

# **The Ward Family Living in the Neskowin Area of South Tillamook County, Oregon**

by Keith Ward

*Keith Dale Ward b 24 Jul 1928 at Neskowin, Tillamook County, Oregon and d 13 Nov 2013 at Ontario, Malheur County, Oregon*

*Keith's parents who are mentioned in this story were Guy Raymond Ward b 10 Oct 1904 in Neskowin, Tillamook County, Oregon, and d 28 Aug 1966 at Neskowin, Tillamook County, Oregon, and Alice Louise WINTERS Ward b 10 Oct 1904 in Tillamook, Oregon, and d 12 Dec 2001 in Lincoln City, Oregon.*

*Keith mentions his paternal grandparents who were William Hiram "Will" Ward b 19 Oct 1868 in Knox County, Illinois, who died 28 Mar 1938 in Tillamook, Oregon, and Clara Marlan "Dollie" GUGIN Ward b. 14 Mar 1884 in Elk City, Douglas County, Nebraska, who died 14 May 1948, in Tillamook, Oregon*

*Keith's 3 brothers who are included in this story are Calvin Claire Ward 1926 - 2010, Dan W Ward 1930 - 1960, and Larry Michael "Mike" Ward born in 1938 who provided this story written by his dad.*

*This story was edited and typed by Dean Bones in November 2023.*

On the Oregon coast between the sandy beach and Highway 101 lay the small town of Neskowin. It consisted of a store, a garage, and a post office. There was also a hotel and accommodations for summer vacationers. There were permanent homes, quite a number of rental cabins and a number of vacation homes owned by families from the Willamette Valley.

About a half-mile north of Neskowin was a small dairy. It was divided by the highway as it ran through the center of the place. My folks were renting and operating the dairy. They had one son, Calvin, born in 1926, another son, myself, Keith, in 1928, and another boy, Dan, born in 1930.

I can remember sitting on the porch watching a small track-laying tractor working on the golf course. It was going back and forth crossing the creek where the seventh green is located. It would ease down the edge of the creek bank into the creek and crawl up the opposite bank. I thought that was pretty classy.

During the summer few cars came by on the highway. There were two makes of cars that really turned me on. They were large and different from the others. I was told they were either sightseers or people on vacation from California. The one car was the Pierce Arrow with its headlights built in on top of the front fender, and the other car was the Auburn, big with its white or tan top.

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The house we lived in was sitting on a hillside near the bottom, and Highway 101 ran just below the house where the hillside flattened out into pasture. Our driveway ran below the house just above the highway and north about 200 yards to the barn which was very close to the highway. Out from the barn and on the edge of the highway stood the milk-house and the milk-stand. We only milked 14 to 16 cows, and as the place was mostly hilly we had to have our hay for the stock trucked in. Along with our garden spot we also occasionally had a patch of turnips for the stock.

The garden spot was across the highway from the barn over a bridge over a creek and onto the pasture. Lacking a truck or a tractor we had to move vegetables, turnips for the stock, hay, grain and whatever with a wheelbarrow. It seemed we all had a hand in wearing it out.

A short distance from our house was a small two-room shack that stood on a knoll. It was only used by a lady from Salem. She ran the Red Lantern Tavern in Salem and would drive in occasionally with a friend or two and spend a weekend or so. They seemed to have a wild time while they were here. There was a short incline going up to the shack, and I used to watch her drive up her little hill and wonder if she was going to make the pull. She drove a little black Model T coupe that did the job every time.

At that time there was an occasional hobo walking by on the highway. Sometimes one would offer to chop up some firewood for something to eat. Mom would show them where the axe was and would always have some food sacked up for them. We never had any real trouble with them, but maybe it was because our German shepherd was always watching. I don't know how good of a judge of character the dog was, but he was never all smiles with folks in dirty clothes who were carrying a packsack and were walking up the highway.

There was a hobo walking past one day that didn't approve of the barking and the dog's attitude. He began lobbing rocks and cussing the dog. The dog didn't like this and herded him up the highway to the barn and out onto the bridge over the creek. We had to go down and call off the dog. Hard telling what might have happened had there been no one home. The hobo was trying to pull up a fencepost for battle when the dog was called off.

