no Georgian Revival houses identified in Benton County to date, twentieth century schools or fraternal structures often utilized the style. Two examples include the Willamette Grange (1923) and the Children's Farm Home School (1924).

Other styles that were popular during this period, but have not been identified in Benton County surveys to date include the Spanish Colonial, Mediterranean, California Mission, Pueblo, Exotic (Egyptian Revival, Moorish, and Swiss Chalet influences), Art Deco, Moderne, International, Stripped Classical, and Minimal Tract styles.

**War Era: 1941-1945**

Few resources from this time period have been identified or surveyed, since the 1984-1986 survey focused on nineteenth and early twentieth century resources. Some of Camp Adair has been documented, but there has not been a systematic survey of resources associated with the camp. Further survey work may identify resources from this period.
Nineteenth century farmhouse and water tower. This house was built in the Vernacular Gothic style with typical elongated double hung sash windows and sawn scroll-work porch details. Photo courtesy of the author.
Identification of Resources
Benton County bungalow. Built circa 1910, this house displays the broad overhanging eaves, wrap-around porch, and horizontal emphasis of the bungalow style. Photo courtesy of the author.
Endnotes


2 Gutke, 269.


4 McAlester, 158.

5 A more detailed description of the styles can be found in the Resource Identification section, Pioneer Settlement and Agricultural Development, under Architecture. See also Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses.

6 Peavy Arboretum was established in 1926 on lands acquired by the School of Forestry of Oregon Agricultural College (now OSU) with the help of George Peavy. Students had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in forestry by working on the land.

7 Karen Thomas, Camp Arboretum: The Dynamics of the Civilian Conservation Corps in McDonald Forest and Surrounding Areas (Albuquerque, NM: Heritage Associates, Inc., 1981), 33-34. See also the section on Government Activities.
Government Activity

Because there are many aspects of government activity in Benton County, there is not one primary resource type, but a number of different types. Those which might be expected include military forts and encampments, county courthouses, town and city halls, jails or prisons, post offices, Civilian Conservation Corps projects, and homes of significant politicians.

In Benton County, although there has been governmental activity on all levels historically, only a few significant resources have been identified. They are noted below. The most significant resources identified so far are associated with the Federal government activity in Benton County. Further field research is needed to identify additional historic resources related to all types of government activity.

The pre-settlement era, in which the British Hudson’s Bay Company, French, British and American fur trapper, and the United States government was active in the vicinity, was a time in which few permanent structures were built. This period is not discussed in the Identification Section of this document due to limitations on time and budget. However, trails, travel routes, encampment sites, forts or other important sites may be discovered with further research.

Pioneer Settlement & Agricultural Development: 1846-1879

Although they may have been several resources associated with this time period, the only government-related resource identified to date is the Fort Hoskins site (1856). Fort Hoskins has been the subject of on-going exploration and documentation and was acquired by the county in 1992 to be developed into a historic interpretive park.

The first Benton County Courthouse was constructed in 1854 in Corvallis on the same site as the present courthouse building. It housed county offices and the jail, and was built in the Classical Revival style.

Other resources may have included town halls, town squares, or community post offices, but no remaining resources from this time period have been identified.

Railroads And The Progressive Era: 1880-1913

By this period, settlements were well established and work on infrastructure and housing government offices and activities was possible. The Benton County Courthouse, although located in Corvallis and outside the scope of this report, is clearly associated with county government and was constructed in 1888 to replace the earlier building (1854).

Although not yet surveyed for their potential historic contributions, two additional government-related sites were created during this time period. The Siuslaw Forest, created in 1907, and the State Game Farm, created in 1911, have both significantly changed from their historic appearance, but may still yield information pertaining to Benton County’s history.

The Motor Age: 1914-1940

In addition to potential resources of the types listed above, this time period provides resources associated with the Work Relief Programs of the Great Depression.

