

NORTH



CHEHALIS R.

Road to Claguate - 1954

KLABER 1911

John Hague
Claim No. 44
1853

No. 1 School
Later Grange Hall
(Baw Faw)

Church 1888

Peter Charles
Claim No. 45
1852

Samuel T. Adams
1853

Charles F. White
Claim No. 37
1852

William Marcy
Claim No. 38

G.W. Buchanan
Claim No. 39
1853

Turner R. Round tree
Claim No. 43
1853

Fort +
Stockade

1889
CEM

Thompson W. Newland
Claim No. 40
1853 - 1st school

William Murphy
Claim No. 44
1853
Palmiter
1861

First School House
1854
H.R. Stillman
Claim No. 42
1852

1862
The Falls
Sawmill

STILLMAN or MILL CREEK

So. End of Prairie

RIVER
CHEHALIS
FORK

First Entrance
Trails from
Cowlitz
Landing

To Baw Faw Peak

Road To Wildwood
1935 to Vader
and Ryderwood

BOISTFORT PRAIRIE
1850's

Later Road
To P. E. II

LOST CREEK
Lost Valley

A HISTORY OF BOISTFORT VALLEY

100 Years 1850 - 1950

Compiled April 1955 by:

Bernice Sweany Roundtree
of Chehalis, Washington
with the help of her Mother,
Eliza Harris Sweany

Born at Boistfort, June 2, 1873

Died January 17, 1968

The Boistfort Valley was first called Baw Faw Prairie, then Boisfort, and finally, Boistfort. The French word, Boisfort, pronounced something like 'bawfaw', means "a small valley, surrounded by green hills." This described the prairie at the time the first white settlers arrived in the spring of 1852.

When first seen by white men, as far as is known, the prairie was one and one half miles long, north and south, and about a mile wide. It was devoid of trees but covered with wild grass about eighteen inches high, a beautiful sight after a long journey.

The south fork of the Chehalis River marked the eastern edge of the prairie and on the west is another river called Stillman Creek, or Mill Creek, both flowing northerly to help swell the Chehalis River. The north end of the prairie was somewhere near the present Church, with the cleared area extending south about a mile and a half. The rest of the valley was covered with trees until it was gradually cleared. Now it is all farm land and homes, about two miles wide and fourteen miles long.

Boistfort Valley is located in Lewis County, Washington, about fourteen miles southwest of Chehalis. About six miles further on southwest stands Baw Faw Peak, the highest point in southwest Washington. It has been the location of a State Fire Lookout for years because from the top of the Peak one can see the Pacific Ocean, then turn around and see the Cascade Mountains, the city of Chehalis, other towns, rivers, etc. The Peak and surrounding hills were completely covered with beautiful timber when the settlers came.

It seemed that the prairie was not used as a permanent home by

the Indians, but they kept it burned over so that the camas could grow. These blue-flowering, onion resembling, bulbs were dug in late summer and used for food, often cooked, by the Indians. They dried the blackberries for winter use, also fish.

The Siwash Indians, as they were called by the white settlers in this area, were a branch of the Chehalis tribes. During the Indian wars of 1855-1856, the people of Lewis County were not molested by the Indians but, in order to feel more secure, at least two blockhouses were built on the prairie. Turner Roundtree built one on his Donation Land Claim and the family spent a few nights in it.

Historian of Pioneer days, Charles Miles, has a letter written to him by Clarence Maynard in 1962, at the age of 85. He writes:

"My mother Mary Alice White was born Feb. 26, 1856, in the stockade at Boistfort Prairie. There was a fort and stockade located about a short quarter mile south of Grandfather White's home. The forts were located at each corner of the stockade to give the defenders a clear view of all sides. The fort and stockade were gone when I was old enough to understand, just a few logs left scattered around, perhaps less than a dozen."

But the Indians in this area were always friendly and the settlers were kind to them. The white and Indian children played together while the Indians camped along the rivers. For years they camped in the valley twice a year---fishing season and blackberry---camas season---and were not disturbed by the presence of white people. Everyone learned enough words of the other language to converse in a more or less limited fashion. In later years, after 1888, the Indians came to pick hops grown by white men.

They had an interesting way of catching eels. One Indian would wade out into the river where eels were known to stay in the rock beds. He would stir up the water and when the eels would try to get away another brave, holding a three foot stick

with a string and hook attached, would swing the stick at the eels catching one on the hook. They rarely missed the swift moving eels. They were especially enjoyed smoked or cooked over a fire. I have never heard of the settlers trying to eat them.

The trails to Boistfort were from a branch off the beaten trails, hence the settlements were not stopovers for Pioneers going to other sections in the early days. Boistfort was the end of the trail going west from Cowlitz Landing (now Toledo). A few years later some of the growing families moved over the hills to Pe Ell.

An act passed by the United States Congress in Sept., 1850, allowed a single man to claim 320 acres as a Donation Land Claim. A man and his wife were allowed to stake 640 acres. Over the Indian trails came the settlers, horseback or walking, looking for homes after coming west in covered wagons, suffering many hardships.