Around a couple of corners toward Neskowin was the grade school. Us kids would walk to school and back on an old road through some timber that ran parallel with the highway. The school was 1 room for 8 grades with lavatories, library/workroom, and a

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small downstairs playroom with a wood furnace. Outside was the playground with a merry-go-round and a couple of steel pipes between some small spruce trees for chinning bars.

Mom would take us to Sunday school which was usually at the schoolhouse, and if it was not there it would be at the preacher's house. The older preacher and his wife were German Lutherans and nice people. His name was Adolph Gauhl.

Mom would round up us kids sometimes, and with the red wagon in tow we would walk the highway to Neskowin for some groceries. Us kids usually went barefoot, and it seemed like about every time we made this trip at least one of us would stub our big toe on the asphalt. That would call for a little rag wrapped and knotted around the toe for a day or so.

Next to our house was a large woodshed where we would split our wood after we knocked the chicken manure off the chopping block. We did get some satisfaction out of the chopping block since that's where we chopped the heads off the chickens. It always amazes me how the bodies would flop all around, and their heads would lay there on the chopping block blinking their eyes at you after you whacked them.

A short distance from the woodshed stood a 2 hole outhouse. Some said the purpose of the 2 holer was for a client and their friend. Others said one hole was to sit on, and the other was to vomit in in case of a hangover. It seems in either case it might have worked out.

Looking for something to do one day I ran across an old used and abandoned flywheel from an old car. It had a slender ring with gear cogs around the outside of it. It made caterpillar tracks on the ground which I found quite interesting. One of our aunts was taking care of us one day shortly after my newfound attraction. During our aunt's stay she took time out to go to the outhouse. The folks had gone to Tillamook on business, and they shortly returned. Our aunt went home. Then hell broke loose. Mom was a little over-concerned, but Dad thought it to be funny. It seems while playing with my newfound fly wheel I had forgotten I had placed it around one of the holes in the outhouse. It so happened that this was the hole our aunt parked on. Apparently she was angry and very put out that her bare butt had the imprint of the wheel and all of its cogs. I thought it was funny but made sure it didn't happen again.

There was another time the same aunt was taking care of us. Originally the hillside had been dug out to make a flat spot to make room for this house, woodshed and outhouse to set on leaving a 6' to 8' bank behind the buildings. On top of the bank

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behind the buildings was a stack of large limbs that were to be slid down the bank when needed to be sawed up or chopped up for firewood. The day was warm, sunny and dry. Our aunt decided to step outside and check on us kids. She noticed some smoke rising above the woodpile. Curious she climbed the bank and looked behind the pile of limbs to find me trying to enjoy my first cigarette. I had taken some paper and rolled up some seed from a dried up weed called Dock weed. She really interrupted me as I was busy striking matches and trying to keep my project moving along. I really got in trouble over this, and it was declared I could have started a fire and caught the woodpile on fire or caught the grass on fire that would have run up the hill and started a forest fire. I decided I was pretty bad and that smoking was for big folks.

During my first grade in school I proved to be quite a success. The teacher was Mrs. Louthier, and I found out what a good teacher she was when at the end of the year she told my mother what a good pupil I was. I believe, however, the teacher may have been stretching things a little bit. As I remember there was hardly a week that went by that she didn't go to the trouble of spanking me when I'm sure I didn't need it. These incidents took place in the workroom. She started out with a yard stick which in time broke in two pieces at which time she used a foot ruler. The ruler would produce more expression and became her official tool for promoting discipline.

One of my first problems was the girl who sat in front of me. She was about 4 grades ahead of me, and when she would rise up slowly from her seat for a few seconds it was a signal that she was releasing the passage of some foul wind. This action always irritated me to the extent that I would tear off a short piece of paper and chew it until it became soaked. Then it could be rolled tight into a short solid chunk. It wasn't very thick, but doubled over a rubber band was lethal especially for a tight-fitting skirt. The end result of a well-placed shot would produce an audible expression of surprise and the rubbing of a spot on her rear end. This gave me a moment of satisfaction, but it never failed to keep me from checking into the workroom. This rubber band action seemed legal to me and each time only increased my plans for the next time to be more careful, shoot harder, and not to be seen doing it. The teacher made me stay in my seat once for a week. I had bathroom privileges, but noon time and recesses were out. That was a long week. I guess my first grade problems could have been my introduction to the common rubber band.

