

TAKEN FROM THE CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF OREGON:

"REFLECTIONS'

Related by, Frederick LeRoy Trullinger

"My earliest recollections go back to my visits with Grandfather and Grandmother Wood at Hillsboro, Oregon, when I was about four years old. I can remember very well when my sister, Mary, was born. Brother Carl and I were with my grandparents a month before the event. After Mother had fully recovered, we were brought home from Hillsboro by horses and hack. It was an all-day trip to drive 22 miles in February's muddy road."

"When we arrived home, there was a neighborhood party of happy people. We had not been told of our sister's arrival. When the party was over, we were very surprised to find that someone had left their baby. I called attention of Mother to the baby and, imagine my surprise to learn that I had a baby sister. I was six years old at that time."

"My father took me to Portland when I was around 7 or 8 years old, on the steam train. It was a combination

freight and passenger train, with one coach at the end of a long freight train. Going down the hill into Portland, (now McLaughlin Boulevard), the engine seemed to drop out of sight as it rounded a steep curve. Several breakmen were stationed along the tops of the freight cars to operate the hand brakes going down 4th Street, which was about a 4% grade. It always took two engines to pull the train up the hill, one in front and one boosting from the rear. There was plenty of noise with smoke and black cinders pouring out of the smoke stack. There were several stops along the route to pick up and to pile wood in the engine tender. There were also several water stops at the water tanks, where we stopped for the water to make the steam, which made the train run. One might liken it to our modern gas stations along our highways."

(Early experiences of a Country Boy, visiting
in a big city.)

"Portland was around the 1880's. a city of 10,000 people. All traffic was horse-drawn. I was walking along, about $\frac{1}{2}$ -block behind my father 'gawking' along like a country kid would do, when suddenly I came abreast of a man standing at the side of a cigar store. I looked up and there, a big Indian stood, with his right hand raised in the air, as though he was going to hit me with a big rock. I let out a yell and ran to my father, who had stopped when he heard me yell. He laughed and took my hand and led me back and explained that what I saw was a wooden Indian, holding a handfull of cigars. That evening, we went to a variety show, which was my first. The actors would come on the stage and perform acrobatic stunts. At the end of every stunt, I would yell, 'You can't do that, Papa.' Everybody would laugh.

On these business trips to Portland, my father would sell flour to various wholesale grocers, one of whom bought a carload and went bankrupt before he paid for it. My father lost a lot of money, which he could ill afford to lose.

He was so discouraged for many years, he would sell no flour in Portland."

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- 1883 - 3 months at North Yamhill, OR
- 1884 - 6 months at Hillsboro, OR
- 1885 - 9 months at Public School, North Yamhill, OR
- 1886 - 9 months at Public School, North Yamhill, OR
- 1887 - 9 months at Private School, North Yamhill, OR
- 1888 - 6 months at Astoria, OR
- 1889 - 3 months at Junior High, Seattle, WA
- 1889 - 3 months at Junior High, Seattle, WA
- 1890 - 3 months at Survey & Architectural - DeBusey & Kemp,
Monteseno, WA
- 1891-1893 - 2 years at Monmouth, OR
graduating B.S. Degree in Teaching
- 1893 - Taught school - 3 months at Willamina
- 1894 - Ran for office of Surveyor of Yamhill County
- 1895 - Joined Masons at LaFayette Lodge #3
- 1895 - 6 months teacher, Fairdale
- 1896 - 1897 - Teacher at #8 Setton District
- 1897 - August 1, Postmaster at North Yamhill

FRED TRULLINGER'S SCHOOL EXPERIENCE, ETC.

Written by, Fred Trullinger

"Our home was a mile and a half from town. My father did not believe in starting his children at too young an age. Therefore, I was nine years old and my brother, Carl was seven before we started to school. We had to walk to school over muddy roads and paths, in all kinds of weather. My first schooling was a three-month spring term, the year of 1883. There were only four pupils in the class and I was more than a head taller than others in the class. A nine-year old boy was rather out of place with six year olds. I started in the first grade and during my three months, I learned to read and write the simple words. My teacher was a very strict disciplinarian - any little gesture not to her liking, you were given a demerit on your record sheet. If you received twenty demerits over a period of time, you were given a dose of "hazel switch tea," which you remembered for some time. I never quite reached the twenty mark, but I sure was worried. My next school was in Hillsboro, Oregon, the fall of 1884. I was living with my Grandmother Wood. My grandfather was away on a trip East, traveling on the first through-train out of Portland, by the Northern Pacific. All of the old Oregon Pioneers were invited."