The first settlers of Boistfort Prairie were Charles F. White and his wife Elizabeth Buchanan White, in the spring of 1852. Mr. Charles F. White and wife, son Jasper, and Mrs. White's brother Mike Buchanan left Peoria, Illinois, in April, 1851. They crossed the plains in covered wagons and ox teams reaching Portland, Oregon in the fall of that year. After staying there for the winter, in the spring of 1852 they came to Boistfort and staked out their claims. Charles F. White's son, Cyrus White, was the very first white child born in the valley. That was Dec. 20, 1853. Their next child, Mary Alice White, (married Charles W. Maynard) was the one born in the afore mentioned stockade Feb. 26, 1856. Then Arthur James White was born in 1860. Charles W. Maynard later became State Treasurer. In fact many of the people of the valley took part in the affairs of the County and the Territory of Washington, later of the State.

In the fall of 1852 Peter (Pierre) Charles, who had been an employee of the Hudson Bay Co. and had an Indian wife, staked a Donation Land Claim on the Prairie. The wife did not fit in with the ways of the white women so they soon moved over the hills to where Pe Ell now stands. Samuel T. Adams became own of the D. L. Claim. The name Pe Ell probably came from the mis-spelling and mis-pronouncing of the name Pierre.

The Second white woman to come was Mrs. White's mother, Mrs. George Buchanan, who with her husband brought their sons Ripley, Winfield, and Thomas, and daughter Catherine. That was 1853. Later Catherine married A. F. Tullis and moved to the section now called Adna where they operated a store. That fall of 1853 Mr. and Mrs. Thompson W. Newland arrived. Also Mr. and Mrs. William Marcy and two daughters arrived from Indiana after having spent the summer crossing the plains by covered wagons. They all staked out claims, but ahead of them was some-one else.

The Third white woman came in August, 1853. Turner R. Roundtree, who had previously visited the country with his older sons, arrived in August, 1853, with his wife, Mary Adeline, three younger sons--Andrew, Perry Oliver (Grandfather of my husband Orville), and Martin D. Also two daughters were in the party---Polly (who later married Mr. Shirley) and Betsy or Elizabeth (who married William Murphy). They had left Illinois the previous fall, crossed the plains to Oregon City then to Boistfort, and staked their claim, dated October 28, 1853.

Henry Stillman came west to Oregon in 1849 from Lima Center, Wisconsin---stayed in Oregon two years, then went to Cowlitz Landing (Toledo). He went over the Indian trail to Boistfort in 1852, coming out of the woods on the place that the Newlands staked later. Mr. Stillman staked his 640 acre claim and built a house on it while staying at the C.F. White home. Then he went back to Klackamas for the rest of the summer. He had written for his wife, daughter and young son Jay Stillman to join him. They crossed the plains traveling with Mrs. Stillman's

brother, Henry Palmiter (who later married my great-grandmother, Margaret Isabelle).

Henry met the party at the John Day River, came to the Willamette Valley, and remained there until the fall of 1853. They used a row boat to go down the Willamette River, cross the Columbia, and down the Columbia River to Monticello (now Longview.) What a hazardous trip for a rowboat! Indians poled the boat up the Cowlitz River to Cowlitz Landing; then they travelled the overland trail to their new home at Boistfort, arriving in the fall of 1853. Henry Stillman was County Commissioner in 1854. In 1862 he built a water-powered saw-mill on his place at the falls on Stillman (Mill) Creek. He furnished the settlers with lumber, which was a wonderful help.

John Hogue took a Donation Land Claim at what is now Klaber in 1853. J. D. Decker also took a place between Klaber and Ceres on the west side of the river in 1852 or 53, but abandoned it and settled on what was later known as the Scollard place, now Arthur Hamilton's, a mile west of Chehalis.

William Brewer's family crossed the plains with mule and ox teams in 1853, to Oregon, and while living in Lane County, William died. The widow, My Great-grandmother, Margaret Isabelle Scott Brewer, moved with her ten children to Grand Mound where they suffered hunger and hardships before she married Henry I. Palmiter, (Mrs. Stillman's brother). He brought her and eight of her children to Boistfort in 1861. Two older girls had already married: Ann Brewer Crowe and Sarah Brewer Harper. The fourth child, Mary Lucinda Brewer, married Martin D. Roundtree and moved to the Roundtree Donation Land Claim in 1862, where she lived until her death in 1923. Life was hard and the nearest doctor lived in Olympia, so the death rate was high. Martin died in 1871 leaving Mary a widow with five small children, at age 24, but the next year she married Edward Harris. They were my Grandfather and Grandmother Harris, parents of my mother, Eliza Jane Harris Sweany. As children we visited them

of times because we lived only five miles away at Curtis. We had wonderful times around the old farm.

Because of serious injury Grandfather Harris was mostly in the hospital during the Civil War, where he learned nursing and doctoring. After his honorable discharge June 13, 1865, he did not go back to Massachusetts or New Hampshire, but came by way of the Isthmus of Panama to Washington Territory. He arrived at Boistfort in 1866 and found work for Martin D. Roundtree. He lived on that farm until his death in 1928---age 80 years.

