

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE NETARTS BAY AREA

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GENERAL HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF NETARTS, TILLAMOOK COUNTY, OREGON

1400's: Tillamook, or Killamook, Indians inhabited a large area between Nehalem, the Salmon River, and from the crest of the Coast Range to the Pacific Ocean, with their main village near the mouth of the Kilchis River. "Tillamook" translates as "Land of Many Waters." The earliest Tillamook inhabitants in the Netarts area also settled around 1400 (according to archeological work of Newman, 1959). Netarts originally extended from Cape Lookout to Cape Meares. In the language of the local Killamooks, "Ne ta ats" meant "near the water," or "the big water," or "many waters." Later, modernized spelling became Netarts. The best known occupied area for the local Indians was on the spit, with other middens in evidence at most creek outlets around the bay, mainly at Wilson Beach. Indian trails led along the coast to the mouth of the Columbia and eastward to the Willamette Valley. The "Octopus" tree on Cape Meares, once featured in Ripley's "Believe it or Not," was an Indian meeting place. Burial canoes are known to have been placed above present-day Oceanside.

1579: Sir Francis Drake (English) sailed along the Oregon coast. His maps noted "Portus Nove Albionis," contented by historians to be Nehalem Bay in Tillamook County, discovered by Drake.

1679: "Indian legend supports the supposition that a ship was wrecked on the Tillamook beach (Neahkahnie) about 1679".

1744 (July 18): Lieut. Juan Perez (Spanish) sailed as far north as 54 40'.

1765: First use of the Indian name Oregon (or "Ouragon") by Maj. Robert Rogers in a petition to King George III to explore territory in search of North West Passage.

1775 (Aug. 18): Capt. Bruno Hecata (Spanish) sailed up the Pacific, noting mouth of Columbia.

1778 (March 12): Captain Cook (English) voyage up the Pacific coast in search of "New Albion".

1778 (July 6): Captain Meares (English) discovered Tillamook Bay, naming it "Quicksand Bay." He christened Cape Lookout the same day (later erroneously called Cape Meares by cartographers), and christened the tree rocks off present day Oceanside, naming them "The Three Brothers," now known as "Three Arch Rocks." Later, he passed the Columbia, but failed to identify it as a river.

1778 (Aug 14): Capt. Robert Gray (U.S.) crossed Tillamook bar in the sloop "Lady Washington," anchoring near where Bay City is now located. It was the first harbor on the coast of Oregon entered by a "white man's" ship. Gray found it a "tolerably commodious harbor." Because Gray's Negro servant, Marcos Lopez, was murdered, the bay was known as "Murderers' Harbour."

1778 (Aug. 16): Capt. Meares (English) directed the launching of the ship "Northwest" at Clayoquot Sound, near Nootka. It was, except for Russian ships, the first vessel built on the Pacific Coast.

1792 (April 27): Capt. George Vancouver, on the ship "Discovery," remarked of Cape Meares (then called Lookout), "This Cape formed only a small projecting point, yet it is remarkable for the four rocks that lie off it, one of which is perforated, as described by Mr. Meares; and excepting a rock passed the preceeding afternoon, these were the first we have seen north of Cape Gregory".

1792 (May 11): Capt. Gray successfully crossed, for the first time, the bar of the Columbia River. He was also the first U.S. citizen to circumnavigate the globe.

1806: Journals of Lewis & Clark referred to the "Kilamox" and "Killamuck" Indians. William Clark was the first white man of record to visit Tillamook Head, giving it the name "Killamuch," and observed the processing of flesh of a 105 ft. whale which had washed up on the beach. One of the expedition members was saved from an intended robbery and murder by a Tillamook Indian through the intervention of a Clatsop-tribe woman.

"Lewis and Clark estimated the Tillamooks at 2,200. By 1841 their numbers had fallen to 400. Thirty years later there were but 28 Nehalems, 55 Nestuccas, and 83 Kilchis's Tillamooks proper. By 1950 between 200 and 300 were able to prove Tillamook descent".

1811: Astoria founded by the John Astor's Pacific Fur Company (PFC), with trading up the Columbia and down the coast, with the boundary of Spanish Territory at 40 degrees parallel.

1812: PFC sold to British Northwest Company (NWC) and merged with Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Duncan McDougall, trader with NWC, headquartered at Fort George (Astoria), called the Tillamooks the "most roguish people of the region."

1821: Dr. John Floyd of Virginia introduced (unsuccessfully) an Oregon bill in the U.S. Congress for the occupation of the Pacific Northwest by the United States.

1825 (March 19): Fort Vancouver dedicated by Hudson's Bay Company.

1826 Three men sent by Chief Factor John McLoughlin of the HBC to examine conditions on the coast. "Their leader, Alexander McCleod, found the Tillamook area difficult of access and unproductive of furs obtained either by trapping or by trade with local inhabitants." ("The Tillamooks," by Dr. Daniel J. Scheans)

1828 (Oct. 11): Massacre of Capt. Smith party by Kelawatsets Indians as they crossed the north bank of the Umpqua River. Arthur Black, only survivor of the special expedition sent out by Hudson's Bay Co. (HBC) Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin, escaped to the coast and was returned to the fort on Aug. 10, 1828 with help of friendly Tillamook Indians.

1830s-1840s: Regular appearance of Michel La Framboise (HBC) along the coast. In the early 1830s epidemics decimated the coastal Indians. "By 1849 less than one-fifth of their contact population was alive."

1830: Hall J. Kelly wrote "A Geographical sketch of the Part of America called Oregon," in which he wrote, "Killamook river is one hundred yards wide, has no falls, and no difficult rapids. It opens into Killamook bay, ten miles south of creek of same name, and forms a communication, for a considerable indian trade, with Multnomah Valley: there being a short portage from the head of this river to the Multnomah."

1832: Murder of Pierre Kakequiron and Thomas Canosawarette. In a letter from Dr. John McLoughlin to Michel La Framboise he wrote, "You will proceed with party under your command to Killamook Country for the purpose of punishing the atrocious murder of Pierre Kakequiron and Thomas Canosawarette who were savagely murdered by the above tribe, twenty days since." (Letter No. 240, signed J. McLoughlin, Fort Vancouver 8 May, 1832.)

1836: Steamer "Beaver" (English) was the first steam vessel to ply the Pacific Ocean, coming under sail. It was the first vessel to run under steam in the Columbia River (April 17).

1838: Reference to "Killimoux" on engraved map of the Territory of Oregon.

1841 (Aug. 14): Reverend John H. Frost, Solomon H. Smith and Lewis Taylor (Indian boy), from the Mission at Clatsop Plains, traversed the east side of Netarts Bay, proceeding over Cape Lookout, and around Sandlake en route to the Willamette Valley. The same year "Joseph Frost (Methodist) contacted Tillamook Indians, but no mission established."

1848 (Aug. 14): Creation of the Oregon Territory by an act of the U.S. Congress.

1850-53: Coastal charts drawn by U.S. Geodesic Survey, renaming Captain Meares' "Cape Lookout" as Cape Meares. Donation Land Law passed by U.S. Congress in 1850, guaranteeing settlers free land up to one square mile per married couple. "Freelands," were Indian lands.

1853 (Dec. 15): Tillamook County created by the Oregon Territorial Legislature with a land area of 1115 sq. miles. "The first twenty years were difficult ones for the settlers, especially since they had to pack all their supplies in from the north over the treacherous Neahkahnie Mountain. Several shipping attempts failed. Thirty-two shipwrecks (Orcutt, 1951) between Neahkahnie and the Nestucca bar attested to the dangerous Pacific Coast."

1853-59: Indian Wars in the Oregon Territory. Indian coastal lands were ceded from Tillamook Bay to the California border. Agreements were never ratified, and the lands taken illegally.

1855: Mr. Snowden, Government's Surveyor parcelled land in the Netarts area. The remaining Tillamooks were settled by Government order on the Siletz (1855) and Grand Ronde (1859) Reservations. "By 1900 the Tillamook were assimilated into coastal white world of timber, fishing and wage labor."

1856: Warren Vaughn parcelled first land-grant claim in Netarts area.

1857: Earliest mention of present "Tillamook" spelling ("Oregon," by A.N. Armstrong). Used simultaneously with "Killamook."

1859. Oregon admitted as a state. Bureau of Land Management Maps and early surveys show "Netarts Wagon Road," (12 mi. long through South Prairie). Creeks were forded and roads had no gravel bed. 1859 surveys show claims S.E. of the Bay. The "Oyster Bay" shanty-town sprang up south of Whiskey Creek. There, the Austin family took up claims.

1862 (May 20): Federal Homestead Act passed. 1862 witnessed the earliest Donation Land Claim on the Netarts Spit (grazing claim of 28 acres).

1863: "The first settlement of the Netarts Bay was made this fall (1863). There were three-four claims taken up there and one family and two or three bachelors lived on them. Tom Goodale took the place owned by Mr. Desmond (Vaughn, Book 111). Sebastian Hardman and "Mr. Grimes" were other early settlers (a later Hardman land-grant claim was made in 1898 on the Netarts spit).

1867: Tim Goodale built the first house in the Netarts area. At this time an early visit was recorded (Headlight, 1896) which mentioned the prospering oyster business. Schooners came in regularly from San Francisco, paying \$.50 per bushel delivered on board. Many claims made in the shallow waters of the southern part of the bay. Known local residents were T.H. McCormick and his father, Captian Portugee Thompson, "Portugee Joe," who lived with his squaw at the head of the bay and had a dairy of about 40 cows.