"I was ten years old and growing up. When I registered for the "second reader" in school, my teacher and cousin, Lou Morgan, thought I should be in the third reader. It was necessary that I learn to add and subtract figures up to ten. Skipping the second grade made the reading rather hard, but after three months, I made the grade. Fall term, I was back in Yamhill in the fourth grade and had learned my multiplication table up to the 6's, so at the end of the six months, I was passed into the eighth grade, skipping the seventh."

"In 1886, I attended a private school in Yamhill with Prof. Williams in charge. Here I studied Latin, English Grammar, Arithmetic, along with higher reading."

"In the spring of 1887, my father rented his flour mill to H.M. Daniel and moved the family to Astoria, Oregon, where he took a job as Operating Superintendent of my Uncle John's sawmill. I entered school in Astoria during the fall term and had three months in the 9th grade. My father was not satisfied with his work as he had too many nephew bosses. So he accepted a job as superintendent of the Western Sawmill on Lake Union in Seattle, Washington, owned by the Denny's."

"We four children started school in the 'Old Denny School.' I took the school books that I had used in the private school in Yamhill and in the 9th grade in Astoria, Oregon. The Principal at the Denney School, decided I should go to the Central High School on Second Avenue, between Pine and University."

"In 1888, the Central School burned down and we were temporarily housed in the old roller skating rink. I was a junior at the time, in a school of ninety pupils with three teachers: Mrs. Shumway, Miss Coy and Prof. Hollenbeck. It was rather a crowded and primitive set-up. We were there three months of our spring term and three months of the fall term, 1889."

"It was during the spring term that the Great Seattle Fire burned every building surrounding the old wooden skating rink. I helped to move out the school books and desks. We piled them up on the half-block used as a play ground. The following week, I helped to move them back."

"The fire burned over 93 acres. All buildings were destroyed on the waterfront and back to Third Street."

"Soon after the fire, my father took a job to build a sawmill in Montesano, Washington, so the family moved to Montesano. I remained in Seattle, boarding with a cousin on Grant Street. I completed my junior year in high school."

"After rejoining my family in Montesano, Washington, I went into a surveyor's and architect's office to learn to be a surveyor, and the essential procedures of an architect. I was with them for six months, helping them carry chains, holding the staff for running lines, made blueprints of surveys for new town additions, etc. I received no pay - my father paid them \$15 per month for my training. I came out a full-fledged surveyor. Oh yes?"

"In the meantime, my father, having completed the mill in Montesano, took an interest in a company building a saw-mill at Hoquiam, Washington. The family moved to Hoquim, leaving me in Montesano, where I lived with the surveyors until 1890, when my family moved back to the flour mill in Yamhill, Oregon. I was 16 years old - I worked in the mill until the fall of 1890."

"My Grandfather Wood had his hop yard ready for production and wanted me to learn to dry hops so that I could look after the drying. Jack Killen, an old time hop grower living on the Dick Baird Pike farm, taught me how to dry hops. From 1891 until 1895, I dried Grandfather's hops, without any pay. He had two dry kilns so that I was a pretty busy boy each fall. The secret in drying hops was to spread them on the screen floor in an even thickness. In this way, the heat coming from below would pass through the hops in an even heat until they were dry. It took about 20 hours for each lot. After dried, we would shovel them into the storage warehouse where they were left for two or three weeks, or until they passed through the curing sweat. They were then baled into oblong bales, with a hop press. While still in the press, a burlap covering was sewed on by hand. Each bale weighed about 200 pounds."

"As an expert boss drier, I received \$5 per 12-hour day. We burned about one half of a cord of wood each day in four foot lengths. Two hop stoves in each 30-foot square kiln."