Benton County has identified two significant government-related resources identified from the twentieth century. The Alsea River Trout Hatchery, developed by State Game Commission...
between 1934 and 1936 has several of its original buildings and structures intact. It was surveyed and recorded during the 1984-1986 Survey, but has not been listed on the County Register. Camp Arboretum, the site of a Civilian Conservation Corps camp from 1935 to 1942 has, in part, been surveyed and recorded. Three of the remaining structures have been listed on the County Register. Resources associated with the activity of the CCC outside of the camp facility have received limited attention and have not been surveyed as historic sites.¹

**War Era: 1941-1945**

There is one government-related resource from this time period that is quite significant to Benton County’s history. Camp Adair, a training cantonment for infantry troops, was located in northeastern Benton County and southeastern Polk County. Although most of the structures associated with the camp are gone, the site may yield historic information of importance. Built to accommodate thousands of troops, Camp Adair consisted of numerous buildings, and was essentially a community unto itself. To date, no systematic survey of the site for historic purposes has been undertaken.
Endnotes

Evaluation

Benton County is currently in the process of redesigning their evaluation form in an effort to create a process that is more consistent with National Register standards and the Benton County Code. Following the county-wide surveys in the 1980s, at least two different evaluation forms were used.

The form that was used to evaluate resources following Phase I of the Benton County Cultural Resources Survey (1983) used a rating system based on the age of the resource and included a scale from 1 to 4 (including pluses and minuses) with 1 being the most significant and 4 being the least significant. Following Phase II of the Survey (1984-86), a different form was used for resource evaluation. It required a simple "yes" or "no" answer to whether or not the resource was significant in relation to each of six criteria. A final ranking was then given to each resource using a scale of 1-50, with 45-50 being of prime significance and lesser scores being less significant.

These forms presented some problems, including a lack of consistency of overall results, an inconsistency with the Benton County Code (by which the resources were further evaluated for inclusion on the County Register), and a complicated scoring system which appears to have resulted in a great deal of subjectivity in the ranking of resources.

Regardless, a Benton County Inventory of Historic Resources was created following the evaluation of the surveyed resources. Those placed on this list were determined to be potentially eligible for inclusion on the Benton County Register. Between 1992 and 1995, many resources which were listed on the Inventory were reviewed further for eligibility to the County Register and public hearings were held. Several properties were determined to be eligible for the Register and were listed during that time. Following the implementation of the "Owner Consent" rules in September 1995, the number of resources added to the county register was significantly reduced and several owners of properties listed on the Inventory requested that their properties not be reviewed for inclusion on the Register.

The evaluation form being considered for future use attempts to eliminate (or minimize) the problems previously experienced. It includes criteria for age, significance, and integrity and will include a method of "scoring" each criterion so that an overall score and ranking can be determined. A description of two methods of "scoring" which are being considered is included below in the section "Final Score and Rating."

Two versions of a new form were presented to the Benton County Historic Resources Commission (HRC) during the Spring of 1996 for preliminary review (see "Draft Evaluation Forms"). It was the decision of the Commission to continue the discussion about the revised form at a future date. It should be noted that although both draft versions of the form are included in this document, future discussions may result in further revisions to these forms or the consideration of a completely different version. Adoption of a new evaluation form is included as one of the strategies for Benton County's preservation program (following section).
Evaluation Criteria

Age

Because a resource must be 50 years old or older to be eligible for either the Benton County Register of Historic Resources or the National Register of Historic Places, a section for "AGE" is proposed for the form. If the resource is less than 50 years old, it must meet the criteria for exceptions to age as outlined in the National Register Bulletins for further consideration.

Depending on the version of the form to be adopted by the HRC, this category may be included in the overall scoring by assigning a numeric value to the age of the resource (the older the resource, the higher the points awarded) or it may simply indicate that the resource is or is not old enough (or meets exception criteria) for further consideration (see "Draft Evaluation Forms").

Significance

When evaluated within its historic context, a resource must be shown to be significant in at least one of the following areas to be considered potentially eligible for listing on the Benton County Register. These areas of significance are derived from the National Register standards and the Benton County Code. The areas of significance to be included are:

Events/Patterns of History: The resource is associated with an event (or events) and/or with a pattern of events or historic trend that has made a significant contribution to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

Person(s): The person(s) associated with the resource is (are) individually significant and made demonstrated contributions to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and the resource is associated with the person(s)'s productive life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance.