1868: Claus Christensen, from Denmark, settled in the area and, with Indian help from the, Nestucca Reservation, harvested oysters to be sent to San Francisco. Also sent to S.F. by 30-mule pack.

1871: First post office opened (October 9 1871). Edward C. Bunnell was first postmaster.

1873: Cornelius Desmond brought his family to Netarts "when his son Charles was 12 yrs. old."

1875: As of this date, "seventy-five Oriental junks are known to have been found adrift or ashore on the American side of the Pacific".

1875: Glasscock family moved to the Netarts area. Roy Glasscock stated, "when the boat failed to come, the little settlement would run short of food except that furnished by the gardens, the forest and the sea." "The forest furnished elk, deer and bear in abundance. Wild hogs were plentiful, but, as they ate the dead fish that were thrown up by the waves, they were unfit for food. There were even wild cattle, small, runty, red mullies, that were said to be the descendants of stock that had come ashore from a Spanish ship that had been wrecked on Cape Lookout on some unnamed date in the long ago." ('Oregon Boy in East-Bound "1878" Covered Wagon' Roy Glasscock, Feb. 10, 1927)

1883: Samuel Tomlinson & family built and operated the Tillamook River ferry for the Cape and the Benscheidt (new) Roads (\$.25/ wagon with team, \$.15 horseback and \$.05/person for a row boat to cross). The road ended at the southern end of Happy Camp and was 6 mi. long, as opposed to the original road from South Prairie which was 12 mi. long. The third road the, Benscheidt Road, was a short-cut between the original South Prairie Road and the Tillamook River Road, beginning at the Tillamook River Ferry and ending at the summit.

William C. O'Hara built a school house, located on bluff overlooking Netarts Bay (above boat landing) used until 1896 when the floor collapsed. A later school was located in the building which now houses the office of the Terimore Motel.

1885: "John W. Maxwell acquired the area we call Oceanside as a soldier's homestead". (160 acres) ("Tillamook, Lest We Forget")

1887: J. H. Jackson was an early sheriff. In the same year Henry Lepaute, Paris France, handground the giant (one-ton) lens for the Cape Meares Lighthouse ("Welcome to Cape Meares," by Don Benskin).

1890: George W. Phelps and family came to Netarts from Long (South) Prairie. He and his nephew purchased three acres from Pat Moore, who at one time, along with the O'Hara family, owned most of the waterfront. He built several boats and ferried people across the bay for \$.05. Phelps built the largest boat, a small deep-sea boat named the "Sea Lion", which had an inboard motor.

1890: Cape Meares lighthouse and caretakers' houses constructed (1890-1963). Originally the light house was designed for Cape Lookout. The mistake was not learned until the completion of the lighthouse on Cape Meares in 1890. Displayed in the Tillamook County Pioneer Museum is the first fire-wick kersone lamp.

1890's: First saw mill erected by Theo Steinhiber and Mr. Bailey. Joe Guptal of Tillamook was a sawyer. George Phelps was the first fireman for the saw-mill boiler. Trees were yarded out by oxen to Whiskey Creek. Remnants of boiler remembered by Jim Mundell in front of Lee Hanson's oyster hatchery, at the low-tide line.

1896: Tidal wave hit Happy Camp.

1897: Tillamook Indians awarded a settlement of their claims for lands taken by the United States. "3 year old son of George & Mary Johnson fell into Desmond Slough and drowned in 6 inches of water."

1897 - 1900: Ship "Free Trade" set sail from Netarts Bay for San Francisco but failed to arrive. No trace of her or crew ever found. Failure of shipment forced closure of mill.

1901 & 1903: Naturalists William L. Findley and Herman Bohlamn photographed and recorded wildlife on Three Arch Rocks. Their efforts led President Theodore Roosevelt to designate the rocks a National Wildlife Refuge in 1907.

1902: Edner's home and store located near where "Pearl" (of Pearl Street) lived. "Virtually all the shoreline by 1903 of the bay was occupied, showing dependence of tide-land resources.

1906: George W. Phelps (father of Mildred Edner) built first store in Netarts, just west of Happy Camp.

1910: First trip by automobile from Newberg to Tillamook. In the same year the old lamp (in the Cape Meares Lighthouse) was replaced with an incandescent oil vapor lamp. (Headlight Herald, April 27, 1973)

1911: Opening of railroad to Tillamook. By 1915 a plank road through the timber to Netarts had replaced the dirt wagon road.

1917: Second mill established (water powered) at Whiskey Creek, owned by Peder Erickson and Otto Kyle. Supplied ready-cut houses or cottages for tourist camps (Happy Camp?). This mill later cut sitka spruce for World War I bi-planes.

1917: Clarence Edner and 3 sons (George, Jack, and Robert) bought the store west of Happy Camp. Renamed it from "Inside Inn" to "Camp Edner". Store divided into rental apartments upstairs, with family living-quarters in back of store.

1920's: Automobiles arrived in area. Improvement of Old Netarts Road into Netarts from Tillamook via summit. Car road extended to Oceanside. Most roads could only be used in the summer time, when the road was dry. The oldest still-standing structures in Netarts/Oceanside area were erected then. There was a livery stable at Happy Camp, now demolished.

1920's: Extensive logging on east slope of Netarts Bay.

1930's: Electric power came to Netarts.

1934: Tillamook Pioneer Society organized. Second incandescent oil-vapor lamp at the Meares Lighthouse was replaced by an electrified lamp.

1935: 935 acres donated by U.S. Lighthouse Service toward park on Cape Lookout. Louis W. Hill Family Foundation donated the Netarts Sand Spit to expand the park. The Hill property had once been purchased as possible land for a coastal railway. ECW prepared plans for Cape Lookout State Park.

1938: Cape Meares obtained a park by lease and purchase (94.32 acres). Managed by State Parks and Recreation Division and surrounded by 138.51 acre Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge, managed jointly by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

1939: Storm breached the Cape Meares and Netarts Spits and caused considerable damage at Happy Camp.

1939: Civilian Conservation Corp worked from "spike" camps at Jackson Creek in Cape Lookout State Park. 5 mile trail constructed through rain forest to tip of Cape.

1939: Outboard motors on Netarts Bay in common use.

1940's: Military installations at Oceanside and Cape Meares. "Radar" Road constructed to still-existing concrete bunker above the road. The first public water district was completed.

1943 (Oct. 12): World War II Army Air Force B-17 bomber struck Cape Lookout, with only one survivor. A bronze plaque marks the crash site on the Cape Lookout Trail.

1946-47: Edners built a new house on part of the old O'Hara Meadow, between old and new highway location. In 1947 the Netarts Volunteer Fire Department was formed.

1950's: Road constructed over Cape Meares.

1952: Access road constructed to Jackson Creek & Cape Lookout State Park, where parking and picnic facilities and beach access were provided. A large camping area was constructed south and east of the sand dunes at the foot of Netarts Bay on the land given by the W. Hill Family. Also in 1952, the Netarts Fire Department Auxiliary was formed.

1955 (July 10): "The latest milestone of historic interest in Netarts will be dedicated on Saturday, July 12 at 11:00 p.m. of the new Tillamook County boat landing on Netarts Bay at the mouth of O'Hara Creek, now known as Silver Sands or Bishop's." (Headlight Herald, July 10, 1955)

1956: "Shady Brook" store erected by the Edners next to the Post Office, replacing the use of an old house as a store (Headlight Herald, September 13, 1956)

1957: New road to Cape Lookout State Park also provided access for logging. Land was logged in checkerboard fashion in the 1950's.

1960's: Road extended over Cape Lookout to Sandlake.

1961: Netarts Bay Road West constructed along bay. (1961-65) Logging at S.E. corner of bay, and later in the 1970's.

1963: Automated beacon installed at Cape Lookout lighthouse. In 1964 the Coast Guard leased the lighthouse to Tillamook County.

1968: Lighthouse keeper's residences (most historic in area) demolished for a parking lot.

1977 (July): Completion of Netarts/Oceanside Sanitary System (5.5 million gal. capacity).

1988: Additional lands added to Cape Lookout State Park (40-acres tract on south side of Cape Lookout).

1991-94: "The Capes" developed on coastal land immediately north of Netarts.

1994: Expecting extensive development pressures, both Netarts and Oceanside began organizing local-planning groups.

