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1852-56.

University of Washington, Ph.D., 1973
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1973

THE STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION
IN AN EMERGING FRONTIER COMMUNITY:
JACKSONVILLE, OREGON 1852-56

by

JERILYN SUE MCINTYRE

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

1973

Approved by

W. E. Ames

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July 27, 1973

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Date: 6-27-73

We have carefully read the dissertation entitled THE STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION IN AN EMERGING FRONTIER COMMUNITY--
JACKSONVILLE, OREGON, 1852-1856 submitted by
Jerilyn Sue McIntyre in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the degree of Ph.D.

and recommend its acceptance. In support of this recommendation we present the following joint statement of evaluation to be filed with the dissertation.

Ms. McIntyre's dissertation is an exploratory study of the use of historical methods for describing and analyzing the communication structure of a community. She has chosen the mining town of Jacksonville, Oregon, because within a relatively short time it offers the opportunity to observe an area developing from one man and the discovery of gold to a functioning frontier community. The assumption on which she bases her research and analysis is that isolation was the primary motivating force behind the establishment and maintenance of the communication channels affecting the community. She makes wide use of social science concepts and terms.

As in nearly all exploratory studies, Ms. McIntyre's work has strengths and weaknesses. It is imaginative in its conceptualization, thorough in its research, and logical in its reasoning and conclusions. The amount of work which she offers is prodigious. The presentation is competently handled and demonstrates careful analysis.

At the same time her work suffers from the faults contained in nearly all exploratory studies. Probably the outstanding fault is the lack of specifics as to the messages which the channels carried within this particular community. She is able to trace clearly and logically the channels which developed and operated in this mining town. She is able to deal in a broad way with some of the subject matter which was discussed and which provided the substance for communication. But far too frequently the detail of the substance is missing. The readers wished that they could see the communication structure developing or processing specific information either within the community or being received from external locations.

There is little doubt that Ms. McIntyre's work is basic to future studies which will enable scholars in this field to see the movement of information through the structure similar to the one which she describes. Ms. McIntyre's study yields evidence that historical method offers much to those seeking an understanding of the development of communication structure in relation to an emerging community.

DISSERTATION READING COMMITTEE:

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Doctoral Dissertation

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Completion of a dissertation is possible only with the support of many persons, and my case is not unique.

My doctoral committee, including Dr. William Ames, Dr. Vernon Carstensen, Dr. Richard Carter, Dr. Don Pember, Dr. John Stewart and Dr. Robert Scholz contributed valuable advice and direction. I owe a particular note of thanks to Dr. Ames, Chairman of the Supervisory Committee, who has been most generous with his time, assistance and encouragement.

My research sources were the collections at the Jacksonville Museum in Jacksonville, Oregon, the University of Oregon Library at Eugene, the Oregon Historical Society Library in Portland, the Northwest Collection and Microfilm Collection at the University of Washington in Seattle, the Bancroft Library at the University of California, the Stuart Library at the University of the Pacific, the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, the Oregon State Archives in Salem, and the Federal Records Center in Seattle. The staffs of all of these libraries were very cooperative in extending to me the use of their manuscripts and other materials.

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Introduction

There are at least two directions which might be taken in arriving at conceptualizations of communications history. Leading in one direction is anecdotal history, a descriptive approach dealing with the dominant institutions, personalities and issues of the past. The anecdotal focus is on the who, what, when and where of communications history: who were the major personalities, and what were the major events in the evolution of the communications industries? Where, when, and in what order did the most significant developments occur? The emphasis in this approach is on depicting the media which have emerged as solutions to communications problems.

Leading in the other direction is what might be called "analytic" history, which examines the context -- the social, cultural and political environments -- of communication in all forms. Why have adequate channels for the flow of information been essential not only to individuals, but also to groups of individuals and to human communities? How have contemporary media developed from earlier stages? What patterns and relationships can be found among communications events and the social and intellectual forces in their environments? In this approach, the focus is on past problems of communications, as well as upon past solutions.

There is value in either direction. Anecdotal history provides the detail and the examples on which analytic historians rely for data and evidence. Analytic history, in turn, gives structure and order to the facts of anecdotal history. These categories, therefore, are not mutually exclusive. The anecdotal historian does some analysis in obtaining his information, and in organizing it: at the same time, the analytic historian makes use of some anecdotes in building the framework of context for his studies. The differences in the two directions is thus a difference in emphasis, not of essence.

Neither is necessarily preferable, since both presumably lead to a common destination, but, to this point at least, the emphasis on anecdotal history has predominated in the field of communication.

In the future, therefore, communications histories must pay more attention to questions of historical context, to patterns and relationships, and to speculation about the how and particularly the why of communications developments.

A practicable approach is to assume that there is no single theme, and no recurring relationship or set of relationships between communications media and society. At various stages in history, different themes or relationships appear important, because the impact of communications institutions and events is shaped by their interaction with other social and intellectual forces, and those forces do not remain constant from one era to the next. The historian's objective is to identify themes and relationships by contributing a sense of the interplay of influences during particular periods of history.

Both anecdotal and analytic approaches to the study of communications history may deal with descriptions of context, but analytic history must always look more at the how and the why of developments, and at the relationships which underlie specific communications problems. In their search for such relationships, analytic historians must be willing to take their cue from other areas of the study of communication, and make use of communications concepts applied in historical settings. This means that non-media communications -- interpersonal communication, small group communication, and communication through other social institutions and agencies -- are of as much interest to them as are the formal media. The communications industries are only one part of a total picture of historically significant information channels and procedures.

The dissertation which follows is a first step along the path to an analytic history of communication on the American frontier. The approach used, the speculations and assumptions on which it is based, and the conclusions drawn are by no means the only ones possible. Others are suggested in the concluding chapter, as topics for future research, while still more may occur to the reader. This is simply intended to be an exploratory study, testing the feasibility of this particular approach to the topic.

The crucial relationship under consideration is one deeply based in the context of life on the frontier. The assumption which has provided direction for research and for interpretation is that isolation was the primary motivating force behind the establishment and the maintenance of communications channels in frontier communities. In this dissertation, the focus is on one such community -- Jacksonville, Oregon, a gold-mining town and trade center which sprang into existence as the result of a gold rush in the early 1850's.

Life on the frontier -- on all of America's frontiers -- was characteristically a life of isolation. Particularly for those in the vanguard of the movement west, the loneliness and the feelings of estrangement which were its consequences helped shape the society and the individual actions of those who settled on the frontier. Isolation was a condition at best only tolerable for most settlers and, more often, a circumstance to be overcome as quickly as possible.

Physical isolation -- actually living in areas separated from others, and hampered by inadequate or unreliable transportation and communication links outward -- was the fundamental problem, but it had other ramifications. Where supplies, business products and services could not go, or where their transit was limited because of geographical barriers, there was commercial isolation as well, sometimes as crucial to the survival of individual settlers or

settlements as was physical isolation itself. Where contact with other persons was restricted, leading to limits on the flow of information about other communities, or about homes and relatives in other states and territories, there developed psychological or social isolation as well.¹ Indeed, to appreciate the impact of social isolation, one needs only to read the diaries and letters of early settlers on the frontier. From those sources comes evidence of how much those pioneers hungered for news of their previous homes, of their families, or of anything which would make them feel that they were still a part of a larger society. Loneliness, and the monotony of life on the frontier, were compelling forces to those whose only hope of relief was to open and maintain transportation and communication channels.

Coping with isolation thus became a concern not only of individuals, but also of communities as a whole, and of institutions on the frontier. Through letters home, correspondence to newspapers, and more organized propaganda campaigns, individuals and communities encouraged others to move west and join them. An increase in population was welcome for two reasons: first, it assured greater social contact; and second, it enlarged local markets, enhancing the commercial possibilities of an area. At the same time, a growing population further justified the intervention of both government and commercial institutions, which provided the incentive and the resources for improvement of transportation routes. On the frontier, an early step in the growth of communities was the application of government procedures to the tasks of road-building and the improvement of water transportation. Laws and corporations for road and water transport projects were established by government agencies;

1. A double name for a single category. Social isolation was the condition in which settlers lived; psychological isolation was their response to that condition.

they were put into operation by individual settlers, and sometimes by private businesses. At a time when the technology of communication was still quite simple, transportation routes were the most basic communications link available to settlers on the frontier.²

Jacksonville, surrounded by other settlements in Oregon's Rogue River Valley, was a frontier community forged in isolation. Founded in a little-known and sparsely settled region of the West, the town grew until within a few years it was the population and commercial center of Southern Oregon. Despite its growth, however, a dominant concern in the town's early history, the main inhibitor of its later development, and a continuing problem against which its citizens united in seeking a solution, was the area's isolation from other regions.

The impact of its physical isolation was most obvious and most immediate. Jacksonville was located in a woody, hilly, often-mountainous valley drained by a river system which was not adaptable to extensive use for water transport. This was ideal country in which to look for gold, which helps account for the early gold rush to this part of Oregon; at the same time, however, it was a region into which access was extremely difficult. It was also an area in which agricultural resources were developed after the initial rush of settlement, in a portion of the valley several miles south of Jacksonville; at first, therefore, Jacksonville and its surrounding mining camps depended on other regions for food, as well as for housekeeping supplies, homebuilding tools and mining equipment -- in short, for the staples of existence. When the area's

2. A point made by numerous other histories of life on the frontier. See, for example, Oscar Osburn Winther, The Old Oregon Country (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1950), p. 126; and Ray Allen Billington, The Far Western Frontier (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962), pp. 269-271.

fragile transport links were cut, as they were by the harsh winter of 1852, or when they were severely strained, as they were by the Indian wars of the era, isolation almost literally brought on crises of survival.

There was no newspaper in Jacksonville until more than three years after the town was founded. Those communications activities and channels upon which citizens of the area depended for their flow of information were "non-media" channels, for the most part: interpersonal communication with neighbors, other residents of the valley, travelers, packers and other passers-through, as well as communication through business organizations, government agencies and social institutions. In terms of communication, the isolation of Jacksonville was made more profound by the fact that the town was founded in an era, and in an area, in which the technology of mediated communication had very little impact. The telegraph was the newest technological innovation of that era, for example, and it had not yet been extended to the Oregon country.³ In the early 1850's, therefore, the news and information which came into a community such as Jacksonville were literally carried in by persons arriving from other areas, and were carried out in the same manner. News, which may be a commodity in all communications situations, was quite obviously a commodity in this one: it followed the same routes along which moved other commodities and supplies necessary for the community's survival.

Out of isolation thus emerged the need for, and consequently the facilities of, both transportation and communication. It had a double impact: on

3. Efforts to bring telegraph service to Oregon began in 1854, with actual construction dating from 1855. It was not until 1864, however, that direct telegraph contact was possible between Portland and major cities in California. Clarence Bagley, "Transmission of Intelligence in Early Days in Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XIII (December, 1912), 359-360; and E.D. Smith, Jr., "Communication Pioneering in Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XXXIX (December, 1938), 355-356.

the one hand, isolation was a consolidating force in the community, heightening people's awareness of how much they depended on each other; on the other hand, it was a force which compelled settlers in the valley to maintain their links outward.

In crisis, particularly, isolation underscored the interdependency of the area's residents. Individuals with different values and lifestyles (e.g. farmers and miners) submerged their differences in the face of supply shortages, Indian wars, and other stresses of the era. Crises were either caused or worsened by the cutting or encumbrance of transportation routes, and the need for cooperative action to keep either from happening became well understood.

The most effective cooperative action would be in road-building or road-improvement activities. These were supported by local citizens, apparently appreciative of the importance of these projects. That an adequate road network in the valley was not provided until several years after Jacksonville's founding was the result of other factors, as shall be explained in a later chapter. Even in those early years, however, there was an impetus for better outward transportation and communication links, and that impetus came largely from the impact of isolation.

There is an interesting conceptual challenge in assessing the relationship between isolation and Jacksonville's ability to respond through the community's communication and transportation facilities. Where interdependency of the individual members of a community increases to the point that it helps shape their actions into cooperative activities, and where channels for the inflow and outflow of information and supplies are crucial to the survival of a community as an entity, there exist conditions which may be suggestive of general systems theory.

Systems theory as a way of viewing life processes, first applied in the physical and biological sciences, has been used increasingly in social science conceptualizations. Key to all systems theories, regardless of field, is the idea that systems are, as one writer has said, "bundles of relations"⁴-- usually interdependencies -- between or among entities, or between entities and their environment(s).

An important part of a system's ability to adapt to stress or change is its capacity for the transmission of energy or information. To some systems theorists, information transmission and energy transfer are similar,⁵ and both are crucial to the system's ability to respond to change or stress. Information, therefore, is simply a particular form of energy on which a system might depend.

In understanding a system's response mechanisms, and in evaluating its procedures for response, it is helpful to distinguish between two different aspects of information transmission -- distribution and processing. Distribution channels carry information, both inside the system, and outside, to and from the system's external environments. Processing centers consume the information; they make it usable in some way, as a basis for some kind of response or adaptive reaction.

The effective operation of both distribution and processing channels or agencies is essential to a system's capacity for adaptation. If either the

4. Anatol Rappoport, "General Systems Theory," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1968, XV, 454.

5. James G. Miller, "Toward a General Theory for the Behavioral Sciences," American Psychologist, X (September, 1955), 513-531.

distributing or processing links are broken or blocked, the system's ability to respond and, ultimately, to survive, may be hampered.

It is this point -- the importance of a system's transport and communication links to the system's survival -- which suggests an analogy to conditions in Jacksonville during the town's early years of adapting to crises imposed by isolation. In fact, two aspects of systems theory have provided direction for the analysis which follows: the idea of interdependency as a condition characterizing a system, and the notion of the importance of information distribution and processing to the viability of a system.

When seen in terms of a rough analogy to systems definitions, the roads and trails which were Jacksonville's transportation and communication links become the input-output channels of distribution in the community. Forced into interdependency by the stresses of a multifaceted isolation, Jacksonville's citizens used their transportation routes to carry both the food and the information on which their community depended. Those routes had no particular impact on the content of the material which they carried; they were simply conduits of information flow -- the local "medium" of communication.

There were channels and agencies of information distribution, however, which, to one degree or another, did help shape the content of the messages or information which they carried. Such institutions as the United States postal service, and the private express companies had little direct impact on content, but such individuals as travelers, military couriers, packers and immigrants moving along transportation routes did more to shape the messages they transmitted. All of these agencies carried news, gossip, rumor and other bits of information, official and unofficial, to anyone who was interested, and thus created a common information pool upon which individuals or groups in the community could draw. By omitting or adding information to messages

carried, or by losing messages or information in the process of transmission, these agencies, to a greater or lesser degree, determined the content of the news they carried. Meanwhile, their information functions varied: some remained primarily distribution channels, while others were partly distributors and partly processors.

Still other agencies or institutions had even greater impact on the information with which they dealt, and thus they may be thought of as information processors. These included churches (especially the Methodist church in the early years of Jacksonville), social organizations such as fraternal associations and political parties, military agencies, and government bodies. These agencies provided forums for the discussion of matters concerning the community, and thus constituted an important source of information and opinion in the valley. Perhaps more important, however, was the fact that they represented and provided sets of standards and procedural guidelines which gave structure to public opinion, and thus had great impact on the decisions which the community made in response to conditions of stress or change. Through these agencies, citizens consumed and used the information which came to them via the distribution channels; it was here that the community's real capacity for response and adaptation resided.

The following dissertation examines the framework for information distribution and processing in Jacksonville during the community's first few years of existence. The relationship of greatest interest to this study is that which existed between the environment of isolation into which the town was born, and the kind of communications networks which were created to respond to that isolation.

In order to understand Jacksonville's ability to adapt to change or stress, one must first know the significant internal and external factors affecting the

community, as well as the means by which citizens learned of those factors and of other significant information. Part I of this dissertation thus provides historical background for the analysis which follows. In Chapter One, there is a brief review of the history of the Oregon country, with particular attention to early problems of isolation in the territory as a whole. The first part of Chapter Two narrows the focus to a consideration of events in southwestern Oregon which led to penetration of the isolation in the Rogue River Valley, and to the discovery of gold near Jacksonville. In the second portion of that chapter, the emphasis is on developments in the community which followed the gold discovery. The time period of interest in the latter part of Chapter Two is the first four years of Jacksonville's existence.

Part I is not intended to be a definitive history of southwestern Oregon, nor even of the community of Jacksonville. It is presented simply as background, essential to an understanding of the isolation in which the community existed, and of the conditions responsible for the particular communications networks which emerged there.

The four chapters in Part II turn to a description of the agencies, institutions and individual channels which constituted the networks of communication in Jacksonville. Ideally, of course, an analysis of information usage within such a community would include discussion not only of the structure, but also of the function of communication there. Because of limitations of time and resources, however, this study has focused only on structure and its context. The function of communications networks in Jacksonville, which conceivably could be determined through more detailed examination of the content of messages carried in particular eras, or during particular episodes, should be the focus of future studies.

Part III is a concluding chapter in which there are other recommendations for histories of this type, and for future research in this general study area. The interpretations and speculations in this particular discussion, it must be remembered, are only exploratory.

If there is a single speculation worth keeping in mind throughout this dissertation, however, it is that the need for an adequate flow of information was of crucial importance to the growth and expression of cooperative action in an emerging community such as Jacksonville. News, brought into the area along routes which were avenues of commerce as well as of communication, may indeed have been a commodity, but it was a priceless commodity, belonging to the community as a whole. The people of Jacksonville and the Rogue River Valley appeared to recognize this, with an awareness perhaps greater than that which exists in similar small communities today. Perhaps Jacksonville was younger, its networks of communication simpler, and its information needs more directly related to its survival; but perhaps, too, its channels of communication were still close enough to the citizens they served to be more immediately responsive to the community's needs. In that era, isolation was such that the establishment of a communication structure could be a solution to the problem. In communities today, the natures of both isolation and communication networks have changed, so that now such networks may no longer be part of the solution -- they have become part of the problem.

PART I

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

MAP I (Facing)

"Oregon Territory West of the Cascade Mountains"

October 1, 1855

Prepared by Surveyor General's Office

COURTESY, OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAP
of
OREGON TERRITORY
WEST OF THE
CASCADE MOUNTAINS.

Surveyor General's Office
Salem, Oct 17, 1855

C. S. Gardner, Sur. Genl.

TERRITORY



Explanations.

- Townships subdivided are marked
- under contract
- proposed to be surveyed
- Roads and Post Tracks

Chapter One

The Oregon Country Before 1850

Oregon's isolation was manifold. It was geographically isolated, and its white population of trappers, traders and subsistence farmers was separated into sparse, scattered settlements. Moreover, situated as it was in a late-settled part of the North American continent, it had its own peculiar political, psychological, social and economic needs as well, all rendered worse by the region's separation from other areas. Those needs became translated into distinct problems of political, social-psychological and commercial isolation.

Added to these problems was a kind of informational isolation. Not only was it difficult for Oregonians to learn of events transpiring in the United States and on other frontiers, but it was also difficult for knowledge of Oregon itself to penetrate to those other regions. Until the 1820's, persons outside Oregon were quite uninformed about that portion of the continent, and after the 1820's, for a time, they were perhaps quite misinformed. In either case, there was a barrier to the accumulation of accurate information about Oregon.

The kinds of isolation which existed in the early Oregon colony persisted, to some degree, even after other pioneers had been persuaded to move westward, particularly in those parts of the Oregon Territory which were settled later. The early history of the territory thus provides clues to the context from which the later forms of isolation emerged, and from which precedents for coping with the problem were sought.¹

1. This section on the early history of Oregon draws on many different sources. Among the most helpful were Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of the Pacific States of North America, Vol. XXIV: Oregon, 1834-1848 (San Francisco: The History Company, Publishers, 1886); and Elwood Evans. History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, (Portland, Oregon: The North Pacific History

Oregon's geographical isolation was the fundamental condition from which stemmed all other problems of isolation. An island of settlement located far beyond the frontier, Oregon was for years little more than the outpost of American interest, an interest shared with the British. Under the treaty of 1818, both Great Britain and the United States agreed to a joint occupation of the territory between the 42nd and 54th parallels. It was understood that either party could terminate the agreement after giving the other party one year's notice; neither nation did so until the United States gave notice in 1846.

Part of the reason for this long period of contentment with joint occupation was that Oregon did not invite settlement. It was a trader's colony, primarily, not an area for colonization. Not until permanent settlers were induced to brave the area's physical isolation, to establish homes and develop other industries would there be reason for either nation to extend the protection of its laws and institutions to the Oregon country.

At first, most of the exploitation and exploration of the region had been accomplished by fur traders and trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company, the North West Company, and the Pacific Fur Company, an American firm acquired by the North West Company in 1813.

The trading voyages of Robert Gray and Benjamin Kendrick in the late 1780's and early 1790's were the basis for American claims to Oregon, but the northwest became known to Americans more through the exploits of later trappers and explorers, including Lewis and Clark, Capt. Benjamin Bonneville, and Jedediah

Company, 1889), I, pp. 95-332. More recent histories of value were Dorothy O. Johansen and Charles M. Gates, Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1957), pp. 225-245; and Ray Allen Billington, Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier (3rd ed.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 509-533. Also of note, Winther, Old Oregon Country, pp. 3-121.

Smith. Settlers in the Midwest and in the eastern United States learned of the Oregon country through published accounts of the explorations of these and other men. Once information about the region began to circulate, the interest in colonizing there began to grow.

It was the Americans, rather than the British, who were for that reason first to establish permanent settlements in large numbers. They were encouraged in those enterprises in a variety of ways. Dr. John Floyd, a Virginian congressman of the 1820's urged American expansion into Oregon.² A few years later, Hall Jackson Kelley began his enthusiastic propaganda activities on behalf of settlement, through letters to Congress and to newspapers, through books, pamphlets and speeches. Meanwhile Kelley's idea for an emigration society was picked up by others: Nathaniel Wyeth, a Cambridge, Massachusetts businessman mounted trading and colonizing expeditions in 1832 and 1834. Wyeth's ventures eventually failed, but reports of the expeditions added to the growing store of information about the Pacific Northwest.

The first real colonies were established by missionaries. Jason Lee founded a Methodist mission in the Willamette Valley in 1834, and other mission projects followed. During this period the mission colony lived harmoniously with other groups in the valley. They sought and obtained aid and supplies from the Hudson's Bay Company, lived as neighbors with the French Canadians who farmed nearby, and ministered to the Indians of the decimated tribes of the area. Soon the missionaries' colony had become more of an agricultural community, however, and they became prominent among those encouraging American migration to

2. Floyd's importance is stressed in Edward Gaylord Bourne, "Aspects of Oregon History Before 1840," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, VI (September, 1905), pp. 260-267. See also Billington, *Westward Expansion*, pp. 512-514.

the Pacific Northwest. It was the mission colony, too, which led in early agitation for establishment of some sort of government and code of law in the valley.

The beginnings of colonization on a mass scale were in the 1840's, when a number of factors combined to increase popular interest in Oregon. Depression hit the Midwest, and men looked to the frontier for new opportunities. Their attention was directed to Oregon by Senators Lewis Linn and Thomas Hart Benton, both of whom championed the cause of American expansion into Oregon in a number of Congressional speeches and bills. Linn introduced several measures designed to reward colonization in Oregon; his land grant bill of 1842 was perhaps best known to immigrants of this period.

Why did immigrants take a chance on moving westward? It was probably for a mixture of reasons, but underpinning most was the conviction that Oregon was a land of promise, a place for a new start in life. Peter Burnett, later prominent in Oregon and California politics, was probably typical of many others; he later wrote that he went to Oregon to assist in founding an American community there, to restore his wife's health, and to pay his debts.³ Another pioneer, Jesse Applegate, underlined the opportunism in decisions to move west with a more philosophical assessment. Pointing to the discontent so widespread during the depression which preceded the Mexican War, he said people on the Missouri frontier were restless and nomadic ". . .and had been taught by the example of their ancestors to seek a home in a 'new country' as a sure way of bettering their condition."⁴

3. Peter Burnett, Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1880), pp. 97-98, 252.

4. Jesse Applegate, "Views of Oregon History," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 2, p. 31.

The tradition of hope inherent in the westward movement was thus one reason settlers were willing to move on in search of new opportunities. Their choice of Oregon as their destination, however, was no doubt cultivated by the growing amount of promotional material about the region. Oregon was no longer unknown to the rest of the country. The speeches and bills of Benton and Linn were familiar to the immigrants, as were some of the earliest descriptions of Oregon. Added to these were W. A. Slacum's 1837 report on the Willamette Valley settlements, the narrative of Lt. Charles Wilkes' exploring expedition in 1841, and the countless personal and informal accounts, sent back through private and newspaper correspondence by those who had made the trip west in earlier immigrant trains. Oregon was thus well publicized through a variety of means in the 1840's,⁵ it was discussed in numerous lyceum lectures, in "Oregon Meetings" of pioneers organizing for the trip west, and in private conversations. With discussion came the resolve to take action, and that action took the form of the great migrations westward which began in 1843.

One pioneer's testimony may illustrate the way in which others tapped various sources for the information they needed in deciding to move west. John Minto, an 1844 pioneer, read missionary articles about the frontier in a newspaper, and learned the location of Oregon by consulting a geography book. He had also heard of Senator Linn's land bill, vigorously debated in Congress in 1842, which promised a full section of land to men who settled Oregon.⁶ Minto

5. Verne Bright, "The Folklore and History of the 'Oregon Fever,'" Oregon Historical Quarterly, LII (December, 1951), pp. 241-253; and Helen B. Kroll, "The Books That Enlightened the Emigrants," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLV (June, 1944), pp. 103-123. See also Billington, Far Western Frontier, pp. 69-90; and Johansen and Gates, Empire of the Columbia, pp. 235-236.

6. The bill offered military protection and government to the territory, but the item of greatest interest to immigrants was the proviso promising a grant of 640 acres to every white male over 18 years old, for cultivating and using the land over five years. An additional grant of 160 acres would be given to

reinforced what he knew of opportunities in Oregon through conversations with other Missouri farmers, who were intrigued with Oregon not only because of the reputed fertility of its farmlands, but also because of its closeness to the sea and to convenient shipping routes. Nor were arguments about American's "manifest destiny" unknown. In Minto's later assessment,

Such information as the speeches delivered by Senator Benton upon the subject of the title of the U.S. to Oregon and the character of the country was then very generally known in the West. Added to these sources of information were the statements of Missionaries, of Mountaineers, in addition to the narrative of Lewis & Clark, Bonneville as embellished by Irvin, of Wythe, Farnham & others. These sources of information were only drawn upon by fur traders but were kept in circulation by verbal communication in most cases.⁷

By such means did the spread of information eastward lure settlers to the Oregon country. In the 1840's, therefore, Oregon could no longer be said to exist in the kind of "informational isolation" which had earlier kept it from being known to the rest of the nation.

For its new immigrants, however, the other forms of isolation persisted. It was still geographically cut off from other areas, its economy was still limited to trapping and subsistence farming, and its people were socially and psychologically estranged from contact with others. Those other forms of isolation awaited other developments before they would be overcome or mitigated. Among those other developments were four which were most significant: the establishment of local government and the passage of laws, the increase of

married men for their wives, with 160-acre parcels also to be awarded for their children under 18 years old. Congressional Globe, 27th Cong., 3rd Sess. Vol. XII, p. 240. See also Arthur Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, 1961), p. 72.

7. John Minto, "Early Days of Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 50, pp. 20-21.

population, the diversification and growth of the economy, and the improvement of transportation and communication channels.

For some time after the beginning of colonization in Oregon, American settlers had existed in a kind of political isolation, perhaps better described as isolation from government. As mentioned above, the mission colony in the Willamette Valley had been eager for the extension of American government to their settlements, . . . an eagerness they expressed through petitions to the United States Congress.⁸ Their early interest was perhaps premature, however. Until 1843, law and order were maintained in the Willamette Valley -- the center of most early settlement in Oregon -- by the strong and fair administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, primarily in the person of Dr. John McLoughlin. Added to this influence was the tacit acceptance of a "moral code" of lawful conduct, apparently strong enough to prevent outbreaks of any serious criminality.⁹ Those crimes which were committed were punished either by missionary magistrates or, in the case of Hudson's Bay Company employees, by company officials.¹⁰

Life in the Oregon country, it appears, was both well-ordered and harmonious before 1840, yet some American settlers were determined to have a formal structure of government and law. Using a series of pretexts for gathering to

8. Johansen and Gates, Empire of the Columbia, pp. 227-229, 232-233. See also Frederick Holman, "A Brief History of the Oregon Provisional Government and What Caused Its Formation," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XIII (June, 1912), pp. 100-101. Petitions were sent in 1838 (presented to Congress in 1839), 1840 and 1843.