Design/Construction: The resource embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; and/or the resources represents the work of a master; and/or the resource possesses high artistic value; or the resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Rarity of Types/Styles: The resource represents a type of construction or architectural style that was once common in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and the resource is among the last examples of this type of construction or architectural style that are surviving in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

Information Potential: The resource has yielded information important to history or prehistory; or the resource may be likely to yield information important to history or prehistory.

Integrity

Integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity and it is integral to the resource's ability to convey its significance. There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity. Which aspects must have integrity should be determined on a case by case basis, as some aspects are more important in conveying significance.
The seven aspects of integrity are:

- Location: Is the resource in its original location or has it been moved?
- Design: Is the original design intact?
- Setting: Has the character of the setting stayed the same or has it changed?
- Materials: What portion of the original materials are retained?
- Workmanship: Does the resource show craftsmanship of the period?
- Feeling: Does the resource evoke an aesthetic or historic sense of the past?
- Association: Is this the site of a historic event or activity or is the site associated with an important person(s) historically?

**Final Score and Rating**

As mentioned, a final decision about which scoring system will be used has not been made.

One of two methods of scoring have been discussed and it is possible that either (or some combination thereof or something entirely different) may be used. Some method of scoring each resource is important in order for resources to be ranked (placed in comparison to other resources) and further action to be taken (see categories of ranking below).

The first method for scoring would include assigning a numeric value (score) to each area of significance and integrity, as well as age. The scores for each area would be added together to get a final overall score from which a ranking could be made. The highest the overall score, the higher the ranking.

A second method of scoring would simply be rating each area of significance and integrity as "High," "Medium," or "Low" rather than assigning actual points. The final ranking would then be based on the total number of "High" ratings in comparison to other resources (the "Medium" and "Low" scores would need to be taken into account as well).

There are advantages and disadvantages to both methods of scoring. The HRC will need to consider these in their discussions and adopt the method that best meets their needs.

Based on the overall score, a ranking would be given to the resource. Again, this ranking is currently under discussion, but will most likely include the following areas of ranking:

- Primary Significance (Benton County eligible; possibly National Register eligible)
- Secondary Significance (probably Benton County Register eligible)
- Contributing (meets some criteria, possibly Benton County Register eligible)
- Non-Contributing (lacks sufficient significance and/or integrity)
Draft Evaluation Forms

HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION FORM (Version 1)
Benton County

Inventory Resource No. _______________ Rating _______________

Historic Name __________________________________________ Date ____________________

Address __________________________________________ Evaluator ____________________

CRITERIA AND FINDINGS
To determine if a historic resource is eligible for placement on the Benton County Register of Historic Resources, it must be 50 years old and meet a qualifying level of both "Significance" and "Integrity." The following criteria, based on the National Register criteria and the Benton County Development Code, will be used to evaluate proposed historic properties.

AGE
A resource must be 50 years old or older (for properties less than 50 years of age, consult National Register Bulletins #15 [Criteria Consideration G] and #22 to determine potential eligibility). NOTE: If the answer to both these questions is "No," there is no need to complete the rest of this form.

Yes   No

1. Resource is 50 years old or older.

   Period of significance:
   1879 and older = 4 points
   1880-1912 = 3 points
   1913-1940 = 2 points
   1941-1945 = 1 point

2. Resource meets criteria for exceptions to age.

Total Points for Age = __________

SIGNIFICANCE
When evaluated within its historic context, a resource must be shown to be significant in at least one of the following areas. Each area can be worth no more than a total of five (5) points to assure that the areas are weighted equally (one area is no more significant than another area). This section is worth a total of 25 points.

Yes  Somewhat  No

1. Events/Patterns of History
   a. The resource is associated with an event or events that have made a significant contribution to the history of Benton Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and/or

   b. the resource is associated with patterns of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

Total Points for Events/Patterns of History = __________
2. **Person(s)**
   a. The person(s) associated with the resource is(are) individually significant and made demonstrated contributions to the history Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and
   b. the resource is associated with the person(s)'s productive life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance.