My first 2 or 3 years of grade school had their own little problems. There was an appendix that was about to blow, and I broke a leg in school. The leg took a month in Tillamook. I was in the old hospital which was a little different than it is today. When I wanted a nurse I had to let her know by picking up a little bell by the handle and

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shaking it. If I was quite impatient I threw it up at the ceiling, the wall, or out into the hallway. That was amusing. The night nurse later in her shift would get up on a gurney in the hallway and go to sleep. She would get to snoring and eventually get to snoring so loud she would wake herself up. She would jump up, make her rounds, and before long it would be gurney time again.

Throughout our grade school experience we had teachers and then we had TEACHERS. One woman teacher in particular was quite informative as she created marriages out on the playground and little sex sessions that turned out to be a little wild and far out. She had a 21 year-old son at home and a boy and 2 girls in our grade school. She was single, and considering her teaching the poor old gal probably was plagued with frustration and an overactive imagination and was doing the best she could. Mom was always asking about our school activities, and I made the mistake of relating some of the teachings out on the grassy knoll. Mom's questioning seemed a little pushy, I thought. The next morning, I believe it was, she said, "You are not going to school. You and I are going to town. We ended up in Tillamook in the school superintendent's office. I was to tell the superintendent all that was taught on the grassy knoll. J.E. O'neal was the superintendent's name, and the deeper we got into what had been happening the redder his face and bald head got. I'm sure there was a thing or two that neither he nor Mom had ever heard before. It was a time and place I could have happily done without.

The grandparents on our father's side ran a 160 acre dairy about a mile north of us. The road to the dairy left the highway, went down through a neighbor's place, meandered up along a creek, crossed a bridge, and there was the barn and milk house.

Due to Grandfather's struggling with colon cancer the grandparents moved to Tillamook to be closer to his doctor. Doing this they turned the place over to my folks along with the mortgage in 1936.

The house wasn't overly large but had 3 bedrooms. And of all things it had indoor plumbing including a bathroom with a commode and a bathtub. This was quite a change for us. No more outhouse, no more round tub to pour hot water in to bathe, and there was running water in the house. One morning years before this my grandparents were milking their cows when their house caught fire and burned down. This house was built to replace it in about 1904.

Next to the house was a large woodshed with a small portion of it for fruit jars and other shelving. A chicken house stood a few yards behind the house, and there was a

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garden spot down in front of the house beside the path going down to the barn. Inside the front yard was the visible top of a small buried tank used for providing carbide lighting when the house was first built.

Our new dairy was all hilly ground with some timber and brush. The only flat ground was here and there in the creek bottom as it made its way east through the center of the place. No flat ground meant hay had to again be trucked in from the Willamette Valley while grain was to be picked up at the feed store 10 miles north in Cloverdale. For a short period of time grain was trucked in by Elliot Feed and Seed from Perrydale in the Willamette Valley. We were milking 23 - 25 cows We also had a mean Jersey bull, a pig or two, some chickens and a dog or 2 with our best dog being an Australian shepherd.

This place also had a small shack on it a short distance from our house. It had a porch, a woodshed and an outhouse. As one might guess the lady from Salem started using this shack, so I guess the move didn't break up the friendship.

Dad left the house one afternoon for Tillamook on some errand. It was September 1936. It was that evening after it started getting dark that we saw car lights coming in on the road. We snapped on a switch that lit up a porch light and a light over the big door on the front of the barn. We watched Dad get out, and we opened up the front door. He was driving a brand new 1937 Chevy pickup into the barn. He had gone to Tillamook and traded off our 1929 4-door Chevy sedan for a pickup. Pretty exciting!

We would go to school and back in this new pickup. But as we advanced in grades we would walk home if the weather was good enough. We could haul our milk to the factory, haul our grain from Cloverdale and drive up the creek to the gravel bar and haul gravel down the road to fill the potholes.