9. Charles Wilkes, Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842. (Philadelphia, 1845), IV, p. 352, quoted in Holman, "Oregon Provisional Government," pp. 103-104.

10. Arthur S. Beardsley, "Code Making in Early Oregon," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, XXVII (January, 1936), p. 4.

discuss the problem,¹¹ they succeeded in May, 1843, in gaining approval of the formation of a provisional government, aimed primarily at assuring law and order in the colony, and at providing a means for protecting life and property.¹²

There were undoubtedly several motivations for the establishment of government at that time, and not all of them were directly related to individual feelings of estrangement from the institutions of democracy. A frequently mentioned motivation was the dislike of Dr. John McLoughlin, and the desire of some settlers to remove the community from the dominating influence of McLoughlin and the Hudson's Bay Company.¹³ Individual political or economic ambitions may also have influenced some of the government's founders. As Charles Wilkes noted in 1841, a code of laws, to some of its advocates, ". . . would give them more importance in the eyes of others at a distance, and induce settlers to flock in, thereby raising the value of their farms and stock."¹⁴

At the same time, however, it is reasonable to assume that the Oregon settlers were influenced by that tradition of American life which appears to require the formality of government and law, even in the most primitive or isolated conditions. To the petitioners and organizers of the late 1830's and

11. When Ewing Young, an early settler, died without leaving a will, the colony met to decide on disposition of his property. At the same time, a committee was appointed to discuss adopting a code of laws. In 1843, meetings called to provide means of protection against wolves also resulted in the appointment of a committee for drafting laws which would lead to formation of a government. These "wolf meetings" culminated in the May, 1843 gathering at Champeog, at which the provisional government was established. Holman, "Oregon Provisional Government," pp. 101-102, 109-110; and Johansen and Gates, Empire of the Columbia, pp. 233-242.

12. LaFayette Grover, Oregon Archives, including the Journals, Governors' Messages and Public Papers of Oregon (Salem, Oregon, 1855), pp. 8, 11, 14-15; and Holman, "Oregon Provisional Government," pp. 117-118.

13. Holman, "Oregon Provisional Government," p. 104.

14. Wilkes, Narrative, IV, 352.

early 1840's, to the founders of the original provisional government in 1843 and the architects of change in 1844 and 1845, as well as to the hundreds of immigrants moving west in trail associations which, in themselves, constituted a form of mini-government,¹⁵ there was apparently always the idea that some sort of agency was required to arbitrate conflicts, to regulate interactions, and to enforce the standards of conduct and the priorities of community action.

Whatever the motivation, however, a government was established, and the debate over the need for that government soon became academic. Migrations in 1843 and 1844 swelled the population of the settlements south of the Columbia to 2,110 by late 1844.¹⁶ These were, for the most part, families or home-builders -- "substantial" people, as Judge William Strong was to call them later¹⁷ -- ready to colonize, and desirous of some legal protection for their property. These settlers confirmed the American claim to Oregon in a way that the trading empire of the Hudson's Bay Company had never been able to do for Britain. The fur company was forced to move its headquarters north, conceding the area south of the Columbia to the Americans, and leaving a vacuum of influence which the provisional government had to fill. Thus, while that government may have been unnecessary in 1841, and perhaps may still have been superfluous in 1843, it was distinctly needed by late 1843 and early 1844.

15. Billington, Far Western Frontier, pp. 95-105 describes the movement and organization of trains in 1842 and 1843, mentioning that the 1843 migration came in a train headed by Peter Burnett, assisted by a negotiating council of ten. (Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 256 says it was a council of nine.)

16. Joseph Meek's 1845 census, quoted in Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 267.

17. William Strong, "History of Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 68, p. 22.

Oregonians wanted and expected the rapid extension of territorial status to their colony. Their early government was an interim agency, at first rather weakly empowered,¹⁸ but revised in the next two years to become stronger and more durable.¹⁹ Those years of revision were marked by factional struggle within the colony,²⁰ but the result was a government formally established by popular vote in July, 1845 which was an effective agency on behalf of the people. Moreover, since it was patterned on federal territorial law, and principally on the laws of the territory of Iowa,²¹ when Oregon became a territory in 1849, the transition to that status came easily. The Territorial Organic Act continued in effect all of the laws of the provisional government, except the land law.

The episodes surrounding the establishment of the provisional government were important for several reasons. Perhaps most important, they led to establishment of an effective structure for protecting land and property in the colony. At the same time, they expressed the people's desire to overcome their political or governmental isolation. Oregonians proved themselves willing and able to provide the institutions and laws for ordering and regulating their lives, as they waited for federal laws to be extended to them.

18. The government established in 1843 was administered by an executive committee of three, a legislative committee of nine, and a supreme court. Its chief weakness was that it had no power to tax, but relied instead on pledged subscriptions.

19. Revisions in 1844 and 1845 produced a government headed by a single executive (a governor), with a legislature of thirteen members. This government was given the power to levy taxes. See Holman, "Oregon Provisional Government," pp. 124-130.

20. The split was between those who wanted to preserve the more temporary government, and those who wanted revision. Johansen and Gates, Empire of the Columbia, p. 244 characterizes it as a conflict between the "entrenched 'old-timers'" and the newer settlers. However, Jesse Applegate, one of the newer settlers, was among those who resisted revision. Applegate, "Views of Oregon History," p. 41.

21. The original Organic Act was taken verbatim from the 1839 laws of the territory of Iowa, referred to in later code controversies as the Little Blue Book. Beardsley, "Code Making," pp. 8-10.

Meanwhile, the government thus established was also significant as an information-consuming agency. Any government is a mechanism for processing a particular type of information, according to statutes, rituals or traditions, by which it streamlines the procedure of decision-making on behalf of the community: such was the case with Oregon's provisional government, and with the territorial structure which followed. Moreover, the founding of the government had promotional value, too. Promoters of settlement in Oregon were aware of the importance of providing familiar institutions to break down the psychological isolation which newcomers would feel in the frontier society.²² The new government thus not only lessened the effects of political isolation, but also eased the estrangement caused by other forms as well.

More than any other development, however, it was the arrival of large numbers of other settlers which did most to overcome those other feelings of isolation in early Oregon. The increase in population justified the existence of government, and prompted the later extension of the desired territorial status to the area; in addition, many of the immigrants of the 1840's became prominent in the politics of the new colony. Meanwhile, the arrival of other settlers provided more consumers, as well as more producers in the economy. Most important for overcoming social and psychological isolation, the new settlers also made it possible for there to be greater opportunity for social interaction, for conversation and the exchange of news and information.

22. Settlers expressed the concern in the petition signed by J. L. Whitcomb and 35 others March 16, 1838, and introduced the next year in Congress by Senator Lewis Linn: "The natural resources of the country, with a well-judged civil code, will attract a good community. But a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection for life or property. . . we can only speak of a country highly favored of nature. We can boast of no civil code. We can promise no protection but the ulterior resort of self-defense." Congressional Globe, 25th Cong. 3rd Sess, Vol. VII, p. 141.

While the immigrants taking part in the great migrations may have been attracted to Oregon by the promotional efforts of Kelley, Linn, Benton and others, two other occurrences of the period helped confirm the promise of the Oregon country. One was the passage of federal land laws which clarified the earlier confusion about land title in Oregon, and made available free land in large parcels. The other was the California gold rush, which provided a ready market for the products of Oregon's farms and ranches.

Land laws had evolved from earlier conditions of uncertainty regarding the possession of property in Oregon. The provisional government, under pressure from immigrants arriving after 1843, revised their original land law to remove features which favored earlier settlers and the missions.²³ The new laws did not assure that title would be preserved once federal jurisdiction was extended to Oregon, but they did bring order to what was threatening to become a chaotic situation.

For years before, immigrants had settled claims without the absolute certainty that their holdings would be legal under federal land law.²⁴ With the first of the great migrations in 1843, there was even greater fear among

23. The features of the old laws which were most objectionable to new immigrants were provisions requiring that new settlers record their land claims within twenty days, while old settlers were given a year to do so, and allowing the missions to claim up to six miles square of land, while others were limited to 640 acres per claimant. Dorothy Johansen, "The Roll (sic) of Land Laws in the Settlement of Oregon," Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims, I (Portland, Oregon: The Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1957), p. 2-3.

24. Ibid. Immigrants had more than just their own hopes for land title. The Pre-emption law of 1841 had established precedent for laws granting "squatters' rights" to land, while the bills of Senator Linn had included provisions for land grants. Thus, claiming land in the hopes that title would prove good was a good gamble. Some, however, disagree: J. Henry Brown, "Settlement of Willamette Valley," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 10, p. 10 says people who migrated in the 1840's came on a "venture," not knowing if they would be assured land.

original settlers that their claims would be jumped, as the choice lands of the Willamette Valley began to fill. Meanwhile, the newer settlers resented the extent to which the original landholders had taken up most of the desirable property in the valley, and thus they wanted clarification of land policy as much as did the original settlers. It was in response to this situation that the colony's provisional land laws were promulgated, bringing order to the situation for a time.²⁵

When territorial status was extended to Oregon, however, the old land laws were replaced by federal policy. The long uncertainty over land title ended with passage of the Donation Land Act in 1850, which confirmed most of the original claims, and at the same time opened up other parts of the Oregon Territory to settlement. Immigrants were able to claim large parcels of free or low-priced land in the lush valleys of the south, and thus later migrations began to fill those other areas. Settlers arriving after 1850 came in time to enjoy some of the prosperity which had spread to Oregon as the result of the California gold rush.

For those settlers who had been in Oregon since the 1840's, meanwhile, the gold rush was the factor of greatest significance in ending their isolation. Even with the establishment of government and the evolution of land policy, immigrants to Oregon before 1848 had failed to find the great opportunities they had been led to expect. There were few of the necessities of life, and fewer still of the luxuries because it was so difficult to ship supplies there. Inadequate roads, rivers unsuited to steamboat travel for much of their length, and location of the Oregon country on the periphery of most commercial activities,

25. M. P. Deady, comp., The Organic and General Laws of Oregon Together With the National Constitution and Other Public Acts of the United States 1845-1864 (Portland, Oregon, 1866), pp. 64-65. See also Johansen, "Land Laws," pp. 2-3.

conspired against the growth of a diversified trade. The main industry in Oregon before 1848 was agriculture, but even that was limited to subsistence farming. There were few markets within the colony, and few avenues outward by which the colony could dispose of its production.²⁶

As a result of the limited trade, there was a shortage of both credit and currency as well, making necessary the use of wheat as a form of currency. Commodities, however, were an unwieldy and inflexible medium of exchange, and hampered the diversification of the economy. The solution to Oregon's problems of commercial isolation appeared to be two-fold: more settlers were needed to provide labor for industries, and markets for the products of Oregon had to be found or be developed. For the latter, a concurrent need was implied, since transportation and communication routes would be necessary for distribution. Thus, events affecting the economy ultimately affected communication as well.

The land laws attracted settlers to Oregon, as mentioned above, but their impact was not felt until after 1850. In 1848 and 1849, it was the gold rush which brought settlers to the west, either as miners, or as merchants to supply the miners. While at first the rush appeared to threaten the future of Oregon by drawing away its men, soon its economic benefits began to spread to Oregon.

News of the gold discovery did not reach Oregon until August, 1848.²⁷ When word arrived, however, all aspects of life in the colony were affected as

26. Their principal external trade was with the Sandwich Islands. Strong, "History of Oregon," p. 21; and Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 54.

27. Reportedly, the captain of the ship which brought news of the discovery kept it secret until he had bought up all the picks and shovels he could find. A few days later, the rumors were confirmed overland. J. Henry Brown, "Settlement," p. 8.

most able-bodied men hurried to make their fortunes in the California gold fields.²⁸ Many returned by 1849, but an even larger number left for California again that year. When they returned, they brought with them the gold dust they had accumulated.

Probably the most important contribution of the gold rush was that it provided a marketplace for Oregon products, wheat particularly, from which coins and other currency could be obtained.²⁹ With the high prices paid for Oregon products in the first years of the rush,³⁰ and with the introduction of currency and gold dust into the economy of Oregon, those who stayed at home prospered as much as, and perhaps more than, those who had departed for the mines.

28. Peter Burnett estimated that about two-thirds of the male population "capable of bearing arms" had gone to California in the late summer and fall of 1848. Burnett, *Recollections*, p. 254. By 1850 the population had returned to its pre-gold rush size of over 13,000. Since there was little immigration to Oregon in that period, it is assumed that the Oregonians returned to keep their land claims. Throckmorton, *Oregon Argonauts*, p. 89.

29. James Henry Gilbert, *Trade and Currency in Early Oregon*, *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, Vol. XXVI (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1907) p. 77; and Throckmorton, *Oregon Argonauts*, pp. 87, 94-95, 105. See also Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the Pacific States of North America*, Vol. XXV, *Oregon 1848-1888* (San Francisco: The History Company, Publishers, 1888), p. 48.

30. Prices were marked up as much as 100% and 200% over New York costs by February, 1849. At the same time, flour rose from \$5.50 and \$6.00 a barrel in August 1848 to \$12 and \$15 a barrel in February, 1849; in the mines, the price was sometimes as high as \$100 a barrel. Lumber prices rose from \$16 per thousand board feet in the fall of 1848, to \$80-\$100 per thousand in November, 1849. Wages rose, too. Throckmorton, *Oregon Argonauts*, pp. 88-94.

Speculation in gold coins³¹ and gold dust³² also brought a variety of different coins and currency into Oregon. When the new, flexible currency combined with the enlarged work force brought both by the gold rush and by the land laws, Oregon's economy was ready for diversification and growth. After a period of retrenchment following the heavy speculation in the early 1850's,³³ Oregon entered a period of greater commercial stability. The problem of commercial isolation, for the population centers of the Willamette Valley, had ceased to be troublesome, although it remained a matter of concern in other parts of the territory.

By the time of the founding of Jacksonville, the older Oregon settlements had thus coped fairly successfully with informational, political and commercial isolation. Commerce had also made necessary some improvements in transportation routes, and thus the territory had begun to make some progress with physical isolation. Those transportation improvements, however, built on conditions which existed before 1848, and thus benefits did not spread quickly to outlying settlements.

31. One of the last acts of the provisional government, passed February 16, 1849, was a law creating a company for the "weighing, assaying and stamping of gold." Laws of Oregon 1843-1849, pp. 58-59. It was originally intended to be a territorial mint, but that conflicted with the coinage powers of the federal government, and thus the company was continued as a private enterprise, the Oregon Exchange Company. The "beaver money" printed by this company sold for \$5 and \$10, containing ten per cent more gold than government coins. They were removed from circulation after the San Francisco mint opened in 1854. Gilbert, Trade and Currency, pp. 81-86; and Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, pp. 99-100.

32. Speculation in gold dust occurred because the dust sold for \$10 and \$11 an ounce in Oregon, and for \$16 an ounce in California. Speculators would buy quantities of dust in Oregon, and make a profit on sale of it in California. Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 98.

33. Oregon went through a local depression in 1854, anticipating the national economic problems by three years. Gilbert, Trade and Currency, pp. 92-94.

At first, transport routes had served the center of population, which was in the Willamette Valley. A few major trails, blazed by explorers, trappers, and later by immigrants into Oregon, led over the mountain ranges from the east.³⁴ These included the hazardous passage around the falls of the Columbia, between The Dalles and Ft. Vancouver, as well as the later roads built as alternatives to that route. The Barlow Road, first wagon route in Oregon, was completed in 1846, followed by the building of the Southern Road that same year.³⁵

In the early years of the Oregon settlements, water routes supplemented the overland trails, but the waterways, too, served the main centers of settlement. What little ocean traffic there was entered by the mouth of the Columbia, supplying little towns and trading posts which sprang up along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. Smaller vessels were used for transport on the rivers until the 1850's, since most Oregon waterways were difficult for steamboats to navigate, and because, in any case, the volume of trade was not sufficient to support steamboats. Overland traffic, other than that which passed along the immigrant routes, followed trails connecting towns and trading posts of the valley, later expanding into a network which connected the outlying settlements with the waterways.

34. There were several good histories of transportation developments in this period. Sources most helpful to this discussion were Randall V. Mills, "A History of Transportation in the Pacific Northwest," Oregon Historical Quarterly XLVII (September, 1946), pp. 281-312; and Oscar Osburn Winther, "The Place of Transportation in the Early History of the Pacific Northwest," The Pacific Historical Review, XI (December, 1942), pp. 383-396. Also of note is Winther, Old Oregon Country.

35. For the specific developments leading up to building of the the South Road, see Buena Cobb Stone, "Southern Route Into Oregon: Notes and a New Map," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLVII (June, 1946), 135-154; and Mildred Baker Burcham, "Scott's and Applegate's Old South Road," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLI (December, 1940), 405-423.

Thus, predictably, before the gold rush and for a few years afterward, transportation and communication followed those routes dictated by the marketing and supply needs of the most populated parts of the territory. More sparsely settled areas were reached only by pack trails. The provisional and territorial legislatures, meanwhile, exhibiting great concern for the road situation, passed a number of laws governing road construction, the creation of road districts and the establishment of procedures for surveying new projects.³⁶ Road-building in the territory was helped by these laws, which were supplemented by private road projects and explorations. Newer settlements, spawned by the spread of Oregon's growing population and the press of opportunism, would become links in the growing transportation and communication networks, but not on an equal footing with the older settlements. It took time for adequate services to extend to the hinterland.

Jacksonville, located in the Rogue River Valley of Southern Oregon, was a product of this later period of exploration and economic opportunism, but it was also a settlement on the periphery of transportation improvements. Founded in 1852 in a still-isolated part of the Oregon Territory, it suffered in its early history from the same kinds of isolation which had plagued the Willamette settlements in the 1840's -- physical separation from other regions, people and markets, estrangement from regular government agencies (prompting local citizens to furnish their own government institutions for a while), as well as social, psychological and commercial isolation.

36. Road laws were passed in June, 1844, December, 1846 and December, 1847. See Jonas A. Jonasson, "Local Road Legislation in Early Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLII (June, 1941), 162-175.

The early Willamette settlements had shown how the effects of isolation could be overcome or lessened. They had attracted more settlers to the valley, had provided regular and stable government institutions to bring order to the area, and had taken advantage of opportunities to diversify their economy and improve their transportation and communication services. Jacksonville, because of peculiarities of its existence in a mining region, was not able to follow all of these Willamette precedents, but it did draw on some, as well as on traditions of the California mining regions. The manner in which Jacksonville built on the past and tried to cope with its own isolation is the topic with which the rest of this dissertation will deal.

Chapter II

Settlement of Southern Oregon

A frontier town's first years of existence cannot be described in terms of that one town alone because its history necessarily involves the development of an entire region. Such was the case with Jacksonville, whose origins were a part of conditions unfolding during the mid-nineteenth century throughout Southern Oregon and, in particular, in the Rogue River Valley.

In many respects, Jacksonville in the 1850's cannot be examined as a distinct social entity. It was part of a large local community. Therefore, in speaking of the "community of Jacksonville" in the pages which follow, this study will be referring not only to the town of Jacksonville, but also to the camps and settlements which surrounded and depended on it.¹

The varieties of isolation in Southern Oregon, and especially in the Rogue River Valley, were difficult to overcome, as the southern valleys had to compete with the reputation of, and the earlier development which had taken place in, the Willamette Valley. Books, letters, pamphlets, speeches and other publicity had been mainly about the settlements along the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, and thus tended to attract immigrants to those older towns and posts. For the

1. Several histories were valuable in the writing of this section. See, for example, Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, pp. 174-246 and 260-404; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 368-458; Charles H. Carey, A General History of Oregon Prior to 1861 (Portland, Oregon: Metropolitan Press, Publishers, 1936), II, 666-670 and 723-754; A. G. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, Comprising Jackson, Josephine, Curry and Coos Counties (Portland, Oregon: A. G. Walling, 1884), pp. 308-370; and Jesse Lee Gilmore, "A History of the Rogue River Valley -- Pioneer Period, 1850-1862" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1952). Articles of general interest, Wallace D. Farnham, "The Development of an Oregon County, 1852-1890: Mines, Farms, and a Railroad," Pacific Historical Review, XXV (February, 1956), 29-45; Willis B. Merriam, "Notes on Historical Geography of Rogue River Valley," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLII (December, 1941) 317-322; and Binger Hermann, "Early History of Southern Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XIX (March, 1918), 53-68.

residents of the Willamette Valley, there were both bad and good aspects of the area's well-publicized desirability. On the one hand, the migrations of the 1840's brought population in waves to that portion of Oregon and, as a result, the best lands there had been claimed by 1850. On the other hand, the greater density of population in the Willamette Valley provided the area with certain advantages. With population centered there, so, too were economic, political and social amenities. Transportation routes were improved, newspapers and debating societies were founded, churches and social organizations were established. Privations were still part of the daily life of Oregonians in this era,² but whatever improvements were being made came first to the Willamette Valley and Columbia River towns.

Meanwhile, the best-known characteristic of the southern valleys, and especially of the Rogue River Valley, was the hostility of the Indian tribes who lived there. Building of the South Road into Oregon eventually helped open the southern valleys to settlement,³ but even then the number of settlers remained small. Only the more adventurous were willing to risk both the

2. Illustrated by the reminiscence of William Strong, a pioneer of 1849: "When I came out here however a great many of the settlers had returned from California; & having felt a good many of the hardships and privations common from want of what they called 'store goods' there were hardly any who returned from California by sea but what brought with them a small stock of goods. And during my first travels in this valley on horseback, at every house almost that I stopped at -- there was no lumber in the country, -- sometimes they had a floor of earth, sometimes of shakes; they had a table generally made of stakes put in the ground & shakes put on top; they never required moving; bed steads were stakes in the ground & slats bound together with raw hide. The floors were puncheon floors." Strong, "History of Oregon," pp. 16-17.

3. Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," p. 27; and Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 371.

inconvenience and the dangers of life in Southern Oregon, and those who did so chose to settle in those areas where the Indians were considered to be more friendly. Thus, the Umpqua Valley was first to be penetrated.⁴

There were two stages in the series of events which began to break down the isolation of the southern portion of Oregon. First was a combination of events which brought thrusts of both exploration and commercial exploitation into the area from the outside. These external influences led to colonization attempts and to other business activities which introduced a sizable population, much of it transient, at first, into the valleys of Southern Oregon. External forces eventually brought permanent settlements to the area, and introduced the second stage of events. This was the stage in which internal influences -- thrusts of expansion outward -- began to play a greater part in overcoming the area's isolation.

Southern Oregon might have remained physically isolated for many years, had it not been for the northward movement of California's transient mining population.⁵ Prospectors, ever in search of new strikes, had moved into the mountains of Northern California, making rich discoveries at Trinity in 1849, Scott's Bar in 1850, Thompson's Dry Diggings and Humbug Creek in 1851. There were other strikes in the Shasta and Klamath valleys during the same period.⁶ Towns and

4. Levi Scott took a claim in 1848, near what became the town of Scottsburg. Jesse Applegate, meanwhile, settled at Yoncalla, which for a time was regarded as in the Umpqua Valley. An old Hudson's Bay Company fort was at the site which became the town of Elkton.

5. Gilbert, Trade and Currency, p. 93; and Leslie M. Scott, "The Pioneer Stimulus of Gold," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XVIII (September, 1917), 152.

6. Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, pp. 184-185; and Harry L. Wells, History of Siskiyou County, California (Oakland, Cal.: D. J. Stewart & Co., 1881), p. 61.

camps springing up near these diggings proved difficult to reach from supply bases in the Sacramento Valley. Mountainous terrain stood between the supply depot at Shasta City and the principal mining town of the area, Shasta-Butte City (later named Yreka), so that trails often became impassable in the winter.⁷ Thus, at the same time that prospectors, noting the similarity between the terrain in Northern California and Southern Oregon, were moving north to look for gold in Oregon, merchants and packers were also looking to Oregon in an attempt to find better supply routes to the Northern California mines.⁸

Discoveries along the Klamath River had prompted expeditions to find a coastal access to the Klamath, which, it was hoped, would open up distribution routes to other mining areas. This was one of the objectives of the expedition dispatched in May, 1850 by the San Francisco firm of Winchester, Payne and Company. Sailing in the Samuel Roberts, the company failed to find the Klamath access,⁹ but eventually entered Umpqua Harbor, where they laid out new townsites for colonization along the river.¹⁰ Establishment of trade centers for the

7. Wells, History of Siskiyou County, p. 41; James Mason Hutchings, Diary, Bancroft Library, University of California, MS 69/80 C, p. 41; and America Rollins Butler, "Mrs. Butler's 1853 Diary of Rogue River Valley," ed. by Oscar Osburn Winther and Rose Dodge Galey, Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLI (December, 1940), 342.

8. The area's topography was not well known, hampering exploration efforts. The Klamath River was thought to be farther north.

9. Mistaking the entrance to the Rogue River for that of the Klamath, the expedition tried to sail up the Rogue River, but was driven back by Indians. Socrates Scholfield, "The Klamath Exploring Expedition, 1850," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XVII (December, 1916), 342-348.

10. Umpqua City was located at the mouth of the river, Elkton near the junction of the Elk and Smith rivers, while Winchester was laid out at the crossing of the Oregon-California trail. Sources used for the general history of the Umpqua region were Scholfield, "Klamath Expedition," pp. 341-357; Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," 98-137; Frances Fuller Victor, "A Province of California," The Overland Monthly, July, 1893; pp. 96-103; Jesse Applegate, "Umpqua Agriculture, 1851," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XXXII (June, 1931) 135-144; Harold Minter, Umpqua Valley, Oregon and Its Pioneers (Portland, Oregon: Binsford &

mines, and colonization of the new settlements, were major goals of the Umpqua Company,¹¹ and thus they returned to San Francisco in September to begin promoting colonization of their townsites.¹² A second ship, the Kate Heath, returned to the Umpqua settlements in October, 1850 carrying passengers, mill machinery and merchandise.¹³

The Umpqua Company ultimately folded, suffering in part from shipping disasters which caused the loss of valuable cargoes, and in part from a provision in the Donation Land Act which forbade the holding of claims by companies or non-residents for speculative purposes.¹⁴ Where the venture as a business may have failed, however, as a project for bringing settlers to that previously under-populated area of Oregon it definitely succeeded. The Umpqua settlements continued to grow, government services were extended there, and road projects were begun, linking the area with the Northern California mines.¹⁵ Scottsburg,

Mort, Publishers, 1967); and Addison C. Gibbs, "Notes on the History of Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 36.

11. Scholfield, "Klamath Expedition," pp. 341ff; and Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 378-379.

12. George Cole, Early Oregon: Jottings of Personal Recollections of a Pioneer of 1850 (Spokane, Washington: Excelsior Printers, Stationers, Engravers, 1905), p. 9: ". . . hand-bills were posted showing the advantages of the route and advertising the cities as before named. Plats of these new cities were made out, and lots were offered for sale at public auction at real estate offices in San Francisco.

13. Gibbs, "Notes," p. 7.

14. Ibid: and Victor, "Province," p. 98.

15. By winter of 1850 there were enough settlers in the area to prompt the territorial legislature to create Umpqua County and provide for the organization of county government there. Elections were held in April, 1851. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 389-390.

principal town in the Umpqua area, became an important supply center for the Yreka mines, as well as for the diggings now being worked in Southern Oregon. Its growing commercial importance, which was heightened by reports of nearby gold discoveries, encouraged other settlement. Scottsburg was a foothold of white civilization in that otherwise isolated country. That other expeditions should attempt to duplicate its success was inevitable, and that boded well for the future of Southern Oregon.

An attempt to establish an alternative port of entry south of the Umpqua harbor¹⁶ led to the founding of Port Orford in 1851.¹⁷ Unfortunately for the boosters of that colony, however, the topography of the region between Port Orford and the interior was much more rugged than it was between Scottsburg and the mines. It was not known at the time, but was revealed in subsequent explorations, that the task of blazing a trail to the mining areas of the south was both dangerous and difficult. Several attempts at finding such a trail were made,

16. The Umpqua harbor was a controversial port. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company refused to deliver mail there because the bar across its entrance made entry dangerous. Local merchants and residents, of course, claimed that the entry was safe. The Umpqua Gazette, Scottsburg's newspaper in 1854 and 1855, was a major forum in which the matter was debated.