These pioneers did not realize that they were making history but they knew that in order to build civilization they must have church and school. In 1853 a school was organized and taught by Mrs. T. W. (Mary Buchanan) Newland in her home. Her husband, Mr. Thomas J. Newland was Lewis Co. Supt. in 1854-1856. Salary \$75.00 per month. This school has the reputation of being the first public school in what is now the State of Washington and was Number One. The five pupils were: Jay Stillman, Jasper White, and Henry, Winfield, and Catherine Buchanan. During that year a schoolhouse was built near the Oak Grove and a little creek on the Stillman place back of the present Boistfort Cemetery. It was a frame house of split cedar and was used only in summers.

School was taught there in 1855 by Mr. J. W. Anderson, a lawyer from Cowlitz. The willow switch was used freely on those who misbehaved. Pupils were not separated according to grades as we know them, but according to ability. Children furnished their own books and slates on which to write their lessons. Orville's Grandfather John Henry Miller (born 1842) taught at No. One in 1874.

The U. S. Congress set aside two townships of land for a University of Washington in 1853-1854. One tract was located in Seattle--the other at Boistfort, but this action was set aside in 1857-58, and Seattle acquired the University.

Later a school was built more nearly in the center of the valley, where the Grange Hall now still stands, and still numbered One in the Territory of Washington. Pupils came, walking or horseback, from as far as five miles each way. The number ONE was retained for Boistfort School for over fifty years until renumbered after consolidation. This Number One served alone for the entire valley until, around 1890 to 1900, about eight one-room schoolhouses were spaced about, so that pupils need not walk so many miles, and school could be held during the winter.

Besides Number One schoolhouse, which was later remodeled into BawFaw Grange Hall, there was Number 70 at Boistfort on the northern line of the Roundtree Donation Land Claim. One each was built---Deep (or Lake) Creek, Lost Valley (where I taught one year - 1922-23), Ceres, Curtis (which grew to three rooms while I was attending about 1910). Two were built in Wildwood: one at Hill's in 1893, and one at Deterings about ten years before. That was before Deterings lived there but there were several families. At first school terms were three summer months only.

The long, long list of school teachers contributed much to the culture and learning of the people. Many local girls and now and then a boy attended school outside---Chehalis, Olympia, and the Normal Schools, then came back to teach. My Mother and her sisters did this and, years later when we moved back to the valley, my sisters and I did the same.

J.T. Forrest taught at No. 1 about 1885. Many fine men and women from other sections of the country came to teach too. Notable among these was Ulysses E. Harmon who came to teach at Number One in 1886. He married Mother's half-sister, Ellen Roundtree, the next year. In 1889--1892 he was Lewis County Supt. of Schools and then Chehalis City Attorney. In 1909 he moved to Tacoma to be City Attorney there for years.

My Mother, Eliza Harris, stayed at home nights while teaching at Wildwood (Hill's) riding back and forth each day

horseback, three and one half miles from home. She had been using a man's saddle until she could earn enough money to buy herself a woman's side-saddle. It would take around twelve dollars and fifty cents, about half of a month's wages. She was nearly twenty-two that Spring of 1895 when early one Saturday morning she rode the sixteen miles to Chehalis alone, bareback and sideways, of course. Ladies wore long skirts and never, never rode straddle. She purchased a beautiful light colored leather side-saddle with a red velvet or plush seat and rode home in it the same day, tired, thrilled and proud.

A red haired young man, Charles H. Sweany, came from Winlock to Boistfort to teach in 1892. Auburn haired Eliza Harris saw him at the Fourth of July picnic that year. The next year he taught at Number 70 and boarded at the Harris home, and although she was away teaching too, they became acquainted. They were married August 23, 1896, and both continued teaching in the valley two more terms. These were my Parents. They lived in other parts of western Washington until 1909 when they bought the Curtis Store.

Consolidation of the valley schools occurred in 1910. The lower grades were continued in the several school-houses, with the eighth grade and some high school classes being taught by Maude Mustard (who married Arthur J. White - 1915) in the one room Boistfort Church. In Summer - 1912 - a school building with two rooms for the grades and one room for the high school, was built across the river from the Grange Hall. From there the first graduate of Boistfort High School, Orville W. Roundtree, graduated alone in 1916. There was no class of 1917, three students in 1918, and nine in my class of 1919.

In the summer and fall of 1918 the present two story high school building was constructed next door while the students attended classes in the Grange Hall until Christmas.

We moved into the big beautiful new building in January 1919 and I graduated that year.

During the first years of Boistfort High School it was up to each student to find transportation or walk. Some rode horseback, but when we moved back to the Curtis Store after a year and a half in Kelso, I rode one semester (Spring 1916) with Anna and Fred Roach in a two-wheeled cart, horse drawn. A few cars were around by the fall of 1916 so a daily car load was taken from Curtis to Klaber to High School. It wasn't unusual for eleven to be squeezed into a Model T Ford. Just fun!

In 1918 my father built over a small truck bed with seats along the sides, to accommodate a dozen students. It was the first school bus we had ever heard of, and it seemed so luxurious and like a picnic to be riding comfortably together. I was a student too but since I had been driving the family Ford and the truck for two or three years, when Father was busy at home he sometimes asked me to drive the bus loaded with students.