We were enjoying running the Surge milking machine which was quite a change for us. The milk would be transported in our pickup to the cheese factory about 4 1/2 miles north to a small place called Oretown. On the place that we just left the milk cans were set out on a milk stand and picked up by a larger flatbed truck to be delivered to the factory each day. At this time, Oretown consisted of a cheese factory, a post office and a church. Up on the hill behind the church was the cemetery. The community consisted mostly of a milk ranch and numerous dairies.

We tried a team of horses for a while, but they didn't work out too well. The one horse could end up with the harness scattered. One time he ended up at the barn with his collar on and a few chunks of leather straps dragging.

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The last team we had wasn't too bad. We rode them quite often as well as worked them. One particular day the team we had then was up the creek bottom in a back pasture when they came racing down the creek bottom rattling rocks at the creek crossing. They went around the barn, down across the bridge and slid to a stop at a wire gate crossing the road that we happened to have closed. Wild-eyed and shivering the horses were put in the barn and fed. Dad picked up his rifle and went up the creek to see if he could find out the cause of their problem. He returned and said there were bear tracks around where the horses had been. So I guess the horses got a good snort of a bear and didn't like it.

With the last team the mare really wasn't too anxious to get into a hard pull. The white gelding sometimes would need a little help. When you popped him across the butt with a rein he started wringing his tail and would lay right into the tugs. Usually something was going to move, and the mare would get in and help.

December 7, 1937, a 4th boy, Larry Michael, was born becoming the last addition to the family. Mike got off to a slow start but all at once took off in growth and has turned out to be the largest one of the bunch.

Dan took his BB gun one day and went up the creek to a vine maple patch where we used to play. As you got about to the patch you went through some brush on a deer trail that grew over and formed a tunnel. He came running home from his adventure saying that he had shot a bear in the face at the tunnel. Dad went up to look and returned saying there HAD been a bear in the tunnel, and it looked like Dan had run down the trail about as fast as the bear had run up the trail. Looking at the tracks he thought it was a yearling. Dan came around the corner of the house one day with his BB gun, and Mom asked him where he was going. He said, "Going woodpecker hunting." Mom said she was sure he would be home for dinner.

Most all of our firewood consisted of spruce limbs from downed trees up on the ridge. They were sledged down and stacked in the pasture out from the house. Our grandfather on our mother's side would come and saw the limbs up with his one-lunger water-cooled buzz saw that popped and snapped for a couple days. This racket and the screeching of the circular blade would make your head ache and your ears ring for a while.

The spruce chunks would produce a hot fire, and in time thanks to the pitch they would encourage a flue fire. The second one I witnessed wasn't really all that bad. During the hottest part of the fire Dan threw Mom's razor strap that she used on us

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into the fire. A good part of her spankings weren't all that bad, but I had to make out that they were all bad. Dad's spanking were different. His had expression and would build a fire on you.

Cal stepped out to the end of the porch one day with a small .32 automatic looking for a target of sorts. The target he chose to blast away at was a knothole on the side of the chicken house. A little later Mom went to the chicken house for eggs or something and found her big white rooster dead apparently from a gunshot wound. Mom was pretty much disgusted. Cal could have picked out a more reasonable target it seems. His only "logical" and failing excuse was, "What was the rooster doing in the hen house setting on a roost in the middle of the day?" Maybe the rooster was caught up on his work and was taking a much needed rest?

Milking cows had its specific time of 5 o'clock in the morning and 5 o'clock in the evening, so you knew whatever you were doing where you were to be at these time periods. We started milking one evening, and the electricity went off, so we had to milk the cows by hand. Dad remarked, "Some damed fool probably ran into a light pole!" It so happened that his oldest son was visiting his girlfriend and bumped a light pole that must have blew a fuse in a transformer.

Our evenings were spent listening to the radio or playing games such as checkers or Chinese checkers. Later on we were into pinochle pretty heavy. Prize fights broadcast on the radio held a big priority. We followed all the fights, and Dad always had us supplied with boxing gloves. We did quite a bit of boxing, and when boxing with Dad you could get popped and wonder where it came from. Dan boxed Mike once and said Mike was big and not the fastest, but when he hit you it was like a sledge hammer.