17. In May, 1851, Captain William Tichenor organized a small party of men in Portland, depositing nine of them in June on the beach south of the Elk River. It was an experiment which almost ended in disaster. Soon after Tichenor returned to Portland for supplies, Indians began a siege on the encampment, eventually forcing the nine whites to evacuate their camp and flee into the woods. All survived, although at the time it was believed they had been massacred, and newspapers reported the tragedy.

Despite this ill-omened beginning, Tichenor managed to assemble another group of volunteers and established a permanent settlement at Port Orford. For a time, it appeared it might rival Scottsburg. Stephen Dow Beckham, Requiem for a People (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), pp. 52-59; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 391-394.

perhaps the best known of which was the ill-fated T'Vault expedition of Fall, 1851,¹⁸ but a usable trail was not cut until 1856. By that time, of course, the mining trade had gone irretrievably to other supply centers.¹⁹

The founding of these coastal settlements was part of a pattern of exploration in 1850 and 1851 which had great importance for the Rogue River Valley. Trailblazers, packers and immigrants were moving through that long-neglected area, starting from Port Orford, Scottsburg and the other Umpqua towns, as well as from other places in Oregon and California. Miners were drifting north from California to prospect for gold in the valleys and mountains of the area. All of these passers-through began to make their presence felt.

In the spring of 1851, there were three cabins between the Umpqua Valley and Yreka, occupied by men operating ferries across the Rogue River along the road to the south, evidence of the profitability of accommodating travelers along this route.²⁰ In January, 1852, settlements were still quite isolated, but immigrant traffic, mining explorations and colonizing expeditions were gradually making the Rogue River Valley better known. People were at last venturing into the region, and were on the verge of exploiting the feature that would bring settlers in a rush.

18. T'Vault set out in August with twenty-three men, but the party separated, all but ten men returning to Port Orford. The others continued to search for a trail, but fell in with Indians after getting lost. Five of the party were killed, and the massacre became a cause célèbre. Beckham, Requiem for a People, pp. 59-63. One of the survivors has left a narrative of the ordeal: L. L. Williams, "First Settlements in Southwestern Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 77.

19. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 204; Victor, "Province," p. 102; and Alta California, May 14, 1853, p. 2 and June 27, 1855, p. 2.

20. Owned by Davis Evans, Charles Perkins and the Jewett brothers according to Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 382. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, 336 says the owners were Evans, Perkins and Long. Beckham, Requiem for a People, p. 48 explains that Long took over Perkins' ferry when the latter left the valley.

It must be remembered that even though the isolation of the Rogue River Valley began to be broken down in this period, this did not occur because of any specific external interest in the region. Commercial exploitation, which brought travelers and a few settlers to the Rogue Valley, was an impartial external force opening up the region as a whole to the passage of packers, travelers and immigrants. Since there were few settlements there at the time, there was obviously no great motivation to serve specific locations in the valley.

It was in the second stage of the region's development that interest in overcoming the area's isolation -- which at that point was primarily a geographical isolation -- became related to specific towns and settlements. Individuals establishing residence in the Rogue River region, or persons with commercial interests there, began to direct their efforts at linking particular towns and settlements with points outside the valley. In this era, forces other than the inward thrust of commercial exploitation began to influence developments, while commercial exploitation itself began to assume a more localized aspect.

It was the prospectors, sharing the widespread belief that gold would be found in paying quantities in Oregon, who were catalysts for this period of settlement and development. Moving up from the Yreka area in the Spring of 1851, miners crossed the Siskiyou and found gold in the Illinois and Rogue River Valleys.²¹ Their initial penetration of the area was not too rewarding,

21. A party of miners headed by Dan Fisher crossed the Siskiyou in May, 1851, following the Illinois River to diggings there. Fisher returned to Yreka for provisions and collected another party, which passed through what became the Jacksonville area. Gold was discovered on Canon Creek of the Illinois Valley, that July. Scott, "Pioneer Stimulus," p. 150, says gold was discovered near Table Rock by a party on the way to the California gold fields, but it wasn't thought to be in sufficient quantities for mining, so the party didn't stay. See also W. A. Moxley, "The Story of Josephine and the Discovery of Gold in Southern Oregon," Oregon Historical Society, MS 855. Other early discoveries: Oregon Spectator, May 30, 1850, p.2; June 27, 1850, p. 2.

however. Those early diggings proved disappointing, and the recurrence of fighting with local Indians further hindered the development of a major rush.²²

After a peace treaty with the Indians was negotiated in Summer, 1851,²³ an Indian agent was appointed to live in the Rogue River Valley. The agent, A. A. Skinner, and a government interpreter, Chesley Gray, took adjoining claims along Bear Creek -- the first donation claims in the Rogue River Valley. Other claims were settled later in 1851,²⁴ so that by the beginning of 1852 permanent occupation of the valley had begun. Estimates vary as to the number of settlers in the valley by early 1852,²⁵ but the essential fact is that, at that date, permanent homes were few and scattered. There was, of course, the large transient population of miners and travelers passing through the area, but their numbers are difficult, if not impossible to estimate. Still, more people were gaining firsthand knowledge of the southern valleys, and Oregon and California newspapers were beginning to carry more information about the area, even to the point of expressing belief that the Indian dangers had passed.²⁶

22. See below, pp. 54-55.

23. Beckham, Requiem for a People, p. 52.

24. Lemuel Bills and his son Worthington, later accused of inciting Indians against other white settlers (Oregon Spectator, January 20, 1852, p. 2, January 27, 1852, p. 3, and February 3, 1852, p. 1) built a cabin close to the later site of Gold Hill; N. C. Dean took a claim near Willow Springs, while Moses Hopwood settled near Skinner and Gray. Farther along the road to Yreka were Stone and Poyntz, L. J. C. Duncan (on Wagner Creek), an old man named Lewis (whose claim was subsequently jumped), Samuel Culver (near the later town of Phoenix) and Patrick Dunn, Thomas Smith and Fred Alberding near later Ashland. The southernmost claim was the "Mountain House," held by Hugh Barron, James H. Russell and John Gibbs. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, 336-337; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 396; and L. J. C. Duncan, "Settlement in Southern Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 27, p. 4.

25. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 337 estimated there were 27 or 28 men; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 396 says there were 50.

26. The Oregonian tended to be more reassuring, while the Oregon Statesman stressed instability in the area. At issue was the value of the treaty.

Settlement came much more quickly after two men, passing through the Rogue River Valley in the winter of 1851-1852, found gold on Jackson Creek, six miles from Skinner's donation claim. The true story of that discovery may have been lost to history because there have been so many conflicting versions of it.²⁷ Evidence suggest, however, that the strike on Jackson Creek was not the earliest discovery in the area; prospecting may have been carried on by

27. The actual date of the discovery and its circumstances are a matter of dispute. Evidence on the side of a Fall, 1851 strike are Matthew P. Deady, "History and Progress of Oregon After 1845," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 24, p. 23; George W. Riddle, History of Early Days in Oregon (Riddle, Oregon: The Riddle Enterprise, 1920), p. 27; and Paine Page Prim, "History of Judicial Affairs in Southern Oregon," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 61, p. 1; all of these men were contemporaries of the event. See also Emma Adams, To and Fro, Up and Down in Southern California, Oregon and Washington Territory (Chicago: Cranston & Stowe, 1888), pp. 554-555.

Thomas Frazer, an early packer, says gold was discovered there in 1850 or 1851. Thomas Frazer, "Reminiscences of Thomas Frazer, the 4th," University of Oregon Special Collection, MS CB F869, p. 38. He may have been referring to those minor discoveries made before Clugage and Pool's strike.

Some of the early settlers near Jacksonville, meanwhile, place the Clugage-Pool discovery after the turn of the year. J. A. Cardwell, "Emigrant Company," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 15, p. 15 places it in January, 1852, while both L.J.C. Duncan, "Settlement," p. 5 and Thomas Smith, "Account of the Rogue River Indian Wars of 1852 and 1855," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 94, p. 26 says it was in February, 1852. The early histories also disagree: Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 337 says it was January, 1852, and Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, p. 186 gives a February, 1852 date. Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 162 takes the safest position and places it either in December or January. The fact that three local pioneers say it was after the first of the year, however, is worth noting.

The version cited most often is L. J. C. Duncan's story that gold was first discovered by a man named Sykes, an employee of A. A. Skinner, and one or two other men. (Other sources mention that one of these could have been Skinner's nephew James.) Duncan claims that Sykes and his fellows found gold about a half mile from where Clugage and Pool later made their strike on Rich Gulch. The Clugage-Pool discovery in February, 1852 came after the two men, who were at that time packers on the road to Yreka, stopped at Skinner's ranch, heard Sykes' story, and went from there to the place where they began prospecting and found gold.

miners in 1851, and perhaps even before that.²⁸ However, the strike made by James Clugage²⁹ and John R. Pool³⁰ sometime in December, 1851 or January, 1852 was of sufficient richness that, when word of it leaked out,³¹ the rush was on.

As with so many particulars of this episode in the history of Jacksonville, there is no record of the exact way in which the Clugage-Pool strike became known to other prospectors. Nevertheless, common sense and knowledge of the way such news usually traveled among mining camps suggest that the word was carried by the miners' grapevine, in one or more of several different ways.

A frequent clue to miners, who were always on the lookout for bigger and better strikes at new diggings, was the arrival and subsequent quick departure of other prospectors at a supply center. Anyone coming to a place such as

28. The discoveries in 1849 and 1850 have been mentioned above. More detail is known about the Hardy Eliff party, which moved from Yreka to Josephine Creek in Summer, 1851, prospecting throughout the Rogue River Valley along their way. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, p. 395; and Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 162.

29. Also spelled "Cluggage" in many references. However, "Clugage" is the spelling in lawsuits involving him, and in the government records for the period in which he was a county commissioner.

30. Formerly a Yreka prospector according to many of his contemporaries. Some references call him James R. Pool. His last name is frequently spelled "Poole."

31. Anna Guest, "The Historical Development of Southern Oregon" (unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of California, 1929), pp. 95-109 gives an account of the gold discoveries near Jacksonville which suggests that news of the strike was kept secret for a while. It is reasonable to assume that this would have been attempted, but news of a strike as rich as that made by Clugage and Pool was bound to leak out. A letter written later that year by a local merchant says the valley was settled "at telegraph speed," but that, of course, could have referred to events after the news finally did spread. Letter, R. B. Morford to Joseph Lane, April 12, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

Yreka, buying up supplies and mining equipment, and then leaving again rather abruptly, would obviously be suspected of having knowledge of a new strike. Other miners would therefore follow him out of town, tracking him to any new claim he might have staked.³²

In other instances, a prospector might come into town to buy supplies, stay a night to celebrate, and either brandish enough new gold dust to arouse suspicion, or else become drunk and tell everyone the details of his discovery. In either case, he would be very likely to awake the next morning to find that his drinking companions of the night before had departed before him to jump his claim.³³

Mining camps, in other words, were rumor mills, fed by whatever gossip might come their way. Miners were ready to believe almost any story about new diggings, or even about lost or forgotten strikes.³⁴ Information might be brought into town by other prospectors, or by packers, expressmen, or travelers; or it could be inferred from the type of "suspicious" behavior described above.

32. See, for example, Col. E. M. Anthony, "Reminiscences of the Early Days of Siskiyou," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS C-D 205, p. 12 for reference to this occurring in the Yreka area.

33. Francis D. Haines, Jr., Jacksonville: Biography of a Gold Camp (Medford, Oregon: Gandee Printing Center, Inc., 1967), p. 36 mentions that this was the way in which the finder of the Sterling strike missed his chance for a big discovery.

34. The "Lost Cabin" legend circulated in mining camps of Northern California. It usually involved an account of a very rich strike made by a miner (or two or three miners, depending on the version) who struck it rich, and then either died or left the strike without being able to find the way back. Whether there had originally been such a discovery is almost irrelevant; belief in the story caused hundreds of other prospectors to search the mountain areas of Northern California for the lost treasure. One who did later commented, "Different parties would go out on account of different stories locating it first in one place & then in another. How the stories began I do not know. It was just common rumor. I never saw the brothers of the Lost Cabin, & never saw anybody that did." E.L. Bristow, "Recounters With Indians, Highwaymen and Outlaws," Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 7, p. 10-11.

Whatever the source, such news would be sufficient to cause restless miners to pick up their belongings and move on to a new area, in hopes of finding better opportunities.

This is probably what happened after the strike at the location which became known as "Rich Gulch."³⁵ The rapid influx of miners, merchants and other mining camp hangers-on appears to have come at first from other mining areas in Southern Oregon and Northern California.³⁶

Soon the news that had traveled by word of mouth throughout the region was finding its way into the pages of western newspapers.³⁷ Meanwhile, the Rich Gulch strike was the first of many. Following the original discoveries at Rich Gulch and on Jackson Creek, two miles away, came strikes on Applegate Creek, Foote's Creek, and at Willow Springs. The Illinois Valley yielded strikes at Althouse Creek, Sucker Creek and Sailor's Diggings, while in 1854 the area's fortunes, by then sagging a bit, were revived by a new rush at nearby

35. Herman Francis Reinhart's colorful history of the Jacksonville area, perhaps drawing on these other stories, offers this version of the way news of the Jacksonville strike spread. ". . .there had been two or three rich creeks struck at Jackson's Hill or Jackson's Creek on both forks, and there had been some miners with three or four pack animals come to Yreka for provisions and one had paid in very nice coarse gold, some different from the Yreka gold, and when the merchant tried to find out where he got his gold, would not tell. But he got drunk and spent his money so freely and kept saying plenty more where that came from, that some men concluded to watch him and one night he struck out on the sly with his animals loaded with provisions and new tools. The men that had been watching him followed with pack animals, and they had along tools and provisions. . .the same night there were fifty or sixty men all followed right after each other and followed the man that they were after right into his camp and found that two or three others were mining on the sly. They went to work prospecting and found a rich creek and in a short time a thousand miners from California had overrun the whole country." Herman Francis Reinhart, The Golden Frontier: The Recollections of Herman Francis Reinhart 1851-1869, ed. by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), p. 34.

36. Duncan, "Settlement," p. 7; Reinhart, Recollections, p. 34. See also Oregonian, January 17, 1852, p. 2; and Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 339.

37. Alta California, May 1, 1852, p. 2, May 22, 1852, p. 1 and June 7, 1852, p. 2; Oregonian, April 3, 1852, p. 2 and April 17, 1852, p. 2. Gold in Southern

Sterlingville.³⁸ The number of discoveries in both the Rogue and Illinois Valleys was regarded as evidence of the richness of the area's placer deposits and thus a ring of camps and settlements sprang up. At the center of all, acting as the region's supply center and the commercial distribution point, was the town known at first as Table Rock City, and eventually as Jacksonville.³⁹

In its first few months, Jacksonville was a mining camp much like many others throughout the West. Packers and a few merchants moved into the area to supply the miners, and a tent city rose on the site. Gamblers and prostitutes were not far behind, as Jacksonville acquired a reputation as a mildly rowdy town.⁴⁰

The importance of the Jacksonville trade was well appreciated in Scottsburg and in the supply towns of the Willamette Valley. Their cultivation of the Southern Oregon market was a continuation of the thrust of commercial opportunism into the area, and it was a crucial force in helping to break down the new

Oregon, of course, had been discussed earlier: see Oregon Spectator, September 5, 1850, p. 2 and July 19, 1851, p. 2; and Alta California, May 10, 1851, p.2.

38. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 3; Duncan, "Settlement," pp. 9-10.

39. Named after a nearby landmark. Deady, "History," p. 73, says the town was named after a man named Jackson, who used to supply the miners. More recent versions, however, say the town was named from Jackson Creek which, in turn, had received the name from one of the men who discovered gold on its banks. Oregonian, August 1, 1926, Sec. 1, p. 12; and Oregon Journal, February 17, 1952, Sunday Journal Magazine, pp. 4-9. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 3 says the name was changed from Table Rock City to Jacksonville by a vote of the miners' court.

40. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, 360 and 264. For a later period of the town's history see S. H. Taylor, "Documentary Letters of S. H. Taylor to the Watertown (Wisconsin) Chronicle. Oregon Bound, 1853." Oregon Historical Quarterly, XXII (June, 1921), 157. Writing in December, 1853, Taylor comments "The most flourishing branches of business are those of the bowling saloon, the gambling den and the drunkery -- and yet there is less of gambling and drinking in the place than you would expect to see."

community's commercial isolation. Within a short time, however, the impact of internal commercial forces would also begin to be felt, as Jacksonville's economy expanded outward.

In the first few months, at least one dimension of isolation in the Rogue River Valley had become less severe. The residents of the earliest permanent settlements had been widely separated from each other, and news was carried between them by travelers, packers, and by the settlers themselves, as they traveled in the valley. They were cut off even more from residents in other regions. After the gold discovery, news continued to be carried by immigrants, packers, expressmen and other transients, but the isolation of the Rogue River Valley had become primarily an isolation from other areas; the population within the valley was now large enough to reduce feelings of estrangement among miners and settlers who lived there. Another benefit of this, of which the local citizens were well aware, was that there were now enough white settlers in the Rogue River Valley to provide a fighting force in times of Indian attack.⁴¹ As the area appeared more safe, it was suitable for settlement by families. The way was thus cleared for the extension of the farmer's frontier into the area, to mingle with the people and institutions of the mining frontier which were already there.

Population showed a dramatic increase, as would be expected. In March, 1852 there were over 100 miners in the area,⁴² increasing to over 1000 later in

41. Cardwell, "Emigrant Company," p. 15: "A few days there was plenty of men in the valley for any Emergencies that might take place." The Indians also seemed to realize the hopelessness of the situation after they were outnumbered: Thomas Smith, "Account," p. 26.

42. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 338 says there were 100-150 at that early day, while Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest estimates 500 by February. Dunchan, "Settlement," p. 7 says "several hundred" by March.

the spring,⁴³ and numbering between 1000 and 1500 by summer.⁴⁴ Stores and other businesses established in town began to be housed in sturdier structures, and Jacksonville took on a more permanent appearance.⁴⁵

At first, Jacksonville catered quite naturally to the mining interests of the area. The first store, opened in a tent that February by two Yreka packers, carried mining tools, clothing, boots, tobacco and whiskey.⁴⁶ Other trade followed, with much of the merchandising being done by individual packers who carried supplies from Yreka, Scottsburg and the Willamette Valley.

What kind of town was Jacksonville? The question was asked in newspapers throughout Oregon and the West, as the new community's prospects for the future were regarded with interest, if not always with optimism. When Oregon's postmaster Nathaniel Coe traveled through the area that first summer, for example, he wrote a letter to the Oregonian giving his impression of "Table Rock Village"

43. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 1. Letter, J. W. Drew to Joseph Lane, May 1, 1852; Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection, says several hundred were at Willow Springs by then, and over a hundred on the river.

44. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 338.

45. The first log cabin, built at the head of the town's only street by W. W. Fowler, was constructed in March. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 360. Taylor, "Oregon Bound," p. 157 made the clapboard houses that replaced the tents seem less than homey: "The mass of men 'keep batch' -- the merchants in their stores, and mechanics in their shops -- even the Justice of the Peace, with several miners, cooks, eats and sleeps in 'the office,' a circular mosque-like building, made of 'shakes,' I believe without a board or pane of glass about it. The houses, except one, the Robinson House, are all made of these things, and are generally lighted by the crevices or windows of cotton cloth."

46. Appler and Kenny's trading post, set up in a tent, was the first of several such tent businesses. (Lumber reportedly cost \$250 per thousand feet, although it could be bought in smaller quantities up the valley.) Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 360. The first brick stores (Maury and Davis' general store, and the Brunner Brothers' merchandise store) were built in 1854.

to the paper's readers:

It is composed of tents, sheds, shanties, and frail houses of split timber. One respectable two story house was being constructed. . . the village has a population of about 150. This mining district, within a distance of five miles, is estimated to have a population of 1500 or 2000 men. A few of the gold claims are rich and pay well. I do not think there are generally so. How long profitable is to continue, can only be matter of opinion.⁴⁷

Newspapers continued to report developments in the area, but they cautioned against too much belief in its gold deposits. They conceded, perhaps grudgingly, that the Rogue River mines, to that point, were producing well.⁴⁸ They needn't have been so pessimistic. Although Jacksonville, as the center of a mining region, was still dependent on that one industry, there were increasing numbers of farmers and other settlers moving to the area, giving hope that the community might be able to become self-sufficient agriculturally, and might also be able to develop other industries as well. The large numbers of miners had a dual significance for these new settlers and their families: they provided a fighting force against possible Indian attacks, as mentioned above, and they were also a market for the production of farms and local industries. The Rogue River Valley had the potential for a stable, diversified economy.

The question of greatest interest to this dissertation, however, goes beyond inquiry into the kind of town which Jacksonville was, or gave evidence of becoming: what kinds of isolation were still most severe, even after the town had been established and had begun to exhibit some signs of stability and permanence? How capable was the community of mobilizing to overcome those forms of isolation?

47. Oregonian, July 3, 1852, p. 3.

48. Oregonian, April 17, 1852, p. 2, May 15, 1852, p. 2, and July 31, 1852, p. 2.

By the summer of 1852, as mentioned above, at least one type of isolation had diminished, since there were now greater opportunities for social interaction within the valley. The problem of isolation from persons and agencies outside the valley remained severe, however, as did the commercial isolation which grew out of the community's dependence on other areas for supplies, as well as for postal and banking services. Meanwhile, there was political isolation as well. Although government had been formally extended to the Jacksonville area when the Oregon territorial legislature created Jackson County in January, 1852,⁴⁹ the agencies of that government were yet to be established in the area. The people of the area had to rely on other institutions and traditions to establish order and maintain law during the community's first year.

Jacksonville and the settlements of the Rogue River Valley thus continued to be plagued by commercial, social-psychological and political isolation. They were similar to the earlier Willamette settlements in the forms of estrangement with which they were afflicted, but they suffered from a different type of physical isolation, which was critical in the later development of the town. The early Willamette colony, it will be recalled, was geographically separated from other areas, but it was also blessed with natural transport routes which provided the eventual means by which that geographical isolation could be overcome. The Columbia and Willamette Rivers were navigable, in some areas even by steamboats, and there were other waterways which could be used to reach more outlying settlements. Meanwhile, the topography of the area was such that overland trails and wagon roads could be laid out, connecting the settlements of the region.

49. Local Laws, 1851-1852, 19-20.

Jacksonville and the Rogue River Valley were not similarly blessed. The rivers of Southern Oregon, particularly the Rogue River, were not navigable because of falls and rapids. Meanwhile, the mountainous terrain made difficult the construction of wagon roads, and necessitated the area's dependence on pack mule transport. The community of Jacksonville was thus confined by the limitations of its transportation facilities within a kind of geographical isolation which had not existed in the earlier Willamette settlements. That geographical separation made its other forms of isolation more difficult to overcome, and prevented Jacksonville from enjoying the growth and development which would eventually come to the Willamette towns. For a time, however, Jacksonville⁵⁰ rivaled them in importance.

At first, Jacksonville was solely a mining and trading center. Those few farmers who settled in the area had to accommodate themselves to the mining camp traditions and activities with which the miners ordered their lives. In June, 1852, a preacher passing through the area commented on life there:

The place is considered very wicked; horse racing, gambling, law-suits, trading, and the like, on the Sabbath. Notwithstanding all this recklessness, the merchants and proprietors kindly offered me their houses for religious worship on the Sabbath last. The appointment was made at the store of Mr. Fowle at 2 o'clock P.M., to avoid the bustle of horse racing, which generally occupied the forenoon.⁵¹

Prospectors and miners worked their claims during the week, saving the weekend for their trips to town. Thus, Saturday and Sunday were traditionally

50. Merriam, "Historical Geography," p. 320 says by 1855 it was the territory's foremost county, in both population and wealth.

51. Oregonian, June 5, 1852, p. 1.

the days on which miners converged on the supply center for the camps to gamble, watch horse races, drink, and engage in whatever form of revelry they preferred. The weekend was also the time when needed supplies were purchased. This period of each week, therefore, represented the primary occasion for the exchange of information and gossip.

In an area in which not all diggings were rich, and where even the best strikes could not be worked in the dry summer months, there were only a few who accumulated fortunes. Among these were the original discoverers of gold. Clugage, Pool, James Skinner and a man named Wilson reputedly filed joint claims on 400 feet of Rich Gulch immediately after their gold strike there,⁵² and Clugage and Pool also formed a loose partnership in a donation claim on land which became the town site of Jacksonville. Other miners did not honor the land claim, however, and continued to mine there, so Clugage and Pool did not press the matter at that time.⁵³ Instead, Clugage donated various lots to local civic and religious organizations.⁵⁴

Some miners who failed to prosper moved on to other areas, particularly later in the 1850's. A number of them stayed on, however, to become substantial citizens in Jacksonville or in other towns of the area. Among these were several who turned to packing or running small express companies. Both of these

52. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 359. Clugage reported he had two partners. See Alta California, May 22, 1852, p. 1.

53. Clugage did try to press his claim to the town site a few years later. Material relating to the dispute, involving correspondence with the land office commissioner, is in B.F. Dowell, Correspondence and Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 134, pp. 136-145.

54. Clugage donated land for the Methodist and Catholic churches, as well as the block for county buildings on which now stands the Jacksonville Museum.

commercial alternatives to mining were attuned to crucial survival needs of the community -- the need for supplies and for commercial intercourse with other regions. Packing and expressing were the first significant information distributors in the area, other than inter-personal communication channels. At the same time, they represented the thrusts of commercialism into the community, and of economic expansion outward. These two kinds of enterprise, moreover, were among the few which were not adversely affected by limitations in the region's transportation network.

On the contrary, the fact that roads in the Rogue River Valley were so poor that few wagons could get through was a boon to local packing and expressing operations, since they created the conditions which made the two businesses necessary. Anyone with a mule or two could turn a profit even on small shipments of supplies brought in from other areas. Prices were high,⁵⁵ and the valley's farmers were hampered by a drought. Thus the services of packers and expressmen were even more necessary after the summer. They supplied all commodities to the community, but most important, they supplied the staples -- food products and mining equipment.⁵⁶

55. It was a notoriously expensive place in which to live. Oregonian, June 5, 1852, p. 1; U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Surveyor General of Oregon, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 92, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1851, p. 200; and Alta California September 29, 1852, Supplemental, p. 1: "Milk is sold at 25 cents per quart; beef 10 to 15 cents per pound; Flour 20 to 25 cents per pound; Blankets \$10 to \$15 per pair; Molasses \$4 per gallon; Sugar 40 cents per pound; Cotton Cloth 30 cents per pound. At retail, Bacon sells at from 60 to 75 cents per pound; Butter \$1 to \$1.25; Salt 20 to 30 cents per pound. Horses are cheap, and kept on ranches at 50 to 75 cents per week."

The miners' usual fare, at their camps, was meager. Many lived on a standard diet of flapjacks, beans and squirrels, fish, and sometimes venison. William Day Ewing, Autobiographical Statement, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS CR EW56.

56. Dowell, Autobiography in Correspondence and Papers, MS P-A 139, n.p. says he carried flour, sugar, coffee, salt, eggs, butter and tobacco. Frazer, "Reminiscences," p. 40 says "our goods were mostly groceries & articles adapted to mining camps. We rented one side of the store to a Jew who had quite a stock of dry goods. This gave customers quite a variety."

As long as the region's limited transportation routes remained open, the community of Jacksonville could be adequately, though not luxuriously supplied. The community operated at a subsistence level in 1852, however, because the scorching summer and fall of that first year restricted agricultural production, and put limits on the amount of gold dust that could be mined and used as currency. To this point, the area's commercial and physical isolation were decided inconveniences, not unlike those experienced in other regions of the West. The dependence on the narrow pack trails in the mountains, however, was ominous.