"The winter of 1890, I went to a private school in Yamhill, Oregon. I completed my high school learning. My curricular included English and Latin Grammar, advanced Geography, Philosophy, Chemistry, Ancient History and Algebra."

"The fall of 1891, I persuaded my father to let me go to college, as the private school dwindled out for lack of finances."

"My father talked to the Yamhill County Surveyor about my schooling and he recommended Monmouth College of Education. The surveyor had a brother-in-law teaching Math and Chemistry there. On his recommendation, I reported at Monmouth and contacted Prof. Spellman, the brother-in-law."

"I found a place to sleep in the home of the Frazer family. An old farmer family that had recently moved to Monmouth. They had a family of three boys and three girls. By doubling up with one of the boys, I had a place to live for \$1 per week. I got meals at the dining hall for \$3.50 per week. They fed us mostly potatoes and gravy, topped off with applesauce and salt-rising bread. Little, if any, meat. Usually had eggs and pancakes for breakfast, with milk to drink."

"Tuition per quarter amounted to \$25. In other words, my schooling cost me about \$300 per year. My grandfather loaned me the money, which I paid back working on his farm, vacation time, at 50¢ per day, for 12 hours of work. Grover Cleveland was President of the United States at that time and conditions were hard. Money was scarcer than hen's teeth."

"The first year at Monmouth, I was a member of the Senior Class graduating, as a well qualified teacher. (Class of 1892.) I had made a very good showing in my Chemistry class and Prof. Spellman took a liking to me. He invited me back the second year, offering me my tuition free, if I would assist him in teaching Chemistry. I accepted."

"My days were very busy. One day I would have the

experiment class for 40 minutes. The next day I'd have the other half of the class reciting for 40 minutes. Along with this work, I had the advanced class lessons to learn and recite, every school day. My curriculum included Trigonometry, Geometry, Astrometry, Latin, German-English, Philosophy, Higher Chemistry, Zoology, teaching in the Practice School, etc., etc. Along with my work in the gymnasium; I was an expert on the Spanish rings and boxing, all in all, I was kept busy."

"Near the end of my school year, I had an opportunity of taking an examination for appointment to West Point. I was recommended by our Congressional Representative from Roseburg; Benger Herman. I did a lot of preparatory cramming on spelling, grammar, history, etc., for this exam. There were about forty boys, between the ages of 16 and 22, that took the exam."

"My gymnasium training helped me to win by 4 points over the other contestants, but my scholastic training was not good enough to win over a 22-year old school teacher, Amos Frieze. He was also a resident of Roseburg, where our Congressional Representative lived."

"Mr. Frieze got the appointment and later became quite a famous engineer. He had charge of the work, building the San Pedro, Los Angeles Harbor. Also in charge of improvements at the Mouth of the Columbia jetty work and many other Pacific Coast harbors."

"I was one of 4 boys graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. I was 19 years old. The older graduates secured very good positions as principals of our better schools. I was too young to get a principalship so had to content myself with small country schools."

"The first three months I was a substitute teacher at Willamina, Oregon. My second school was an ungraded school at Fairdale, west of North Yamhill. I had 60 pupils in all different grades. My third #8, a notorious, bad-boy school near McMinnville. I boarded myself and was paid \$40 per month. I had as many as 52 cases of corporal punishment in 3 months."

"The country school superintendent came out to show me how to teach without so many whippings. He took over and I sat back and let him show me. He lasted less than two hours and left in disgust. I never had anymore help from him."

"My school teaching experience ended with this last experience in 1897. I was 23 years old."

"My father had been a big help in helping Thos. H. Tongue win the nomination as Representative in the U.S. Congress. For this help, Mr. Tongue asked what he might do for my father to show his good will. My father suggested that he might recommend me for the job of Postmaster at North Yamhill, Oregon. I got the job and took over August 1, 1897. In 1895, I got the nomination as Surveyor of Yamhill County. Yamhill County was a strong Republican County so I was pretty sure I'd get elected. I was defeated by 600 votes, which as it later turned out, I was very thankful."