*Total Points for Person(s) = ________*

3. **Design/Construction**
   a. The resource embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; and/or
   b. the resource represents the work of a master; and/or
   c. the resource possesses high artistic value; or
   d. the resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (applies only to districts).

*Total Points for Design/Construction = ________*

4. **Rarity of Types/Styles**
   a. The resource represents a type of construction or architectural style that was once common in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and
   b. the resource is among the last examples of this type of construction or architectural style that are surviving in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

*Total Points for Rarity of Types/Styles = ________*

5. **Information Potential**
   a. The resource has yielded information important to history or prehistory; or
   b. The resource may be likely to yield information important to history or prehistory.

*Total Points for Information Potential = ________*

**TOTAL POINTS FOR SIGNIFICANCE** (can be no more than 25 points) = ________
INTEGRITY

Integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity and it is integral to the resource's ability to convey its significance. There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity. Which aspects must have integrity should be determined on a case by case basis. Some aspects may be more important than others in conveying significance, depending on what makes the resource significant (see sections above). Each area of integrity is worth three (3) points; this section is worth a total of 21 points.

1. Location (is the resource in its original location?)
2. Design (is the original design intact?)
3. Setting (has the character of the setting stayed the same?)
4. Materials (are the original materials retained?)
5. Workmanship (does it show craftsmanship of the period?)
6. Feeling (does it evoke an aesthetic or historic sense of the past?)
7. Association (is this the site of a historic event or activity or is the site associated with an important person historically?)

TOTAL POINTS FOR INTEGRITY =

FINAL RATING AND RANKING

On the basis of the evaluation of significance and integrity, the findings for this resource are:

Total Points for Age
Total Points for Significance
Total Points for Integrity

TOTAL OVERALL POINTS =

RANKING:

44-50 points Primary Significance (possibly NR eligible)
37-43 points Secondary Significance (possibly Benton County eligible)
30-36 points Contributing Significance (meets some criteria)
29 & below Non-Contributing (lacking sufficient significance and/or integrity)

Based on the Total Overall Points, this resource is ranked as ____________________________
Draft Evaluation Forms

HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION FORM (Version 2)
Benton County

Inventory Resource No. ___________ Rating ________________

Historic Name ___________________________________________ Date ________________

Address _______________________________________________ Evaluator ____________

CRITERIA AND FINDINGS
To determine if a historic resource is eligible for placement on the Benton County Register of Historic Resources, it must be 50 years old and meet a qualifying level of both "Significance" and "Integrity." The following criteria, based on the National Register criteria and the Benton County Development Code, will be used to evaluate proposed historic properties.

AGE
A resource must be 50 years old or older (for properties less than 50 years of age, consult National Register Bulletins #15 [Criteria Consideration G] and #22 to determine potential eligibility).

Yes No

1. Resource is 50 years old or older.

2. Resource meets criteria for exceptions to age.
   (NOTE: If the answer to both these questions is "No," there is no need to complete the rest of this form.)

SIGNIFICANCE
When evaluated within its historic context, a resource must be shown to be significant in at least one of the following areas. Each area is weighted equally (one area is no more significant than another area). An overall score of "High," "Medium," or "Low" will be given for each category, corresponding with its evaluation of "Yes," "Somewhat," or "No."

Yes Somewhat No

1. Events/Patterns of History
   a. The resource is associated with an event or events that have made a significant contribution to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and/or

   __________ ________ ________

   b. The resource is associated with patterns of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

   __________ ________ ________

   Overall Score for Events/Patterns of History = __________

2. Person(s)
   a. The person(s) associated with the resource is(are) individually significant and made demonstrated contributions to the history of Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and

   __________ ________ ________

   b. The resource is associated with the person(s)'s productive life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance.