During the winter of 1852, snow blocked those roads, and abruptly returned Jacksonville and the surrounding camps and settlements to the kind of total isolation from which the region had only recently begun to emerge. It produced a real crisis of survival for the young community, which was intensified because there was no alternative means of transportation to which its citizens could turn. The isolation increased the already-high prices of staples,⁵⁷ and some residents subsisted only on unsalted beef and game.⁵⁸

In the midst of the shortage, there were attempts at speculation in foodstuffs, but on at least one occasion the people acted to control it. Once, when a supplier reached Jacksonville with a 250 pound supply of salt, he was met outside town by one of the local merchants, who bought the entire shipment for \$8 a pound, thus putting himself in a position to control the market in salt. The miners and other citizens of the town convened in a session of the "people's court" and passed a resolution regulating the price of salt, charging merchants

57. Flour up to \$1 or more a pound, salt at \$16 a pound, tobacco \$1 an ounce. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 361; Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 166; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 407. Ward Bradford, Biographical Sketches of the Life of Major Ward Bradford, Old Pioneer, as Related by the Author (By the Author, 1893), pp. 40-41; salt, butter, sugar and tobacco \$5 a pound, flour and potatoes \$1 a pound.

58. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 361.

to sell no more than one ounce to a person, at a price of no more than \$16 a pound. Men reportedly picked up their rations of salt at the post office.⁵⁹

Other difficulties were reported later that winter,⁶⁰ adding to the dismal conditions. Eventually, some enterprising packers managed to break through the snow, which reached depths of three feet on the trails, by coming over the Siskiyou on snowshoes. Others brought shipments on mules from the north. The first packers who came through profited handsomely, but with a sufficiency of supplies, prices dropped to normal levels.⁶¹ By spring, prosperity and provisions alike were again in abundance.⁶²

The winter supply shortage underlined the potentially critical relationship between the valley's physical isolation, and the survival of both citizens and communities there. The winter of 1852 was the first of several early episodes which pointed to the need for maintaining open transportation routes, a concern that was to remain critical for several years.

59. They picked it up at the post office because they paid for it in gold dust, and the scales were at the post office. Cole, Early Oregon, p. 47. Frazer, "Reminiscences," p. 44 says his partner, David Birdseye, told him that some flour had been kept hidden during the crisis.

60. Reinhart says flour sold for \$1 and \$1.50 that winter, potatoes \$.80 or \$1 a pound. Since there was no salt, Appler and Kenny melted down salted butter and sold the salt for \$3 an ounce. The hotel sold meals for \$1.50 to \$2.00, using a club to turn away people who couldn't pay. Many ate adequately only once or twice a week. Reinhart, Recollections, p. 58.

61. Frazer, "Reminiscences," p. 49 says he sold flour for 60 cents a pound, tobacco for \$5 a pound, salt in five-pound boxes at \$2.50 and ". . .everything else in proportion as the town was about dreened of everything. . ."

Dowell, however, sold his supplies at Yreka because someone else had broken through to Jacksonville before he did, and prices were down to 75 cents a pound for flour. Dowell, Autobiography, n.p.

62. Oregonian, February 19, 1852, p. 3: Cram, Rogers' agent, Hereford, wrote that prices were low because provisions were plenty. Flour was 50 cents a pound, sugar 45 cents, coffee 75 cents, and beef 25 cents.

Another series of crises emphasized other aspects of danger in the area's isolation, and yet, at the same time, provided opportunities for the growth of cooperative action among individual citizens and among agencies of government. The Indian wars of 1853, 1855 and 1856 intensified and made necessary both the means and the expression of interdependence among those living in and near Jacksonville. This was an important development both for communications in the community, and for community action-taking.

Histories and reminiscences of the mid-1850's are filled with charges and counter-charges about the origin of animosities between Indians and whites in the Rogue River Valley, as well as about the instigators of specific episodes of violence. The wars, however, were a culmination of a long-simmering period of hostility between the two races. In the period before extensive white settlement of the valley, the Rogue and Shasta Indians had been known for blocking white travel through their lands. Immigrants and travelers passing through the area on their way to the Willamette Valley, or in expeditions between Oregon and California, had on several occasions been attacked by hostile Indians.⁶³ Such depredations continued and heightened with the gold rush traffic after 1848. The Indians were intent on keeping whites from encroaching on their territory.⁶⁴

An early war with the Indians in 1851, in which settlers in Southern Oregon had petitioned General Phil Kearney for protection, had set the stage.⁶⁵

63. Jedediah Smith's expedition is the obvious early example. In the era closer to the founding of Jacksonville, other episodes were reported. See U.S. Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of War: Military and Indian Affairs in Oregon, House Exec. Doc. No. 2, 32nd Cong. 1st Sess., 1851, pp. 144-153.

64. Smith, "Account," p. 26.

65. Beckham, Requiem for a People, pp. 50-51; and Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 382-388.

Kearney and his troops were assisted by local volunteers.⁶⁶ After a period of sporadic hostilities, the Indians accepted a treaty negotiated by Governor Gaines in the summer of 1851, in which they agreed to stop harassing travelers, and both sides promised to return stolen property.⁶⁷ It was this agreement which resulted in the appointment of A. A. Skinner to live as Indian agent in the Rogue River Valley.

The war in 1853 began after several Indians, including an old chief named "Taylor", were hanged in retaliation for the alleged murder of seven white men. Later events made matters worse. Indians killed three whites in individual attacks, for which the whites hanged three Indians, one a small boy. A party of whites also raided an Indian camp, killing six women and children.⁶⁸

As soon as the war was underway in August, calls went out from Jacksonville, not only to the territorial government, asking for military support,⁶⁹ but also to neighboring communities.⁷⁰ Volunteer and regular army troops combined forces

66. Letters to the Oregonian in this period indicate the volunteers were not particularly helpful. See especially August 2, 1851, p. 2.

67. Beckham, Requiem for a People, p. 52.

68. Most helpful sources for this discussion of the Indian wars were all of Beckham, Requiem for a People; Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, 311-321, 342- and 369-399; Carey, General History, II, 556-623; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 381-44 passim; and Haines, Jacksonville, pp. 22-26. For valuable reminiscences, see Hutchings, Diary, p. 18ff; Ewing, Autobiographical Statement; Thomas Smith, "Account"; J. A. Cardwell, "Emigrant Company;" Daniel Giles, Autobiography, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS CB G 391; and Letter, B. F. Dowell to Mrs. F. F. Victor, September 25, 1877, Bancroft Library, University of California, MS P-A 133.

69. A letter from the County Commissioners, acting as a Committee of Safety, was delivered to the governor. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 411-412.

70. Yreka's Ft. Jones was petitioned for assistance. The captain in charge described his response in U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Secretary of War, Accompanying Documents, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853, pp. 40-42.

in a series of skirmishes, bringing the Indians to the treaty table by September. Under the terms of this agreement, Indians were allowed to remain in the valley, but ceded much of their independence. Land for a reservation was set aside, an army fort established, and Indians surrendered title to their land in return for a few gifts and a grant of money.⁷¹

The period between 1853 and 1855 was one of relative peace, although attacks by eastern Indians along the immigrant trail in 1854 prompted the formation of volunteer relief expeditions, and increased feelings of resentment and hostility among whites.⁷² Tension in the valley continued to increase. Many of the white settlers were convinced that peace would not be complete until all of the Indians were removed from the area. Meanwhile, the proud Indians were ready to resist, already chafing under their confinement on the reservations.

In October, 1855, the final series of battles began. Once again, it appeared that the whites may have brought on the war, although there had been Indian depredations as well. A raid led by James Lupton on a nearby Indian camp resulted in the death of 23 Indians -- most of them old men, women and children -- and brought brutal retaliations by the Indians a few days later. Eighteen persons were killed, as the Indians terrorized settlers living along the river near the present site of Grant's Pass.

Again, calls went out to other areas. The response was quick, since 1855 was a year of Indian battles throughout the Pacific Northwest, and there were

71. Beckham, Requiem for a People, p. 124; Carey, General History, p. 563; Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, p. 318.

72. The Walker expedition was controversial because it was felt the volunteers overcharged for supplies. Dowell was one of the packers, and thus includes in his collection of papers a rather large selection of material about the expedition. Dowell, Correspondence and Papers, P-A 133.

widespread suspicions among the whites that the Indians were planning a war of extermination against them.⁷³ It was clear that the relatively mild policy of Indian Superintendent Joel Palmer, and the unsympathetic attitude of General John Wool toward volunteer forces, did not reflect the opinions of the majority of those threatened by the Indians. More in tune with local sentiment were volunteer leaders who believed in the need for a complete defeat of the Indians.

The war begun in October, 1855 wore on through the winter. The Indians' proud Chief John must have known the significance of this war: despite pleas from some of his tribesmen to end the war earlier, he resisted until all was truly hopeless. Thus the war did not end until June, 1856.

In a treaty negotiated that month, final arrangements were made for the removal of all Indians from the southern valleys to reservations in the north.⁷⁴ With their removal, Jacksonville and the other settlements in the Rogue River Valley were freed at last from the fear of Indian attack.

There may have been other benefits as well for white settlers, as a result of the Indian wars. Scrip placed in circulation as currency may have helped the area's economy,⁷⁵ and roads built to carry supplies to military forces in the area did improve transportation routes in Southern Oregon. On the whole, however, the wars were more of an impediment to progress. They drained away the energy of citizens in the Rogue River Valley at a time when its potential

73. See, for example, Letter, A. M. Rosborough to C. S. Drew, November 23, 1857, in Cayuse, Yakima and Rogue River War Papers, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS Bx 47.

74. Beckham, Requiem for a People, pp. 188-191.

75. Deady, "History," pp. 35-36. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 344 says the wars enabled the area to become more self-sufficient.

for growth was perhaps greatest, and may also have discouraged many other settlers from coming and contributing their energy and efforts to the valley's growth.⁷⁶

From the standpoint of communication, however, one major development occurred in the Indian war period. The need to unify for protection increased settlers' awareness of their dependence on each other. The communications network which resulted, using interpersonal channels as well as certain other informal means of distributing information, was effective in mobilizing settlers for defense. It also kept citizens informed of each other's needs and activities. The importance of this network is discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI.

The Indian wars and the supply shortages were crises which threatened the actual physical survival of Jacksonville and its citizens. They were, moreover, crises which were intensified by difficulties of communication and of transportation in the area. Meanwhile, the community was experiencing another kind of crisis -- perhaps more appropriately identified as a "stress" -- which threatened the community's survival as a political or governmental entity, even though it did not threaten the community's actual physical endurance. This occurred when the regular forms of government were slow in coming to Jacksonville, resulting in the need for citizens to provide their own institutions to take care of local legal and judicial matters. The government "crisis" was not particularly intensified by the limitations of the area's transportation system, and thus it was one with which citizens, by relying on other traditions and on their own ingenuity, were capable of coping effectively by themselves. In the other forms of isolation -- physical, commercial and social -- they were forced

76. Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 189.

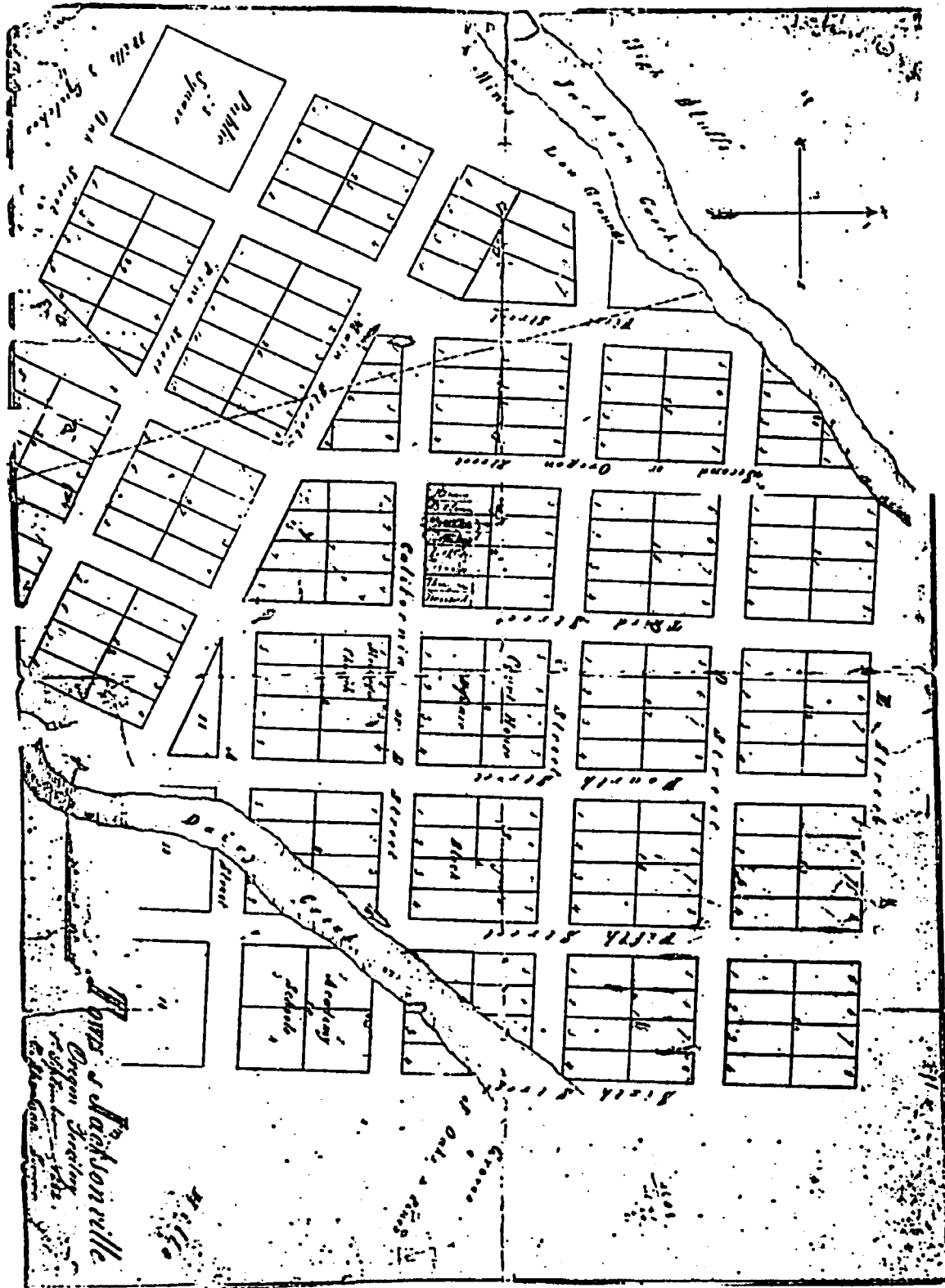
to look outward, to establish links with other areas, but governmentally, they could look inward to solve their problem of political isolation.

Their link to political forms in other areas was one of tradition. The system used in Jacksonville during its first year was based on procedure for the holding and recording of claims, and for adjudicating disputed matters, which had been developed in the mining camps in California. At first, miners gathered together in special sessions called "miners' courts" to act on matters of importance. Soon they delegated authority to an official, called an "alcalde," after the Spanish title used in California. The alcalde was essentially a powerful justice of the peace.

The popularly elected alcaldes, assisted at times by the miners' court -- a mining town's equivalent of a New England town meeting -- were the means by which law and order were maintained during that first year in Jacksonville. The ad hoc government worked well, for the most part, although there were instances in which emotion ruled instead of reason.⁷⁷

In March, 1853, the institutions which the territory had provided began at last to operate in Jacksonville, and thus the alcalde system was replaced by more formal agencies of government. In the same way that the provisional government had served the Oregon colony before territorial status was achieved, the alcalde system served the community of Jacksonville. It kept order and provided the means of regulating conduct and arbitrating disputes, all crucial concerns in a mining area, where stability and the absence of conflict were important achievements. The debt owed to the early alcaldes was acknowledged when,

77. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 363; and Dowell, "Oregon Indian Wars," in Correspondence and Papers, P-A 137 and 138, both describing the hanging of Indian children during the war period.



MAP II (Facing)

Plat of the Town of Jacksonville"

September 1, 1852

Prepared by G. Sherman, Surveyor

COURTESY, OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

in 1854, the territorial legislature recognized as binding all of their decisions and actions.⁷⁸

A brief review of developments in the town's first four years indicates that Jacksonville was gradually attaining permanence and stability. In 1852, for example, tents gave way to clapboard and log houses. A partial survey of the town was made that summer, and major streets were laid out.⁷⁹ Jacksonville was becoming more than a temporary camp. By the end of 1852, much of the land throughout the valley had been taken in land claims, or was being mined. Meanwhile, gold production in 1852 and 1853 may have been as much as one million dollars annually,⁸⁰ much of which found its way into the coffers of merchants in the supply centers of Scottsburg and the towns of the Willamette Valley. The town was spreading its prosperity throughout the Oregon Territory.

In 1853 and 1854, probably Jacksonville's peak years as a mining center, farmers began to become an important force in the valley, and the area's agriculture began to supply some of the needs of the home market. A migration of families, including a large representation of Methodists from the middle and

78. Oregon, Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, Oregon Historical Society Archives, Portland, Oregon, No. 5962.

79. Henry Klippel and an associate named Smith laid out Oregon and California streets that summer, adding to Main, the town's first street. According to the papers relating to the suit involving Clugage's claim to the town, "on or about" February 23, 1852, the town of Table Rock City was laid out, and a plat made by Samuel Smith. Later, in September, a plat of Jacksonville was made by G. Sherman, and included in the commissioners' journal in 1855. In Dowell, Correspondence and Papers, MS P-A 134, pp. 136-145.

80. Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 168. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 342 estimates about \$3 million a year produced in this era.

western states, settled near Bear Creek and Ashland.⁸¹ Division of the population into two different classes -- the more stable settlers and their families, as distinct from the more transient, reckless miners -- became more noticeable. The influences of farmers and other permanent settlers began to rise, while that of the latter was probably on the decline. Meanwhile, good wheat crops in 1853 and 1854 benefited both the farmers and the miners, by helping to ease the valley's supply problems.

Wheat production, and the local raising of vegetables and livestock, helped the Rogue River Valley settlements become less dependent on other regions for staples. The trade with outside areas was still important, however. In 1853, that trade began to shift from Scottsburg to Crescent City, a new town on the northern coast of California which served Yreka as well as the Rogue and Illinois Valley towns. Crescent City merchants, aware of the importance of transportation routes to their own prosperity, were more aggressive in promoting the improvement of the area's roads and trails and thus they sponsored the building of a wagon road between Crescent City and Southern Oregon. Fund-raising problems brought a four-year delay in completion of the project, but it was an important indicator of public awareness, both in Crescent City and in Southern Oregon, of the need for road improvements.

During this period, the direction of Jacksonville's future became more apparent, and efforts to establish transportation and communication links to the outside -- whether in the form of roads, government structures, or commercial connections -- took on a new meaning. Earlier efforts to overcome the

81. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 363; and Farnham, "Development," pp. 31-33. Several excellent descriptions of Jacksonville in this era are available. See, for example, Hutchings, Diary, pp. 34-35; Taylor, "Oregon Bound," pp. 149-159; and Orson A. Stearns, "Reminiscences," University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS CB St 31, pp. 1-23.

varieties of isolation in the area had resulted primarily from the press of simple survival demands. By 1854, however, political and economic factors had added new dimensions to the need for overcoming isolation. Now Jacksonville and its surrounding community were looking outward to expand, rather than to secure, their own interests. The community was the center of trade and distribution for Southern Oregon, a commercial center of great importance both to Oregon and to Northern California. Its gold production, which remained high, particularly after the Sterlingville boom in 1854, was an important source of currency. At the same time, agriculture and other industries began to develop,⁸² giving it the beginnings of a diversified economy. These commercial developments were accompanied by the appearance of social improvements and refinements in the community: the Methodist migration of 1853 resulted in the building and dedication of a Methodist church in 1854, and in that same year, the region's first public school was established.⁸³

In 1854, Jacksonville was an infant in terms of some of its conditions of development, but it was becoming sufficiently established to be considered more than just a mining town or a mining trade center. It had broadened its social and economic base, and was on the way to become a much more self-sufficient community.

82. Flour mills were built near Ashland in 1854, and saw mills had been in the valley at least as early as 1853. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 342; and Taylor, "Oregon Bound," p. 157.

83. The Reverent Joseph Smith, with the help of a Miss M.E.F. Royal and a Miss Overbeck reportedly circulated among the miners, taking up a collection for the church. The Reverent T.S. Royal dedicated the new church in January, 1854, and it served as the home for the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations. The Catholic church was not built until 1860, although masses were held in the community as early as 1853. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 367 and 171. Other churches were extending their influence to the area. See Ezra Fisher, "Correspondence of Reverend Ezra Fisher," ed. by Sarah Fisher Henderson, Nellie Edith Latourette, and Kenneth Scott Latourette, Oregon Historical Quarterly, XIX (September, 1918), 241-245.

Complete self-sufficiency would not come immediately, however, nor would the community be able actively to cultivate the development of the new industries in its midst until the Indian wars ended in 1856. At this juncture, however, a significant communications development occurred with the founding of the Table Rock Sentinel, first newspaper in the valley.⁸⁴ From that point on, many of the area's communications services were channeled through that publication and its successors.

In a sense, the coming of the newspaper institutionalized many information functions which had been performed by other channels and agencies in early years: business news, political information, gossip and social items were now reported in the pages of the Sentinel, whereas before they had been transmitted only through interpersonal channels, or through other distributing and processing mechanisms.

Jacksonville still remained relatively isolated,⁸⁵ but the beginning of publication of a newspaper at this time was significant for the introduction of a new means by which the community could cope with that isolation. In 1855, however, the area was nearing the end of the Indian threat which, to that time, had been a major concern of settlers. At the same time, whether valley residents realized it or not, the peak of the town's existence as a mining area had passed; its future would rely on other industries. The environment of the new local newspaper was thus different from that which had surrounded the communications channels and agencies of the community's first three and a half years.

84. Founded November 24, 1855 by William G. T'Vault, and his partners, Alexander Blakeley and a Mr. Taylor.

85. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, pp. 346-34 . It was particularly isolated from news of the outside world.

Those "non-media" channels were perhaps more appropriate to those early years of the town's development. They were certainly shaped by, as much as they responded to, the early forms of isolation into which the community of Jacksonville was born. The categories of communications channels and agencies which existed during that era, and the kinds of problems with which they were faced, are the topics to be considered in Part II.

PART II

**THE STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION
IN THE VALLEY**

Chapter III

The Network of Roads in the Valley

In December, 1851 the Oregon legislature sent a memorial to the United States Congress asking appropriations for, among other things, a military road from Puget Sound to the southern border of Oregon Territory. Such a road was needed, the memorial stated, because the geography of Oregon isolated its citizens from military protection and made them feel insecure. Of those geographical barriers, the memorialists said

The surf of the Pacific is lashed in one unbroken line against the base of the Coast range of mountains, while they shut in the Eden of Oregon, and present one dark outline of unbroken and impassable barrier on the west, creating a solitude which is felt, but which cannot be expressed.¹

Their reference to the "solitude which is felt but which cannot be expressed" may have been the kind of hyperbole which often crept into such memorials, but it also pointed to a fundamental characteristic of life on the Oregon frontier. Solitude and isolation were common concerns of settlers and local politicians, and provided the impetus for much of the political activity of the period.²

The geographical isolation of Oregon, especially in the hinterland, continued in the 1840's and 1850's largely because of inadequate transportation routes. However, efforts to cope with the problem had begun in the era of the provisional government, when Oregon's citizens, through their government,

1. Quoted in Oregonian, December 27, 1851, p. 1.

2. Winther, "Place of Transportation," p. 384 estimates that from six to seven hundred documents, including bills, amendments to bills, legislative enactments and petitions relating to roads are in the provisional government's records.

through private corporations, and through individual enterprises had sought to facilitate travel and transport both within Oregon, and to regions outside its boundaries. Their concern resulted in expeditions to find a safer overland passage for migration into the Willamette Valley, in the enactment of road laws and the creation of road districts, and in a continuing series of resolutions and memorials to Congress, seeking federal assistance to internal improvements in Oregon.³ These activities provided both precedent and procedures for later road-building and road-improvement projects in areas such as Southern Oregon.

The Willamette settlements were able to make use of waterways to supplement the road network which served the area.⁴ Other problems arose, however, from the difficulties of establishing links with the United States and with other territories, and of reaching outlying areas in Oregon to which population was slowly spreading.

Unfortunately, many of those outlying areas were not similarly blessed with waterways which could be used for communication and transportation. The Rogue River Valley, for example, lay in an area bounded by mountains,⁵ and drained by a river system which was not navigable by steamboats or other large

3. For the kind of argument usually advanced, see Governor Gaines' message of December 2, 1850, in which he stresses the importance of establishing roads to connect the different sections of the territory. "The want of proper means of conveying intelligence through the Territory, and of transporting the products of the soil to the market, has been severely felt. . ." Quoted in the Oregonian, December 4, 1850, p. 2.

4. Discussed above, pp. 29-30. See also Mills, "History of Transportation," pp. 282-282; and Oscar Osburn Winther, "Commercial Routes from 1792 to 1843 by Sea and Overland," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XLII (September, 1941), 243 which notes that everyday business relied more on the use of streams than on the area's roads.

5. The Siskiyou to the south, Cascades to the east, Umpquas to the north, and coastal hills to the west. Geography proved a barrier for some time. See U.S. Congress, House, Topographical Memoir to the Department of the Pacific, House, Exec. Doc. No. 114, 35th Cong. 2nd Sess., 1858.

vessels. Transportation there was thus restricted to the use of overland routes which, for many years, were little more than pack trails.

The communications significance of this is obvious: this was an era, and an area, in which roads were the major local "medium of communication" -- the means by which information flowed to and from the community of Jacksonville. Messages and news of all types were transmitted or delivered by being carried over the local transportation arteries. Limitations on the adequacy of those transport routes thus also implied limitations on their adequacy as a communications medium. In other words, because those roads were usually passable only by packers, expressmen, and other travelers on horseback, or on foot, there were also limits on the amount of information which could be brought into the community. Because the trails could be blocked by snowstorms, rain, or other radical changes in the weather, there were also effects on the reliability and the frequency with which messages arrived. And because many of the individuals carrying news or information did so as an adjunct to other services which they may have been expected to perform in the community there was an accompanying impact on the form in which that information arrived: under those conditions, news often became personalized, delivered either as part of, or accompanied by, informal conversation or gossip.

All of these appeared to be true of communication in the Rogue River Valley in the early 1850's because of the inadequacy of the area's roads. Deficiencies of that transportation network were not, however, the result of indifference or inaction on the part of local citizens, or of other settlers in Oregon. In fact, efforts to improve transportation in that portion of Oregon had begun even before Jacksonville was founded.

Road-building and road-improvement activities in the Rogue River Valley began with a series of projects motivated by the spirits of commercial

opportunism and of exploration which pervaded the late 1840's and early 1850's. Commerce, for example, led to the blazing of the north-south trail, the first to penetrate the Rogue River Valley. It was originally a trader's route followed by Hudson's Bay Company brigades, and by various tradesmen among the American settlers of the Willamette colony.⁶ The road used by these expeditions wandered out of the Willamette Valley, through the Umpqua Valley, and from there, passed through a steep canyon in the Umpqua Mountains, into the Rogue River Valley. Passage to California was over the Siskiyou mountains on the Oregon-California border, a barrier which made the road appear impractical for large-scale trade until several years later. The north-south trail was not traveled much in that early period, except by the occasional exploring and trading expeditions, and hardly at all by parties of settlers.⁷

Greater use of this trail followed the building of a southern route for immigration into Oregon. The South Road, following the Old California trail

6. Winther, "Commercial Routes," pp. 230-246. The original impetus for establishing the trade road came after Jedediah Smith's expedition in 1828. Smith had been hostilely received in Spanish California, and then his expedition was met with Indian attack in Oregon. He and three of his companions were the only ones to escape alive. Shortly after that disaster, Alexander McLeod of the Hudson's Bay Company re-established a road for trade to California, which was used by the fur company's brigades in the 1830's. Winther, Old Oregon Country, p. 50; and Stone, "Southern Route," p. 137.

American tradesmen using the road were Ewing Young and Hall J. Kelley, driving horses from the Sacramento Valley to Oregon in 1834. The Willamette Cattle Company drive in 1837 was a similar venture.

The north-south trail was also known as "the big road," the "California route," or the "great road," and, in more recent years, as the "Oregon-California trail." Verne Bright, "The Lost County, Umpqua, Oregon and It's (sic) Early Settlements," Oregon Historical Quarterly, LI (June, 1950), 122; and Robert C. Clark, History of the Willamette Valley Oregon (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1927), p. 368.

