

Learned, Grace EDMUNDS - Writing about Victor Learned Sr.

Victor was born in Denver, Colorado, on February 22, 1892, the youngest of five children of Gertrude SANBURN Learned and Harry Learned, an artist who died when Victor was only four years old. Also one brother and one sister died in childhood in Colorado.

About three years after his father died his mother married a widower by the name of Lee Burnside (*Levi Talbot Burnside db*) in Aspen, Colorado. The three children, Alva, Hilda and Victor with their mother and stepfather started traveling with Mr. Burnside's shooting gallery in a covered wagon.

They went to Salt Lake City with stops at Ogden and Logan and then on to Pocatello and Blackfoot, Idaho and across the Rattlesnake Dessert to Huston, Idaho. Then they went to Heppner, Oregon, for the winter. They left Heppner about a year before the terrible flood (*in 1903 db*). From Heppner they traveled to numerous towns including Prineville, Shaniko, Sister, and over the old Santiam Toll Road to Sweet Home, Albany and Corvallis. Leaving Salem they crossed the Willamette River on a hand-drawn ferry boat.

Five days after leaving Salem in August of 1902 they arrived in Ocean Park which is now called Pacific City. Their stepfather ran his shooting gallery at this location for several weeks. Leaving Ocean Park they went to Dallas and Independence to pick hops and prunes while Mr. Burnside ran the prune dryers. When the harvest was over the parents and Hilda returned to the coast while Alva and Victor remained in Dallas to go to school. The boys worked in Arthur Dimmick's livery stable and his home to pay for their board.

Then they joined their parents and sister on the coast in 1903. Their parents rented the Arthur Dimmick farm, homesteaded 160 acres above Hon, now called Horn Creek and later rented the Jasper Dimmick farm. All were located between Cloverdale and Woods.

Victor and Alva attended school for two years at the old District #4 school on the Sanders place. Some of their schoolmates were the children of the Bailey, Sanders, Gist, Worthington, Burke and Kennedy families. This school was discontinued when a school was built in Cloverdale, so the brothers went to school at Woods. Others attending the Woods School included the Miles, Hushbeck, Norton, Waymeyer, Belleque and Ward children. Others were the Magarell children from Pacific City which did not yet have a school and Joe Finnegan who came from his parents' homestead at the present Tierra del Mar.

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Their sister, Hilda, went to Tillamook to work at the Allen House and then later to Portland where she met and married Glenn Glasford and then on to California where she lived until her death.

In 1908 Victor pulled boat for one of the fishermen on the Nestucca River. Later he and Alva fished on the lower Nestucca Bay with a drift boat and then sold their fish to the Elmore Packing Company. The cannery foreman was Billy Penter. Their catch that fall was fourteen tons of Chinook at the price of 2 1/2 cents a pound and six tons of Silversides at 1 1/2 cents a pound.

When Victor was seventeen years old he took up a homestead and trapped at Blaine, Oregon, with Wallace "Polly" Edson. He sold his share to Polly and went to Marshfield, Oregon, to work in the C.A. Smith mill, the largest mill in the world at that time. The pay was two dollars for a ten hour day.

During these years Victor's mother and his stepfather who could never stay in one place very long came and went from their homestead to such various places as Tillamook, the Willamette Valley and California. In 1909 they left Cloverdale for the last time, returned to Colorado, and went on to Florida where Victor's mother became ill and died in 1910.

After several months at Marshfield Victor returned to Cloverdale where he purchased the Confectionery Store from Mert Everest and the soda works from Gary Price. He made soda for all the stores from Pleasant Valley to Neskowin. He also fished and with my brother, Arthur Edmunds, and caught the largest fish ever caught on the Nestucca bar. It weighed 74 1/2 pounds.

On the 10th day of May, 1917, Victor enlisted in the service of his country, and on July 24th he left his business in the care of his brother Alva to go with the 10th Company Coast Artillery of the Oregon National Guard of Tillamook County to Fort Stevens, Oregon. There he was mustered into the Federal service and from there went across the river to Fort Columbia for training. Others in the Tillamook company from the Cloverdale area were John Imlah, Dick Ward, Sam Ray, Web McGinnis, Lyle Craven, Jim Bailey, Elmer Bailey, Glen Cockran, Pharis Stiverson, Mac Edward McCabe, Forrest Gist, Dee Sanders, Elma Johnson, Hugh Arstill and George Wallace.

Victor and I, Grace EDUMUNDS Learned, were married March 12, 1918, at Vancouver, Washington.