With larger buses and better roads, all of the smaller one room schools were gradually closed, in the 1920's, and a larger central Boistfort Grade School was built next to the High School. It accomodates all in the valley and some other territory near by.

During the early pioneering days they lived close to nature, raising their own vegetables, fruit, meat, and grain. The yearly holiday was when they would haul their wheat to Olympia, taking two days each way to make the trip. Those lucky enough to have friends and/or relatives in Olympia, as my Grandparents had, would spend a day visiting while the wheat was being ground, then start the two day trip home. One night each way was spent near the present site of Centralia with relatives or friends. My mother was born in 1873 and she remembers those wonderful trips.

When butchering the beef for meat, the tallow was saved for making candles. Candle molds were brought from the east

as one of the essentials. They made soap, most of their furniture, and shoes. Sheep furnished wool for quilts, comforts, and stockings; even the girls learned to knit their own stockings, gloves, and mittens.

Fruit was either dried or made into jelly; canning was unknown a hundred years ago. They had no jars that would seal but they had bottles. A string was dipped in kerosene and tied around the neck of a bottle, fire set to the string, and when the bottle was hot then suddenly immersed in cold water, it would break off the neck, thus making a container for jelly.

Wild animals were in abundance. It was not an uncommon sight to see wild cats, deer, bear, or even the fierce cougars when wandering through the woods in search of meat, game or berries, or maybe a stray cow or pig.

The Oliver H. Joy family came from California in the 1870's with their seven children at home, bringing a good library which was greatly appreciated. They purchased the Stillman place and continued to run the sawmill.

For entertainment these pioneers had a Literary Society with debating, essays, spelling and ciphering contests; singing schools, taffy pulls, quilting bees, and apple parings.

For an apple paring the neighborhood crowd gathered to peel several bushels of apples, using three peelers which removed the peelings by turning a crank. Other hands cut the apples in quarters and cored them, and still others would string the quarters on twine ready for drying. That done the party would move into the parlor to sing or play games, not being expected to clean up the mess. Always lunch was served.

For the quilting bees the women would come during the day and get a lot of visiting done while their fingers flew at the quilting. The men would come in the evening, probably in time for dinner and then take the women home.

The roads in summer permitted trips to Chehalis and return the same day in the 1880's. The Fourth of July was an occasion. If Chehalis was celebrating, the Father usually said it was too far to go the sixteen miles, but the family would go ahead with

plans, and when the day came they always went. Other years the whole community held a picnic on Stillman Creek. The Declaration of Independence was always read and usually there was a speaker. Patriotic songs were always on the program, usually by a group of young people who had been practising. My Mother, Eliza Harris Sweany, remembered the Fourth of July, 1881. On the way to the Chehalis celebration they met a man on horseback at Claquato. He told them the sad news that President Garfield had been shot in the back July 2. He lingered until Sept. before he finally died. The news sank deep into the memory of the eight year old girl. That same trip she saw and tasted her first orange.

Among the early pioneers life was hard, accidents were tragic, and the death rate was high. The large mound of earth on the Buchanan Claim, rising out of the otherwise nearly level prairie, made an ideal burial place. It was used by all the white people until the farm was sold in 1887 to a Scotch bachelor, (Hutchinson).

The new owner removed most of the headstones and burned over the ground, much to the distress of surviving relatives. It was taken to court and he was refused the right to plow the land over the graves, but he forbade trespassing after he had put a fence around a few broken stones.

My Grandparents, Mary and Edward Harris, donated a tract of land, the south-east corner of the Roundtree Donation Claim, for immediate use as a Boistfort Cemetery. Grandpa Harris was a carpenter as well as a doctor, farmer, and minister; and he made many of the coffins. Loving hands covered the outside with black cloth and the inside with white. Embalming was not practised.

Years later my grandparents, father, and other relatives were buried there. It is still in use and belongs to the community, the only cemetery in the valley.

My Grandfather Harris, who came to the valley in 1866, had had some experience nursing in a Boston hospital after being

wounded in the Civil War. He saw cases in need of medical care at Boistfort but there was no doctor. Before Chehalis had a doctor, word had to be taken by horseback fifty miles to Olympia and hours were needed to make the long trip. Then perhaps the doctor would be drunk or out of town. Crville's Grandfather, Perry Roundtree, made the hurried trip to save a life in 1859, and when he found the doctor drunk he tied him on a horse and brought him anyway. He was pretty well sobered up when they got back to Boistfort.

After Mr. Harris married the widow of Martin D. Roundtree and was caring for the five children, he found a way to help. He, with his wife's sister's husband, Champion B. Mann, druggist at Olympia, by using doctor books and simple remedies, were able to save many lives. Edward Harris' deeds of kindness endeared him to the people and he served them spiritually as an ordained minister as well as physically.

Besides a daughter, Eliza Jane Harris Sweany, my mother living in Chehalis, two sons were born to Edward and Mary Harris. Henry died in 1906 leaving his wife Emma and son Roy. The other son is Charles W. Harris, retired Professor of Hydraulic Engineering at the University of Washington, living in Seattle.