William J. Hawkins, III

July 1 1994

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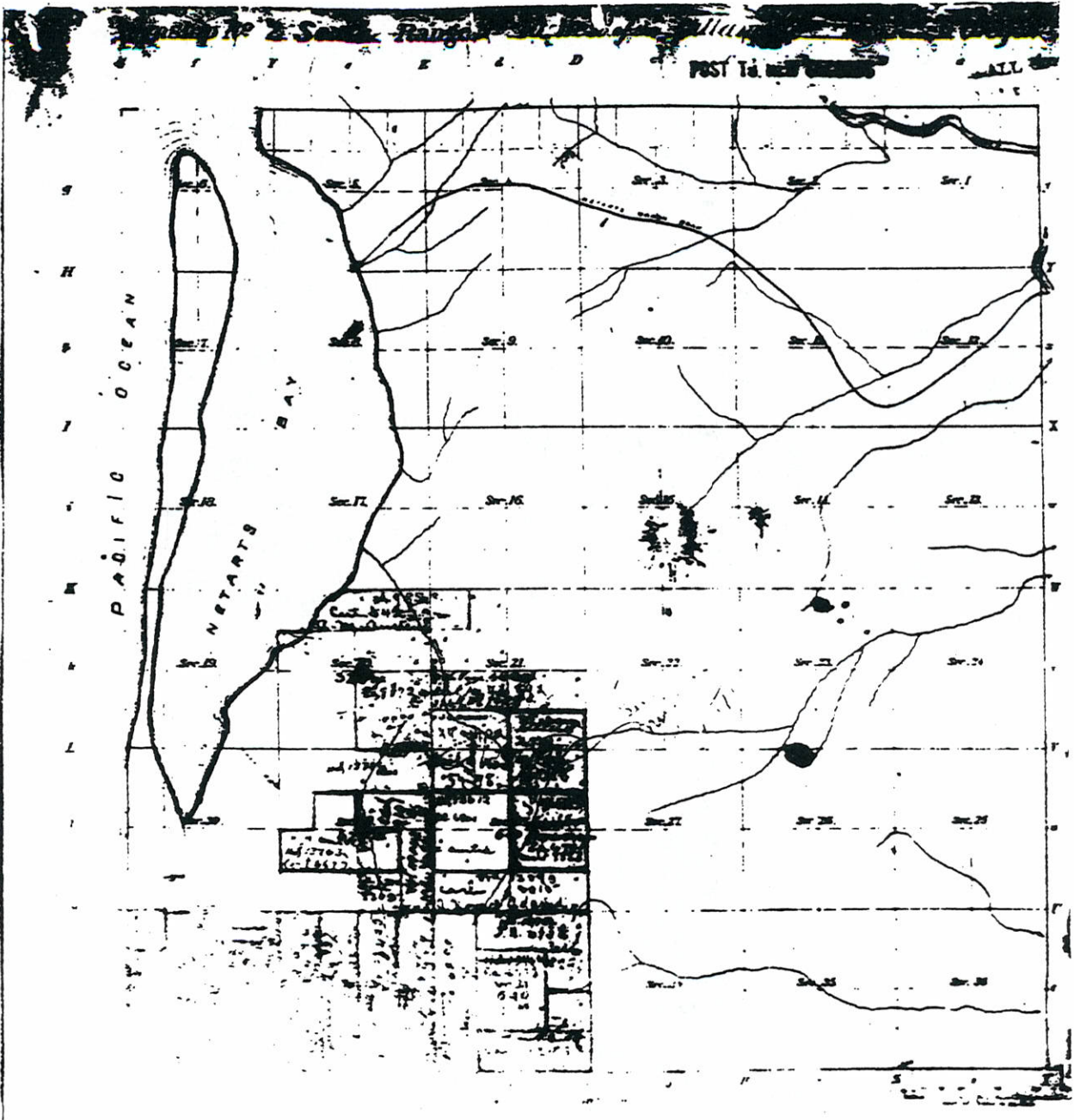
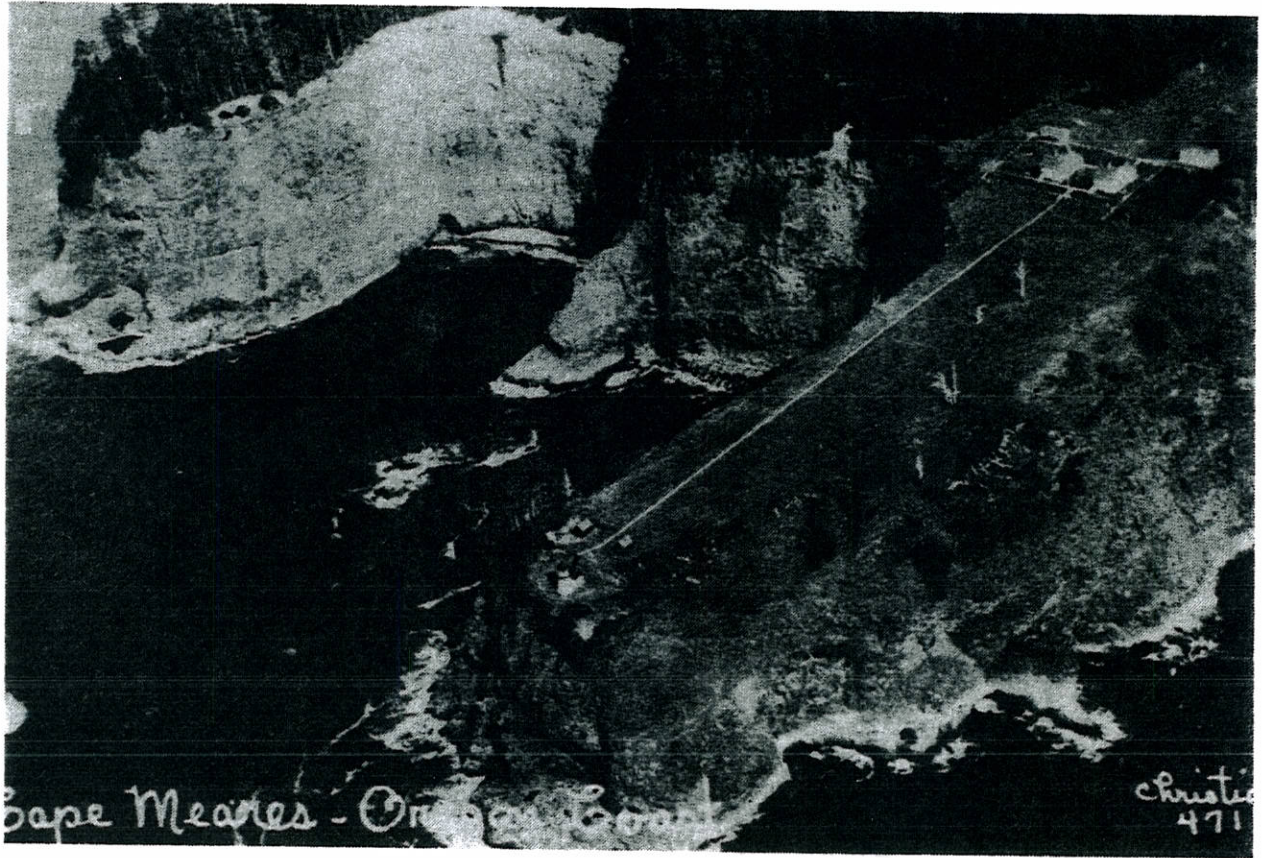


Figure 47. An early Bureau of Land Management map depicting an early survey and trail - 1859. (Used by permission of the Oregon Historical Society.)