Not too much later as time went by a telephone was installed, and it was followed by television. Television lines started at the house, went down to the barn and across the creek to the hillside and then up to the top of the ridge ending in a rain-protected box.

There was a good-sized clearing at the top of the ridge where the box was located. The clearing was about 350 yards from the front porch and was a bad place for a buck deer to feed. Dad used a Winchester 94 25-35 and was a good shot. Cal was a good shot too. The rest of us kids never won a trophy, I guess, but we never went without something to eat either.

Our neighbor lived a short distance from us on the graveled road and like us he had a large mean Jersey bull. The bulls were very unpredictable and might take to you



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whenever they got the urge. We would stake ours out with a chain snapped to his nose ring, and sometimes we would snap on a staff also. We bought a mask for him once which was metal covering over his face with lower slits so he could only see down to feed. By raising his head up high, though, he still posed a threat. Dad took him out one morning on the chain, and the bull charged him and about shoved him through a woven-wire fence. Dad got away from him and whipping the chain against his ring got him calmed down enough to take him.

Cal returned from girlin' one day and was wearing his new pair of yellow cord pants. He parked at the barn and headed for the house when our bull stepped around the corner of the barn facing him. The bull was younger and still had his horns. After a couple of seconds of staring at each other the bull charged. Cal grabbed him by the horns, and they wrestled each other ending up behind the barn with the bull shoving Cal down into a large manure pile. Cal got away from the bull in the end without a scratch, but his yellow pants never did look the same after that. The bull later was dehorned and resided in a a pen built of 3 X 12s when he wasn't staked out. When he would bellow and raise a little cain the dog would go to the barn and watch things for awhile.

The neighbors' bull and our bull got loose one day and were meeting in the neighbors' open field. Everyone was anticipating the big crash only to witness them spend the afternoon trying to breed each other.

The neighbor asked Cal one day to do something at their barn, and Cal noticed the neighbors' bull was missing his chain. He grabbed a pitchfork intending on getting ahold of the bull's ring. A disagreement took place, and after Cal fed him a few inches of the the pitchfork into his neck he managed to slide the pitchfork down his nose, through the ring his ring and bury the fork into the ground. The bull snapped the handle off the pitchfork, caught Cal a stub horn high on the inside of a pants' leg and tossed him into the air. When this started Mom was in the living room and noticed our dog in the yard watching toward the neighbors. She said the dog took off all at once and headed out across the neighbors' field. Our dog fought off the neighbors' dog, ran through the neighbors' barn and separated Cal and the bull.

The same neighbors' bull was loose again one day, and Dad, going over to help get a chain back on him took his rifle with him. About the time Dad got there a friend of Dad's drove in and wanted to know what was going on. The man was a friend of Dad's. His name was Grant Irish who was a big man and ex-logger. Dad said he told Grant the bull was big and he was mean. Grant stepped over a fence and behind a shed where the bull was. Dad said the bull slammed Grant up against the shed so

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hard you would have thought the shed would go down. Dad said he loaded the rifle and stepped around the corner of the building expecting the worst. He said that there stood Grant with one arm around the bull's neck and with the bull's ring in his other hand with the head twisted around and asked, "Well, where the hell's the chain?"

Nothing like an ornery Jersey bull! We all had a whack at it at our place.

We had a load of hay coming in one afternoon from the valley, and the darned guy delivered a load of pick-up bales on a semi-flatbed on a road that wasn't really designed for it. Crossing a bridge and then a sharp corner at the neighbors' barn, the driver failed to make a wide enough swing for the trailer. He dumped part of the load over the bank next to the creek. The remainder of the load was stacked in the barn. The semi turned around and left. We were on our own. The hay that was spilled we moved with the pickup and stacked it. It was a moonlit night, and I believe we were done shortly after midnight.

A couple of pigs occupied the pig pen. They occasionally escaped and had to be rounded up. We put up an electric fence around the pen to solve the problem. But the old sow would still escape once in a while. One day we watched her do her thing. She would put her snout close to the fence and sense whether the fence was on or off. If the fence was on she would back off about 10 feet, and knowing she was going to get shocked she ran for the fence squealing until she cleared the fence. Snapping her ears back and forth and wringing her tail a little she was free. The first litter of babies she delivered numbered 16!