7. A notable exception was the Lansford Hastings company in 1843, a party of 53 men, women and children led by Hastings from the Willamette Valley to the Sacramento Valley in California. Winther, "Commercial Routes," p. 242. The route itself was long regarded as impractical because of its passage over the Siskiyou, see Merriam, "Notes," p. 317.

through the Umpqua and Rogue River Valleys, and leaving it to turn eastward through the Klamath country, was constructed as an alternative to earlier immigrant routes. Interest in the project was high for several reasons. Among them was undoubtedly the need for finding a safer means of passage for settlers interested in coming to Oregon, but at the same time there may also have been commercial motivations as well. The South Road provided easier access to valleys whose fertility was known or suspected,⁸ and once a better way of reaching those valleys was provided, the real estate values there were bound to rise. (The two leaders of the South Road expedition, Levi Scott and Jesse Applegate, settled in Southern Oregon after they finished building the road.) Success of the route was assured after improvements were ordered by the territorial legislature in 1847.⁹

Travel over both the north-south trail and the South Road increased in the late 1840's. After 1848, the California trail became the major overland route to the California gold fields¹⁰ despite the fact that, during this era, it was a rather poor road. The Southern Road, meanwhile, became the favorite route for migration into Oregon.¹¹ Perhaps more than any other single factor, it was the increased traffic over these two roads which helped make known the southern valleys of Oregon to future settlers. Although the rush to establish

8. The Oregon Spectator, for example, had promoted settlement in the southern valleys. The Barlow Road and South Road expeditions were well aware of the commercial consequences of their undertakings; see Winther, "Place of Transportation," p. 385.

9. Laws of Oregon, 1843-1849, 15-17.

10. Oscar Osburn Winther, "The Development of Transportation in Oregon, 1843-1849," Oregon Historical Quarterly, XL (December, 1939), 323-324; Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, pp. 368-370; and Strong, "History of Oregon," p. 21. The Oregon Spectator printed several letters in this era, indicating public interest in finding a better road. Oregon Spectator, March 18, 1847, p. 1, December 28, 1848, p. 2; February 8, 1849, p. 2; and July 22, 1851, p. 2.

homes there was not immediate, because of the continuing Indian menace, the region was now served by two important transportation links to other regions.¹²

These trails were the first which may be said to have been blazed or built because of the thrust of external forces into the Rogue River Valley. There were no settlers living in that area at the time, agitating for transportation routes. Instead, it was the fortune-seekers heading for the gold fields of California, and the settlers coming to establish homes elsewhere in Oregon, who necessitated the improvement of these early roads through the valley.

The thrust of external forces later added another important portion of the Rogue River Valley's transportation network, when they helped make necessary the building of a trail from Scottsburg. Again, one of the motivations was commercial: Umpqua Valley merchants had an obvious interest in blazing a trail from Scottsburg to the Southern Oregon and Northern California mines. Thus, a trail was cut from Scottsburg to Winchester in 1851.¹³

Improvement of this trail resulted from the press of other needs, however, as the federal government entered the picture to provide means for bringing military protection to the area. Once settlement had rushed to the Rogue River Valley after the gold strikes in 1852, there were white settlements of sufficient size to warrant concern over the continuing threat of Indian attack. Roads in the southern valleys were not adequate means of transporting military troops and supplies in times of crisis, and thus steps had to be taken to improve them. The

12. Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," p. 27. The Indian menace was a concern which prompted Oregonians to warn immigrants of dangers along the trail. See Applegate's instructions in Oregon Spectator, April 6, 1848, p. 1.

13. Minter, Umpqua Valley, Oregon, pp. 143-144: Petitions for road work were submitted as early as 1850, but actual work was not begun until 1853. For correspondence about the Umpqua Valley roads, see Letters, J.W. Drew to Joseph Lane May 1, 1852; and Riley Stratton to Joseph Lane, September 4, 1854, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection. The importance of a wagon road from Scottsburg to Winchester, was noted in Umpqua Gazette April 28, 1854, p. 2.

Oregon government acted first, passing acts in 1852 for the building of a territorial road from Marysville (Corvallis) to Winchester in the Umpqua Valley, and from Winchester to the south line of the territory.¹⁴ It wasn't until the next year, however, when the United States Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a road from Camp Stuart (in the Rogue River Valley) to Myrtle Creek (a tributary of the Umpqua River) that other improvements needed in the Umpqua Valley were made.¹⁵

The road built in 1853 was extended to Scottsburg in 1854, following another Congressional appropriation.¹⁶ When the military road was completed in 1855, the official in charge of the project termed it "as good a wagon road now as any in the country," but at the same time observed, correctly, that difficulties which remained in the road's passage through the Umpqua Canyon would continue to be a hindrance to wagon traffic.¹⁷

14. Local Laws, 1851-1852, 21-22 and 27; An act was also passed for a road from Winchester to Jacksonville; see Special Laws, 1852-1853, 35.

15. Congressional Globe, 32nd Cong., 2nd Sess., Vol. XXII, p. 165. See also Letter, Benjamin Alvord to Joseph Lane, November 25, 1853, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

16. Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong. 1st Sess., Vol. XXIII, Pt. 3, p. 1621. This project was controversial, since many local citizens felt that the most direct, and least expensive route had not been chosen. Jesse and Lindsey Applegate were bitterly criticized for their actions. See Letters, Lindsey Applegate to Joseph Lane, May 2, 1854; Jesse Applegate to Joseph Lane November 17, 1854; James D. Burnett to Joseph Lane, September 8, 1854; W. W. Chapman to Joseph Lane, November 18, 1854; and J. W. Drew to Joseph Lane, July 15, 1854, Oregon Historical Society Lane Collection. See also W. Turrentine Jackson, "Federal Road Building Grants for Early Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, L (March, 1949), 6-10. Lt. Withers, in charge of the project, advertised for bids via handbills. Handbill in Oregon Historical Society, microfilm 1515.

17. Letter, John Withers to Jefferson Davis, June 15, 1855, printed in U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Colonel of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., 1855, pt. 2, pp. 507-509.

Whereas the South Road and the Scottsburg road were built only partly because of commercial influences, and partly for other reasons, the Crescent City trail was improved almost entirely for commercial reasons. It was another packer's trail, found or built in 1853¹⁸ at the time that Crescent City itself was established as a supply center for the mines. The merchants of Crescent City were well aware of the commercial necessity of improving the mountain portions of the trail. The first of several road-improvement campaigns began in June 1854, when the town's people took up a collection and repaired the road. At about the same time, the Crescent City and Yreka Plank and Turnpike Road Company was established, for the purpose of making the trail into a road suitable for stage and wagon travel. Prominent in the promotion of this project was the newly founded local paper, the Crescent City Herald.

A report made later that year by the engineer on the road project was duly published by the Herald, and interest in both Crescent City and Southern Oregon appeared to be high. Unfortunately, the lack of ready capital for investment, as well as trade and travel restrictions resulting from the Indian wars which resumed the next year, delayed completion of the toll road project until 1858.¹⁹

18. The "Cold Spring Mountain Road," as it was called, left Crescent City, went through the Elk Valley, east across to the Smith River, which it crossed, following to the middle and north forks of the river. There, it crossed the north fork of the Smith, climbed Cold Spring Mountain and ran along the mountain before dipping into the Illinois Valley of Oregon. From there the trail wandered among the mining camps in both the Illinois and Rogue River Valleys, to Jacksonville. No one knows who originally built the trail; Hereford reported its discovery by those who founded the town of Crescent City. Oregonian, March 19, 1853, p. 2; Don M. Chase and Marjorie Neill Helms, Pack Saddles and Rolling Wheels (Crescent City, Calif.: Printed by the Del Norte Triplicate, 1959), pp. 6, 19, 23-24.

19. A good history of the road project is included in Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," pp. 171-238. See also Giles, Autobiography, p. 16; and T.P. Robinson, Report of the Engineer on the Survey of the Crescent City & Yreka Plank and Turnpike Road (Crescent City, Calif.: Printed at the Office of the Crescent City Herald, 1854).

By 1856, when the Indian wars ended and removed the threat of Indian attack, Jacksonville sat at the center of a network of major roads and trails, which boded well for the town's future as a distributing and marketing center. In fact, it was that location which did ensure the town's prominence for several years after it was founded. Leading to the north and south was the California road, linking Jacksonville with supply centers in the Willamette and Sacramento Valleys, and with mining communities in Northern California. Feeding into this route from the east was the South Road, a major artery for migration into Oregon from 1847 to 1853. To the northwest was the Scottsburg military road, whose trade importance had perhaps dwindled by 1856, but which was still a major means of travel out of the Rogue River Valley. Finally, to the southwest there was the Crescent City road, not yet improved to the point where it would allow wagon traffic, but still the major route by which the community of Jacksonville was supplied.

These roads penetrated the Rogue River Valley as the result of external interest in reaching that region, although there was much support within the valley as well for those projects undertaken after settlements had been established there. Meanwhile, pressure from within the valley for improvement of the region's road network also manifested itself in local government actions leading to the surveying, building and maintenance of county roads.

The authority and the procedures for such county projects had been established by a series of road laws, the first of which was passed as early as 1844²⁰

20. The law of June 22, 1844 was the first general road law enacted by the Oregon Legislature. It provided for the formation of road districts as self-sufficient administrative units, set age limits of those who worked, and designated the required number of days each year that men would be expected to work. Laws of Oregon, 1843-1849, 88-90. Later laws decreed that acts of road commissioners had to be in accordance with Iowa road laws, ibid., 6-7; made judges of county courts responsible for highways and bridges in their counties, ibid. 17-22; and made other revisions about ages of men required to work, Papers of Provisional and Territorial Governments, no. 3638.

MAP III (Facing)

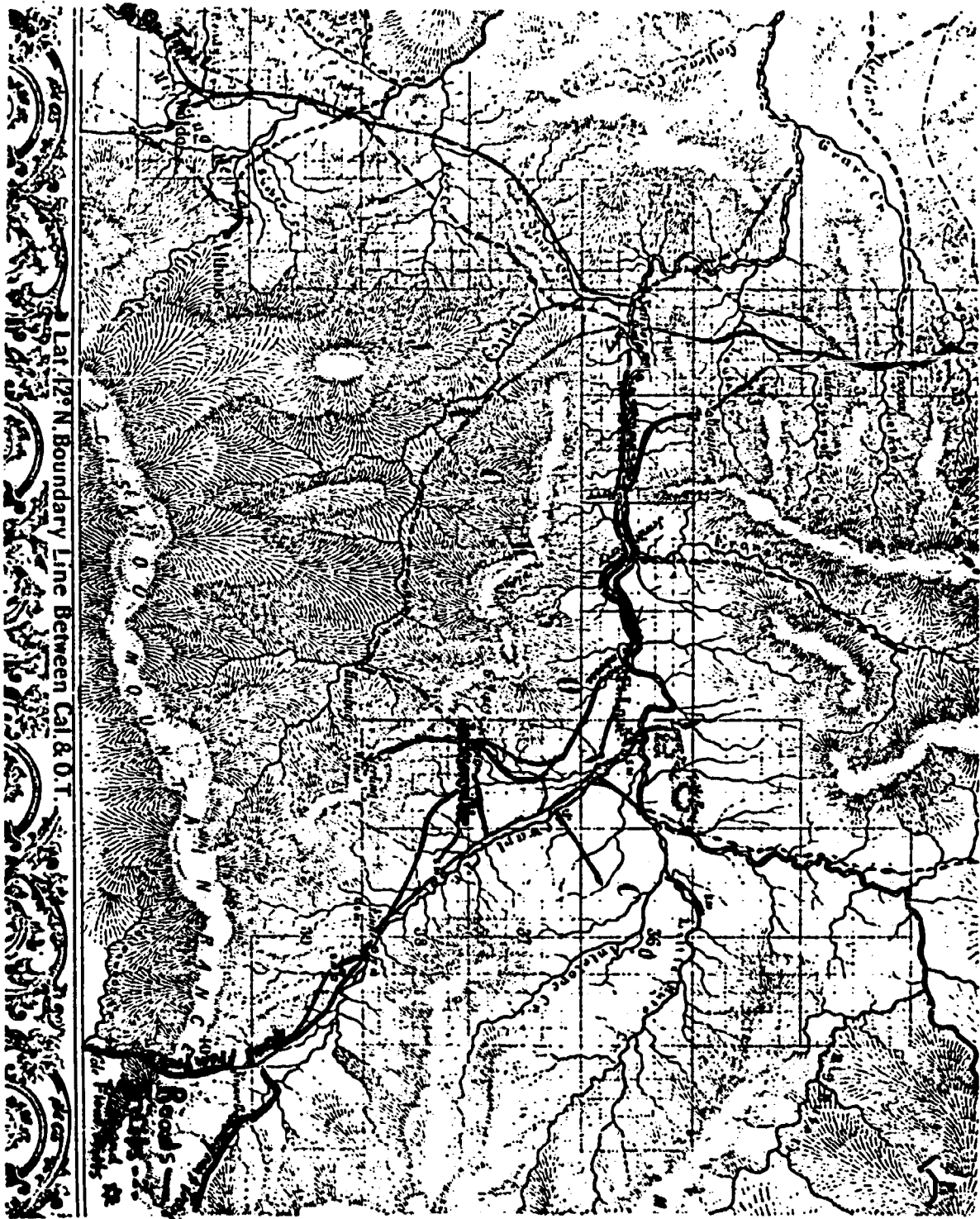
"Preston's Section and County Map of Oregon and
Washington West of the Cascade Mountains"

Jackson County Region

1856

Prepared by J.W. Trutch and G.W. Hyde

COURTESY, OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Those with greatest impact on projects in the early years of Jacksonville, however, were passed in 1851.²¹ By the time Jacksonville was a growing and developing community, road laws and the procedures for implementing their provisions were well-established precedents on which the area's citizens and government could draw. Viewing, surveying and laying out roads became an important part of the county's business.

In the second meeting of the county commissioners in 1853, the board proclaimed the importance of public roads to the valley and designated several routes as public highways.²² In subsequent meetings, petitions were heard, and viewers were appointed to survey and report on proposed routes. Most of the roads proposed were to link Jacksonville and its surrounding settlements with the other major roads through the valley, including the Crescent City trail, the military road to the Umpqua Valley, and the territorial road to California.²³

21. Comprehensive road legislation was passed in 1851, establishing procedures for surveying and marking roads, and for petitioning for new projects. General Laws, 1850-1851, 238-259. For newspaper publication of the new laws, see Oregon Spectator, July 3, 1841, p. 4; July 10, 1851, p. 4; and July 22, 1851, p. 4. On January 27, 1854 the legislature made road work proportional to the value of property owned by citizens. The Statutes of Oregon, Enacted and Continued in Force by the Legislative Assembly at the Session Commencing 5th December, 1853 (Oregon City, 1854), 447-460. For survey of all road legislation, see Jonasson, "Local Road Legislation," 162-175.

22. Jackson County, Oregon, Board of County Commissioners, Jackson County Court Proceedings, April 4, 1853. Public highways designated were a trail leading from Jacksonville to junction with the Old Oregon trail near Willow Springs; all of the Old Oregon trail from junction north to the boundary of Douglas County, and south to the Oregon-California border; the trail from Evans Ferry to Althouse; the road through town, along Oregon, California and Fourth Streets, to the intersection of the trail along the east bank of Jackson Creek, to A.A. Skinner's residence; and the mountain trail, from Jacksonville to the Oregon and California trail.

23. Action taken on roads during the first three years, as recorded in Jackson County Court Proceedings. Surveys: March, 1854, for road to Thompson's Ferry; April 3, 1854, for road linking with U.S. military road; May 8, 1854, for road running to the Illinois Valley, to establish most practicable route

Through such local procedures, and through the continuing interest, both inside and outside the valley, in maintaining the area's transportation and communication links with other regions, the road network serving Jacksonville and the Rogue River Valley was improved and extended. Transportation facilities improved, with the most notable advancement occurring in 1854, when a stage line linked Jacksonville with the Sacramento Valley.²⁴

Still, however, there were problems which limited the efficiency of this road network. They were problems which plagued other parts of the Oregon Territory as well. Roads surveyed and recommended according to established legal procedures were not always built,²⁵ and even when they were, they were not always passable. Trails might be abandoned because they led through territory in which Indian attack was a constant danger,²⁶ but more often roads were impassable

to Crescent City; July 10, 1854, for road from point near Jacksonville to a point near O.D. Hoxie's home; July 11, 1854, for a road from Brown Lee's ferry on Rogue River to the southern boundary of Douglas County, and a road from Salt Spring to the summit of the Siskiyou.

In 1855, viewers were appointed March 5, 1855 for a county road from Jacksonville to Jewett's Ferry; July, 1855 viewers were appointed to survey from John Barrett's house to the territorial road near Isaac Hill's home; and the commissioners heard a report approving a road from the southern boundary to a point on the military road near George Ambrose' home.

Several roads were recorded as officially approved July 11, 1854 and September, 1855, confirming many of the routes requested.

24. The stage road from Jacksonville to Portland was completed in 1859, while through service from Sacramento to Portland began in 1856. In 1854, however, there was a stage line running from Sacramento to Shasta City, California, from which town passengers and freight were transferred to mules for transport over the Shasta and Trinity Mountains. From there, they went by stage again to Jacksonville. See Letter, George Snelling to Joseph Lane, January 1, 1855, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection; Welborn Beeson, "Diary of Welborn Beeson I," Jacksonville Museum, p. 42; and Winther, Old Oregon Country, pp. 145-146.

25. Jonasson, "Local Road Legislation," p. 174.

26. Use of the South Road became less frequent after 1853 because of attacks by some of the eastern tribes. During the Rogue Indian wars, of course, all trails and roads in the Rogue River Valley were dangerous to travel.

because of the weather. Oregon's rains made travel difficult, especially in the winter, and in Southern Oregon, snow often blocked passage over the mountain portions of trails.

The road network which served the community of Jacksonville, despite the numerous improvements which were made in the late 1840's and early 1850's, was subject to impediment by a variety of often unexpected, usually uncontrollable conditions.²⁷ The problematical nature of transportation -- and consequently of communication -- in the area had its greatest impact on the means of information distribution. The community was forced to rely on those individuals and agencies which were best equipped for assuring that information would be carried over the region's roads, even under the worst of conditions. Therefore, as mentioned above, it was expressmen, packers, couriers, and others traveling on foot or on horseback or muleback who carried the bulk of the load for both official and unofficial communication into and out of the valley. Meanwhile, despite the fact that information processing agencies and institutions were not affected directly by the condition of roads in the area, they, too, were restricted indirectly in their operation; they obtained the information which they consumed from those distributors who did rely on the road networks.

Thus, even as the community grew and prospered in other ways, adding to its commercial and political prominence in the early 1850's, its development was shaped by that geographical isolation which was imposed and maintained by problems of transportation into the area. The fact that information was a commodity

27. James Mason Hutchings observed on a February, 1855 trip that upkeep in the area was not all that it should have been: "From Stirlingville to Jacksonville 8 miles. The road here is of gradual grade, but much of it being through timbered country, the roots crossing the road, and the ruts, must make it hard for wagons. One fellow taking up a ranch was building fence right across the road. I got off my horse and pulled down the fence at the trail. I'll bet that fellow was from 'Pike' or Oregon. This is too general, sometimes turning teams a mile or two out or up bad hills." Hutchings, Diary, p. 35.

in this region put the community's awareness of events outside its borders at the mercy of those factors which impeded the flow of all commodities. This would continue to be true for many years to come.

Chapter IV

Agencies of Information Distribution

Two agencies -- the federal postal service and the private, local express companies -- emerged as the principal means by which information and news were carried into and out of Jacksonville during the community's first years of existence. Each represented one of the two frontier traditions which shaped the early development of the Rogue River Valley.

On the one hand was the postal service, part of the more formally structured legal and governmental tradition of the farming frontier in Oregon. According to this tradition, Jacksonville and the other settlements of the Rogue River Valley were treated as units within larger social and political entities, and were fit into those institutions and procedures of government which already existed.

On the other hand were the more flexible, less structured institutions and practices which had been brought from the mining regions, from which had come so many of Jacksonville's first citizens. The mining frontier tended to adapt its institutions to communities, rather than vice versa, and thus its traditions of information distribution were personified by the many express agents and riders of the era.

Details about the specific uses which were made of each of these agencies are difficult to obtain. Hence this chapter will focus on general description of the numbers of agencies and routes in the valley, rather than on analysis of their specific activities. Some general observations about their probable function within the community can be ventured, however, because it is possible to generalize from the services which these agencies usually rendered to communities during this period in history.

The postal service, for example, carried letters, newspapers and other periodicals, as well as books, other printed matter and small packages. Information about the extent of postal operations in Oregon Territory, and about offices and routes in Southern Oregon, can be found in the federal government's postal records.¹ None of this documentation reveals the specific content of messages sent through the mail, but it does suggest that the post offices were an important channel for the flow of information among individuals, as well as among commercial and governmental entities. The uses -- or intended uses -- of the postal service in Oregon can be inferred from the letters and memorials of the 1840's and early 1850's, in which citizens stated their reasons for wanting better mail service in the area. The need for a means of transmitting private correspondence was implicit in their requests; benefits which were much more likely to be stressed were the commercial importance² and the governmental necessity³ of such communications links.

Express businesses, meanwhile, had prospered by adapting themselves to, and identifying with, the needs of individual correspondents. And, once again, while

1. See, for each year during this period, the Annual Report of the Postmaster General, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1851, pp. 417-488, passim; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 32nd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1852, pp. 655-670; Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853, pp. 699-821, passim; House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1854, pp. 615-712, passim; Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1855, pp. 374-375, 418, 431; Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 34th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1856, pp. 764-877, passim; and Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 13, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1-61.

Oregon's newspapers also reprinted reports of most of the important federal actions concerning postal service for the Territory.

2. Umpqua Gazette, May 19, 1854, p. 2; January 27, 1855, p. 2; August 16, 1855, p. 2. Letters, Joseph W. Drew to Joseph Lane, May 1, 1852, R. B. Morford to Joseph Lane, April 12, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

3. Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, Nos. 4178 and 6367.

it is not possible to know the content of messages carried by express agents, it is possible to infer the importance of express companies as a service within the community, by consulting the records which individual agents kept. For example, the account books and journals of C. C. Beekman, Jacksonville's best-known express agent, reveal that he carried personal and commercial correspondence, books, newspapers, small valuables and business supplies, as well as gold dust.⁴ His express and banking agency was not only a means by which correspondence of all types was brought into and out of the community, but it was also a clearinghouse for many of the town's commercial operations, a supply, transport and exchange service of great importance to the town's economy.

Both the postal service and the express agencies of the area were impartial carriers of news or other materials. That which they transported usually arrived in approximately the same form in which it was sent, subject only to the wear and tear of physical transport. Any alteration in form or content of information or material was more likely to result from its loss or stoppage en route than from any interaction with express or postal carriers. Thus these agencies may be regarded primarily as channels for the flow of information into, out of, and within the community.

The two did not exert the same degree of influence early in Jacksonville's history because factors in Southern Oregon's development favored the growth of the express agencies. Nevertheless, it was the postal service which had the earliest institutional impact on information distribution in Oregon.

In 1845, the provisional government had delegated to its legislature the responsibility for establishing post offices and post roads in the colony.⁵

4. Most of Beekman's papers are in the archives at the Oregon Historical Society, Beekman Collection, MSS 916.

5. Deady, Organic and General Laws, p. 61. William G. T'Vault was appointed postmaster general, and as first editor of the Oregon Spectator, was able to use the pages of that publication to advertise for post riders.

Before the government took that action, mail had been carried into the area by private, informal means, first through Hudson's Bay Company channels,⁶ and later through immigrant parties and persons contracting individually to carry letters, messages or other matter overland.⁷

The post office established by the Oregon government in 1845 was not long-lived,⁸ but its creation indicated the importance of postal communication to Oregon settlers, and revealed their inclination to look to government to provide both the structure and the authorization for reliable mail service.

In 1847, the federal government established post offices at Astoria and Oregon City,⁹ and created a mail steamship line to the Pacific Coast.¹⁰ The

6. Bagley, "Transmission of Intelligence," p. 349; Smith, "Communication Pioneering," p. 353; and Strong, "History of Oregon," p. 7.

7. Bancroft, Oregon 1848-1888, p. 29; and Edward R. Payne, "Oregon Territorial Post Offices and Landstamped Postal Markings," Oregon Historical Quarterly, LX (1959), 476. Carey, General History, II, 737 comments that overland mail service across the continent took at least five months until improvements took hold in 1855; and Bagley, "Transmission of Intelligence," p. 358 notes that the practice of having mail carried by private contractors extended into the 1850's, as individuals carried letters and small packages between Oregon and California for 50 cents an ounce.

8. Payne, "Territorial Post Offices," pp. 476-477 attributes its failure to ". . . no roads, no funds, no post offices and little mail."

9. U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Postmaster General, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 30th Cong., 1st Sess., 1847-48, p. 1360 lists three Oregon routes established by the previous Congress: from Astoria to Independence, Mo.; from Oregon City via Ft. Vancouver and Ft. Nisqually to the mouth of Admiralty Inlet; and from Oregon City, up the Willamette Valley to the Klamath River in the direction of San Francisco. Mail was to be carried no oftener than once a week, postmasters were to live no closer to each other than ten miles apart, and compensation was set at \$1000 a year for the agent in the Willamette Valley, as for the agent at Astoria.

Astoria, first office to be established (March 9, 1847) was secondary to the Oregon City office (established March 29, 1847) because the latter was more centrally located in the colony. See Payne, "Territorial Post Offices," p. 477.

10. After several years of consideration, Congress provided for regular mail service to the Pacific Coast, chartering the company which held the contract on the Atlantic side of the route. Bids were taken for the Pacific run, won by Aspinwall's Pacific Mail Steamship line, which launched ships in May and August

California gold rush in 1848 assured the success of the steamship line, which carried both passengers and mail to the West Coast. Oregon benefited when the steamship company extended its operations to Oregon in 1850, and, in an important development for communication in Southern Oregon, designated a stop at Umpqua City.¹¹

By the time the gold rush to Southern Oregon had brought settlement to Jacksonville and vicinity, mail service was at least nominally there already. Distribution to the Rogue River Valley was through the Umpqua towns. In 1851, routes extended from Yoncalla to the Umpqua Valley, and from the Umpqua Valley to Sacramento.¹² After the gold discoveries near Jacksonville, mail service was

of 1848. The classic study of the mail steamship company is John Haskell Kemble, The Panama Route 1848-1869, University of California Publications in History, Vol. XXIX (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943).

11. The run of the steamship Caroline, which began in June, 1850, terminated at the Columbia River. By 1851, the Umpqua City stop had been added, after popular agitation had brought appropriations for semi-monthly service. Kemble, The Panama Route, pp. 44-45; and U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Postmaster General, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1851, p. 487.

12. U.S. Congress, House, A Report of Mail Contracts, House Exec. Doc. No. 56 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1852, pp. 421-428: routes were designated from Pleasant Hill to Yoncalla; to the mouth of the Umpqua River, via Yoncalla; from Yoncalla to Myrtle City; from Myrtle City to Gardiner; and from the Umpqua Valley to Sacramento. A.C. Gibbs had the three Yoncalla routes; Turner and MacTavish the run from Myrtle City to Gardiner; and the Sacramento route, offered for once-a-month service, was suspended.

Gibbs, "Notes," p. 9 says there was no mail service from the Willamette Valley to Sacramento before 1851, and describes the way in which he and Levi Scott went to Portland to get the first Umpqua Valley routes.

At the time of the Jacksonville gold strike, there were post offices at Yoncalla, Umpqua Valley and Winchester, with two postal routes operating (Marysville to Winchester, and Yoncalla to Umpqua City). Oregonian, March 20, 1852, p. 1. A bi-weekly route to Yreka, through Jacksonville, was advertised to begin in November. Oregonian, July 17, 1852, p. 3.

quickly extended to that new population center as well, with offices at nearby Dardanelles, Mansaneta, and Jacksonville.¹³ Steamer stops at Crescent City¹⁴ also became important to the distribution of information in the southern valleys.

The network of newly established post offices and post routes operated within the framework of the laws and traditions of the federal postal service. Contracts on routes were offered in local newspapers, with the lowest bids usually accepted.