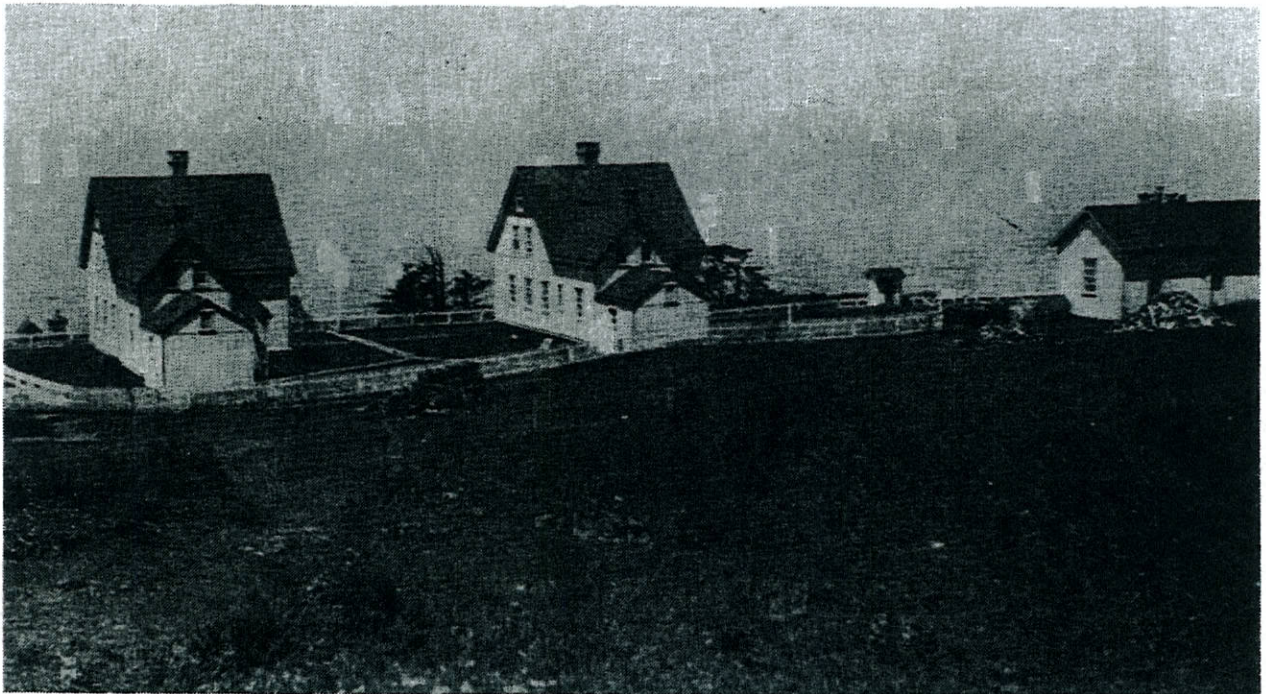
1. CAPE MEARES LIGHT HOUSE, AERIAL VIEW



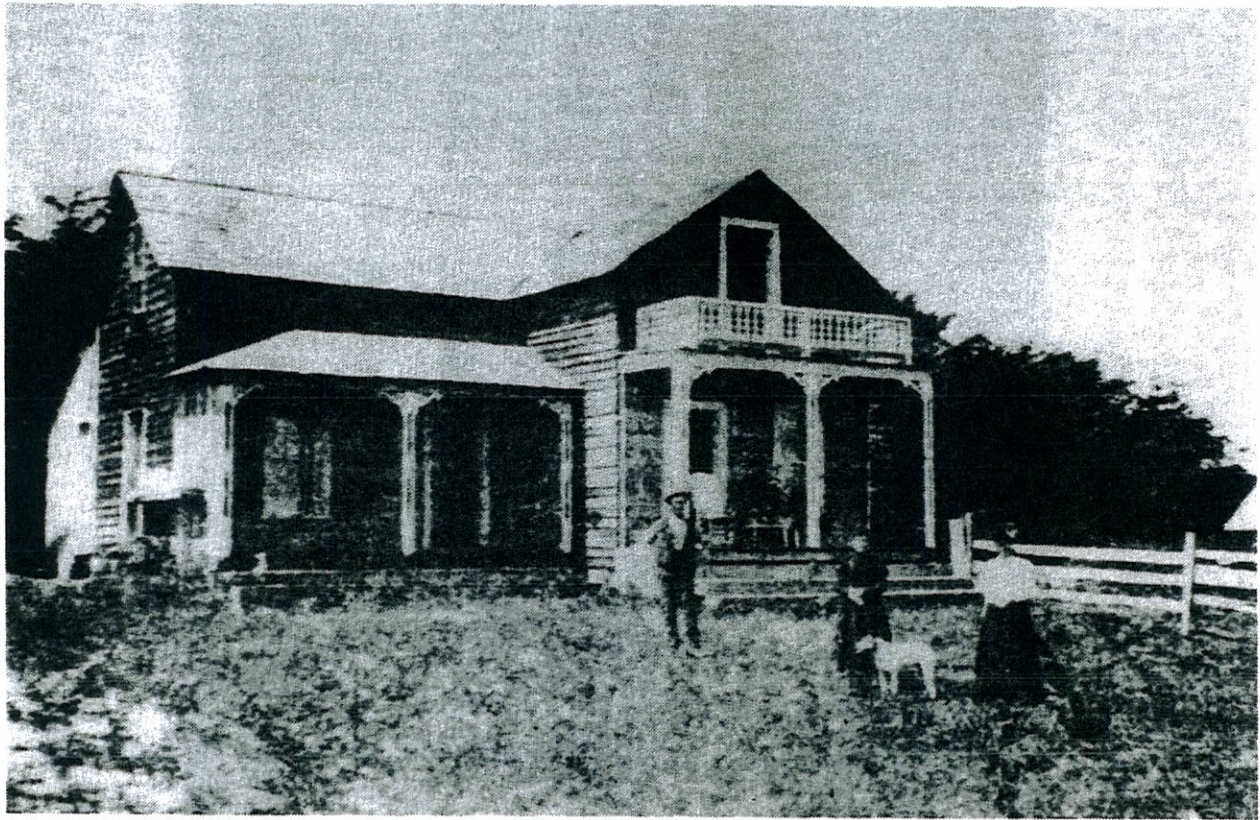
2. CAPE MEARES LIGHT HOUSE, CONSTRUCTED 1890-93