   __________ ________ ________

   Overall Score for Person(s) = __________

3. Design/Construction

Evaluation
a. The resource embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; and/or
b. the resource represents the work of a master; and/or
c. the resource possesses high artistic value; or
d. the resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (applies only to districts).

Overall Score for Design/Construction = ______

4. Rarity of Types/Styles

a. The resource represents a type of construction or architectural style that was once common in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation; and
b. the resource is among the last examples of this type of construction or architectural style that are surviving in Benton County, the region, the state, or the nation.

Overall Score for Rarity of Types/Styles = ______

5. Information Potential

a. The resource has yielded information important to history or prehistory; or
b. The resource may be likely to yield information important to history or prehistory.

Overall Score for Information Potential = ______

OVERALL SCORE FOR SIGNIFICANCE = ______
INTEGRITY
Integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity and it is integral to the resource's ability to convey its significance. There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity. Which aspects must have integrity should be determined on a case by case basis. Some aspects may be more important than others in conveying significance, depending on what makes the resource significant (see sections above). The categories are to be scored as "High," "Medium," or "Low."

Yes    Partially    No

1. Location (is the resource in its original location?)

2. Design (is the original design intact?)

3. Setting (has the character of the setting stayed the same?)

4. Materials (are the original materials retained?)

5. Workmanship (does it show craftsmanship of the period?)

6. Feeling (does it evoke an aesthetic or historic sense of the past?)

7. Association (is this the site of a historic event or activity or is the site associated with an important person historically?)

OVERALL SCORE FOR INTEGRITY =

FINAL RATING AND RANKING
On the basis of the evaluation of significance and integrity, the findings for this resource are:

Overall Score for Significance

Overall Score for Integrity

TOTAL OVERALL SCORE =

RANKING:
"High" Primary Significance (possibly NR eligible)
"Medium" Secondary Significance (possibly Benton County eligible)
"Low" Contributing Significance (meets some criteria)
"Very Low" Non-Contributing (lacking sufficient significance and/or integrity)
Registration

The following is a list of the resources included in the Benton County Register of Historic Resources. Although the locations of these resources are not published (at the request of the property owners), a complete listing of sites and locations is available through the Benton County Development Department. In addition to those listed below, several other resources have been determined to be eligible for listing in the county register. Due to lack of owner consent, these properties have not been listed in the County Register but do remain on the Benton County Inventory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource #</th>
<th>Resource Name</th>
<th>Listing Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>038</td>
<td>Wentz House</td>
<td>04/25/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Mountain View Grange</td>
<td>11/23/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Lake Park Roller Rink</td>
<td>03/28/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Soap Creek School</td>
<td>10/12/92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>KOAC Transmitter</td>
<td>05/06/92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>Woodcock House</td>
<td>01/24/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>William Johnson House</td>
<td>01/24/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>Kings Valley Evangelical Church</td>
<td>10/09/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>Chambers-Miller Farm Group</td>
<td>02/05/92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>Kings Valley Cemetery</td>
<td>05/08/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197</td>
<td>Bush Dairy Barns</td>
<td>01/09/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>Samuel Franz House</td>
<td>02/09/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199</td>
<td>Moody-Aldergrove School</td>
<td>10/09/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Plunkett House &amp; Barn</td>
<td>11/13/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Wren Community Hall</td>
<td>11/13/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206A</td>
<td>Charles King House</td>
<td>07/21/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>217</td>
<td>McBee House</td>
<td>06/13/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223</td>
<td>Hugo Newman Winery</td>
<td>05/09/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>228A</td>
<td>Oakridge Cemetery</td>
<td>11/14/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229</td>
<td>Samuel Whiteside House</td>
<td>02/28/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>Mt. Union Cemetery</td>
<td>11/14/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>263</td>
<td>George Cooper House</td>
<td>06/13/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>268</td>
<td>Currier-Thompson House</td>
<td>09/12/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>Farley-Kirkham House</td>
<td>05/09/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305</td>
<td>Irish Bend School</td>
<td>07/10/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>316</td>
<td>Mary Barclay House</td>
<td>11/14/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>348</td>
<td>Watson Barn</td>
<td>10/09/91</td>
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<td>349</td>
<td>James Watson House</td>
<td>10/09/91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350A</td>
<td>Isaac King Barn</td>
<td>12/12/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>364</td>
<td>Summit Store</td>
<td>02/12/96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365</td>
<td>Post-Strout House</td>
<td>02/12/96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>384</td>
<td>Bellfountain School &amp; Gym</td>
<td>02/28/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>389</td>
<td>Edwin &amp; Anna Starr House</td>
<td>10/16/86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>394</td>
<td>Albert Zierolf Farm</td>
<td>02/27/86</td>
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<tr>
<td>420A</td>
<td>Monroe Cemetery</td>
<td>05/08/95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource Name</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benton County Courthouse</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>N.W. Fourth Street, Corvallis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiechter, John, House</td>
<td>1855-1857</td>
<td>Finley Wildlife Refuge, Corvallis vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hoskins Site</td>
<td>1856-1866</td>
<td>Kings Valley vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris Bridge</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Marys River, Wren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden Bridge</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Alsea River, Alsea vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irwin, Richard S., Barn</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Finley Wildlife Refuge, Corvallis vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King, Charles, House</td>
<td>ca. 1870</td>
<td>22930 Harris Road, Philomath vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King, Isaac, House and Barn</td>
<td>ca. 1852</td>
<td>Route 1, Philomath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe State Bank Building</td>
<td>1910-1911</td>
<td>190 S. Fifth Street, Monroe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philomath College</td>
<td>1865-1867</td>
<td>Main Street, Philomath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rickard, Peter, Farmstead</td>
<td>1875-1890</td>
<td>25450 Starr Creek Road, Corvallis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap Creek School</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>37465 Soap Creek Road, Corvallis vicinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starr, Edwin and Anna, House</td>
<td>ca. 1889</td>
<td>26845 McFarland Road, Monroe vicinity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Treatment
Historic Preservation Program