All manner of illnesses and accidents were presented to Edward Harris for relief. He was sent for once when Joe Moon was in distress with more than half an inch of the end of his nose missing. "Where is it?" demanded Mr. Harris. "I cut it off with the axe, it must be around the chopping block somewhere." "Get it quick!" Somebody did, and it was carefully washed and disinfected, and then put back in its rightful place. Mr. Harris used court plaster to make it stay in place and inserted small rolls of paper in each nostril to keep them open and straight. The piece of nose grew back on, and Joe said his nose looked even better than before.

Many cases of pneumonia, typhoid, polio, etc. were successfully cured. He removed an extra thumb for a child. He was in demand for miles around as an expert on typhoid fever. Two far advanced cases, practically dying when he was summoned, were the only ones he ever lost with typhoid among scores. The

main remedy was Thompson's Fever Syrup coupled with good nursing care.

II.

The Church at Claquato was twelve to fourteen miles away but the road had been cut through the woods and over the mountain, so that the Boistfort Christians were privileged to donate the pews, the pulpit, and the pastor's chair. All were in place and free of debt for the dedication -- 1858. The church and these furnishings are being preserved, at the original location, three miles west of Chehalis. Five years later, in 1863, a Boistfort Christian Church was organized and met in the school-house and homes. Martin D. Roundtree was one of the deacons and about the same time was Sheriff of the county. He had to attend court at Olympia since Lewis and Thurston Counties were in the same district. At this same time the United States Court sessions were held in the Jackson Courthouse on Jackson Prairie, which is still standing and preserved. First court there was November 12, 1850. The U.S. Court served roughly what is now Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and perhaps more.

In 1881 approximately an acre of ground was given by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Adams for the purpose of erecting a building for worship and teaching the Bible. It is the acreage where the Boistfort Church stands today. It was deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Church was built in 1888 with additions since.

(The Samuel Adams' only child, Lou, became Mrs. Arthur White. Arthur was younger brother of Cyrus White, the first white child born in the valley. Lou and Arthur had two children--Alta White Bryan, and Charles, who married Mary Jackson (Jakish). Mary Jackson's parents came to Boistfort during the 1880's using the old-country form - Jakish - and lived near the Grange Hall. Mrs. Jackson lived to be 95 and died in 1956.)

The following is a quotation from - -

"Glimpses in Pioneer Life on Puget Sound", by Rev. A. Atwood of the Puget Sound Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. 1903. Denny-Corvell Co., Seattle.

"Chehalis circuit, as it was known in the Conference year of 1900, consisted of three appointments or preaching places, viz: Boistfort, Fayette, and Deep Creek. At Boistfort our work was organized by Rev. D. W. Cameron in 1886. A church was built at this point in 1888, under the pastorate of W. C. Hockett. It was dedicated that year by H. D. Brown, Presiding Elder of the district. The lot, three fourths of an acre, was donated by S. T. Adams,

Trustees who took official charge of the erection of the building were S. T. Adams, O. H. Joy, and Cyrus White. The Sunday School was organized in 1890. T. J. Hardwick was the Superintendent then. The Superintendent now is George C. Joy (1903). The only revival of general interest occurred in 1888 under the pastorate of W. C. Hockett."

Orville's mother, Alice Roundtree, and his uncle, Albert Miller, as well as Orville were among the many Sunday School Superintendents.

At about this same time the Baptists built a church across the road from the Curtis store, on land given by A. J. S. Watson. It was supplied by pastors from neighboring communities and sometimes by Rev. Reuben McCash, a local resident, and later by Rev. Edward Harris who was an ardent worker for the Christian Church. They also preached in schoolhouses. Special exercises were held at Christmas time with a fine large tree. Families would take their gifts and place them on the Community Christmas tree for the children especially. At Curtis, my father Charles H. Sweany, was Sunday School Supt. many years and my mother also served. Both taught classes too.

The Curtis Church had a struggle for existence, but I remember many Easter and Christmas programs we were in, while having Sunday School, and occasionally there were funerals and special preaching services. The building was torn down about 1930. Other denominations contributed much to personal lives of members, in particular the Lutheran, but there were no other church buildings.

Movement has been steadily toward a Community Church and now the only Church in the valley is the Boistfort Church, remodeled in the 30's. It was transferred to the Baptist organization and a parsonage was erected and dedicated July 16, 1950. At that time the --

Supt. of the Sunday School is a Lutheran,
Chairman of the Board of Deacons is a Methodist,
Chairman of Committee of Dedication is a Christian,
but all are members of the Community Baptist Church
with the purpose of advancing God's Kingdom."

The first period of the development of the valley was during the time when independent denominations worked separately and in a measure in competition with each other. Now the constitution of the church provides that:

"This church is to be recognized as a Community Baptist Church and it's membership shall be open to any member in good standing from any evangelical denomination."

Roads

At first there were only trails in and out of the Boistfort valley. Several farmers would go together and float their grain in a dugout canoe down the Chehalis River to Borst blockhouse where the Skookumchuck River joins the Chehalis River (Centralia). From there it was freighted overland to Tumwater. Others packed produce over the trail to Cowlitz Landing (Toledo) then by canoe to Portland.