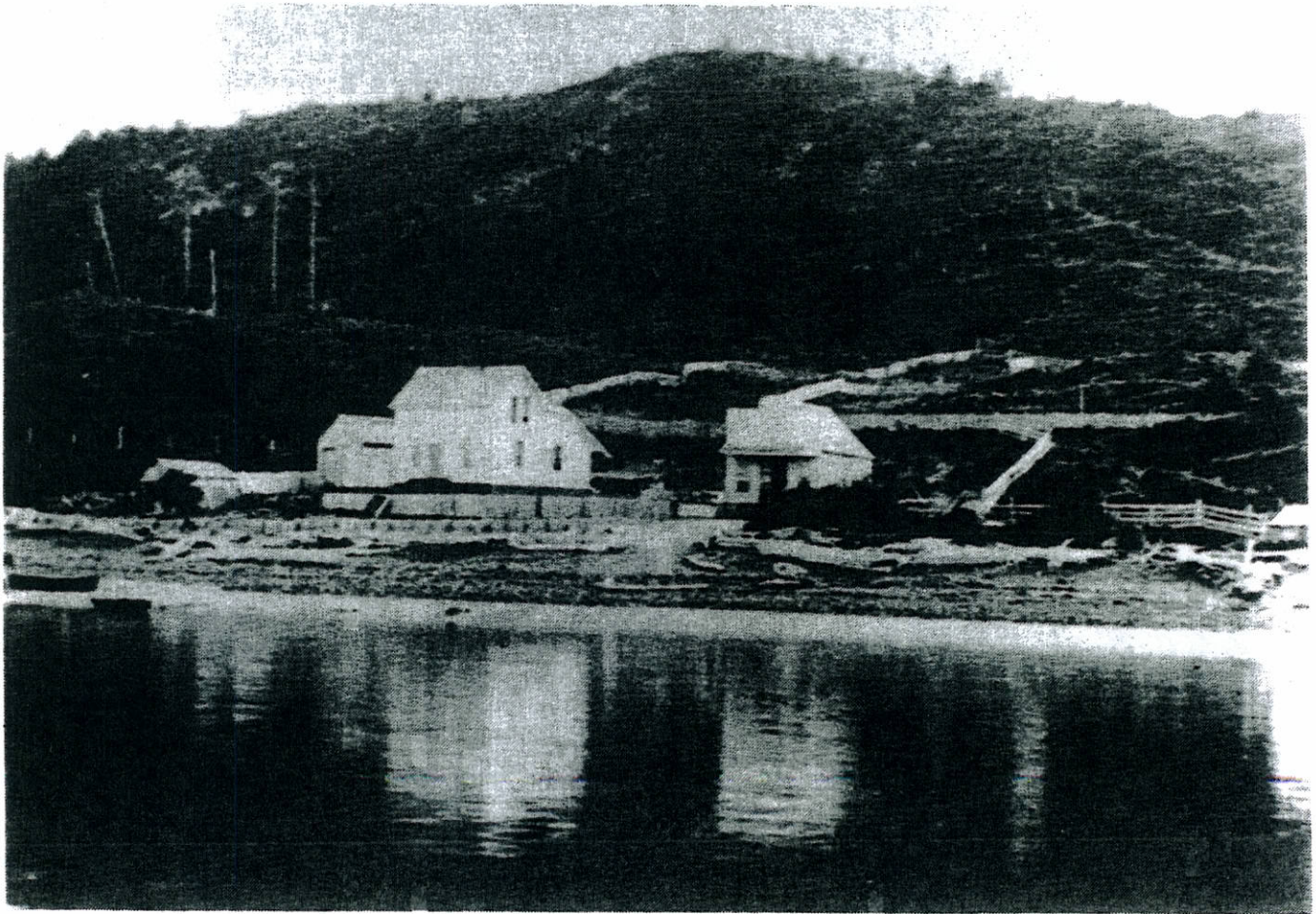
3. CAPE MEARES LIGHT HOUSE



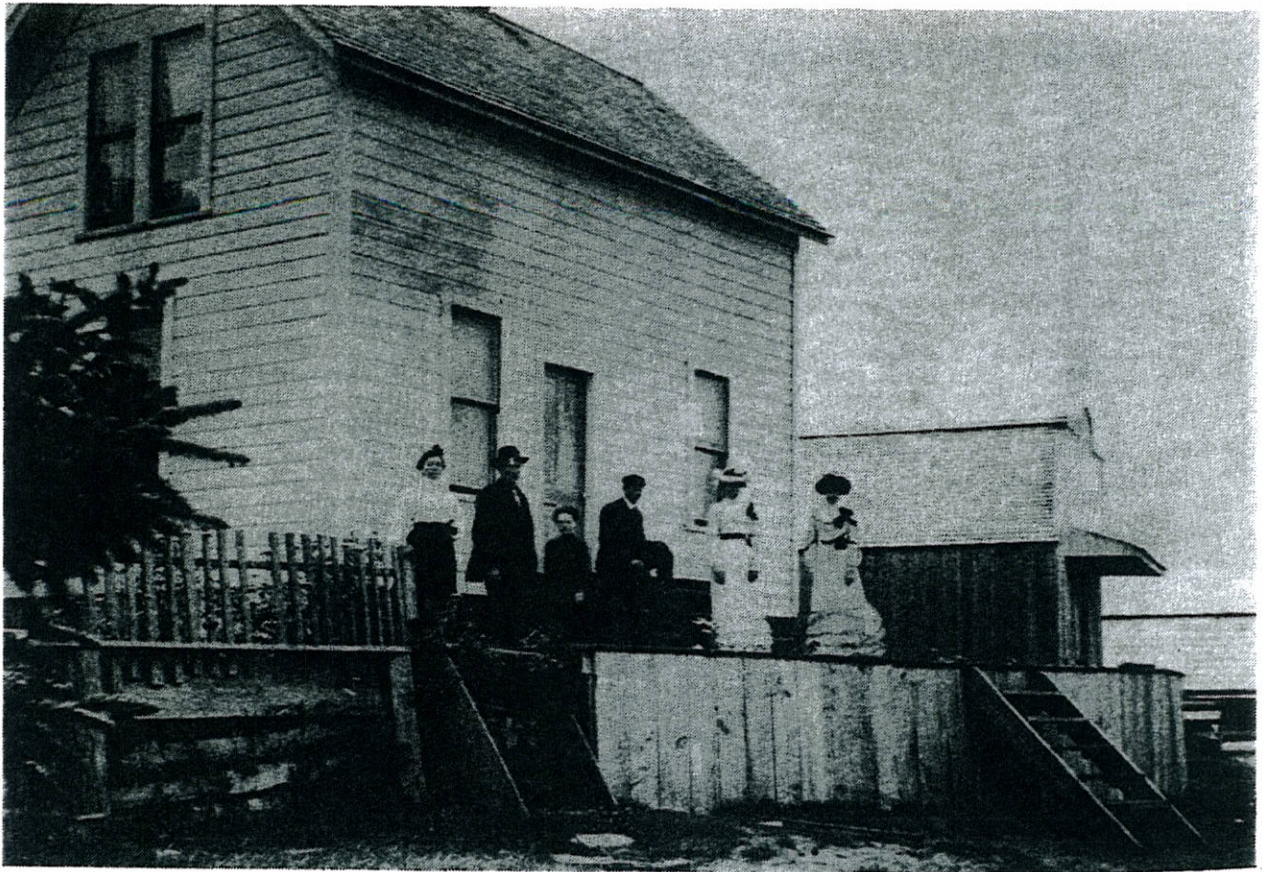
4. CAPE MEARES, LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS' HOUSES



5. RESIDENCE OF CHARLES B. AND EMMA F. RILEY, NETARTS SPIT (Built of 12 x 12 timbers salvaged from storm and held together by wooden pegs)



6. GEO. PHELPS' HOUSE AND STORE, CIRCA 1902, AT INTERSECTION OF PRESENT-DAY PEARL AND SUMMIT STREETS (Courtesy of Tillamook County Pioneer Museum)



7. GEO. PHELPS' HOUSE (Serethna, Geo. Phelps, Mildred Phelps Edner, F.M. Phelps, Lillian Phelps, Pearl I. Farmer)



8. GEO. PHELPS' STORE (NO.1), CIRCA 1892-93 (Forest Mills, Geo. Phelps, Lillian Phelps, Mary Jane Phelps, ???, Grandpa Phelps Lederer.



9. FIRST SCHOOL, CIRCA 1890S, DISTRICT NO.7 (Backrow: 4th from left - Riley Maxwell, 5th from left - Emma Nelson Lunduist, 7th from left - Mrs. Ruth Desmond (mother, 8th from Baertha Maxwell, 10th from left - Will Maxwell, Front Row: 5th from left - Lilian Phelps, Front Row: boy on right (white streak) - F.M. (Marian) Phelps)



10. SEAL HUNT, OCEANSIDE PARK, CIRCA 1895 (2nd from left - Forrest Mills, 2nd man in front - Geo. Phelps and "Sea Lion Bob," Lady in Black hat - Mrs. Forrest Mills, Boy in back on right - Henry Mills)



Oceanside Park and Maxwell Point

11. "OCEANSIDE PARK" AND MAXWELL POINT, CIRCA 1890S



12. NATURALISTS AND WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHERS WILLIAM FINLEY AND HERMAN BOHLMAN, AT THREE ARCH ROCKS, 1901 AND 1903. (Their photographs and recommendations led President Theodore Roosevelt to designate The Three Arch Rocks a National Wildlife Refuge on Oct. 14, 1907)