The purpose of this section is to identify recommended long-term strategies that will enhance the understanding of local history and help preserve significant historic resources.

Recent changes in the membership of the Historic Resources Commission, changes in the owner consent law in Oregon, and changes in funding available to the Benton County Historic Resources Commission (HRC) has led the Commission to assess their goals and objectives and redefine their priorities and work programs. The strategies presented here are a result of discussions which took place between January and June of 1996. As the HRC continues to evolve and new preservation issues present themselves, new strategies will emerge and some of the recommended strategies in this report will be altered.

The strategies presented here are suggested ideas for future preservation work by the HRC and their partners in preservation. Implementation of the recommended strategies by Benton County will be based on a variety of factors such as available funding and priorities established by the HRC, the Benton County Development Department, and the Benton County Board of Commissioners.

This section describes key opportunity areas for conducting further historic preservation work and lists related recommended strategies. The key opportunity areas, in order of priority, include:

- Public Relations, Education, Heritage Tourism and Preservation Incentives
- Survey and Inventory
- Preservation Planning and Regulatory Measures
- Historical Research
- National Register Nominations
Public Relations, Education, Heritage Tourism and Preservation Incentives

Although the Benton County HRC regularly supports programs, projects, and events designed to encourage public involvement in historic preservation activities, there is a continuous need to promote positive public relations and provide public education. The development of partnerships and alliances is an excellent opportunity for improving public relations. Co-sponsorship of programs, such as local recognition of National Historic Preservation Week (jointly sponsored by Benton County Historic Resources Commission, the Corvallis Historic Preservation Advisory Board, and the Benton County Historical Society), not only enhances these partnerships, but provides opportunity for quality public education.

In addition to improving and maintaining positive public relations and providing quality public education, preservation in Benton County can benefit from heritage tourism. Each year, visitors appreciate Benton County's resources, including historic buildings and sites. Because most of the county's historic resources are scattered throughout the county, it is difficult to develop a heritage tourism program specifically for the purposes of viewing or visiting historic properties. The HRC is in the beginning stages of exploring heritage tourism and its valuable contribution to preservation.