Unfortunately, as was also the case with road laws and road construction procedures, the existence of governmental machinery for the establishment and operation of a postal service did not assure its efficiency. Designated routes often were not followed, either because contracts were not let, or because some who held contracts were not diligent in living up to them.¹⁵ The latter was a particularly galling situation to the citizens of the new communities in Southern Oregon, because they saw their chances for prosperity diminished by the irresponsibility of others. By the same token, those who were faithful in

13. Dardanelles office, near later Gold Hills, was established October 19, 1852, William G. T'Vault, postmaster; Mansaneta, also spelled "Manzanita," probably near the later town of Central Point, established October 12, 1853, William G. Rose, postmaster; and Jacksonville post office, established February 18, 1854, Richard Dugan, postmaster. U.S. Post Office Department, Register of Post Offices, 1847-1855, Photostats of Official Records, in Oregon Historical Society Archives, MSS 334. See also Lewis A. McArthur, Oregon Geographic Names (3rd ed.; Portland, Oregon: Binsford & Mort, 1952).

14. Oregon Spectator, August 19, 1853, p. 2 mentions twice-monthly stops by the mail steamship Columbia.

15. Failure of the mail steamship line to live up to its contract was the most frequent complaint. See, for example, Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, Nos. 4178, 4207, 6304, 10332. On other occasions, individual contract holders were also criticized: Umpqua Gazette, January 27, 1855, p. 2; and March 10, 1855, p. 2.

meeting their contracts were honored by those communities, and the coming of the mail was itself a big occasion.¹⁶

Frustration over the inadequacy of the mail service lasted well into the 1850's. In Southern Oregon, the main difficulty was that the region's coastal supply depots, notably Scottsburg and Port Orford, were not reliably served by the mail steamers. Thus, mail was often routed on a roundabout path through the Willamette Valley, delaying the flow of news to the southern part of the territory.¹⁷

Dissatisfaction was expressed through several forums. Since 1845, there had been several memorials to Congress, asking for improvement of service to all of the Oregon country;¹⁸ more localized complaints, meanwhile, were expressed through local newspapers,¹⁹ or through letters to such politically powerful figures as Joseph Lane, Oregon's Congressional Delegate.²⁰

The Umpqua Gazette, understandably, led the chorus in Southern Oregon, railing against the misfeasances of contract holders who had failed to live up to their obligations. Its greatest wrath, however, was directed against the

16. Gibbs, "Notes," p. 11.

17. A delay of from ten days to "several weeks." See Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, No. 5730. For additional estimates; Umpqua Gazette, January 27, 1855, p. 2 and August 16, 1855, p. 2; and Letter, J.W.P. Huntington to Joseph Lane, March 31, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

18. See above, note 15; and U.S. Congress, House, Report of the Postmaster General, House Exec. Doc. No. 1, 31st Cong., 2nd Sess., 1850, pp. 408 and 410-411; and U.S. Congress, House, Journal, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853, pp. 237, 516, 536.

19. Umpqua Gazette, May 5, 1854, p. 2 and July 7, 1855, p. 2, as well as citations above, note 15. See also Oregon Spectator, November 1, 1849, p. 2 and February 21, 1850, p. 2.

20. Letters, J.C. Avery to Joseph Lane, September 16, 1854; and N.C. Coe to Joseph Lane, March 3, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

mail steamship line, whose reluctance to stop at the entrance to the Umpqua harbor necessitated the northern swing through the Willamette country:

The mail steamer passes by our harbor, and could leave the mails for the whole of southern Oregon, and not be detained three hours; and yet all our mail matter has to go up to the Columbia river, and then come back across the country two hundred miles, and then it frequently fails to arrive. What can business men do who rely on California for their supplies, with such uncertain mail facilities?²¹

While the Umpqua Gazette tended to be an apologist for the interests of the Scottsburg merchants with their arguments about the commercial necessity of the steamship service,²² they nevertheless echoed the discontent of many more citizens who felt that better postal communication was essential to the growth of Southern Oregon. In diaries and letters, other settlers of the region were expressing similar sentiments.²³

Improvements would come eventually, but in those first few years of Jacksonville's existence, its postal service was both slow and unreliable. The valley's isolation might thus have been further deepened, had there been no alternative means by which mail could be carried into and out of Southern Oregon. Fortunately, there was an alternative, provided by the express companies whose

21 Umpqua Gazette, August 16, 1855, p. 2.

22. Noted by at least one of their readers: "If the U.S. government enter into a contract with parties to deliver the mail at the mouth of the Umpqua, they do it with a view of accommodating this class of permanent citizens with proper and convenient mail facilities, and not for the benefit of any particular class of persons in trade. The government has no intention of building up particular communities or localities. They have no right to legislate for this vantage or that. . ." Umpqua Gazette, August 23, 1855, p. 2.

23. Letters, E.P. Drew to Joseph Lane, December 16, 1854; J.W. Drew to Joseph Lane, May 1, 1852; J.W.P. Huntington to Joseph Lane, March 31, 1852; R.B. Morford to Joseph Lane, April 12, 1852; and Levi Scott to Joseph Lane, October 21, 1854, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

service had been extended to Jacksonville when the mining frontier moved north from California.²⁴

Several small companies and individual expressmen served the mining camps in Northern California and Southern Oregon during the early 1850's. In Jacksonville, as in other camps, there were at first several small express operations, run by individuals who contracted to carry letters, small packages or other valuables from the mining camps to the post offices at base towns. Among the earliest known express operations in the area were T'Vault & Company's express line from Winchester to Shasta in 1851 or 1852, McClaine and Company's operations in Southern Oregon in 1852, and Dugan and Company, which took over the McClaine line and served the Jacksonville area until its owner sold out to Cram, Rogers and Company in 1853.²⁵ By 1853, the main express outlet in Jacksonville was Cram, Rogers, an affiliate of the giant Adams and Company express and banking house of San Francisco. Richard Dugan, the former owner of Dugan and Company,

24. For discussions of the origins of the express company traditions, and their development in the California mining regions, see Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun, "Origin of Wells, Fargo & Company, 1841-52," Bulletin of the Business Historical Society Incorporated, XXII (June, 1948), 70-83; Alexander Lovett Stimson, History of the Express Business, including the Origins of the Railway System in America, and the Relation of Both to the Increase of New Settlements and the Prosperity of Cities in the United States (New York: Baker and Godwin, Printers, 1881); Ernest Abram Wiltsee, The Pioneer Miner and the Pack Mule Express (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1931); Wells, Siskiyou County, pp. 161-165; and Winther, Old Oregon Country, pp. 149-156.

25. The most direct influence, of course, came from the Yreka-based companies, where early operations were Cram, Rogers and Company, Beekman's Express (Yreka to Jacksonville, 1850-1853), Hoffman's Express (Jacksonville to Yreka, 1851) and Rhodes' Express, succeeded in 1854 by Rhodes and Company, and in 1855 by Rhodes and Whitney. Wiltsee, Pioneer Miner, Appendix C, pp. 104-105; Bancroft, Oregon, 1848-1888, p. 339; and Oregonian, January 8, 1905, pp. 32-33.

was agent for Cram, Rogers until 1854, when he moved to Crescent City to open an express office there.²⁶

In Dugan's place, C. C. Beekman, former Yreka representative for Cram, Rogers, took over the Jacksonville office, and began a long career of service to the citizens of the Rogue River Valley. Beekman had arrived in the west as a miner and carpenter in the mining regions of California, but in 1850 he turned to work as an express agent in Yreka. After he came to Jacksonville, he continued express operations there, even after the fall of Adams and Company led to the subsequent failure of Cram, Rogers and Company. Beekman set up his own independent express office, which served the community until Wells, Fargo established an agency there, appointing Beekman their local representative. From 1854 until his death in 1912, Beekman was the personification of the express institution in Jacksonville. Loyalty to him deepened, as he compiled a remarkable record for reliable service, even under the worst of conditions.²⁷

The dependability of men like Beekman assured them a following in the remote mining areas, especially since their performance could not be matched by most postal riders. As a result, western miners and settlers were usually

26. Letter, C. C. Beekman to Edward Sheil, April 22, 1854, Oregon Historical Society, Beekman Collection, refers to Dugan leaving the month before to establish a Cram, Rogers office in Crescent City.

27. Descriptions of Beekman's life and business are in Benjamin Beekman, *Biography of C. C. Beekman*, Oregon Historical Society, Beekman Collection; and O.K. Burrell, Gold in the Woodpile; An Informal History of Banking in Oregon (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1967), pp. 216-225.

Reportedly, in the many years of his semi-weekly trips between Yreka and Jacksonville, and between Crescent City and Jacksonville, Beekman never lost any gold dust. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 423.

willing to pay the higher rates of the expressmen. Beekman charged five per cent for transporting gold dust, and \$1 each for letters and newspapers, more than the official schedule of rates set by the U.S. postal service in this same era.²⁸ Meanwhile, Beekman was able to add a banking house to his express business in 1856, charging one percent a month for keeping gold dust, and five per cent a month on loans.²⁹

The loyalty aroused by men such as Beekman resulted from the fact that they were much more than simple mail carriers for a mining town, even though that was a particularly valued service they rendered to those out-of-the-way places. By carrying gold dust, keeping money on deposit, and making money kept on "general deposit" available for loans, they were also a vital part of the area's commerce. The express companies and their local agents were the major outward communications and commercial links in early mining towns, and Jacksonville was no exception. Trust in the tradition of the express companies was strong, repeatedly voiced in newspapers, and even acknowledged with admiration a few years later by the postmaster general in Washington.³⁰

28. At this time, letters sent over distances less than 3000 miles were three cents per sheet prepaid, and five cents per sheet prepaid, if sent over 3000 miles. (Rates were six cents and ten cents, respectively, if not prepaid.) Newspapers circulated in county of publication were free, with graduated fee scales for distances beyond county lines; other periodicals were carried for fees less than first class mail, but without the newspaper discount until 1852, when magazines were allowed to move at the same postal rates as newspapers. See U.S. Post Office Department, United States Domestic Postage Rates 1789-1956, Post Office Department Publication No. 15 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956). Rates on the frontier, however, were often higher than the published fee schedules.

29. Beekman, Biography, n.p.

30. U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Postmaster General, Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1853-54, pp. 705-706. The postal agents were hampered, too, by high costs on the West Coast, a fact also noted by the Postmaster General.

The express agency's advantage was that it was not only a stable operation, but it was also adaptable to individual communities and situations. Stability especially seemed characteristic of those agencies associated with larger banking and express companies. Beekman, for example, as representative of both Cram, Rogers and Company, and later as agent for Wells, Fargo and Company, was part of larger, established commercial enterprises with offices scattered throughout the West. This was an important asset, as it provided the otherwise-isolated commercial interests of Jacksonville with a local outlet to commercial institutions outside their community.

Of course, not all express agents were, or had to be, associated with larger express companies. An individual express rider could set up his own business in a mining area, and could continue to operate there as long as he could find enough customers to make his trips profitable. This was a pattern seen more in younger, smaller camps, however. Once an area grew and prospered, a larger express company would be likely to enter and corner the express market.

Whether the local express agencies were individually operated, or allied with larger enterprises, however, they were still more adaptable than was the postal service. Express riders could be used as couriers, for limited special assignments, as apparently they were during the Indian war period,³¹ or they could provide the type of regular, scheduled mail service which became their primary function in most communities. Few areas of the mining west were so remote that they were without at least an individual expressman to bring the mail; this was an adaptability to conditions of isolation which the post office was not able to supply.

31. See Ewing, Autobiographical Statement, p. 2; Edward O.C. Ord, Journal, 1856, Bancroft Library, University of California, MS C-B 479; and B.F. Dowell, 1856 Diary in Papers, 1848-1880, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS Ax 31, April 27 entry.

Jacksonville, of course, soon passed beyond the stage in which only individual express riders served the area. In both the express business and in the postal service, Jacksonville's agents were local representatives of larger institutions and traditions. Thus, post offices did not come to the Jacksonville area simply in response to the singular needs of that part of the Oregon Territory; they came as extensions of a government agency which eventually came to all communities, following a pattern which had existed since the beginning of the federal postal system. Moreover, much of the motivation for this apparently came from the need for government agencies to keep in contact with each other, and not simply because local residents wanted to overcome their psychological isolation from other areas. By the same token, the establishment of express agencies linked with larger express companies was not a singular occurrence, peculiar to Jacksonville; it was the extension of a common mining camp practice to yet another mining area, adapted, of course, to whatever circumstances may have been distinctive in the Rogue River Valley.

In both cases, the establishment of agencies of information distribution within the community of Jacksonville represented another instance in which it was the press of outside forces into the area which provided the means which citizens used to cope with their problems of isolation. In the case of the postal service, it was the inward thrust of government institutions which came eventually, albeit slowly in the Rogue River Valley, to all areas without such formal government services. The express companies, meanwhile, represented the inward thrust of commerce, which had brought so many other improvements in transportation and communication to Southern Oregon during this period.

In characterizing the postal agents and express riders as information distributors in Jacksonville, it would be misleading to leave the impression that

they never interacted with the messages they carried, or that their information function in the community was limited to acting as channels for information flow. As human carriers of news and information, they were also occasionally the carriers of verbal news and gossip as well,³² and as individuals with personal friends and business contacts throughout the valley, they undoubtedly fit into the interpersonal communications network of the area.

Nor were these local agents important to the community solely for their participation in the area's communications networks. The express agents, in particular, even though they were important information distributors within the community, were also, through services such as the banking operations established by C.C. Beekman, important units in the area's commercial order, too. Beekman's information services may have given him a foothold in the Jacksonville area, but it was his importance to the area's commerce which kept him there and assured his success. His role in helping the area out of its commercial isolation thus should not be underestimated.

On the whole, however, it was as information distributors that expressmen and postal riders played an important part in this community's struggle to overcome isolation. Express riders, express couriers and postal agents brought the news and information upon which other agencies and individuals in the area depended for personal, commercial, political and military purposes. They supplied the data consumed by others, and provided, in those first few years at least, the most direct inputs into Jacksonville's common information pool.

32. Teiser and Harrcun, "Wells, Fargo," pp. 80-81.

Chapter V

Distributor-Processors: The People's Network

Many of the communications and transportation developments in early Jacksonville resulted from the thrust of commerce and government into the area. In Chapter IV, those forces were represented by the express companies and by the postal service, distributors of information which, for the most part, had little interaction with, and therefore little impact on, the information which they carried. There were exceptions to this, of course,¹ but generally speaking, those carriers were not interested in the content of messages they transported so much as they were simply committed to maintaining the channel through which such messages were sent.

Distinct from this category of carriers, therefore, is another group which this discussion has called "distributor-processors." The individuals and agencies in this group were different in two respects: first, while they did carry information into and out of the community, their primary function was to relay information within the valley; that is, they consumed information primarily for the purpose of redistributing it, and keeping it in circulation in the community. Second, because the news which they carried was oral, rather than written, they became more involved with it, altering its content as a natural consequence of the multiplicity of exchanges they had with friends and clients in the Jacksonville area. These carriers were less tied to institutional frameworks than they were to the interpersonal network of communication among citizens of the valley, and, to one extent or another, they had a greater personal stake in the news which they carried. They were the agencies in what may be regarded as the people's own information network, a network which generally provided a means for the exchange of all kinds of news and gossip among

1. An obvious exception, perhaps, were the military express couriers during the Indian wars.

citizens of the valley, and, in certain circumstances, for the growth of consensus among the area's settlers.

In this chapter, two types of distributor-processors in early Jacksonville will be considered: first, there were individual carriers, moving within the community's interpersonal communications network, supplying it with news both from inside and from outside the valley. The most notable of these carriers, partly for their impact, and partly for the volume of historical evidence they left behind, were the packers, who carried supplies, heavy cargo and information into the valley. Also of importance, but wanting in the amount of documentation for their activities, were the informal couriers who brought messages to settlers and soldiers alike during the Indian war crises. Other opportunities for personal interaction in the community, afforded by social gatherings, marketing situations and private conversations were likewise extremely important ways in which news was exchanged in the interpersonal network. They, too, are difficult to document, however, and thus they are treated rather speculatively in this discussion.

There was a second type of distributor-processor, meanwhile, which was institutional in form, but interpersonal in impact: this was the newspaper. Newspapers of the area were information processors in the extent to which they consumed information, altered and rearranged it, as part of the usual procedure of newspaper production. Any reporter or editor selects, rewrites, edits and reworks information; rarely does he present it exactly as it comes to him. The newspapermen of early Southern Oregon and Northern California were no different from other journalists, and certainly not from other frontier journalists, in this respect. There is another side to this transaction, however. A reader selects from the news presented to him by a newspaper, and makes use of that information, according to his own personal interests and predispositions.²

2. Through the action of selective attention and selective perception.

To the reader, therefore, the newspaper is primarily a distributor of information, although admittedly of information altered and rearranged before it is seen in print. Newspapers, in this sense, may have been distributors more than they were processors in Jacksonville, before that town had its own publication. Readers there relied on newspapers published in other regions, and, in order to learn of activities and events of interest to their own community, they had to select those articles which most directly related to them.

Interpersonal channels, meanwhile, were the sources which were closest to citizens during the town's early years, and packers were among those who moved most freely within the area's interpersonal network. Pack trains were harbingers of the commercial thrust into the Rogue River Valley, braving the dangers of Indian attack, and carrying food and supplies through that area to the miners of Northern California and Southern Oregon. The lush soil in the valley made it good grazing land,³ as the valley trails became desirable routes for mule trains to follow.

Once gold was discovered on Jackson Creek in 1852, however, with strikes following in surrounding areas, Jacksonville itself became the magnet for commerce and for pack train arrivals. Packers who had once merely passed through the Rogue River Valley on the way to the Yreka mines now stopped at the Rogue River Valley camps. Jacksonville, the center for trade and product distribution in the area, became an emporium of tremendous importance in that part of the Oregon Territory.⁴

Packers continued to dominate in the business of supplying Jacksonville for several years after the town's founding. Roads and trails which posed problems

3. Duncan, "Settlement," p. 5.

4. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 338.

for wagon traffic were always open to mules, and thus the pack trains were the most reliable means of supply. Only they could pick their way throughout the year along the mountain trails between Yreka and Jacksonville, and between Crescent City and Jacksonville; and only the packers could provide the year-round reliability needed on the rough wagon roads to Scottsburg and the Willamette Valley.⁵

The value of pack trains in providing access to remote areas of the West had been proved in the earlier mining camps of California.⁶ Thus, again, Jacksonville's status as a mining camp gave it the option of turning to a mining practice to provide an answer to one of its early isolation problems -- in this case, the basic problem of being cut off from the areas producing or supplying the commodities which the community's citizens needed for physical and commercial survival.

Packers were a particularly transient population. Theirs was a business in which a man might engage briefly, before he moved on to some other trade, or to some other region of the West. Trains could be small, run by one or two men, or large, operated by several packers, either as part of individual enterprises, or in association with commercial supply houses in Scottsburg or the Willamette towns.⁷ Because of the impermanence of enterprises, and the variability in the size of trains, it is difficult to estimate the amount of business done by the packers. There are some indices available, however.

5. Sources used in this section on the packing trade include Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," pp. 347-397; Winther, Old Oregon Country, 173-201; Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, pp. 165-168; and "Packing, in the Mountains of California," Hutchings' California Magazine, December, 1856, pp. 241-249.

6. Use of pack animals for transportation was an ancient custom, of course, as noted by Winther, Old Oregon Country, p. 177, but more direct precedents for the practice came from the Northern California mining camps. See Wells, History of Siskiyou County, p. 161; and Hutchings, Diary, p. 11.

7. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 390.

It is known, for example, that, although packing could be a small-scale operation, for those seriously engaged in the business, trains could range from 40 to 75 mules in size.⁸ Packing to the Southern Oregon mines in the early 1850's represented the beginning of the period in which packing operations were large, regular, and competitive, with, at times, several trains a day passing through the valley.⁹

In the towns where packers obtained the merchandise and supplies they would transport to the mining regions, there was a continuous hum of activity.¹⁰ At Scottsburg, there were estimates of as many as 500 mules a day gathering to leave for the mines,¹¹ and even after trade had shifted to Crescent City, there was still a sizable number of mules in use.¹²

More information is available concerning the volume of trade from Crescent City. During peak seasons there were literally hundreds of mules on the 120-mile trail between Crescent City and Jacksonville (and continuing to Yreka), with one contemporary source estimating 1500 along the route.¹³ Approximately 500 tons of cargo a month were carried over the trail, making Crescent City an important commercial port.¹⁴ Packers earned about six or seven cents a pound on the ten-day trip to Jacksonville and profited even more during the Indian

8. "Packing, in the Mountains of California," p. 246.

9. Winther, Old Oregon Country, pp. 182-183.

10. There were exceptions to this, of course. Scottsburg's activity suffered, for example, after Crescent City began to draw away the Umpqua trade. During the Indian wars, trade was hampered throughout Southern Oregon, because travel by packers was hazardous. Also Alta California, March 15, 1855, p. 2 and June 27, 1855, p. 2.

11. Throckmorton, Oregon Argonauts, p. 165.

12. Umpqua Gazette, May 12, 1855, p. 2, estimated 100 mules in town that week, being readied for trips to Jacksonville and Yreka.

13. "Packing, in the Mountains of California," p. 246.

14. Alta California, September 1, 1855, p. 1.

wars and the winter storms, when few were able or willing to hazard the trip.¹⁵

Meanwhile, there were also packers who carried goods from the Willamette Valley, the region which was the principal source of supplies in the first few months of Jacksonville's history.¹⁶ On this route, as on the Scottsburg and Crescent City runs, packers carried those large cargoes not handled by expressmen and postal riders -- such as furniture, household items, an occasional piano, and, later even the printing press for the first newspaper in Jacksonville.¹⁷ At first, however, the most important service of the packers was bringing in the staples and supplies necessary for survival, since in those early months food was not being produced in the valley. Flour, sugar, coffee, tobacco and salt, as well as bacon and beef, were among the most important commodities carried by the mule teams.¹⁸ Their delay, even for a brief period, could cause a crisis, and a corresponding rise in prices, as the winter of 1852 proved.

Packing was thus a lucrative business. Those who turned to it did so not entirely out of concern for the survival of the valley's settlements, and, in

15. Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," pp. 180-205 traces the rise of prices, as reported in the Crescent City Herald in 1854 and 1855. He indicates that, in the winter of 1854, prices rose because of the shortage of mules, going as high as 12 to 14 cents a pound in trade with Jacksonville, and dropping back to eight cents a pound by spring of 1855. Spring storms delayed pack trains that year, but trade picked up by the summer, remaining good until Indian wars broke out that August. Prices returned to normal when the wars ended in June, 1856.

16. Letter, J.C. Avery to Joseph Lane, May 17, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection; Deady, "History," p. 24; and Oregonian, June 26, 1852, p. 2.

17. Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," p. 205; when the Umpqua Gazette ceased publication in 1855, the press and other equipment were shipped to Jacksonville by way of Crescent City.

18. Sources concerning the products carried into the area by packers: Mary Hill Dunn, Biography, Jacksonville Museum, p. 11; Dowell, Autobiography, n.p.; and Stearns, "Reminiscences," pp. 4-5.

fact, the motivations of those getting into packing were as varied as the men themselves. Some, like Daniel Giles,¹⁹ seemed to try packing because it was a business from which they could profit, while they were enjoying the other adventures of the mining regions. Others, such as Daniel Stearns, Thomas Frazer and David Birdseye,²⁰ were in packing because it was a necessary part of establishing a merchandising business in Jacksonville. Still others were packers for a while, in order to make money which would enable them eventually to turn to other enterprises. The last were quite common, and included among them men who came to the Jacksonville area as packers, miners, and merchants, and stayed as lawyers, farmers, and storeowners -- in short, as substantial men of the community. They were men like Peter Britt, who packed from Crescent City to Jacksonville for three years, in order to set up his photography business in Jacksonville, John R. Tice, who packed for a year before buying a farm in 1854, and Benjamin F. Dowell, at first a packer in Southern Oregon because he had not been able to set up a private law practice in Portland or Salem, and later one of the Rogue River Valley's most prominent attorneys.²¹

As Paine Prim observes,²² in those early years, at one time or another, nearly everyone was a packer. Moreover, by the very nature of the business,

19. Giles, *Autobiography*, pp. 13-33, tells how he arrived in Jacksonville in 1853, intending to work as a miner. He went to work instead for Holdman & Son, packers who traded between Crescent City and Jacksonville. Giles and young Holdman opened up a miners' store on the Applegate River, about seven miles from Jacksonville, and abandoned it during the Indian troubles of that summer. Giles then joined the pack train after it had been bought from Holdman by two other men, and began trading between Jacksonville and Scottsburg. He eventually settled in Coos Bay.

20. Frazer, "Reminiscences," pp. 44-45; and Daniel W. Stearns, *Autobiography*, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS Ax 169.

21. Peter Britt, *Papers*, Jacksonville Museum; John R. Tice, "Letters of John R. Tice," ed. by J.F. Santee, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXXVII (March, 1936) 34-43; and Dowell, *Autobiography*, n.p.

22. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 7.

packers moved among the people, were known to the citizens of the valley both for the service they performed, and for the fact that they were contacts who were in touch with the world outside. They were acquainted with the people in Jacksonville and the surrounding settlements, involved with the community as businessmen, and often as residents there. Their survival and that of their customers depended on keeping the supply routes open. By passing through the region, stopping at homes or camps along the way, talking to people they met, they fit into the network of interpersonal communication in the valley, and, in fact, helped to keep that network functioning by serving as key links in it.

The extent and importance of packing in Jacksonville and the Rogue River Valley can be documented, as can the fact that the settlers of the area welcomed the passage of the packers through their territory. The 1855 diary of Mrs. America Rollins Butler, for example, is notable for its repeated notation of the packers' trips, and for the variety of interactions which settlers had with the men in the trains. The diary indicates that, by camping close to settlers' homes, packers might be asked to stay for dinner, transact business, or they might simply act as carriers of news.²³ Unfortunately, however, although most reminiscences or diaries acknowledge the importance of packing to the valley, few record the packers' comings and goings as faithfully as did Mrs. Butler, and even she did not record the content of conversations with the packers, except to hint that they brought news. What remains from such documents, therefore, is simply an impression of packing as an information channel of great importance in that period, but, as an interpersonal channel relying on oral communication, it was one which left no traces of the kind of information it carried.

23. Butler, Diary, pp. 351-366, passim.

The one exception to this is that packers are sometimes mentioned as carriers of information about Indian dangers, especially during the period of the Indian wars. Again, Mrs. Butler's diary provides an example:

Monday, August 8. . . a pack train passed this morning; reports much loss of hay and other property below by the Indians also one man killed in the Cannon.²⁴

War news, in fact, gave rise to another kind of information network, building on the interpersonal links which already existed among the people of the region, but operating in a much more organized manner. This network, including informal couriers, military messengers, soldiers, immigrants, packers, and other travelers, simply speeded the routine flow of information in the valley; and, in the case of the couriers and military messengers, it made certain, as the usual interpersonal network would not have, that settlers received important news about danger from Indians.

There were several kinds of agents who carried news along this network. Messengers might be dispatched, either formally or informally, to carry news between military camps,²⁵ or to send some sort of word to outlying areas.²⁶ Some were probably much like the military express riders mentioned in Chapter IV. The informal couriers, however, are more of note in this chapter, since they were undoubtedly residents of the valley,²⁷ concerned about the welfare of their families and neighbors, and therefore more personally concerned about the delivery of the news which they carried.

24. Ibid., p. 351.

25. Ewing, Autobiographical Statement, p. 2 and Cardwell, "Emigrant Company," p. 22.

26. J.M. Sutton, "Account of the Rogue River Indian War," University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS CB Su87; and Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, pp. 410-411.

27. Many of the troops serving in the Indian wars were volunteers, from local settlements, and thus messengers selected from those forces were also likely to be local residents.

The most crucial bit of information thus transported must have been about the possibility of Indian attack in situations so threatening that military authorities recommended that settlers "fort up" at certain well-barricaded settlements. This notice, which was apparently either verbal or written, and not binding on settlers, was sometimes disregarded.²⁸ Nor did it always arrive by messenger. Frequently, the word to "fort up" came from other settlers, or neighbors, as, for example, in October, 1855, when the David Birdseye family hurriedly spread the word among their neighbors that an Indian attack threatened, and urged all to gather at the Birdseye home.²⁹

For settlers on the periphery of the battle area, notice apparently was brought to them in the same variety of ways in which it was delivered to settlers in the Rogue River Valley. In many cases, their knowledge of war activity came from packers, travelers, and others passing by their settlements. In 1853, for example, George Cole was a local packer who hurried to begin a trip to the Willamette Valley to obtain supplies. After outrunning Indians south of Canyonville, he and his partner

. . . warned the settlers, who until now knew nothing of the outbreak. They hastily "forted up" and put out a strong guard up the canyon.