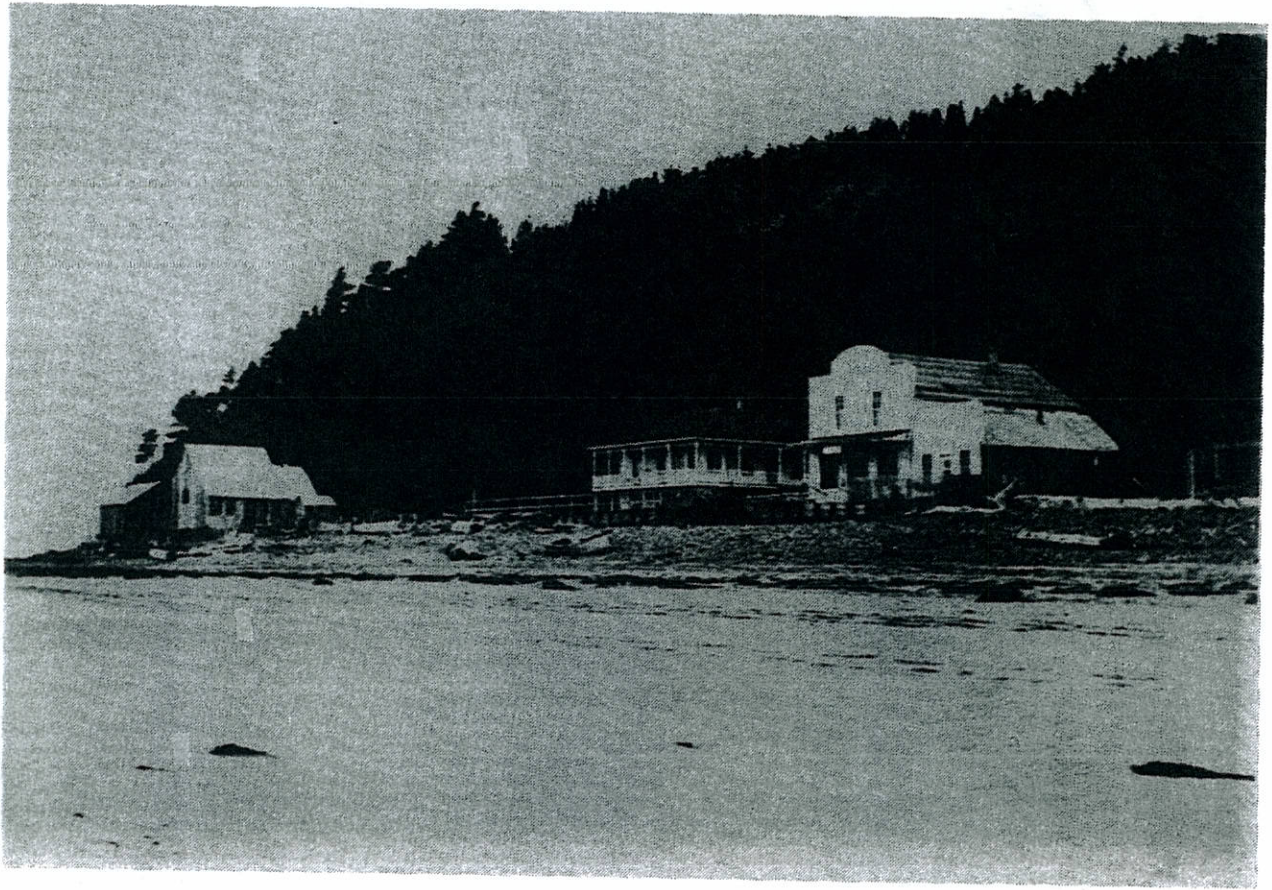
13. MRS. AND MRS CHARLIE WILEY, 1890



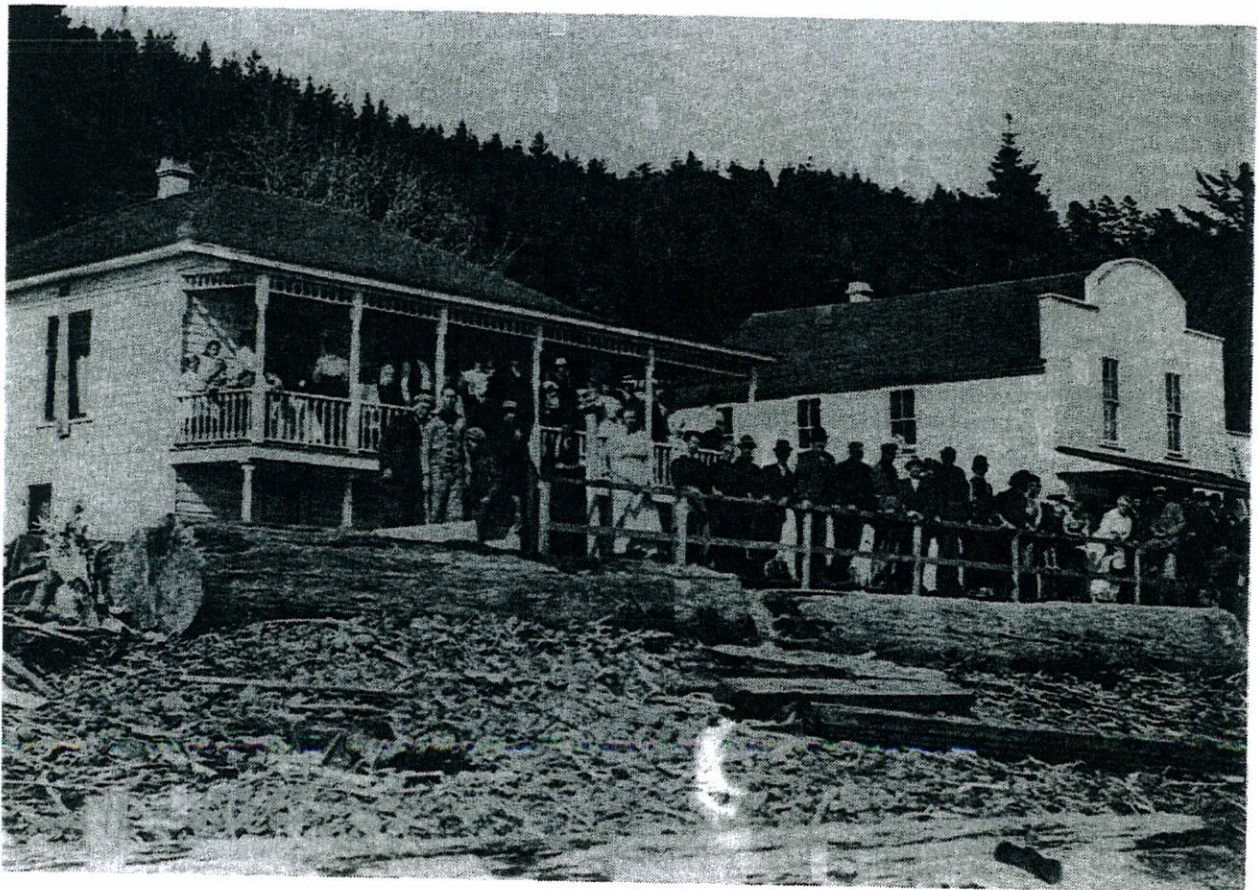
14. BOAT WITH TWO-YEAR SUPPLY OF OIL FOR CAPE MEARES LIGHT HOUSE AND SUPPLY OF GENERAL MERCHANDISE FOR THE PHELPS' STORE



15. MILDRED EDNER AND LOTTIE HARTMAN



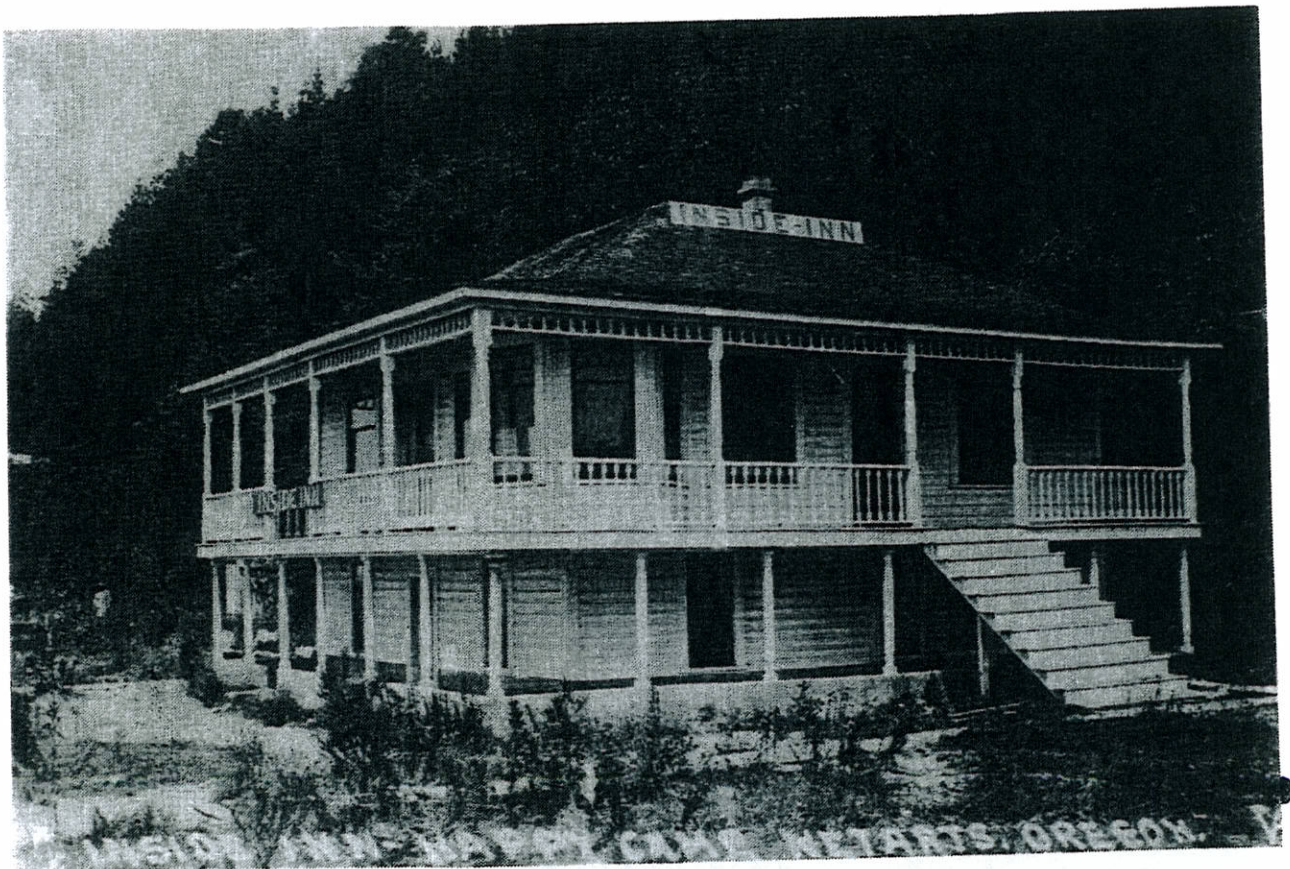
16. EDNER HOME AND STORE



17. FOURTH OF JULY, 1909, CHARLES WELLS, OWNER



18. STORM DAMAGE, HAPPY CAMP



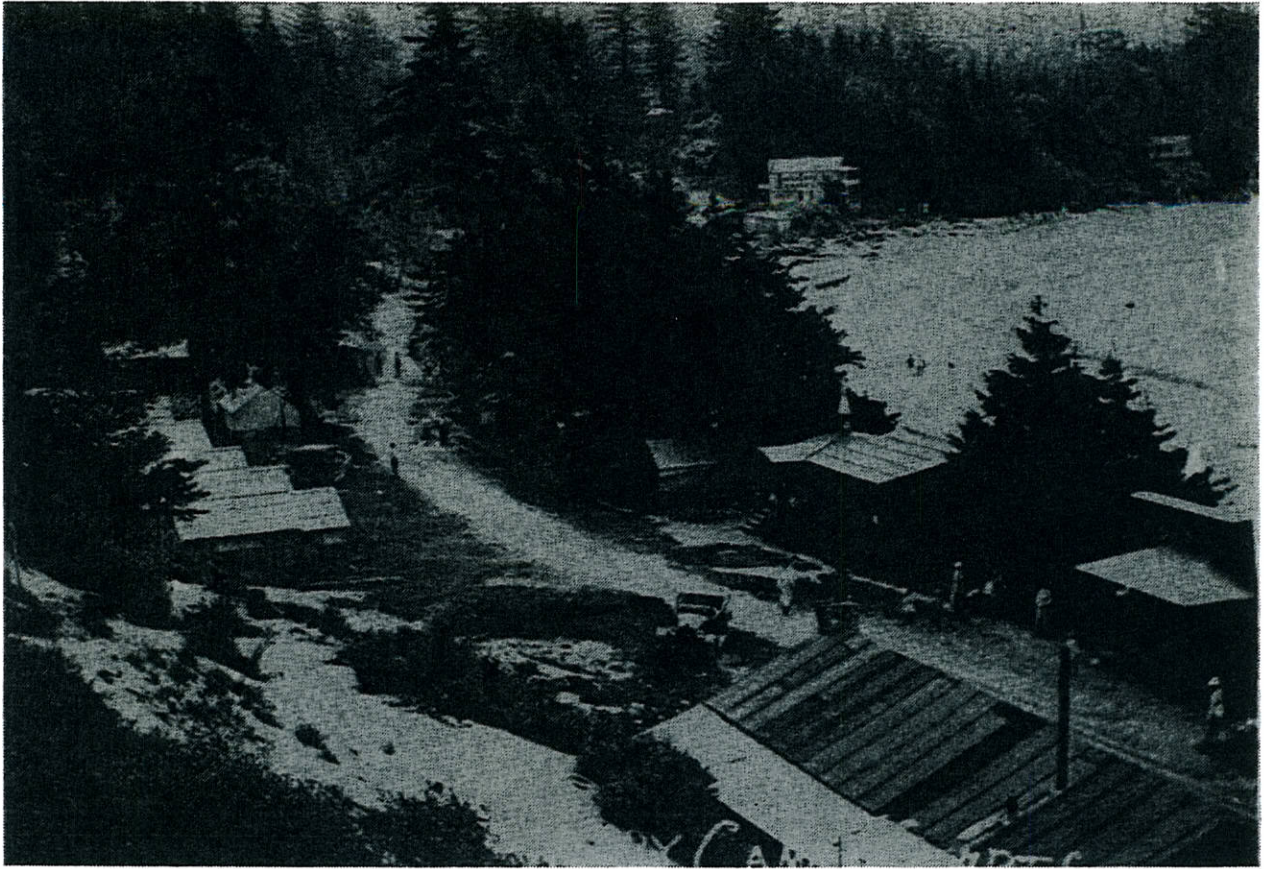
19. INSIDE INN, HAPPY CAMP



20. 1890'S ARMY SUMMER TRAINING AT HAPPY CAMP (HOTEL ON LEFT)