It is also important to provide and/or promote incentives to owners of historic properties. Currently, there are inadequate incentives at the local level for property owners to preserve historic resources. In addition, things such as building codes, zoning, and other regulatory factors can negatively influence appropriate restoration or rehabilitation of historic resources. There are significant ways to increase the types of incentives that are provided to property owners of historic resources.

**Recommended Strategies**

1. Continue to support history and preservation-related programs and activities, such as National Historic Preservation Week.

2. Foster partnerships between Benton County Historical Museum, Benton County Historical Society, Corvallis Historic Preservation Advisory Board, county and city staffs, professionals in related fields, and university faculty from Oregon State University and the University of Oregon, for the purpose of developing outreach and educational programs.

3. Aid in the development of the Historic Preservation center at the Downtown Historic Center.

4. Sponsor an annual rehabilitation seminar (such as Rehab Oregon Right) for owners of historic properties.

5. Actively encourage the use of the local low-interest rehabilitation loans, the Oregon Special Assessment (tax freeze) program, and the federal tax credit programs.

6. Develop and maintain a World Wide Web page which highlights information about historic preservation activities, programs, and resources.

7. Investigate ways to enhance local tourism through heritage resources.

8. Participate in local events such as Fall Festival, da Vinci Days, and/or the Benton County Fair to distribute information about and promote historic preservation activities and programs.
9. Encourage local participation in state and national programs such as the Barn Again! awards and the Century Farm program.

10. Create an ad hoc committee of preservation-related professionals to serve as advisors/consultants to the HRC and Benton County staff.

11. Develop and distribute "Advisory Guidelines for Historic Rehabilitation" for residential, agricultural, commercial, and/or landscape resources. Guidelines should include information about appropriate alterations, maintenance, and additions.

Survey and Inventory

A fair amount of survey work has already taken place in Benton County. In 1976, a statewide survey by Stephen Dow Beckham resulted in the identification and inventory of approximately 30 historic resources in rural Benton County. An additional thirty-six resources were added to the statewide inventory following a 1980 survey by OSU's Department of Anthropology. In 1982, the Benton County Historical Society received a grant to conduct further survey work and in 1983, a windshield survey (generally known as the Benton County Cultural Resources Inventory - Phase I) identified 572 historic resources in the county (excluding Corvallis and Philomath). Due to the nature of this windshield survey, very little historical information was gathered about each resource. In 1984, the Benton County Historical Society applied for additional grant funding to further research and evaluate approximately 200 properties identified during the Phase I survey.

Phase II of this project began in September 1984 and concluded in March 1986. In addition to evaluating the resources identified in Phase I, several others were discovered and recorded during Phase II, bringing the number of resources surveyed between 1984 and 1986 to approximately 245. The total number of historic resources which have been identified as a result of Phase I and Phase II is well over 600.

Although a large number of historic resources have been inventoried, there are many remaining which have not been surveyed and inventoried. Following the end of the Phase II project, a number of recommendations for future survey work were made, including recordation of specific individual resources, systematic surveys of resource types (such as barns and outbuildings), and specific geographic areas (such as Philomath). These recommendations, along with recommendations from current HRC members, have been taken into consideration in creating a list of strategies for future survey and inventory. It was agreed that the continued need for survey and inventory is important and was given second highest priority for future preservation activities in the county.

Recommended Strategies

1. Develop priorities for survey and inventory work in the county. Include a list of the resource types or themes to be surveyed, which might include surveys of twentieth century architecture, archeological sites, Depression-era resources, World War II-related resources, or thematic surveys of the work of specific architects or builders.

2. Finalize revisions of the Evaluation Form included in this document and put the new form into use during future survey work.

3. Conduct a survey and create an inventory of agricultural resources in the rural county.

4. Conduct a survey and create an inventory of cultural landscape resources in the county.
Preservation Planning and Regulatory Measures

The Benton County Comprehensive Plan provides the overall vision and policy guidance for county-wide growth, development, and conservation of resources. The plan recognizes Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 5 and encourages continued use, rehabilitation, and preservation of significant historic sites and structures. Because the Comprehensive Plan policies are not implementing regulations, the Benton County Development Code was created to ensure follow-through on planning strategies. Chapter 89 of the Development Code pertains to Historic Preservation.