"In 1895, I was made a Master Mason at LaFayette Lodge No. 3. It was the third oldest Masonic Lodge in the Northwest and one of the three lodges necessary to establish the first Grand Lodge in the Northwest."

"Our meetings were held in a very small upstairs room over a general store operated by R.P. Baird, who was also Master of the Lodge. C.C. Poling, father of Dan Polling, was senior warden. The room was lighted by coal oil and was bare of any carpet. I was just 21 years old and the first new member that they had for several years. The members were all old men. They elected me Secretary, a job I held for several years."

"Apparently my becoming a member broke the ice and soon after, we had several applications from good and true men living in or near North Yamhill, Oregon. I was elected as Master of the Lodge in 1907."

"I have helped LaFayette Lodge #3 A.F. & A.M. celebrate its 50th (1901), its 75th, (1926), and its 100th (1951) years. Few, if any living Mason, ever had that distinction.

I gave an historical talk at each of these celebrations, giving details of the early history of the lodge and

happenings down through the years."

"In 1958, I celebrated my 50th year as a member of the Scottish Rite Free and Accepted Mason.

Along with my teaching profession, I was somewhat involved in farming. I grew hops, grain and even ventured into the growing of apples. None of these ventures proved to be profitable in money, but I did gain a lot of experience that proved to be of great advantage to me in my later operations. I learned to think and to plan my future life on this foundation of doing things for myself.

I succeeded Harry Gist as Postmaster, paying him \$40 for the office fixtures. Times were hard. A 4th Class Post Office depended upon stamp cancellation, of which there were very few. I received \$20 per month from the Government for transferring Tillamook County mail to the stage. The stage, in those days, was a horse-drawn buckboard that carried the mail over the coast range mountains to the town of Tillamook, a distance of 40 miles. The \$20, along with the cancelled stamps, paid me about \$40 per month. My board and lodging cost me \$10 a month. So you see, being Postmaster wasn't bad considering the times. Men worked 60 hours a week on farms for \$10 per month and board. I had to get up at 5:30A.M. to cancel the stamps and to make up the mail for the early train to Portland, due at 6:20A.M. Up to this time, I had remained in bed until seven or eight o'clock, so I had to change my way of living.

After a year of Postmastership, I decided to put in a small stock of school supplies, which added a few dollars profit per month. I also arranged to have a free reading room in the back room of the Post Office, in which local people gave magazines, books, etc. This proved to be very popular with all ages, the young folks, as well as the old folks, and all free.

The bicycle came in along about this time. None of the hardware dealers cared to sell bicycles. I decided to take on the agency to sell Columbia and Vedette(?) bicycles, two of the most popular brands at that time. The Columbia sold for \$150, the Bedette(?) for \$75. The first year, I sold

33 bidettes(?). I advertised the number of sales by stacking the shipping crates on the top of one another, along side of the Post Office building. This same building was first built for a bank. In 1957, it was converted into a restaurant.

The sale of bicycles added considerably to my income, so much so that in 1899, I had saved seven to eight hundred dollars.

Next door to the Post Office was a hardware store, owned and operated by a Mr. Austin and a Mr. Willsey. Mr. Austin decided to sell his interest in the business, so propositioned me to buy him out. I told him I only had \$800, which was not enough to buy his half-interest. He accepted the \$800 as partial payment and said he would allow me one year to pay the balance, which amounted to \$2,000. I laid the proposal before my father and asked for his advice. After a few days of thought, my father advised that I not accept Mr. Austin's offer as the other partner, Mr. Willsey was an old man of 65 years and I should not get myself involved in such an undertaking. Their sales amounted to around \$8,000 per year and he didn't think it justified my proposed investment, especially since I had only \$800 to pay down. He considered it too much of a risk, but after due consideration, I went against his advice and entered into the partnership. We called the adventure Willsey & Co. I did not wish my name to appear as the Post Office department might object to my outside interests. In the hardware operation, I kept the books and helped in the store part time as my sister, Grace, was my full time helper in the Post Office.