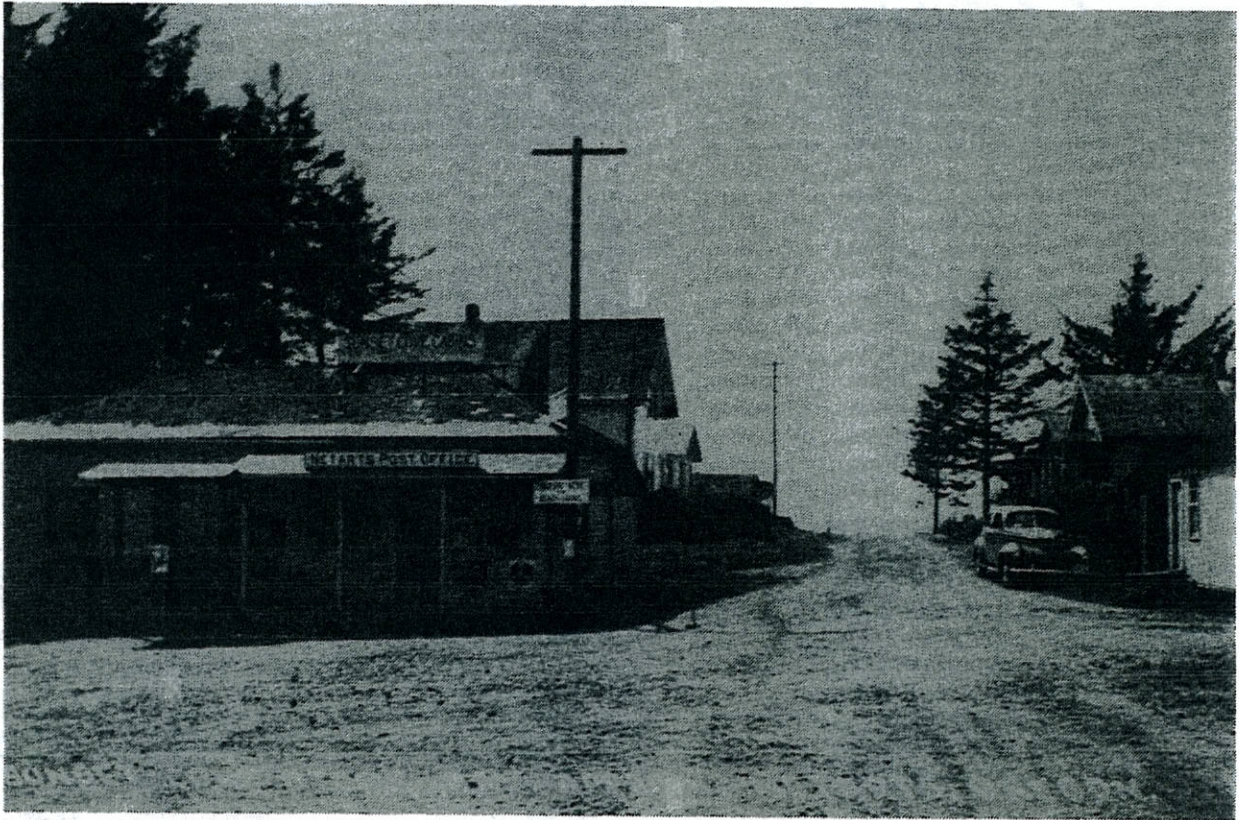
21. 1906, CAMP OF FLORENCE HARDMAN AND DAUGHTER CHARLOTT (LOLLIE) HARTMAN



22. HAPPY CAMP, CIRCA 1918



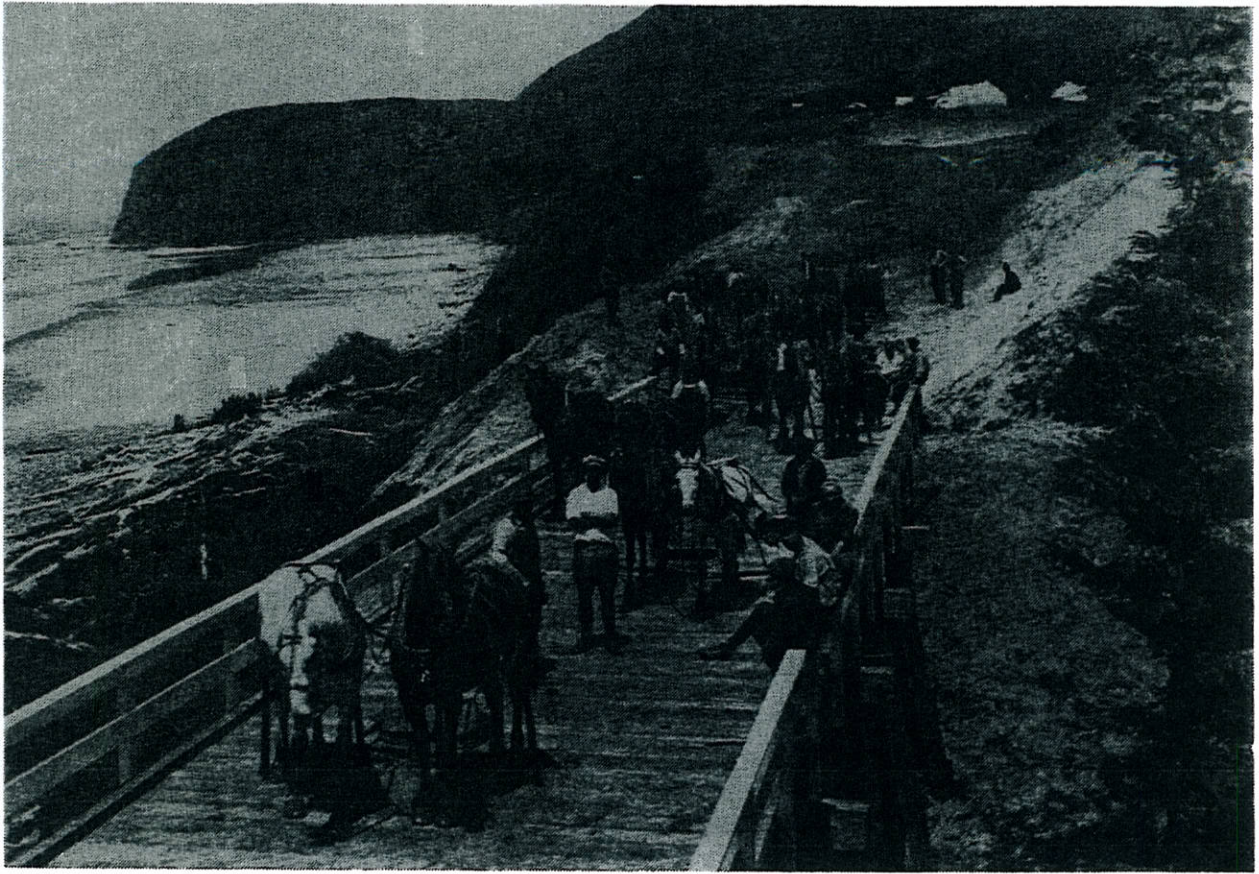
23. HAPPY CAMP, CIRCA 1920



24. SUNSET COVE STORE, BAY APPROACH, NETARTS, CIRCA 1942



25. NETARTS GENERAL MERCHANDISE



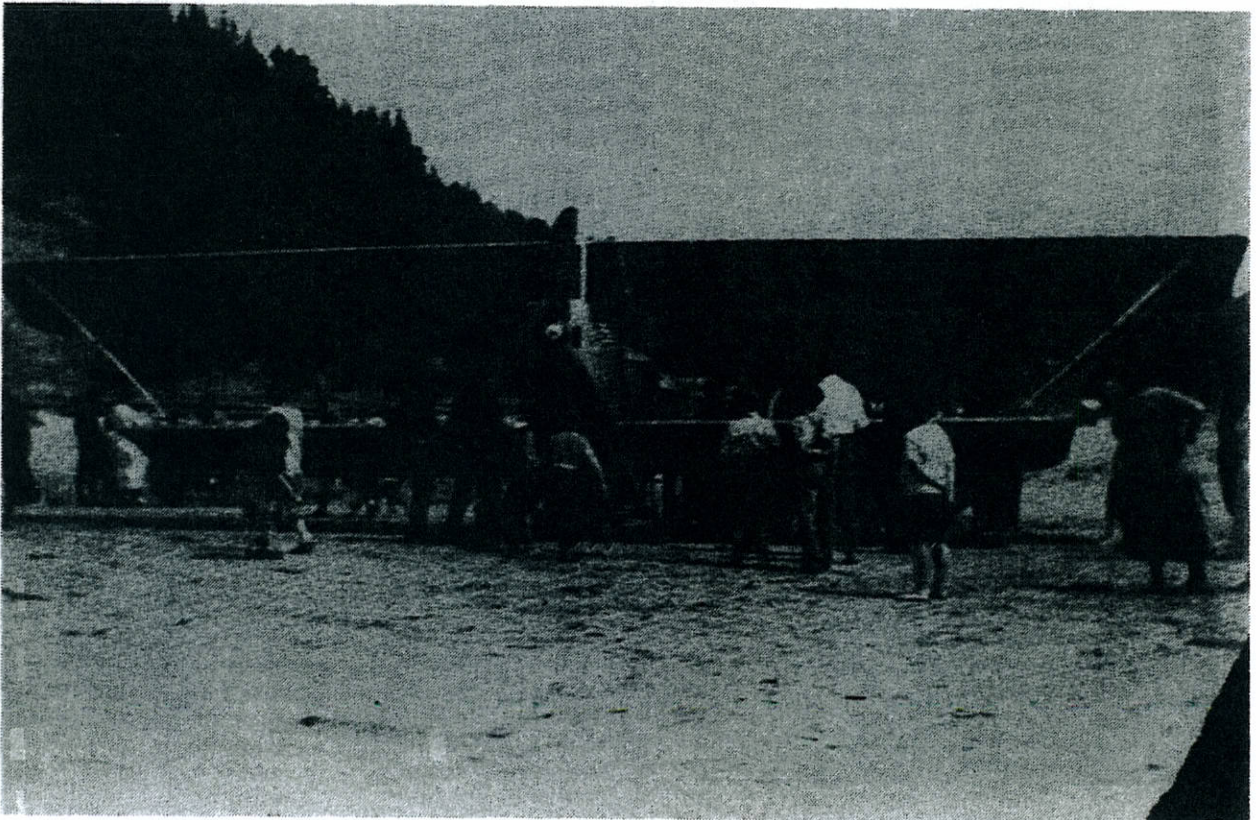
26. 1923 - CONSTRUCTION OF NETARTS-OCEANSIDE ROAD



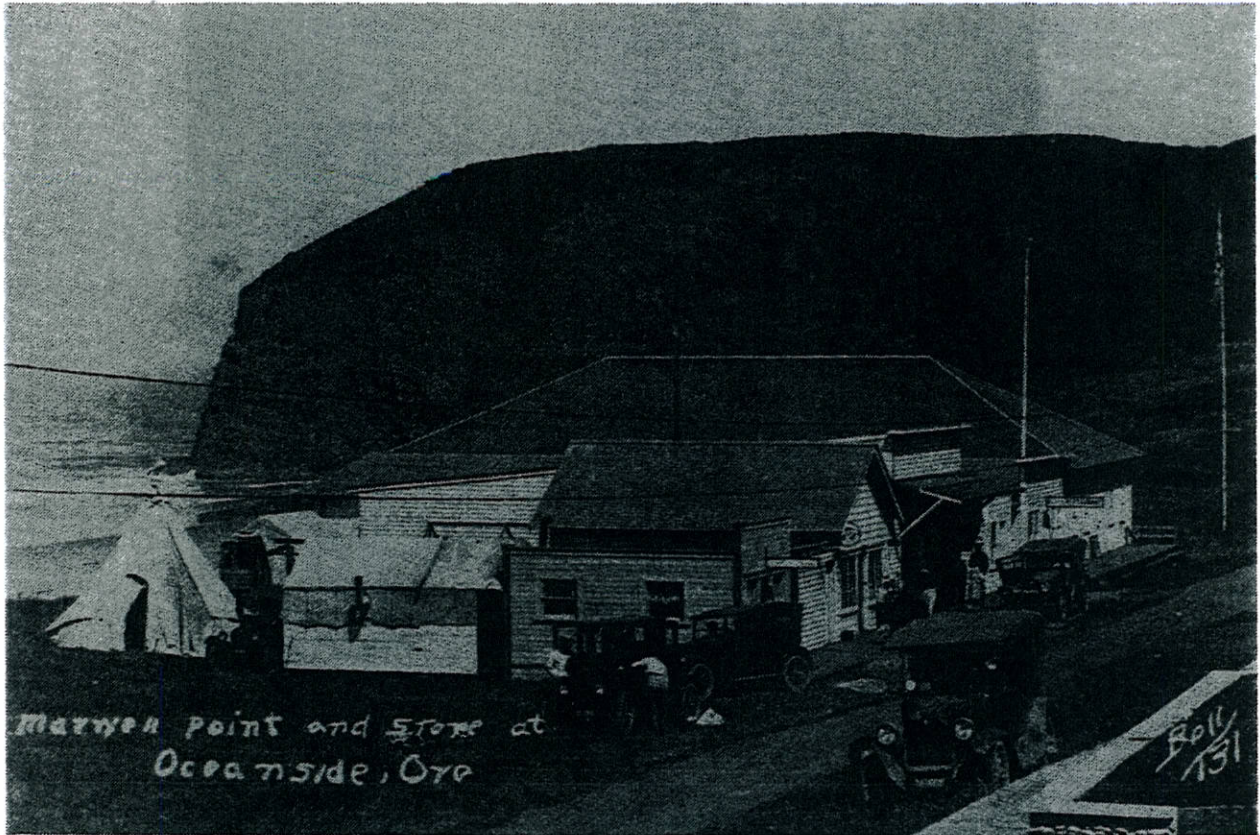
27. PLANK ROAD COMING INTO OCEANSIDE, 1923