A stern-wheeler steamboat managed to come up the Chehalis River during high water one time to a point one mile above Curtis. They were glad to get back safely.

In the Territorial legislature of 1853 several thousand dollars were appropriated for road building in western Washington. When the road was cut through the woods and over the mountain through more woods to Claquato, probably in 1854, then grain was taken to Olympia for grinding with horses and wagon.

As the roads improved, the mail was brought in once a week, then twice a week over the mountain, now called Curtis Hill, first from Claquato, then from Chehalis to Boistfort.

The Northern Pacific Railroad was built through the lower end of the valley in the early 1890s, running from Centralia to South Bend. The nearest depot for Boistfort was Ceres. They had two passenger trains a day each way and four freight trains a day and a turn-around that ran from Chehalis to Pluvius.

From 1914 to 1930 the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul was running nearer by with one passenger train each way every day. Nearest stop was Ruth where local freight arrived but no mail. We picked up freight there for our Curtis store. It was later sold to Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. When we were children we would take the train alone to Chehalis for dental appointments, etc., usually from Ceres.

Back in 1901 James Kingsbury carried the mail and occasional passengers in a light wagon from Adna to Boistfort. By the time my Uncle Henry Harris secured the contract for the mail route in 1902, it was a daily except Sundays. He died June 23, 1906, and his father, my Grandfather Harris, took over the contract to carry the mail by horses and wagon from Adna to Boistfort with a stop at Curtis. When roads were improved, about 1910, the route was changed from Adna to Ceres, which saved the long hard climb over the mountain. Mr. Harris had a fine team and a stage with four double seats upholstered with leather; and it had side curtains to put up for rainy weather. He left home each weekday morning, made the stops at post offices only; Boistfort first, Klaber next, (after it was established in 1911), then Curtis, on to meet the morning train. He would wait at the station for the train to return from Chehalis in the afternoon, take mail and passengers and start from home, stopping again at Curtis, Klaber, and Boistfort postoffices. Postoffices were usually in general stores.

People liked to ride with him - he was so pleasant and jolly. Sometimes he would be stopped to help the sick or aid after an accident. He removed a .22 bullet from my brother's foot one afternoon. Fay had carelessly rested his loaded gun on his foot to keep it off the ground, and accidentally pulled the trigger. It had to come out through the sole

of his foot so he didn't walk on it for a while, but it healed nicely.

The first automobiles appeared in the valley in 1910, and it wasn't long until we had one. It was a mighty good car that could negotiate the mountain--(That is Curtis (Pleasant) Hill). Not long after this a road was built around the mountain following the Chehalis River, and the days were nearly over of passengers getting out of the vehicle and walking up the hill to lighten the load, whether buggy, wagon, or car.

Mr. Harris never learned to drive a car, so he gave up the mail and stage route in 1914. Alva Retherford carried on for four years in a Ford. Then for twenty seven years Mrs. Oliver Goff drove their Fords and her blind husband carried the heavy mail sacks in and out of the three or four postoffices on the star route. No mail was delivered to the homes. By this time people had their own cars so passenger service was not important. After that routes were changed and the valley was and is served by Route 4 out of the Chehalis office, with postoffices still maintained at Curtis and Klaber in the general stores until Klaber closed.

To go back awhile, around 1900, before a road was built to PeEll, some men, usually bachelors, would walk the forty miles to Willapa Harbor, with heavy packs on their backs. They would go in the Spring to take logging jobs and return home in the fall.

The first roads through the woods south to Wildwood were so muddy they put in puncheon (split logs) crosswise. It was rough going. Then later they placed planks lengthwise. They were four inches thick, eighteen inches wide, and many feet long. If a wagon or car stayed on the planks it made a fine road but eighteen inches didn't leave much room to weave or wobble. Turn-outs were not close together so one had to watch for other vehicles, strictly one way traffic. Getting off the planks was a serious predicament which I managed to keep out of. Most roads were gravelled.

About 1912 a narrow (8 foot) paved road was tried out with gravel alongside to provide for meeting and passing. Three

miles were built at the northern end, running through Curtis and Klaber. It gave fine service for about forty years, with few repairs. Accidents were few, but I was on the way home from a pie social and I was in one of two cars that met head-on on that narrow pavement one dark night in June, 1925. Lights had gone out on both cars but my brother Loren, who was driving my car, could see the pavement enough to stay on it. He wasn't expecting to meet another car doing the same trick. All five of us and the two in the other car eventually recovered, but neither car ever ran again. In recent years, the roads are excellent.

The valley timber was gradually cut. Fir logs and cedar logs were floated down the rivers to Littell to Wisconsin Sawmill for years around 1900 to 1908. Shingle bolts were cut in the summer and when the first high water came they would float down the river to Galvin below Centralia. Driving shingle bolts was dangerous and exciting work. A dozen or more small sawmills operated at different times through the years, and lumber was hauled away with horses and wagons.

Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. built Camp McDonald on a part of my Father-in-law's place and started logging on a big scale. It wasn't long until the hills began to look strangely bare.