Mr. Willsey was paid \$40 per month salary and I took none from Willsey & Co. We divided our profits at the end of each year. The first year, we nearly doubled our sales as we had a lot of Hop Dryer installations, stoves and pipe sales. We made the pipe in the tin shop, which was a part of our operation. Mr. Willsey was a very good, practical tinsmith and used the services of a traveling tinsmith that came by in the summer to help. We sold farm machinery

and Studebaker wagons, hacks and buggies. Also, a good business in farm pumps, which I installed for the customer. I also went out into the field and set up binders, mowers and rakes which came to us knocked down in crates. Altogether, our profits were enough that I paid off the Austin note and had a balance to my credit.

At the end of our third year, Mr. Willsey had an offer to buy his interest in the business. He was getting along in years and wished to retire on a farm. Instead of taking on a new partner, I decided to buy his interest. The deal was made and I continued the business under the name of F.L. Trullinger.

In 1889, Willsey & Co. bought a grain and hop storage warehouse on the railroad and rented another warehouse on the same side of the track, owned by Tom Perry. One we operated for cleaning and storing grain, the other for storing hops. This adventure proved very profitable and when Mr. Willsey sold out to me, I entered into a partnership with Ed Salficky. We became known as Ed Salficky & Co., I being the 'Co.' We operated at a very good profit for three years when we sold our interests to Robert Bros.

In 1903, I entered into a partnership with Ben Laughlin. Ben purchased a well-located piece of property, 70 X 90' on the corner of Main and Maple Streets at Yamhill, Oregon. He planned on building a wooden building 50 X 60' and opening a grocery store with Harry Gist (local man) as his clerk.

Ben had recently returned from mining in Alaska with a nice bundle of \$10,000. I persuaded Ben to join me in a partnership and we would build a brick building, 70 X 90' and broaden our store into a General Store, where we would sell everything. I suggested that I would move the Post Office into the store, rent-free, as it would draw a lot of trade. Everyone came to the Post Office for their mail, and would surely buy whatever they needed or desired.

Ben accepted the proposal but stipulated he would come into the hardware store and learn that end of the business while the new building was under construction.

Ben paid the Company one half of the inventory value of the hardware stock and became my partner on January 1, 1903.

Ben was just a farm boy and had little, if any, experience in selling hardware, or anything else. I really had my problems. We planned to have the building completed by July 1, 1903, and placed our orders for merchandise to be delivered on that date. Ben took over the job of hiring the brick masons and other help. I bought materials, but he was the "Boss Builder." We ran into one delay after another. Finally, in June, he came to me saying he was not well-sold on our partnership agreement. He wanted to amend or change it, stating that he was to have $\frac{1}{2}$ of the profit earned in the Post Office. The 4th Class Post Office paid about \$1,000 per year and I couldn't see my giving up $\frac{1}{2}$ of this income. I weighed my business experience, my managerial ability, my education, etc., against his lack of experience, ability, etc., so I refused his amended proposal. I did, however, make a counter proposal to him: I would either give or take over his half, or sell him my half, for all that either of us had put into the partnership, and \$250 besides.

Ben traveled to Eastern Oregon to talk to a cousin in the farming business before giving me his answer. It came out later that he had loaned this cousin several thousand dollars to harvest his crops. The cousin could not pay him so Ben was up against a real problem to finance his end of our bargain. I knew nothing of this predicament, so when he came back in about two weeks, and told me that he would not sell his interests for \$250 profit, I asked him what he would take for his share of the business. He said, "Pay me back all the money I have put into the business and \$500 more." I said, "OK, Ben, and sat down and wrote a check for the amount. He looked at the check, never said a word, and streaked out for the bank to see if they would honor the check. This ended my third partnership and I have never had one since.

The delay, while Ben was making up his mind, held up our store opening until August 1, 1903. My father and brother, Carl, came on the job when Ben quit, and rushed the completion. I borrowed \$8,000 from my Grandfather Wood, which saved me from going into bankruptcy.

We gave a big, free dance before putting in the fixtures. Over 300 couples came to enjoy the roast turkey and the fine dance orchestra out from Portland. Everyone had a great time.