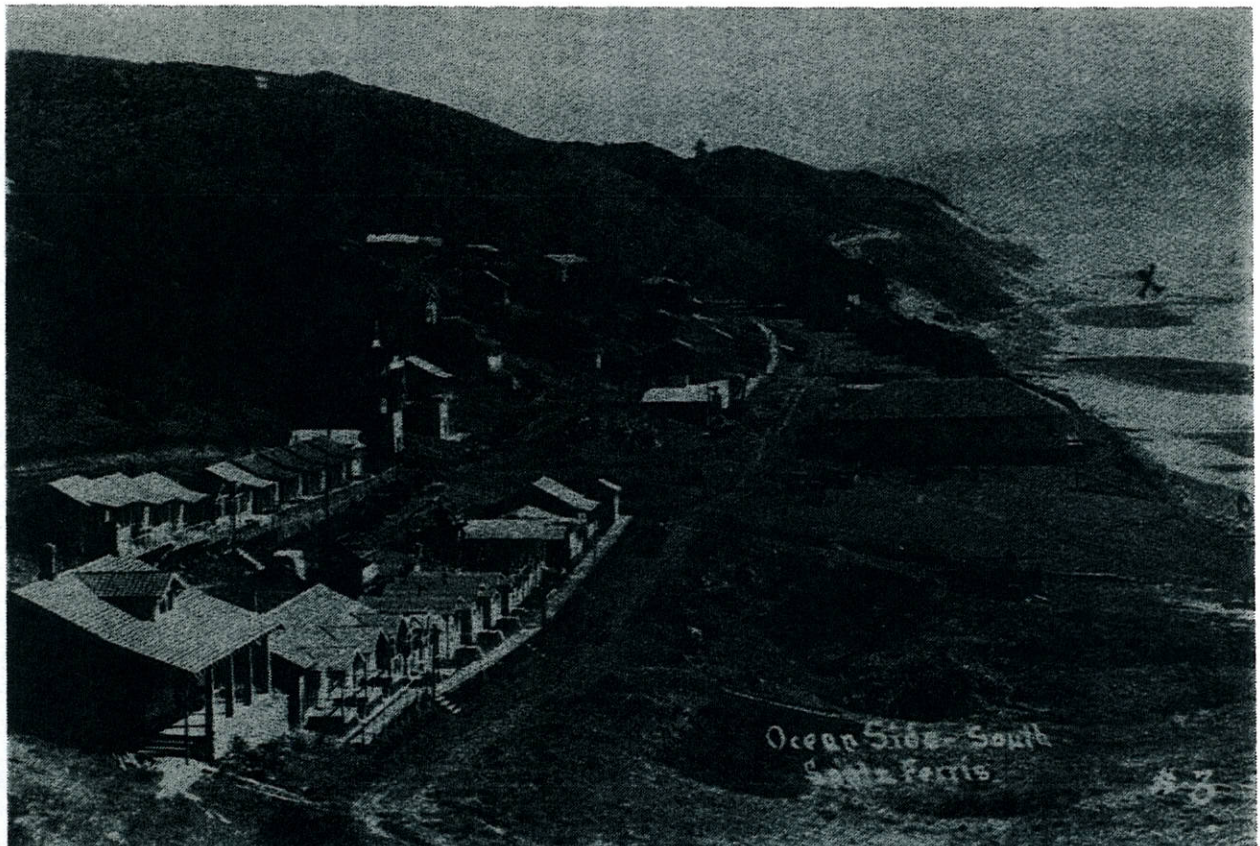
28. CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD TO OCEANSIDE



29. 1920S - PLANE LANDING, NETARTS



30. OCEANSIDE, STORE IN FOREGROUND, MAXWELL POINT IN BACKGROUND



31. 1920S - OCEANSIDE, LOOKING SOUTH FROM MAXWELL POINT



32. 1940S - MILL BUILDING, MR. AND MRS. REDER ERICKSON



33. 1940S - LUMBER MILL ON NETARTS ROAD WHICH CUT SPRUCE FOR WWI PLANES.

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