Shortly after reaching Marysville, the news came of a general attack. The first man through after us brought news of the killing of John R. Hardin, Dr. Rose and others. Hardin and Rose we knew well, and had seen them just before, having said good-bye to Hardin at Patrick's ranch, and having stopped with Rose our first night out. Before reaching Roseburg, I met James Kyle, a partner of Wills, with his pack

28. Butler, "Diary," p. 352: "A written notice for us to report to headquarters of course we will not obey. here also comes a verbal notice for us to go to Judge Skinners many men are passing to day talk largely of their anticipated battle. See also Beeson, 'Diary,' p. 103; and Orson Stearns, "Reminiscences" p. 18.

29. "Birdseye Family," Jacksonville Museum, MS.

train of goods from Scottsburg. Learning of his partner's death, he at once gave orders to his train men where to camp with the train and remain until further orders. He immediately started for Jacksonville. . . .³⁰

A similar account is given of the arrival of war news during the 1855 war, when the Indian danger was much more widespread. This reference, and the Cole reminiscence, are particularly notable because they are among the few which give a relatively detailed description of the news that traveled along interpersonal channels in this period:

I am not sure at this date that we had heard of the Indian outbreak at Rogue River. At that time there was no telegraph of /or/ phone lines. Not even a daily mail. But on the forenoon of the 10th a messenger, Henry Yokum, arrived with the information that the Indians were sweeping north, killing and burning and had killed two men at Galesville and at that time had that place surrounded.³¹

Such news was transmitted by whatever carriers were able to deliver it. The men carrying it constituted a rather special network, perhaps better characterized as the regular interpersonal network of the valley, operating in a special capacity. In any case, the chain of news carriers transporting crucial war information during the Indian crises represented a singular, intensified example of the way in which information was usually carried. During such crises, settlers and military and government authorities indicated an awareness of their interpersonal communications channels, by making use of them for particular purposes. It was, perhaps, the crisis environment which was the impetus for that awareness, but, whatever the impetus, it provided a means of organizing for action which was particularly effective, and particularly suited to those circumstances.

30. Cole, Early Oregon, pp. 54-55.

31. Riddle, History, p. 60.

Both packers and informal couriers, it must be stressed, fit into the pattern of interpersonal communication within the valley. They have been mentioned in detail because they were perhaps the most visible carriers of information along the interpersonal network. That there were other agencies and opportunities for interpersonal communication and socialization is obvious, but, as mentioned above, in identifying them, the problem is one of documenting instances in which specific communications took place.

Diaries and reminiscences of the period indicate that there were definite recurring situations where communication may be assumed to have occurred. Those same sources, however, give few clues as to the kind of information which was exchanged. The best that can be done in reconstructing the interpersonal communications network in the early years of the Rogue River Valley is to indicate those situations which were most notable to the settlers as opportunities for socialization.

Social gatherings -- parties and dances -- were no doubt the most welcome relief from the monotony of life in the valley, particularly in the outlying agricultural settlements. Both Welborn Beeson and John R. Tice make mention of social occasions: Beeson's diary refers to "exhibitions" at Oatman's tavern south of Jacksonville, while Tice's letters mention neighborhood dancing parties.³²

Jacksonville itself also staged entertainments. In June, 1853, Jesse Robinson held a Dedication Ball at his new hotel, and Mrs. Butler's diary made note of the occasion:

Wednesday, June 1. This is Wednesday the 8th The
day the grand Dedication Ball in Jacksonvill Mr
Butler and I have at last yielded our consent to go

32. Beeson, "Diary," p. 101; and Tice, "Letters," p. 42.

Mr C_____e has been waiting for last three hours for us The Misses Constants and Overbeck go with us

Thursday, June 9. The ball is at last over I am at home once more O! what an assemblage of beauty and soft nothings the Ball was well attended all the youth and beauty of Jacksonville and the surrounding country were present. . .³³

Not all social occasions were so grand, but where settlements clustered together, there was ample opportunity for socializing. John R. Tice, for example, mentions that social gatherings in the area included the singing school on Saturday evenings, and "church every Sunday in the neighborhood."³⁴ Other contemporary accounts mention assembling for church in neighborhood homes, or for local-level political meetings. Welborn Beeson's diary, in particular, notes the variety of meetings held at such local gathering spots as Wagoner's fort, and later at the new school house, both of which served as all-purpose assembly halls. Church meetings, school board sessions, assemblies of the temperance society, and of political parties, as well as citizens' gatherings were common.³⁵ We may reasonably assume they afforded opportunities for the exchange of information and opinion.

At the same time, especially in the agricultural neighborhoods, the clusters of settlers living together formed small networks of interaction. In some cases, this represented a continuation of the camaraderie that had begun in the immigrant trains. In other cases, it was proximity in isolated settlements which made

33. Butler, "Diary," p. 346.

34. Tice, Letters," p. 43.

35. Dowell, Memo Book for 1855, in Papers, University of Oregon, January 21 entry; MS Ax 31; and Beeson, "Diary," passim.

friendships close. Whatever the reason, contact among neighbors could be quite frequent. A nine-day span recorded in Mrs. Butler's diary³⁶ indicates that, in the Medford-area settlements, any isolation which might have been felt was certainly not accountable to the absence of neighborly visitation:

SATURDAY, JUNE 25. Saturday Cool and pleasant
Mr Butler is building a milk house cousin John
is in the garden No news of importance busi-
ness appears dull A Methodist minister from
Umpqua called to notify us of preaching

SUNDAY, JUNE 26. Sunday morning very cool
and a prospect for rain Cousin and Mr. Butler
will go to Church I cannot go on account of
not having any conveyance and it is too far for
me to walk Mr & Mrs Sampson called in the
afternoon and stayed for tea

MONDAY, JUNE 27. Still very cool but clear
Mr Detrail was here last night I spend the
after-noon at Mr Millers in company with Miss
Griffen assist some in cutting out a fine silk
dress Some talk of a grand fourth of July in
Jacksonvill

TUESDAY, JUNE 28. Time hangs heavy Business
dull and very little a doing at present Jack-
sonville almost vacated on account of the report
of gold mines at Port-Offord Mr McEntyre has
just returned and reports all a humbugg

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29. Have visitors all day Mr
Butler has gone to town with vegetables finds
a poor market for any thing . . .

Mrs. Butler certainly did not seem to lack company, which makes her next entry surprising:

THURSDAY, JUNE 30. Alone all day finish a
new dress Wish I had some new book to read
to pass off time to some prophet or advantage
Mr Butler is honying a sythe and making other
preparations for mowing grass O! dear I am
tyred of the same dull monotony of time.

Despite this, the next day, when Mr. Robinson³⁷ and her neighbor Alex McIntyre called and brought her a ticket for the fourth of July Ball in Jacksonville, she

36. Butler, "Diary," p. 349-350.

37. Possibly Jesse Robinson, owner of the hotel in Jacksonville.

resisted their urgings that she attend. By the end of the week, she was able to settle down for a tranquil Sunday afternoon with her husband

SUNDAY, JULY 3. Sabbath morning; had anticipated going to Church. But I feel to unwell and we shall all stay at home the heat is so oppressive that we all leave the house and retire to the shade of a tree there to improve the mind by reading and social conversation

The accounts which remain to us of the kind of social lives lived by settlers of the Cogue River Valley in this period are heavily weighted in favor of descriptions by those in the agricultural settlements. The frequency of visits among Mrs. Butler and her neighbors is recorded in her diary. School, church and political meetings attended by Welborn Beeson and his family are part of his reminiscences, while John R. Tice's letters mention dances and song-fests. All-night dances, races and quilting bees and dancing parties, traveling shows, and temperance meetings are among the assemblies recorded by others.³⁸ Little is known, however, of the activities of the miners and merchants living in or near Jacksonville.³⁹ It must be assumed that, for the more "respectable" families, such events as the Dedication Ball and the Fourth of July celebration were attended. After 1853, there was a sizable Methodist population in town which eventually led to the building of a church in 1854; that population, in the meantime, undoubtedly held church in their own homes, which afforded

38. Good contemporary sources, other than those cited before, include "McKee Family," Jacksonville Museum, MS, pp. 1-2; and Orson Stearns, "Reminiscences," pp.22-23.

39. The activities of one group of merchants are described in Robert E. Levinson, "The Jews of Jacksonville: Genesis to Exodus," The Call Number, XXIII (Spring, 1962), 4-14. Business records of men like Beekman, Birdseye, Dowell and others, meanwhile, illuminate the commercial and political aspects of life in town.

another type of social occasion. The Catholic and Jewish populations had similar gatherings.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, for miners, as well as for farmers in outlying settlements, trips to Jacksonville for marketing, trade, or other purposes would also present opportunities to meet with others, and enjoy conversation. This could happen any day of the week, but weekends were the usual occasions for trips to town. As noted above, there were the typical mining camp amusements of gambling, drinking, and prostitution, as well as church meetings and trade and marketing opportunities. All of these occasions -- social, business, or otherwise -- gave the area's residents chances to meet and exchange information or gossip.

Travelers or immigrants passing through the area could also participate in the interpersonal communications of the valley, by stopping to talk or stay with friends or hospitable strangers along the way,⁴¹ or by staying overnight at any of the "hotels" which began to appear along the main-traveled trails. This could be a rather uncomfortable experience as some travelers discovered.⁴² Jacksonville's early years were a period of heavy migration from the east. Most immigrants along the trails stayed with their own wagon trains, or camped near

40. Levinson, "Jews of Jacksonville," pp. 10-12; and Walling, History of Southern Oregon, pp. 367 and 371.

41. Many of the reminiscences of the era refer either to stopping at homes during the course of travels, or of entertaining travelers. See Dowell, 1851 Journal and Memo Book for 1855, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS Ax 31, passim; and Frazer "Reminiscences," p. 42.

42. Frazer, "Reminiscences," p. 46; and Alta California, September 13, 1854, p. 2, which offered this information about stops along the Crescent City-Jacksonville trail: ". . .with a very few exceptions, houses of public entertainment between Crescent City and Sailing Diggings /sic/ (a distance of fifty miles) are doggeries in the extreme. It would be well for travellers to make inquiries of some respectable packers with regard to the fit houses of entertainment before he leaves the town, and adapt his stopping accordingly."

settled homesites along the way, but a few, along with the packers, miners and other transients, could have stopped at inns or hotels. In any of these circumstances, there would have been opportunities to meet residents of the Rogue River Valley, and exchange information with them.

Rumors as well as news spread through this interpersonal network. Welborn Beeson's diary provides an example, from the period of the 1855-56 Indian wars:

October 3 Wednesday: I went a hunting Indians. found a trail followed it. come up to them found it to be Dingman and old Charlie instead of Indians, but before I got home It was reported that I had found where 3 or 4 Indians had been. So that is the way the reports get around.

He added a few days later,

. . .I guess every body is more skeered than hurt. there are such a many storys gets around. It is amusing to hear them.⁴³

Whether it was for the exchange of news, gossip, or rumor, however, the interpersonal network of communication in Jacksonville and the settlements of the Rogue River Valley was an important information force. It kept settlers and miners in touch with each other, and, particularly in times of crisis, was a mechanism by which crucial information could be distributed. It was also the means by which settlers in the valley overcame their physical, social and commercial isolations from each other, making less oppressive their isolation from the world outside the valley. Jacksonville, as the area's trade and distribution center, was the hub of the interpersonal network as well, the place where most news arrived from other regions, and the center for social interaction, as

43. Beeson, "Diary," pp. 102-103.

well as of commerce and government.⁴⁴ Its status as the communications hub, moreover, was confirmed by the interpersonal links radiating out from it, to the other camps and settlements of the area.

The picture which emerges of the various mechanisms of interpersonal interaction is sketchy, partly because such interactions involved oral communication, which left no records, and partly because the substance of such interactions was probably taken for granted to the extent that it was rarely thought worthy of preserving in written record. Despite this, the communications significance of the network should not be underestimated: it represented the people's distributing and processing channels. Those fragmentary traces of the extent and variety of interpersonal links and agencies are thus tantalizing to the historian, even though they will probably always be incomplete.

One source of information which fed those interpersonal channels of communication must be treated as separate from the others. Newspapers also furnished information to the settlers of the valley but they, in contrast to the oral sources of news, have left evidence of their existence, and of the kind of information they contained.

There were many sources of printed news available, including magazines which were delivered by expressmen to Jacksonville,⁴⁵ and books, probably carried west by settlers, or delivered by packers and expressmen.⁴⁶ The most

44. Gilmore, "History of Rogue River Valley," p. 348. As center of the packing and expressing trades, this was not unexpected; there were packing supply points outside town, however. See "McKee Family," Jacksonville Museum, MS.

45. The larger Oregon newspapers -- e.g. the Oregonian -- were agents for magazines. Meanwhile, periodicals were brought by mail or express to the area, at high price, but apparently those who ordered them considered them worth the expense. See Beeson, "Diary," pp. 125-126.

46. There were so few books in the area that interest soon began to develop in the establishment of a local library. See Letters, George Ambrose to Joseph Lane, August 21, 1854; and S.H. Taylor to Joseph Lane, September 7, 1854, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection. Ambrose and Taylor were particularly

available printed materials were newspapers, however, including the Spectator, Oregonian and Statesman in Oregon, and the Alta California in California. Settlers in the Rogue River Valley could read these papers to learn of events in other parts of the west; in the Oregon newspapers they could keep abreast of political and commercial developments which might have some impact on their own region. They looked forward, however, to the establishment of publications closer to their own homes.⁴⁷

The Yreka Mountain Herald was first to begin, founded June 11, 1853,⁴⁸ followed by the Umpqua Gazette, established in Scottsburg in April, 1854. The Crescent City Herald began publication only two months later, in June, 1854.

To analyze these newspapers as institutions would take a separate study. They carried marketing information, as well as items about regional, national and international events of importance, often clipped from other papers. Also significant were advertisements, representing merchants and businessmen over a broad region encompassing the Southern Oregon settlements, as well as those in the most northern part of California. These newspapers provided a psychological link to other areas for settlers and miners in the Rogue River Valley. They undertook projects which represented, in part, the interests of those living in the Southern Oregon valleys,⁴⁹ and they provided a forum in which events of importance in Jacksonville and its surrounding settlements could be discussed,

interested in obtaining copies of public documents and reports, for the use of citizens in the valley.

47. Letter, Joseph W. Drew to Joseph Lane, May 1, 1852, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

48. According to Wells, History of Siskiyou County, p. 98, the founding of a paper was the result of a citizens' project. Local residents put up \$1500 for the purchase of material, and the presses were brought into the community by pack mule at 50 cents a pound.

49. Most notable, of course, were the Crescent City Herald's sponsorship of the toll road project in 1854 and 1857, and the Yreka Mountain Herald's promotion of the separate territory movement in 1854.

and in which the views of settlers in that region could be expressed. Letters to the editors of these papers, as well as to the editors of the San Francisco, Sacramento, and Willamette Valley papers were common means by which Rogue River Valley citizens propagandized about the beauty of their valley, and in which they reported on, and argued about, the Indian wars, and other topics of concern.

Such letters to the editors, and the advertisements placed by Jacksonville businessmen, are obvious indices of the use which Rogue River Valley settlers made of these papers. Another measure is the settlers' repeated mention, in reminiscences of the period, of using these newspapers, and the others in Oregon and California, for news about the Indian wars,⁵⁰ and for information about conditions in other parts of the United States.⁵¹ Here again, however, is encountered the problem of having little written evidence of how the interpersonal network consumed the information it obtained from its sources.

Newspapers of the period, however, especially on the frontier, were rallying points for communities, considered to be elements of civilization,⁵² which citizens of an area would want, and whose importance they were quick to assess. Jacksonville was not able to have a newspaper until late in 1855 because its location in an area served mainly by pack trails made it difficult to transport a press and other printing materials to the town. Thus it was to be expected that citizens of the valley would make as much use as possible of those newspapers which were available to them.

Soon after the Umpqua Gazette began publication, a Jacksonville resident wrote a letter to its editor, and commented

50. Ord, Journal, passim. California papers, too, picked up their news of the war in Oregon through the Crescent City and Yreka newspapers: Alta California, August 21, 1853, p. 2; September 11, 1853, p. 1; September 12, 1853, p. 2. Also, Yreka Mountain Herald quoted in Hutchings, Diary, pp. 18-19.

51. Tice, "Letters," p. 28.

52. Oregonian, April 26, 1851, p. 2.

This portion of Oregon, since its early settlement, has labored under many serious disadvantages for the want of a medium through which its citizens might advocate their own rights, and make their wants known to the world; and to this object I have no doubt you will lend a helping hand, inasmuch as such a course, if properly pursued, would prove of vital importance to every citizen of Southern Oregon; to say nothing of the beneficial results to the northern counties of California.⁵³

In that comment was a clue to the inadequacy of the interpersonal communications network of the valley: it was not an organized force for action. Probably without being aware of it, residents of the area looked for an agency, or agencies, which would institutionalize the links and services provided by their interpersonal communications network -- i.e. by carrying government, commercial, religious and social news and announcements in a form which would "make their wants known to the world."

Before the establishment of a newspaper, it was the growth and institutionalization of local government which provided the information-processing and decision-making bodies for putting into effect the people's wishes. The interpersonal distributor-processors of the region helped link the people of the valley, and gave them a way of knowing each other's wishes, in some cases even helping them organize for protection and action in common crises. It remained for the institutional processing agencies to enable them to take organized action for other pressing problems which the community confronted.

53. Umpqua Gazette, May 24, 1854, p. 2.

Chapter VI

Local Government Agencies as Information Processors

Information processors in the community of Jacksonville were primarily those institutions or agencies which took information brought by distributors and distributor-processors, and used it to direct their decisions and actions. They were agencies which, in the matters with which they dealt, reflected the dominant needs and concerns of the area's citizens.

In the sense that the actions or decisions of these processors, once reported to the community through the various distributors and distribution-processing channels, would prompt some discussion or feedback,¹ they themselves became sources of information, and distributors of a sort. For the most part, however, they were information consumers, the seats of organized action, guided in their consumption of information by particular institutional guidelines, procedures, or traditions.

The processors in Jacksonville included a variety of groups or institutions important in that emerging community. Among them were local government bodies, territorial and federal government agencies, military groups, as well as religious and fraternal organizations, and political parties. Any of these, or several, would be appropriate subjects for more detailed examination of the role of processors in Jacksonville and environs; in this discussion, however, the focus will be only on local government.

In previous chapters, attention has been paid to the two traditions on which early residents of the Rogue River Valley drew in coping with the early

1. As would be predicted in models of political systems theory. See, for example, David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965), pp. 363-429.

difficulties which confronted them. Developments in transportation and communication, brought to the community by inward thrusts of government and commerce, or by similar outward thrusts from within the community, reflected a dualism between the extension of established federal or territorial government services to the area, and the application within the community of more flexible and dynamic mining camp traditions. It is important, therefore, to consider the roots of the two traditions.

Jacksonville was unusual as a mining town, because it rather rapidly experienced the influence of two frontiers² -- the mining frontier and the farming frontier -- on its growth and development. The mining frontier, of course, was present from its founding, as prospectors moved into the Rogue River Valley soon after the Clugage-Pool discovery. The farming frontier, meanwhile, appeared the next year, with the arrival of an influx of settlers attracted by the free or cheap land made available through the Donation Land Law, and by the prospect of a ready market for farm products.³

The mining frontier brought a more transient, less stable society,⁴ and attracted settlement to areas which might not have been as rapidly settled otherwise. The miners themselves, however, rarely stayed to establish permanent settlements. Instead, they moved on, once the prospects of an area had been played out, or overshadowed by newer discoveries.

Despite the impermanence of the type of society characteristic of the mining frontier, mining camps and mining districts had certain distinct and

2. Which produced economically interdependent societies, as Farnham points out, "Development," p. 34.

3. See above, pp. 25-27, 55. The rush of the miners to the Rogue River Valley had made the area safer, and provided consumers for farm products. Farnham, "Development," pp. 31-33.

4. For example, Rodman Paul, Mining Frontiers of the Far West, (New York: Holt,

lasting institutions and traditions. Earlier chapters have noted the repeated application of practices developed in older mining communities. Among these were the services offered by expressmen, packers and others who adapted their businesses to the necessities of reaching miners living in remote areas. By the same token, there were distinctive and recurring ways of governing the camps, evolving from the peculiar requirements of mining society. Miners developed their own codes and forms of government, to provide for the orderly filing of claims, negotiation of disputes, and punishment of crimes.⁵ Their legal tradition was based on the idea that property could be exploited or used by individuals, but essentially it was held in common. As it emerged in California during the gold rush, miners' law implied an equality of ownership -- a kind of socialism -- in which the dominant rules were those of shared responsibilities and expenses.

Mining camp governments in California had their roots in the Spanish form of town government. In that earlier political system, "alcaldes" were the head men of Spanish villages, local patriarchs who were justices of the peace, town recorders, and town constables.⁶ After Americans arrived to establish their

Rinehart and Winston, 1963), pp. 1-11, and Billington, Far Western Frontier, pp. 243-268.

5. Sources most helpful to this discussion of mining camp government and the evolution of mining law include Charles Howard Shinn, Mining Camps: A Study in American Frontier Government, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), pp. 45-220. Rodman Paul, California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1947), pp. 197-239. Paul, Mining Frontiers, pp. 161-175; Billington, Far Western Frontier, pp. 235-240; and Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of the Pacific States of North America, Vol. XVIII: California: 1848-1859 (San Francisco: The History Company, Publishers, 1888), pp. 740-741.

6. In a significant deviation from later mining camp traditions, alcaldes had no jurisdiction in mining cases; the Spanish government maintained strict control over lands and resources. Shinn, Mining Camps, p. 84.

dominance in Spanish California, some alcaldes continued to govern, although their powers were limited by the colony's military governors. Once statehood came to California, alcaldes were superseded by American officials, but the alcalde idea lived on in the mining camps which flourished after 1848.

There were three stages in the development of government in mining areas. First, decisions were made simply by an assembly of all the free men in a mining district, although sometimes the miners thus assembled chose to delegate their authority to juries of six or twelve, presided over by an elected officer and a judge. There was no law, no criminal code, and there were no permanent officers in these early camps; there was only the tradition of reliance upon the vote of the "mining courts."⁷

This early stage gave way in later, larger camps to rule by a select or permanent committee or council, to whom authority was delegated by the vote of the miners in a district. The final stage of development was represented by the election of an alcalde, or justice of the peace, aided in some districts by a sheriff and a recorder/clerk. In these latter two, more refined forms of government, the miners were still the ultimate authority, and could overrule or reject decisions or actions with which they disagreed. For the most part, however, councils or alcaldes were left alone to administer the laws of the district, negotiate disputes, collect funds through the registration of claims, and preside over cases brought to trial. By delegating authority in this manner the miners of a district were able to remain scattered throughout the district, preoccupied with the business of prospecting, while order was maintained and laws enforced at a central location.

7. These early camps tended to reserve their deliberations for matters of importance to the whole district; they did not bother with trivial matters of dispute.

Most camps progressed from the more primitive stage of government -- rule by all of the miners assembled -- to the more sophisticated alcalde system; and once a camp reached the alcalde stage, it did not return to the more primitive form, but instead tended to progress to forms of town government typical of more settled communities. This pattern, in which camp government evolved from less permanent to more permanent and stable forms, occurred over and over again, as miners moved from one discovery area to the next, and formed new mining districts. Thus the traditions of mining camp law followed the miners to the new camps in the Northern California mountains, and from there crossed the border into Southern Oregon.

Jacksonville, as noted above, was settled first by miners from California. It was therefore originally organized and governed as had been hundreds of mining camps before it, by the miners of the area acting as a political unit, and later by alcaldes to whom authority was delegated by election. Originally, decisions in Jacksonville and the surrounding camps were made by the miners assembled.⁸ For specific occasions when a presiding officer was needed, the miners elected judges to serve on an ad hoc basis.⁹ This apparently was the procedure used in an 1852 case in which a gambler was accused of murder, and tried in a proceeding which was supposed to be a trial, yet was conducted more as a lynching.¹⁰ The gambler protested his innocence, but the angry miners hanged him anyway.

After that episode, the miners of the area decided to elect an alcalde to preside over their legal and political affairs.¹¹ The first alcalde in

8. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 360.

9. Carey, General History, II, 669; and Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 8.

10. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 9. Reported in Oregonian, May 29, 1852, p. 2; and Oregon Statesman, June 1, 1852, p. 1.

11. Investing him with "unlimited jurisdiction." See Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 361.

Jacksonville was a man named Rogers, elected in 1852. Rogers held office until a dispute over his decision in a case involving two miners prompted a meeting of the "mining court." Acting as a "supreme court of appeal," the miners of the area overruled Rogers' unpopular decision and removed him from office. The story, recorded in many contemporary accounts, as well as in more recent histories, has probably been embroidered considerably in the course of its many re-tellings. It is worth mentioning, however, because implicit in it are these important facts about the early state of government in Jacksonville: there was an alcalde form of government in Jacksonville in 1852, and in accordance with earlier mining camp practices, the alcalde could be overruled by the higher authority of the miners assembled together.¹²

According to most accounts, Sims and Sprenger were two miners who had formed a partnership to work a claim near Jacksonville. Sims left the area for a time, and, in the meantime, Sprenger suffered an injury which left him unable to work. When Sims returned, he dissolved the partnership, and took over the claim without reimbursing Sprenger. When Sprenger took the case to Rogers, the alcalde decided in favor of Sims. Sprenger's lawyer, a fellow miner named Kenney, felt the decision was unfair, so he consulted Paine Prim, another miner with legal training. It was decided that the miners should be gathered together to ask for a rehearing of the case.

12. Several sources discuss the dispute between Sims and Sprenger. See "Pioneer Justice in Oregon," The Overland Monthly, March, 1874, pp. 224-230; Prim, "Judicial Affairs," pp. 8-9; Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 361; Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of the Pacific States of North America, Vol. XXXI: Popular Tribunals (San Francisco: The History Company, Publishers, 1887), pp. 626-630; and Shinn, Mining Camps, pp. 181-189. Spelling of the names of the principals differs: Simms and Springer, according to Prim, Sims and Sprenger according to most other sources; Kenney's name is "Kinney" in Shinn, The Overland Monthly and Bancroft.

As was the custom in assembling such meetings of the miners, the word to gather was carried from camp to camp, by word of mouth.¹³ When Rogers refused the miners' request for a rehearing, the miners declared themselves a court of appeal, elected a chief justice, clerk and sheriff, and commanded Rogers to appear with the court records. When Rogers refused, the miners decided to hold a new trial, formally empanelling a jury of 12, and hearing lawyers representing both sides of the dispute.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, they decided in favor of Sprenger, and Sims agreed to abide by the decision. Rogers still resisted the will of the miners, some of whom then wanted to lynch him. Ultimately the crowd was dissuaded from violence, and Rogers was asked to resign.

Several men eventually held the title of "alcalde" in Jacksonville.¹⁵ Little recorded evidence remains of their activities, however, or of their decisions in administering the laws of the mining districts, but it would be a reasonable assumption that the Rogue River Valley camps were governed according to the same mining codes which its population of former Californians had brought with them from the California camps. Rodman Paul, who says western mining codes had European origins, as well as antecedents in Iowa claim associations and Georgia mining areas, notes that the California codes developed into definite sets of regulations regarding the filing and holding of claims. Miners'

13. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 9, says Sprenger made the trip from camp to camp, calling the miners together. So does Bancroft, who adds that notice of the meeting was posted on a tree in the main street of Jacksonville. Bancroft, Popular Tribunals, p. 628. Shinn, Mining Camps, p. 154, says another man spent a day rounding up all miners in the district.

14. Prim and Kenney represented Sprenger; Orange Jacobs represented Sims.

15. In the act which confirmed the decisions made by Jacksonville's alcaldes, John R. Hardin, U.S. Hayden, Chauncey Nye, Clark Rogers and W.W. Fowler were mentioned as the men who had held the office. Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, No. 5962.

meetings had the power to establish the boundaries of mining districts, to pass their own laws governing claims, and to elect their own officers. The usual law, however, was that a miner was entitled to use the land he claimed, with a right of discovery and development of its resources, so long as he remained to work actively on it.¹⁶

Miners usually set a maximum limitation on the size of claims, and had an informal system of recording claims (often a book kept in a central place such as a saloon at a mining trade center). Disputes over claims were settled either by miners' courts or, where there were elected officials, by those officers or by juries. Criminal cases were usually decided either by the camp as a whole, or by an elected judge and jury, as in the two Jacksonville cases mentioned above. Punishment was limited, in most camps, to whipping, death or banishment, as there were usually no jails.