The road to Ryderwood was built in 1935 giving the valley a southern entrance.

Hops were raised in the valley as early as 1888, until, in 1912 to 1920, Klaber hop yard was rated as the largest in the world. The man, Herman Klaber, for whom the post office was named, lived across the hopfield from the present Klaber store in the summers. His sister, Mrs. Margaret Kaufman, who with her husband built the Kaufman Apts. in Chehalis, was often there. Their daughter and a girl friend about eleven or twelve years old were wearing anklets, the first I ever saw. They looked so funny! When we dressed up in summer we wore long stockings - pink, blue, or white cotton to match our dresses or ribbons. In winter we wore dark colored cotton stockings. When the weather was warm we went barefoot to play but never to school. Mr. Klaber went down with the TITANIC.

when he was on the way home from Europe in 1912.

People from miles around, including many Indians, came to pick hops in September for about two weeks. School was postponed as it took two thousand pickers. They were paid \$1.00 for a 25 bushel box about 7 ft. long, 3 ft. wide, and 3 ft. deep. A good picker could make \$3.00 a day and some made more.

The Indians camped along the river in tents and hop shacks near the Klaber store while the white people camped in the two hundred or more hop shacks near the Grange Hall at the south end of the hop yard. These little row cabins had built in bunks on which they placed straw mattresses. A person felt very lucky to get a shack with a table and a usable stove. Most people brought their own furnishings and of course dishes, pans, and food.

Twelve large dry kilns, six on each side of the field, were decorated with the name KLABER - a letter high up on each kiln. When I was a little girl my folks put a branch of our Curtis store near the hop shacks for one season. There were also several smaller hop yards in the valley.

Before cars were in general use several blacksmith shops were thriving. One was J.L. Hansen's which was started about 1910 next to the Curtis store. Later Mr. Hansen turned it into a garage and machine shop. Earlier Mr. Jackson (Jakish) had a blacksmith shop across the road from the present Grange Hall near the river. Another was across the road from the Klaber store on hopyard property. There too was a barber shop and hop warehouse, the upper floor of which was used for a Grange Hall before the present location. During the summer of 1918 when the schools were closed the 4 H Club met there. Curtis supported a barber shop too about 1910 across from the store.

Harvey H. Hurd who became County School Superintendent in 1931, taught one term at Klaber, 1916-1916. That spring of 1917 he organized some of the students into a Victory Garden Club as recommended from Washington D. C. to aid the war effort. At first the boys joined and then we girls did too. Mr. Hurd left at the close of school a few weeks later, turning the club over to Orville W. Roundtree. That was the beginning of boys' and girls' club work in the valley.

The next spring, 1918, George H. Tucker, Supt. of Schools, led the Club while Orville was in Army service for a few months. By then it was a registered 4 H Club. We members chose the activity we wished - garden, canning, calf, etc. but all came together for club meetings. Many good reports were turned in. Orville returned for Spring, 1919, and was local as well as Lewis County 4 H leader. We had a large successful club, earning several National championships. Several of us put on demonstrations at the Southwest Washington Fair, and then over at Yakima at the State Fair. I was on the Canning Team with Gladys Detering Edwards, and the trip to Yakima was one of the high-lights of my life. As before, the members chose the project they wanted and all met together in the new high school building. Lewis E. Duncan (who taught many years at Mossyrock) was the President of the Club that year and I was the secretary. Lewis showed an immense profit from a square rod of tomatoes, and also made the trip to Yakima and won National honors in the Garden Division. 4 H Club work continued but we moved to Grass Valley, Oregon that fall (1919) and my Club days were ended. Orville went on to Gray's Harbor County to be County 4 H Club Leader there. Our family moved back to Curtis one and a half years later to operate the Chehalis-Boistfort Telephone Co. again for about ten years or more.

During High School the favorite outing was a hike from near where McDonald is now to the top of Baw Faw Peak. Prior to 1918 it was a long hard trip requiring a day each way for the girls. About this time a shorter trail was located so the trip could be made up and back in a day. A lookout for fires was located on top. I made the trip several times, both on the longer trail and the shorter trail, and later found it much easier to look over the country from a Weyerhaeuser train. The mountains are full of roads now, so we can drive to the top in hunting season.

Stores and Post Offices:

The Boistfort post office was established about 1880 a mile south of the church on what is now the John Good place. Mail came in once a week then later twice. John and Susan Runyan, (formerly widow of Andrew Roundtree) had a few items

to sell, when people came in for their mail. When they moved to Wildwood, R. M. Johnson (Maude Capron's father) took over for a while, and then the Penningtons who had more of a store. Before this postoffice was discontinued, it was moved south to the Buman place for a while, originally part of the old Buchanan Claim.

About 1890 there was a store about one-fourth of a mile south of the present Klaber store, owned by John Howard, but there was no post office.

The Klaber store, with postoffice, was opened in 1911 when the hop yard became big business. J.O. Wallace operated it for the Klaber Investment Co. for approximately three years, then it was sold to I.E. Duncan, later to John Roundtree, and others, changing hands several times. It burned in Sept., 1958.