The store opened with a new, clean stock of groceries, shoes, clothing, dry goods, hardware and notions. I hired two clerks, Harry Gist and Kate Chamberlin. I paid Harry \$60 per month and Kate \$40. They were with me for five years, or until the time Harry got the idea that he could start in business, with Kate as his helper, and make a success as a competitor. His idea was a good one, so he opened his store next door to mine, putting in an identical stock as I had with the exception of hardware. After 7 or 8 years, Harry died. I was appointed as one of his estate appraisers and found that his estate had a value of \$25,000. This certainly proved that his idea was a good one.

My business went along as usual. I brought a young man, Charlie Eustice, out from Wisconsin, who took Harry's place. A Miss Lottie Allan, an experienced dry goods clerk, from Silverton, Oregon, took over Kate's place.

Everything worked out well, leaving all parties happy and satisfied. You could never tell from my sales volume that I had a competitor next door who wished to put me out of business.

In 1906, the Postal Department decided to try out the idea of a rural delivery service. North Yamhill was one of the first to try out the service, using Charley Walker as the first carrier. His route was through the Pike District, up the right bank of the North Yamhill River, as far as Fairdale, then back through Moors Valley on the left side of the river, Via Frowdes, Miller's, Nelson's and Trullinger's mill. From there into town, amounted to a twenty-

five mile, round trip. This was, of course, by horse and buggy. The carrier provided his own transportation.

After Walker's first trip, he received a Registered Letter from Mr. Martin in Pike. It seems that Mr. Martin had put five silver dollars in an envelope and mailed it to a doctor in Portland, covering a bill for \$5, for some phony rheumatism medicine. It was a rainy, cold, wet day and the mail got damp or wet. The envelope fell apart and the money fell to the bottom of his mailsack.

I had taken care of Martin's monthly payments by sending a money order for the \$5. Since it was a money order, I did not have it registered. I returned the difference in price (10 or 15 cents) to Martin. Walker got an idea that I had done wrong in switching from a registration to a money order. By reporting my switch to the Post Office Inspector, he could create a situation where I would be fired as Postmaster and he just might get the job.

The Post Office Inspector came out in about six months and accused me of a heinous crime. I had forgotten all about the switch as I had never given it much thought in the first place. Miss Hope Perry, my assistant, reminded me of the occurrence so I then explained the transaction to the inspector. He went back to the head office and reported that I denied all knowledge of the transaction, but later confessed when the facts came to light. He then recommended that I be fired as I did not give all my attention to the Post Office. T'was true, as I had my prune orchard, my two stores, by this time (Yamhill and Carlton), two grain and hop warehouses, on the tracks, 3/4 of a mile from town, the water works that supplied mountain water to the town, an electric light plant, which I owned and operated; (ran the power from the mill 1/2 mile into town), and the rural telephone company, which I partly owned and managed. When the Oregonian and my father-in-law, John Fox, had their say as to my fitness to hold the job as Postmaster, the Postal Department heads decided that there was no case for such drastic action and dismissed all charges. (The

Oregonian and my father-in-law, together, controlled the Republican Party in Oregon.) They did give me credit for returning the 10 or 15 cents to Martin.

I could write a book covering the many small, out-of-line incidents that happened in my 15 years as Yamhill Postmaster. Eventually, they all caught up with me and a new 3rd Class Postmaster was appointed, and the Post Office was removed from my store. I would not accept the job of 3rd Class Postmaster as I would have had to give my entire time to its management and operation. Instead, I took the Studebaker automobile sales agency for Yamhill and Polk County. I established a branch distribution at McMinnville and at Ballston. I held the agency for two years, selling E.M.F. and Flanders cars. I made more money from this venture than the Post Office would have paid me in ten years. On top of that, I had a lot of fun selling and teaching farmers how to drive cars on a muddy, dirt road. There was not a paved road anywhere in the Willamette Valley, so driving was limited to about six months out of the year; usually late spring, summer and early fall. I drove my first car out from Portland and it took me two days to drive 35 miles. I had to tear down several farmers' wooden fences to obtain the boards necessary to place over the impossible mud holes."