Of the variety of episodes in which either the alcaldes or the miners' courts may have made decisions affecting Jacksonville and its nearby camps, there are only a few written accounts. Prim mentions, for example, that it was at a meeting of the miners that the name of Table Rock City was abandoned, and Jacksonville was adopted.¹⁷ Cole, as cited before, says it was a meeting of the people's court that set the price of salt at \$16 an ounce, during the winter of 1852, in order to avoid speculation in that commodity.¹⁸ Although the Sims-Sprenger case was probably the best-known case decided by the miners' court, Walling and others mention that the last case in which the miners met to decide a criminal case was in August, 1853, when two small Indian boys

16. Paul, California Gold, pp. 210-217. Other sources for this section on mining codes, see note 5, above.

17. Prim, "Judicial Affairs," p. 3.

18. Cole, Early Oregon, p. 47.

were hanged by an angry mob of Jacksonville citizens at the beginning of that year's Indian war.¹⁹

In mining regions the legal and government institutions which developed out of these peculiar frontier circumstances were efficient as long as the camps remained small and undiversified. A larger population, and a diversified settlement such as that in the Jacksonville area late in 1852, and early in 1853, could begin to pose problems, however. Mining codes were, after all, a rather specialized kind of law, in which most residents of the area may have had some interest,²⁰ but they were suited to only one portion of the community's orientation. Moreover, while Jacksonville was not a rowdy camp by some standards, its recklessness could be cause for worry among those settlers who came to the valley with families.²¹ For those reasons, the area's residents welcomed the coming of county government to the area in March, 1853.²²

There had been a nominal county organization since January, 1852, when the territorial legislature had established the boundaries of Jackson County, apportioned one senator and one representative to the new county, and included it within a judicial district encompassing Douglas and Umpqua counties as well.²³ In the

19. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 363; and Dowell, Letter to Mrs. F.F. Victor, p. 5.

20. Many of the Donation Claim holders tried their hand at mining from time to time, so the two populations were not entirely distinct in their interests. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 339.

21. For example, Letter, Elisha Applegate to his mother, August 20, 1853; O. C. Applegate Papers, University of Oregon, Special Collections, MS Ax 5; Deady, "History," p. 58 refers to the homicides in the southern mining areas; and Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 366, refers to an increase in crime in 1854.

22. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 363.

23. Local Laws, 1851-52, 19-20.

new third judicial district,²⁴ court was to be held twice a year. Sessions began almost immediately, with a term of court at Jesse Applegate's home at Yoncalla in March,²⁵ although a term of court was not held in Jacksonville until September, 1853 because of the Indian wars in the valley.²⁶ The county organization meanwhile, was not operative until commissioners were appointed by the legislature in January, 1853.²⁷ The first meeting of the new board was held March 7, 1853, in Jacksonville.

The simple procedure of extending territorial laws and organization to Jacksonville and Jackson County, furnishing it with a more permanent and stable form of government, brought the second half of the community's dual government tradition. For the first few months of the town's existence, the supreme government authority had been moral law, as expressed through the miners acting in a body, or through their elected alcaldes; with the coming of county organization, however, the supreme authority became the structure of statute law. The new order was built on a belief in the right of the individual to own property, and in the duty of government to protect life and property. Both were

24. Jackson County became a part of the first judicial district in 1852-53. General Laws, 1852-53, 51-53.

25. Held March 22, 1852. Offices of the court were appointed, but no business was transacted. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 398.

26. Haines, Jacksonville, p. 26; and Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 422. Although most accounts say M. P. Deady held district court in Jacksonville September 5, 1853, they also mention that court was not convened until after the signing of the Treaty of Table Rock. Indictments were returned on a few civil cases, but these were not tried. A second term of the district court, meanwhile, had been held at Scottsburg earlier in 1853, according to Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 409. O. B. McFadden served a year as district court judge, Walling, History of Southern Oregon, pp. 366-367, but Deady returned in 1854.

27. Special Laws, 1852-53, 26.

manifestations of the values of the farming frontier, and of the more settled society which that frontier brought with it.

Thus, while in 1853 the agricultural settlers may not yet have become the dominant commercial forces in the area, since they were not yet producing enough farm products to make the valley self-sufficient, politically, they had begun to emerge. The institutions of government which now came to the area were institutions with which they would feel more comfortable; at the same time, the personnel of the new government were also drawn from the farming class. On the newly appointed board of commissioners were James Clugage, who had by then turned from mining to farming, and Abel George and N.C. Dean, both of whom were among the earliest donation claim holders in the valley.²⁸ When the first election for commissioners was held in June, 1853, three other prominent farmers were elected: Martin Angel, B.B. Griffin and John Gibbs (later replaced by Patrick Dunn).²⁹

The government put into operation by these men signaled the end of mining camp law in Jacksonville. No longer was the Jacksonville area a mining district existing as a distinctive political unit, able to set its own rules; it had become part of a larger legal and governmental framework, with agencies and representatives not only on the local level, but also on territorial and federal levels as well. What the community may have relinquished in autonomy, it gained in the capacity to represent its interests, formally and officially, outside its own area. The beginning of county government in 1853 marked the first step in breaking down the region's political isolation.

28. Ibid. Other officers appointed at the time were Sheriff Sykes and Probate Judge Levi Rice.

29. Election returns: Papers of the Provisional and Territorial Governments, No. 1917.

When Clugage, Dean and George convened their first meeting on March 7, they turned immediately to rounding out the official form of government in the valley. At that first meeting, they elected Clugage president, appointed C.E. Alexander clerk of the board, and selected justices of the peace and constables for the region.³⁰ The next meeting saw them appointing several more county officers, and turning to other matters presumably considered of great importance to the new county government. Election precincts were established, and election judges appointed, adding to those precincts designated by the legislative act organizing the county. The other business of the session included the setting of fees for peddlers' licenses, the establishment of rates of toll on ferries, and the designation of several local trails and roads as public highways.³¹

According to the acts creating boards of county commissioners, commissioners were to constitute an agency handling all business and contracts relating to the building, upkeep and repair of public highways, public buildings and other public facilities. To these duties at one point were added the responsibility of performing as school commissioners, in the absence of those officials in a county.³² The Jackson County commissioners' interests were wide-ranging, extending from continued attention to the appointment of officials to fill vacancies, the selection of grand and petit jurors, and the designation of temporary court and county offices.³³ Their most frequent orders of business involved the appointing of viewers to survey and lay out proposed routes,

30. Jackson County Court Proceedings, March 7, 1853. Dr. John W. McCully and Hiram Abbott, Justices of the Peace, and Morgan W. Davis and M.G. Kennedy, constables.

31. Ibid., April 4, 1853.

32. General Laws, 1850-1851, 76-79; General Laws, 1851-1852, 64-65; and Statutes of Oregon, 1854, 381-384.

33. Jackson County Court Proceedings, January 13, 1854: the commissioners designated the Robinson House Hotel as seat for the next term of the District

the hearing of results of road surveys, the granting of ferry and other business licenses, and the approval of disbursements for various kinds of county business.³⁴ The commissioners also levied taxes, earmarking portions of tax revenue for county purposes, and another portion (at first refused by the school district) to the local school.³⁵

The commissioners, in short, transacted a variety of business which made them the principal governmental clearinghouse for the county. Because they were able to delegate their influence and authority to lesser officials and agencies for specialized tasks, a complete government hierarchy rather quickly materialized in the valley. By mid-1853, the new framework of government had been erected, its activities were visible, and its officers had begun to serve. It may still have been quite informal, by some standards, since there were no permanent county offices at that time, and the state of law in Oregon Territory at that time was quite uncertain,³⁶ but the new organization nonetheless appeared to be an improvement over the mining district law.

Court. To this point, court was held in the New State Saloon, according to Walling, History of Southern Oregon, p. 366. In September, a building owned by Drew and Pyle was rented for county offices and court facilities. Jackson County Court Proceedings, September 19, 1854.

34. From payment of expenses of the school district, the county officials and court expenses, to reimbursement for keeping of county charges and lunatics.

35. The organization of School District Number 1 was completed in August, 1854. The county commissioners ordered a tax of 17 mills on the dollar, two mills of which was to go to the schools, Jackson County Court Proceedings, October 2, 1854. The tax was reduced to seven mills at the October 18 special session, but two mills were still designated for the schools. The school district voted a \$500 tax on property in the district at their October 3 meeting, however, relinquishing the county tax money for use in organizing other school districts in the county. Jackson County, Oregon, School District Number 1, School District Records, Jacksonville Museum, MS.

36. The uncertainty of the law was a matter of great concern throughout the territory at this time, since the code was still in the process of being revised. See Governor Gaines' message to the legislature, quoted in Oregonian, December 4, 1850, p. 3; and Oregonian, July 3, 1852, p. 2. For survey of the problem, see Beardsley, "Code Making," pp. 10-26.

Both the mining camp government and the county organization served the emerging community as decision-making bodies, and as the centers for official community action in legal and governmental affairs. These agencies, as well as the other processing agencies of the area -- including the churches, political and military organizations -- are perhaps obviously defined either in terms of the decisions or actions which emanated from them, or in terms of the procedures or criteria by which they arrived at their decisions. In other words, they may be categorized in terms of the authority they interpreted, which was sometimes in the form of dogma (churches), orders and regulations (military organizations) or law (government and courts). Their importance as the primary mechanisms for community decision-making and action, and as interpreters of certain crucial kinds of authority, should not, however, obscure the point central to this dissertation -- that the raw material for their decisions and actions was information, which they received through various channels, and made use of in their deliberations. How they obtained that information, and how they used it, are the matters of interest to this analysis.

In considering the question of how these agencies obtained information, it is helpful to remember that persons within them received information both as individuals within the community, and as officials or members of particular groups. As individuals, they participated in the variety of informal interpersonal and commercial channels of communication which have been discussed in earlier chapters; as officials, they received information through formal, procedural means.

The manner in which information was obtained and used is perhaps best illustrated by focusing on one issue of concern to the valley -- in this instance, on road-building, which, as has been mentioned before, was a matter of acknowledged importance to communications and transportation there.

The County Commissioners were the agency which received petitions for the building or improvement of roads in the valley, appointed viewers for road surveys, and heard reports on the feasibility of road projects. The men who were commissioners were also residents of the valley, open to all the influences, experiences and information which appeared to underline the need to break down the area's isolation from other regions. They had experienced the supply problems in the winter of 1852, which were known to have been caused by snow blockage of roads and trails in the valley; they saw the dangers of isolation from military support and supply during the Indian war of 1853; and they probably also experienced some of the inconveniences of depending on outside regions for supplies and other commodities, including not only supply shortages, but also the high prices which resulted. Moreover, all of these matters were much discussed through the variety of information channels in the community, in newspapers throughout Oregon and in California, in memorials and legislative resolutions, and in private correspondence and conversation. It is not at all unreasonable to assume that the commissioners, elected by the people of the county, would have been sufficiently in touch with their constituents and with the life of the community they served to be aware of the region's interest in, and need for, a better road network in the valley. Nor is it unrealistic to assume that they took that awareness with them to the meetings in which they sat as commissioners and listened to recommendations for road projects. The information they had obtained as private citizens would thus provide a frame of reference from which they would consider information brought to them in their official capacities.

At the same time, of course, information and recommendations concerning road projects came to the commissioners formally, according to the official procedures dictated by territorial road laws. Following laws which went into

effect in 1851, a road-building or improvement project began when a petition, signed by at least twelve householders near a proposed route, was submitted to the county commissioners, asking that a road be surveyed and established. The commissioners could then appoint a panel of three "disinterested householders" who, with the help of surveyors, would view the proposed route, mark it, and submit a report to the commissioners' next meeting, either for or against the proposed road. The report would be read aloud at the meeting and, if the road were approved with no objections from other citizens, it would be marked with road signs, and designated as a public highway. Requests for changes in routes, or objections to the establishment of proposed roads, could be similarly expressed through petition to the commissioners, who would appoint yet another panel of road viewers (in this case a panel of five) who would undertake another survey and make another report.³⁷

These procedures assured an orderly way not only of receiving information about proposed roads or improvement, but also for taking action on that information. It is apparent, however, that the commissioners were passive receivers of that information; they did not officially seek out petitions or requests for road projects and, while they did seek information and recommendations from viewers and surveyors, that information, in accordance with established procedure, was formally brought to them through the road viewers' reports. The passive nature of the information acquisition procedures of such government agencies in Jacksonville was an important factor in the area's communications network, and perhaps an important limitation on the capacities of those agencies to respond quickly to some of the needs of the community.

27. See above, Chapter III, note 21.

Those agencies, as information processors, were like machines fueled by information. They did not fuel themselves, but instead received their crucial input of information from other agencies or individuals, which were either formal or informal supplements to government. Those supplemental agencies or individuals were often specialized forums for the discussion or expression of people's points of view.

The most notable of these was the political party, or the political gathering. With a rather large proportion of its population from the south, and from the border states, the Jacksonville area was a stronghold for Democrats. Many of its prominent citizens were active or became active in territorial politics. There was a variety of meetings in which citizens could assemble to express their political opinions, including party gatherings,³⁸ indignation meetings held to protest against, or agitate for some cause,³⁹ and assemblies such as those in the abortive separate territory movement of 1854.⁴⁰

The separate territory movement, in fact, provides an interesting example of spontaneous political organization. Late in 1853, the Yreka Mountain Herald had begun to promote the idea that a separate territory be carved out of the southern part of Oregon and the northern portion of California. The idea received support in both regions, in Jacksonville from some of the valley's most prominent citizens. Rogue River Valley supporters of the separate territory

38. Beeson, "Diary," passim mentions both Republican and Democratic party meetings in the valley in 1856. Meanwhile, the Whigs were still a significant force in the Territory at this time.

39. Beeson, "Diary," p. 123; a meeting was held to protest his father's pro-Indian stance during the Indian wars. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, pp. 368-369 mentions a meeting held in 1855 by the women of the area to protest the apathy among the men of the valley.

40. Described in Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 427-428; Bancroft, Oregon, 1848-1888, pp. 254-255; and Carey, General History, II, 492. See also Letter, J.C. Avery to Joseph Lane, September 16, 1854, Oregon Historical Society,

movement assembled for a convention at the Robinson House January 7, 1854, and with great regard for procedure, elected officers, selected a committee to draft a memorial, subsequently unanimously adopted, appointed a secretary to correspond with other counties about the movement, selected delegates to the up-coming convention, and duly notified the area's newspapers of their actions.⁴¹ When delegates from both Northern California and Southern Oregon assembled at Jacksonville January 25, the same attention to organization was evident. On the first day of the gathering, officers of the convention were elected, a credentials committee appointed, and another committee selected to report a permanent slate of officers to the convention. The next day, permanent officers were chosen, a committee of correspondence appointed to write to other counties to gain support for the movement, and other committees were selected, to draft memorials to the territorial, state and federal legislatures, and to circulate a petition for dividing the territory.⁴²

The separate territory movement planned to meet again in April 1854, but that convention was never held. There was too much opposition to the movement from political leaders in California and Oregon,⁴³ and too little support from other citizens. Still, it was an interesting episode for two reasons: first, it indicated how tradition -- in this case, political tradition -- could provide guidelines for the organization of citizen action; obviously, the men of the two

Lane collection. Avery blamed some of the disaffection between the northern and southern portions of the Territory on the inadequacy of mail service in the south.

41. Oregonian, February 11, 1854, p. 2. Notice was also sent to the Oregon Statesman, the Weekly Times, Oregon Spectator and Yreka Mountain Herald.

42. Oregonian, March 1, 1854, p. 2. Notice again sent to the other papers.

43. See, for example, Joseph Lane letter, Umpqua Gazette, June 23, 1854, p. 2.

conventions drew on their own past political experiences, or on their knowledge of political procedure, to direct the organization both of their movement, and of their two conventions. Second, this was one example in which a citizens' organization already offered the kind of "medium through which its citizens might advocate their own rights, and make their wants known to the world," which the correspondent of the Umpqua Gazette was to request later in the year.

Other agencies operated not only to make informational inputs into the regularly functioning government bodies of the area, but also to provide means for taking extraordinary governmental action during periods of crisis, when the regular government agencies were unable to respond quickly enough. The Indian wars, as might be expected, provided the primary impetus for crisis response. Expressions of need for protection, and requests for action frequently took the form of petitions circulated among citizens of the valley, and sent either to military encampments, or to the territorial government.⁴⁴ Direct citizen action could also result in the formation of military companies,⁴⁵ the designation of officers to lead volunteer military organizations,⁴⁶ the appointment of special government bodies to serve during the crisis,⁴⁷ and the passage of resolutions expressing public opinion about the wars.⁴⁸

44. Petitions asking for military aid were sent in 1851 to General Phil Kearney, according to Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 349; and in 1853 to Captain Alden at Ft. Jones near Yreka. See above, Chapter II, note 70; and Hutchings, Diary, pp. 18-19.

45. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 410. Hutchings, Diary, p. 18; and Dowell, "Indian Wars," n.p.

46. Sutton, "Rogue River War," p. 5.

47. Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest, I, 411, says the Board of Commissioners acted as a Committee of Safety in 1853. Alden cited above, Chapter II, note 70, says there was a board of men, specially selected, who served as "commissioners of military affairs."

48. For example, the citizens' meeting calling for extermination of the Indians after killing of Thomas Wills in 1853. Dowell, Letter to Mrs. F.F. Victor, p.4.

These activities, which allowed citizens to supplement the regular structure of government in the area with a crisis structure of their own, were other examples of the way in which extraordinary events or crises served to mobilize citizens and prompted them to strengthen and expand their information network in the valley. Episodes during the Indian wars had an impact on the area's communications and government similar to that which the gold discovery had on initial settlement of the area: they created a feeling of community, and gave it expression and cohesion somewhat earlier than those events might have been expected to occur naturally.

The framework of government created by the extension of territorial and federal agencies and laws to Jackson County appeared to be an improvement over the earlier mining camp law. It provided a much more organized mechanism for action, better able to grow with the community, and, in peripheral ways,⁴⁹ more able to make known the community's needs to individuals and agencies of government outside the Rogue River Valley. Nevertheless, implicit in the activity of citizens groups, and in their various means of organizing for crisis response, was an indication of an important defect in the new order -- perhaps in all organizations so dependent on procedure: it did not respond quickly. In one sense, of course, citizen action was simply a continuation of both the miners' court and the "wolf meetings" traditions of earlier days, the two manifestations

49. Some agencies, such as the courts and, to an extent, the schools, were part of a hierarchy which required reports from one level of the hierarchy to the next. This kind of intramural government communications was one way, albeit indirect, that citizens' needs became known outside the valley. Other governmental mechanisms, including participation in the election of local representatives to the territorial legislature, and of territorial officers, including the delegate to the U.S. Congress, provided more direct means of selecting persons to speak for the region. Interest in government activities was high. See Letters, George Ambrose to Joseph Lane, August 21, 1854, and S.H. Taylor to Joseph Lane, September 7, 1854, Oregon Historical Society, Lane Collection.

of frontier democracy in the Oregon Territory which still had strong influence in the area. Equally important, however, was that citizen action provided the means of responding to a particular kind of need which the regular government forms were not able to meet.

PART III

CONCLUSION

Chapter VII

Speculations and Directions

There is a temptation, when summarizing the findings of an exploratory study, to draw too many conclusions. Tantalizing speculations hover over the data, and patterns and relationships in the evidence suggest themselves, perhaps too easily, to the researcher. Sometimes speculations provide valuable new directions, and at other times they are simply misleading. They are almost always interesting, however, which is why they are so attractive; they help reveal the potentialities of research.

An exploratory study is itself a rather speculative venture. Ideally it ends in the formulation of hypotheses or research questions for further investigation, and in the clarification of concepts on which future study might be based, but it begins with assumptions and speculations, and builds on, among other things, the insights which grow out of research. An exploratory study does not test hypotheses, it merely points to those which should be tested.¹ It should be used to cull from all of the possible speculations which arise from consideration of a topic those which are most promising for more detailed and comprehensive examination. In this process of selection, unfortunately, some provocative speculations must be abandoned, or at least temporarily set aside. Such was the case in this study of Jacksonville.

For example, one speculation in particular kept suggesting itself as an explanation for the way in which communications networks were formed in Jacksonville. Citizens of the Kogee River Valley responded in different ways to different kinds of situations, suggesting corresponding differences in the communications networks through which these responses were expressed or

1. Claire Selltitz, et al., Research Methods in Social Relations (Rev. ed., New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959), pp. 51-65.

channeled. There appeared to be a dichotomy between what might be called "immediate action" and "deliberative action" response situations.

Jacksonville as a community was definitely faced with at least two different types of stress in its early years of development. One type included those problems which were predictable, or which, if not predictable, were at least not a direct threat to the continued existence of the community or to the lives of persons living there. These were "routine" problems, to which a deliberative type of response was appropriate. Another type included those unpredictable situations which did pose definite threats to the community from time to time. These obviously, were the area's crises, in which immediate action or response was necessary.

Distinctions between immediate and deliberative action responses, and between routine stresses and crises, are speculations which could lead to the formulation of hypotheses about how communications networks were formed in "routine" or "non-routine" situations, or about why such response mechanisms were or were not effective in particular situations. These are legitimate matters for future study, but the hypotheses which they suggest are one step beyond the fundamental questions which this exploratory study must ask. They are speculations, in other words, which, for the time being, must be set aside.

What, then, should emerge from this study? To answer that question, it is necessary to review briefly the basic assumptions which underlay the direction and the organization of this project. The principal assumption, of course, was that isolation was the motivating force behind the establishment and maintenance of communications networks in the frontier community of Jacksonville. The first question which must be answered, therefore, is, what is the definition

of isolation? In this study, it has been variously described: it was physical or geographical separation from other regions, but it was also the absence or limitation of contact among commercial or political entities, as well as the feeling of personal estrangement which individuals felt as the result of being cut off from contact with other persons. All of these are definitions which are reasonable, and supported by the evidence about life in early Jacksonville. Together, however, they constitute a rather vague and shifting definition of isolation which is not easy to use in formulating research questions for future projects.

Clarification of the concept is possible, however, based on the evidence from this study of Jacksonville. Isolation was a condition in the community's environment. Since there were several environments for the community (actual physical surroundings, as well as commercial, political and social environments) there were thus also several conditions of isolation, all of which implied a state of separation or estrangement of some sort.

It is possible to study isolation, thus defined, not as a vague force shaping the development of institutions in a community such as Jacksonville, but as a condition to which the area's citizens had to relate in some way, usually through establishing or improving transportation or communication links within the community, or from the community to entities outside its boundaries. With that definition, it is possible to focus on the communications links which are established in particular episodes, or as the result of interest in particular issues, rather than on isolation itself. In the community of Jacksonville, there were certain episodes or matters of concern in the community which would be ideal foci in studies of this type. Before such projects can be undertaken, however, one other set of definitions must be clarified.

In this exploratory study, it was assumed that it is possible to describe the structure of communication in a community such as Jacksonville by categorizing individuals, agencies and institutions in terms of the extent to which they were distributors, distributor-processors or processors of information. These three categories describe the functional units of the area's networks of communication. If the definition of communications networks is to be clear, the definition of each of these units must be clear as well.

There appear to be no problems with the category of "distributors," which this study has suggested were those agencies or individuals which carried information and news into and out of the valley, without interacting with it, or altering it substantially. By the same token, describing "processors" as those agencies or institutions which consumed information or news in order to make it useful for decision-making or action-taking on behalf of the community, is also reasonable and workable.

The middle category of "distributor-processors" is one in which problems arise, however. This was probably the category of greatest importance to the early development of communications in the Rogue River Valley. Did the agencies and individuals labeled "distributor-processors" by this study perform a distinct function, or was it an amalgam of those functions performed by agencies and individuals in the other two categories? If the latter is true, there is little value in the categorization, since it fails to describe adequately the differing functions of the area's units of communication. The evidence from this study suggests that the distributor-processors of Jacksonville did have a distinct communications function in the community: they were the means by which individual and interpersonal, rather than group or institutional communication and decision-making took place. Rather than representing a function, and a category, somewhere between distributing and processing, however, they

actually may have represented another level at which these two functions occurred.

Obviously, still more work is needed on the conceptualization of the categories which describe information transmission in the community, as well as on the definition of communications networks. For this reason, it is suggested that the first step in further research -- the first project which should emerge from this exploratory study -- be a brief return to those areas of study which originally suggested these terms. Information theory and general systems theory were the fields from which the analogies of information distribution and processing were drawn. Ideas suggested by these bodies of theory should be reconsidered, not for the purpose of building of models into which the historical evidence of future research might be made to fit, but to provide a better understanding of the general concepts of information transmission. Nor are systems theory and information the only other fields which might be consulted; transportation history is another discipline which might contribute insights which would be valuable.

Research projects emerging from the findings of this exploratory study, however, should attempt refinement of such key concepts within the context of the examination of particular episodes or issues in the community's development. Relating specifically to communication in Jacksonville, the following studies seem most promising:

Particular episodes or issues of concern to the community could serve as the focus for studies of the function of specific communications networks in the community's early history. For example, the Indian wars represented a period in which citizens of the area were confronted with a problem to which they responded both through official military and government channels, and through their own

informal, interpersonal networks of communication. By studying events occurring during the Indian wars, and by examining the agencies and channels by which information was distributed and processed, it might be possible to determine which networks were most important or effective in channeling response to this particular crisis. Moreover, by examining the content of messages sent through these networks, it might be possible to draw some conclusions about the way in which such networks were used.²

Roads, meanwhile, were another matter of importance to the community of Jacksonville, discussed and acted upon through various of the valley's information agencies. Discussion of the need for roads, as well as proposals, petitions and official reports leading to community action, were carried through interpersonal channels, and through government, commercial and military organizations. A study of the communications networks formed in connection with this issue might reveal differences in the way in which information channels and agencies were used in organizing the community to action in meeting a particular community need.

Other types of focused studies might be undertaken. One possibility would be the comparison of networks formed in two different types of situations -- contrasting the agencies and channels used in crises such as the Indian wars, for example, with those used in discussion of issues such as the need for better roads in the valley. Another possibility would be to focus on only one channel or agency, to examine the variety of issues with which such an agency or network might deal over a limited period of time, and in what capacities (i.e. as distributor, distributor-processor, or as processor).

2. Such a study has been done by Roger A. Simpson, "The Functions of Communication Activities in Frontier Warfare in Washington Territory, 1855-56" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1973.)

Any one of these projects would be an appropriate place for further research to begin. Each would provide an appropriate focus for the study of specific ways in which communication links in early Jacksonville were established as a means of relating to particular conditions of isolation in the community's environment. Only two areas of concern need be noted.

First, it might be tempting to try to encompass too many agencies or channels in a study of community communications networks. It would be easy for such research, while attempting to be comprehensive, to become unwieldy. The projects suggested above involve topics which are broad enough to lead to significant conclusions, but which are focused enough to be manageable. Any other research in this area should attempt to achieve the same kind of balance.

Second, there might be some difficulty in documenting the communications activities of particular agencies. As noted in Chapter V, for example, interpersonal communication in Jacksonville was rarely recorded, and yet it was one of the most important channels by which information was distributed. Still, there are enough records of various types -- including accounts of life in Jacksonville as reported in publications printed in other communities, local business records, military and governmental documents, as well as a good selection of personal correspondence, reminiscences and contemporary histories -- from which information about most agencies and individuals in the community can be obtained. From this evidence, most communications activities can either be directly documented, or inferred. Source problems are not peculiar to communications histories; they can be overcome in this field, as in others, by the intelligent use of those documents and materials which are available. In such limitations lie both the burden and the challenge of the historical approach.

These are the rather specific directions which might be taken in further projects of this type. What should have emerged from this exploratory study, and what this conclusion has attempted to indicate, are particular areas or topics which are most promising for future study. Beyond these specific recommendations, however, there should be a more general result: it is hoped that this study has conveyed enthusiasm for this approach to the study of communications and of communications history. It has its limitations, of course, not the least of which may be the tendency for too much to be expected of it. Still, the direction which this dissertation has called "analytic history" has one virtue which commends it to further use: it appears to reveal more possibilities than it denies.

PART IV

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Abbreviations used:

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 PHR -- Pacific Historical Review
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