

## **Blaine Country**

Ivah's sisters, Vesta and Ruth and her brother, Wilbur, contributed to the story.

Date written is unknown

*edited and typed in 2023 by Dean Bones*

I am the daughter of Martin Loban. I came into this country August 1, 1918. My dad took up a homestead. We just brought a tent. Dad and my brother Wilbur found a log that would split easily, and we put sides on this tent. We lived in this 'till Dad got the sawmill made and running. He brought a steam engine in to run the mill.

My brother and I fell the trees, and he bucked them while I logged them to the mill with the horses. There was a road from McMinnville to the mouth of Testament Creek built by old Dr. Goucher of McMinnville. From there on most of the way to Blaine was horse trail. There was some road through the Jones and Kostic places to Blaine.

In this area is a creek named after a man by the name of Bible. A.S. Bible bought 80 acres in 1888. Then in ? he bought 40 acres. He is supposed to have said, "We have a Bible Creek. Now we shall have a Testament Creek."

My dad built the road from the mouth of Testament Creek to the Jones clearing with a little donation from neighbors. He built the first two bridges across the Nestucca River. The first one went out in high water when he was visiting in the valley. Then he built the second one, and it stayed 'till the county took over.

We sawed lumber, and the community rafted it to the Robbie Jones' place for a small cheese factory. Then later we sawed lumber for the schoolhouse at Silver Falls. It, too, was rafted.

When we left the valley there was no work available. Dad could not work in the hayfields due to an eye injury caused by a gun accident. The gun blew up in his face. The hop fields had been discontinued. There was nothing we could work at that would help with the living. I walked 3 miles to train and trellis in the hop fields for \$1.00 a day. Also I walked 3 miles to pick strawberries and peas for \$1.00 a day.

By coming to this country and taking up a homestead we could peel Cascara bark and make enough money for our winter supplies. It was not long 'till we had a building, but we did live in the tent most of the winter.

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When one could find housework wages were \$8.00 a month, and I hated housework! I liked to fish, hunt and run a tree-dog at times.

After I was married to John Browning in August 1920, I trapped. He would run one line, and I would run another. We both liked to run tree dogs.

When people had to go to Tillamook they rode horseback to Blaine and carried their children with them. No one ever thought of babysitters in those days.

It was a way of life to use a gun and get meat from the woods. Our family taught us to use a gun for our own protection. If you come between an old she bear and her cubs you could well have to use a gun, and also in mating season I've known of a male charging. It was impressed on me to shoot after you could see the red in its eyes. We also carried a gun in case we became lost or fell and was injured. Three shots one after the other would raise help from home.

We had been hearing dogs barking at a treed animal. The dogs belonged to the fellow that run the Bell Mountain lookout station. This day we heard the dogs we decided to set out for the dogs to see what they had treed. However before we reached them the dogs would have moved.

Well, eventually we found ourselves across Testament Creek and well up on the timbered mountain. We decided being as it was getting late to take the shortest way back home which was straight down to the creek bed, across, and up the other side to the road home.

About half-way of our way down in the dense woods with the light graying we came on a kinda' level track. On looking closer we found sword fern had been freshly cut. Then we saw a hole under and back in the mountainside under this old snag stump. I recalled my brother-in-law saying that bear did this for a winter bed. My sister was standing with her foot in that track, and she nowhere near covered that track. You may be sure we made tracks ourselves. In fact if one of us lost footing we didn't stop. We just kept sliding 'till we caught our footing again. And all the time

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it was getting darker. We decided we'd make a trip back when our brother came home in January.

My brother, armed with a Colt revolver, sister with an old Winchester 30-30 and me with a 300 Savage returned to the tree. Brother looked the tree over and found an air hole in the side above the entrance. He cut a vine maple stick about 10 feet long and used it to prod in the hole. He placed me in front of the hole and over the edge of the flat place. My sister was about 5 feet to my right. It took a lot of poking, and all the time the bear was making toothpicks of that stick.

Suddenly I saw a bear paw and then his nose. My brother yelled, "Shoot!" I did, but the bear retreated back and up. My shot went under his chest. Then again I shot, and down he came. I held fire. My sister cross shot and brought blood but not in a vital spot. Anyway, that rifle being so old couldn't shoot too accurate. I stood there with a cocked gun trained on that hole telling myself to keep cool as he was injured, and he'd come out fighting. I remember telling myself, "Don't shoot 'till you see the red of his eyes."

Then suddenly his paw came into view, and there was nothing slow about him this time. Then his eye came into view. I didn't have time to tell myself anything. This was now or never. I squeezed that trigger, and then it was over. He dropped inside the hole.

I've often given thanks that I kept my cool, or some of us would have been hurt if he had made it out injured. We had quite a time pulling him out of the hole. By the time we dressed him out and skinned him it was getting dark under the timber. My brother rolled the hide up and carried it out. It was all he could manage. Then we made the long trip home in the dark. By the time we reached the road on top and the other side of the creek it was really dark. Our Dad was out trying to raise a shot from us. We answered, and he came to meet us with a lantern.

The next day we went back and brought the meat out and also the fat too since it is real good for making pie crust. We rendered it out like pork fat. The meat was very good smoked.