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For a short time Victor worked as a dining room orderly and then as a cook for the company and then on to being cook at the Post Exchange. He cooked there until nine officers formed their own Officers' Mess and asked him to be their cook. He was promoted to the rank of mess Sergeant, and on October 27, 1918, left with the 27th Division for Camp Eustis, Virginia. He was in the last of the three groups of the 10th Company men to leave Fort Columbia. The Armistice was signed as the ships were ready to sail on November 11, 1918, so Victor was sent to Camp Lewis, Washington, for discharge.

He arrived home on January 27, 1919, to his confectionery which I began taking care of after his brother Alva also entered the army. We ran the confectionery and sporting goods store for awhile, and then we sold it to the Roy Estabrooks. It was at this time that we bought a farm between Cloverdale and Woods where we raised our three children. Victor and Alva bought out three of the Hushbeck heirs which made a 72 acre farm, one of the best in the county.

Soon Alva and Margie Walton from Texas were married and then moved to the farm. The brothers started clearing the land and milking several cows which they had purchased from Charlie Ray. The land clearing was done by hand. They sold the wood in Pacific City and Cloverdale delivering it by water on a scow pushed by a boat and small motor. They cleared the right-of-way and extended the road from the Thun farm down to our farm.

To build a bridge over the little lake that separated their road from the county road the four men who lived on the road, Ray Hushbeck, Fred Thun, Vic and Al, the names by which the Learned brothers were known, rented a 500 pound pile driver hammer. They made a tall frame upon which they mounted it, raised it by hand with a handmade hoist built by Al Boon, and tripped it by climbing a ladder and hitting the trip with a hammer.

They built the bridge in a month. With the help of one man, Dan Mallet, they dug a ditch 2300 feet long and from seven feet deep at the start to three feet deep at the end to drain their land and the land of the three neighbors. They milked as many as 52 cows, mostly Holstein. We were proud of their accomplishments and of the fertile land.

Al and Margie and their family lived on the farm until 1936 when the Learned brothers bought the Paul Burke farm now owned by John Hurliman. Al ran that farm while Vic ran the first farm. Al was working in the woods as a logger at the time of his death in an automobile accident in 1945.

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In 1949 we rented the farm to our partner, Alva's widow Margie, and her son Glenn, and we moved to Pacific City, our present home.

While on the farm Vic was a director for the Cloverdale Cheese Factory and represented the factory at the Tillamook Creamery Association meetings. He also was a Nestucca Union High School director for seven years.

Upon leaving the farm Vic bought and operated equipment for building roads, making landfills and excavating for buildings. Later he sold cars and farm implements for Tom Bailey at the Ford Motor Company in Tillamook. He then accepted a position as Weed Controller for Tillamook County. Then Vic bid on the right to pick greenery on the Cape Kiwanda Forest Service unit. He still rents the greenery land, and until recently he picked salal and huckleberry sprays and carried them out by pack board. many times the sprays weighed around eighty pounds. He enjoyed picking the greenery more than any work he had ever done except running his much loved dairy farm.

Nowadays Victor spends his time in his big garden and enjoys occasional river and ocean fishing.

As far as I know Vic and his friend, Clyde Hudson, are the two eldest pioneers in South Tillamook County. They were both in the Tillamook County Booster's Band of which Mr. Win' Trombley was Band Master around 1914. Also they were in the Cloverdale Band, led by Andy Heater. Clyde played the clarinet and Vic the snare drum.

Clyde was versatile in many occupations. His photography which dates from his first Sears box camera in 1900 became well known for his scenic post card service in which he supplied cards to South Tillamook County business places as well as many patrons all around the northwest. Some of his scenes were included with the most prominent photographers of the Northwest by the Anderson Scenic Card Co. for their Oregon Calendars. Clyde was also competent in carpentry of barns, houses and finishing of build-ins of which many are still in use. He has been a Ham operator for many years having received his operator's license in 1922. His call number is W7PE. His local Radio and TV repair service was carried on for several years in South Tillamook County.

These two old friends have much in common. They both are members of the Cloverdale Baptist Church, they have the same date for their birthdays, and they

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are proud of the fact that, as they say, "George Washington was born on our birthday!" They usually celebrate their anniversaries together with loved ones. Their February 22, 1979, meeting will have completed ninety-three years of life for Clyde and Eighty-seven for Vic.

(Note that Victor Fay Learned died June 14, 1979. db)