Mom was quite a cook and was always coming up with a different dish for us to try. There was usually always a fresh cake and coffee when company dropped in. We never bought bread that I can remember of, and she usually baked 8 or 9 loaves at a time.

We built a 2-door cupboard on the end of the porch that was as wide and tall as the porch. There was a barber friend from Portland who dropped by occasionally on weekends to fish the creek, eat a big meal and hopefully return home with a number of jars of canned foods. About the last time he stopped in he asked Mom if she had any spare canned goods, and Mom said, "I don't have a thing right now, Harry." She was standing beside the cupboard that contained about 300 quarts of freshly canned goods. When Harry went down the path Mom turned to me, winked and went into the house.

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Up the creek bottom a ways was a large rotten stump that contained a nest of honey bees. One evening we grabbed a tub and headed up the creek to rob the bees' nest. We ended up with a good amount of honey in the tub plus cone. I guess I ate too much cone and became very sick afterwards. After that the smell of honey would turn my stomach. About 25 years later I tried eating it. I liked it then and have ever since.

Our school lunches during grade school and high school usually consisted of ground deer meat sandwiches.

During the fall and winter we would pick foxglove leaves for a little extra money. The leaves were stuffed into a grain sack and sold for a few cents a pound. This plus peeling chittum bark sometimes meant we were all going to a movie at the theater in Cloverdale. Us kids would have a couple of blankets and ride in the back of the pickup. Sometimes the trip home seemed rather cool. I forget how much a sack of leaves would amount to, but a couple of parties stuffed rocks in the center of their sacks to gain some weight. One party even had a chunk of stove pipe filled with rocks in their sacks. It wasn't long before the buyer was to run a rod or knife into your sacks of leaves to check for rocks. The leaves were processed for the heart medicine digitalis.

The house water was piped down from a trough up a canyon. You would have to go up to the trough when the water ran slow and scratch the screen partly plugged with leaves and grass or pull out a trapped waterdog. We buried tile further up the canyon where the stream originated, tiled it down to a cement cistern we had buried above the house and piped on to the house. We took a sample of the water in to be tested, and it came out showing pure water.

The weed Tansey Ragwort was a real spreading problem. It was a poisonous fast spreading weed. We used 3 gallon sprayers with 3 cups of powder added to the water to spray the weeds. We all sprayed, and one summer we went through 1,100 pounds of powder. It was almost a losing battle through if your neighbors didn't spray.

Since our dad was quite a hunter us kids took to it as soon as we could handle a rifle. Dad heard of a plane that had gone down in the country supposedly in our area, and there was a \$500.00 reward for its location. He and I started out early one morning thinking we just might run onto some sign of it. We started out on Jim Creek, and it took all day to hunt through to home. We walked the ridges never seeing any sign of a downed plane and walked up on the porch about 5 o'clock that afternoon. We stepped into the kitchen to find Mom standing there with a strange look on her face. She said, "Listen" and turned on the radio. The radio was blaring out the sounds of

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sirens at Pearl Harbor. The Japanese had bombed that morning. This changed the way of life for some time.

Soon, a small Army encampment was set up just north of Neskowin, and above it beyond an open hillside cemented underground army bunkers were built. They used camouflaged netting and mounted 50 caliber machine guns. The Blimp Base was built. Blimps patrolled the coast. Highway 101 was patrolled by jeeps, 6 X 6s and halftracks with mounted machine guns. We had blackouts. No lights were to show from your residence after dark, and any that did would be visited by an army patrol. We could hear the patrols at night, but we couldn't see them on the highway. One individual complained about the dust stirred up and the noise of the army vehicles going past their house. The person was shortly visited by a commanding officer informing him that the Army's routine would continue, and the party would either be satisfied with it or consider a change of residence.

The large open hillside between the encampment and the Army bunkers was a dairyman's hay field. During haying time I would walk up over the ridge and help in the field. The owner would also hire some of the soldiers who were off-duty. On this day a neighboring dairyman came down to help also. The 2 dairymen were discussing the plan for the day when an argument began, and soon they were down on the ground fighting and cussing each other. Sitting on the hay wagon beside me was a soldier who jumped off the wagon. He picked up about 3 pitchforks and got back on the wagon. He said, "If this would take place in Kentucky where I'm from they would be using these pitchforks."