Toward the lower end of the valley, shortly after 1900, a general store and postoffice were opened and named by Ben Curtis. Later he sold it to his brother, W. A. Curtis. The next owner was I.E. Duncan before he went to Klaber, and then John Roundtree bought the Curtis store.

My parents, Charles H. and Eliza Harris Sweany bought the Curtis Store and postoffice in 1909 from John Roundtree and operated them and the telephone company until August, 1919, except for a year and a half at Kelso around 1914. Curtis is where I grew up with my three brothers, Fay, Loren and Gordon, and two sisters, Veva and Loris; Helping in the store and postoffice, going to school, learning to sew, reading our many books, climbing trees and all over our high roof, riding on rafts in high water, etc. etc.

All six of us graduated from Boistfort High School and went on to college. In the spring of 1925 we all graduated from some school; Fay from Washington State College at Pullman, I (Bernice) from Washington State Normal School, Ellensburg, as did Veva; Loren and Loris, the twins, from Boistfort High School, and Gordon from the eighth grade at Curtis. You may be sure there were no graduation gifts that year.

When we first bought the store in 1909 customers came from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. or later seven days a week. My folks

decided on an innovation--closing on Sundays. In order to stick to it we usually drove the five miles to Grandpa Harris' at Boistfort for the day. Occasionally we drove the horses and wagon over the hill to Grandpa Sweany's in Winlock. We had an automobile by 1911 but kept the horses around for months to haul freight for our store. My father managed the Chehalis-Boistfort Telephone Co. for many years, installing the local switchboard and telephone office. Loren was just a small boy when he could make a balky telephone work better than anyone else. Subscribers would stare at him in disbelief when he would tell them that he had come to fix their telephone.

Orville W. Roundtree and I, Bernice Sweany, were married June 28, 1925 in the Boistfort Church by my Grandfather, Rev. Edward Harris. We did not live in Boistfort Valley after that but made our home in Ryderwood for eight years during which time our daughter Elenor, 1927, and our son Vern, 1929, were born. Since 1933 we have lived in Chehalis but always have a warm spot in our hearts for Boistfort Valley. We can see Baw Faw Peak from our home and never fail to look for it every day.

Many things occurred through the years which I have not mentioned.

On the second Saturday in June, 1914, four ladies met with Mrs. Millie Wilson at the home of Mrs. Hutchenson. Mrs. Wilson was a Sunday School organizer and minister who did extensive work throughout southwest Washington. She had attended the Sunday School conference in Switzerland. Those present at the first meeting were Mrs. Robert J. (Marie) Hill, Mrs. T. H. (Jennie) Calkins, Mrs. Buman, and Mrs. Hutchenson. Plans were formulated at this time for an organized women's group, the first of its kind in the upper Boistfort valley.

Mrs. Wilson helped outline the foundation for general procedure. Mrs. Hutchenson was chosen President, Mrs. Buman vice president, and Mrs. Calkins, secretary-treasurer. The second meeting was held with Mrs. Calkins with three more joining - Mrs. G.O. (Alice) Roundtree (Orville's mother),

Mrs. W.G. (Elizabeth) Foster, and Mrs. John Meyn. At this meeting the name for the club was discussed. Mrs. Hutchenson suggested: "Boistfort Helping Hand." It was chosen and is still used.

The business procedure for the meetings is still the same. At each meeting the president opens with a passage from the Bible, followed with the Lord's prayer, given in unison. Each meeting is closed with a short benediction.

The purpose of the Boistfort Helping Hand is to give a "helping hand" to any cause that is worthy or to any person or family in need. Through the forty one years there have been so many events where the Helping Hand has done it's share that it would be impossible to enumerate them. For many years this club has held a bazaar each fall to obtain money to carry on its work. Through the years this group has tried to live up to its name, and because of these high ideals, the club continues and is always ready to extend a "helping hand".

A Mrs. Shoemaker suggested that the lower end of the valley should also have a woman's club. In October, 1915, a group formed the Curtis Improvement Club, with the purpose being social and giving help to the needy. It did not have the religious flavor. The first president was Mrs. James Keener. Surviving charter members (in 1955) are: Mrs. Ora Capron, Mrs. Albert Rayton, Mrs. Clarence Anderson, and Mrs. Robert Brown (now Pearl Brown Rose). This club has survived through the years to the present, and they join with the Boistfort Helping Hand for the annual bazaar, keeping their proceeds separated.

More recently a Garden Club has been organized, and the Boy Scouts.

The Baw Faw Grange No. 34 was organized in the 1870's, carrying on for years, then disbanded. In 1912 it was reorganized and has been very active since.

Candles, kerosene lamps, and gasoline mantle lamps were used throughout the valley until power lines were installed in 1921. That is, all the people except the Harris family. About ten years before, Professor Charles Harris came from the University and built a private power plant beside Stillman Creek

so that his parents might have lights and power. It was wonderful for them.

Now good roads lead over the hills in each direction and local roads are fine for year around use. The Ocean Beach Highway runs across the lower end of the valley, bringing Chehalis just a few minutes away.

All this has been accomplished ONLY because the brave and hardy pioneers came and triumphed. We say THANK YOU to them.

Bernice Sweany Roundtree