The Benton County Code currently addresses the creation and responsibilities of the Historic Resources Commission, the creation of and procedure for listing properties on the County Register of Historic Resources, exterior alterations to or demolition of historic resources listed on the Register, special uses allowed for historic properties listed on the Register, and land partitions and parcel line adjustments.

The Benton County Code does not specifically address the regulation of historic properties located within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) of Corvallis and Philomath. It is also based on the premise of being able to list properties on the Register regardless of owner consent. Both of these issues have become concerns for the HRC within the last year. A number of historic properties located outside of the city limits of Corvallis and Philomath, but within established UGB, have not been attended to because neither the cities nor the county feels they have clear jurisdiction. The HRC met with the Corvallis Historic Preservation Advisory Board to discuss this concern and tentatively agreed to a procedure in which both groups would be involved in reviewing properties located within the UGB. This procedure, however, has not been formalized.

The issue of owner consent has been a concern with county residents who feel that property owners' rights are usurped when the HRC places a property on the County Register without their permission. In 1995, Oregon enacted a new law requiring owner consent for listing properties on local historic registers. As a result, the current Development Code is no longer in sync with the new statewide Administrative Rules regarding owner consent.

Recommended Strategies

1. Update the Benton County Development Code to bring it in line with recent changes regarding owner consent and Economic, Social, Environmental and Energy (ESEE) analysis.
2. Develop procedures and policies for addressing historic resources located in the areas which are outside the Corvallis city limits but inside the designated Urban Growth Boundary for Corvallis.
3. Continue discussions about the HRC's missions and goals. Adjust these missions and goals accordingly to reflect changes in responsibilities outlined in the Development Code, changes in the focus of the work program, or changes in funding for projects.
4. Prepare a long-range plan for addressing a variety of historic preservation issues in Benton County.
5. Explore potential funding options for preservation activities.
Historical Research

There may be several topics which warrant further historical research. Areas which represent significant impacts on the history of Benton County should be considered. It is possible that a number of topics may overlap with areas identified as potential resource types to survey. Specific topics which might be considered include women and ethnic groups, cultural landscapes, and the pre-settlement era. In addition, certain forms of research, such as oral histories, may provide additional information that is otherwise unobtainable.

**Recommended Strategies**

1. The Benton County Historic Resources Commission will revise and edit the “Historical Overview” section of the Historic Context Statement.
2. Develop a prioritized list of topics or themes to research which would enhance the overall work of the HRC.
3. Investigate potential funding sources which would support research on various topics.
4. Coordinate research with survey and inventory projects when possible.

The National Register of Historic Places

The listing of properties in the National Register of Historic Places not only helps to protect and preserve them, it is often an honor for owners to be recognized for their efforts to preserve, restore, rehabilitate, or re-use historic properties while retaining the integrity and significance of the sites for future generations. Listing in the National Register provides owners the opportunity to take advantage of State and Federal tax incentives for rehabilitation.

Rural Benton County has very few historic resources listed on the National Register (most Benton County listings are in the city of Corvallis). There are currently only thirteen properties listed, though there are numerous other which may be eligible for listing.

**Recommended Strategies**

1. Actively encourage property owners to list their historic properties in the National Register.
2. Design and hold an informational workshop to assist property owners interested in preparing National Register nomination forms. Invitees might include owners of properties listed on the County Register, as well as the general public.
3. Provide technical assistance to property owners preparing nomination forms.
4. Promote incentive programs available to owners of properties listed in the National Register. Currently these incentive programs include the Oregon Special Assessment Program, federal tax incentives, as well as local loans and land use waivers.
5. Investigate possible funding sources to support preparation of individual, district, and multiple property submissions to the National Register. Possible sources of support could include individuals, neighborhoods, local businesses, fraternal groups or organizations interested in history or preservation.
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