Another day, a nice Sunday, we headed for the hayfield with the team and wagon. The owner was on the wagon spreading out the hay as it was tossed up to him. Directly above us were the Army bunkers. I guess it was such a nice day that the soldiers decided to engage in a little target practice. The target area would be the beach or ocean about a mile away. They fired a couple bursts from their 50 caliber machine guns. When each bullet passed over us it delivered a high-pitched, deafening crack. The team took off as hard as they could go. The owner was trying to get to the front of the wagon to grab the reins to stop the horses and was cussing the soldiers as hard and loud as the horses were running. He finally had his team under control and back across the field to start over again. I never heard whether the soldiers blew up their target and quit shooting or if they heard all the loud cussing they were getting.

We would see an occasional bomber fly over and maybe a Navy flying boat go through. Dan and I were out in the pasture next to the house one day watching some planes above us. One plane was towing a target some distance behind, and a fighter

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plane was diving back and forth at the target shooting with bursts of machine gun fire. We could hear the revving up of the fighter's engine and the dull firing of its guns. Behind us we heard 3 plops. Since we were the only ones or only things in the field the noise had to be from spent bullets from the fighter.

It was not uncommon to see ships out on the ocean. They were mostly freighters traveling north or south. It was not uncommon to see log rafts being towed south probably to California. I believe the Sause Brothers Towing from up toward Astoria did a lot of this. A lot of the logs that washed up on the beach had slipped out of rafts due to storms.

I was out checking some traps I had set out up the creek hoping to catch a wild mink. I caught a big one, my first mink. Rather than go back down the creek I climbed the ridge and ended up above the neighbors' house by a fence overlooking the highway and the ocean. There was a freighter on the ocean heading for the beach in my direction. It repeatedly was blowing its fog horn. It turned around just before it got to the breakers and looked huge. I would never have thought a ship that large could have gotten that close to the breakers and turned around if I hadn't seen it. It went back the way it had come still blowing its fog horn but running a definite zig-zag course. There must have been a submarine giving it a bad time. We never heard of a freighter having a problem out here, so I guess it made out all right.

At a viewpoint north of Neskowin overlooking Daley Lake is a commemorative marker. At this time the highway was very crooked with rock walls at this point. Where this marker is now there was a very small shack for observation purposes to watch for ships and aircraft. The only thing in the shack was a telephone, and it was for one purpose only. Cal and I took the watch quite a few times which was from midnight to 4:00 in the morning. We were to have a rifle with us and call Portland if we saw a light out on the ocean or if we heard an airplane. If we heard an airplane they wanted to know in which direction it was flying and if it sounded like a single engine or like a four engine. There was never anything we reported on. Due to the blackouts traffic on the highway was almost at a standstill.

There were periods of different collection drives. There were steel and iron drives collecting all the scrap steel you could find. There were rubber drives and aluminum drives. It seems like before the war the US shipped so much scrap iron to Japan, and it was shot back at us at Pearl Harbor.

So many things were rationed. They needed to know how much gasoline you would need to haul your milk, to haul your grain, to run your tractor. A lot of ranchers had

# **The Ward Family Living in the Neskowin Area of South Tillamook County, Oregon**

by Keith Ward

their own tractors, and some even built their tractors. Us boys got off the high school bus one evening and walking through the neighbors' place going home we always walked past a home-made tractor the neighbor had built. He used an older car body cut off, frame shortened, and over-sized tires on the rear.

If you were claiming gasoline for your tractor it might have been a good idea to run it around the farm a time or two once in a while. I had a piece of chalk in my pocket, and as we walked past the tractor I marked an X on the face of the rear tire. The next day Dad was approached by this neighbor and was asked if he had seen any strangers on his place or had seen strange cars at the neighbors' place. Dad said he had seen no one over at his place. The neighbor finally told Dad about the X he found on his tractor tire and thought the government might be checking on it being used. I told Dad that I had done it without reason. The rubber cracking with age, a tire or two flat, and grass growing up through it surely wouldn't be a sign of non-use . . .