

CFR 0441

Fred H. Bowlby, Sr.

CENTURY FARM REGISTRATION

59

OREGON STATE FAIR -- SEPTEMBER 8, 1959

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1. Name: Fred H. Bowlby, Sr.
2. Postoffice Address: RT 2 Bx 235 Cornelius
3. County in which your farm is located: Washington
4. How old is your farm? 106. How old are you? 83.
5. Who founded your Century Farm? Wilson Bowlby
6. How many miles did you travel to come today? 54
7. Did you receive a Century Farm award at last year's State Fair? no
8. Do you have Century Farm land on both husband and wife sides of the family?
no
9. How many generations of your family live on the farm today? 3
10. How many exhibits do you have at the 1959 Oregon State Fair? none
What are they? _____

11. How many years have you belonged to the Oregon Historical Society or your county Historical Society? none

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Bowlby Farm

The Fred Bowlby farm was settled by Howard's great grandfather, Dr. Wilson Bowlby, in 1853. Some of the early farming is uncertain but by 1900, the Bowlbys say the farm had been grained to death. At that time, they started in the dairy operation, growing Red clover and other field crops for the dairy herd and started building up the land with manure. The dairy operation was given up in 1932 because of a severe outbreak of mastitis, for which there was no satisfactory control at that time.

They then went into the chicken and turkey business including one of the fine turkey breeding farms in Oregon and continued in this until 1949 at which time they shifted over to vegetable and small fruit crops which they were able to establish because of irrigation in 1948. They now irrigate between 70 and 100 acres annually. The crops now consist of $10\frac{1}{2}$ acres of strawberries, 9 acres of beans, 28 acres of sweet corn, and 15 acres of cannery squash. They still produce some grain -- 15 acres of wheat, 25 acres of barley, 20 acres of oats, and 20 acres of clover hay. This farm today produces more per acre than any time in its history.

THESE ARE THE MEN of the family at Bowlby farm, Rt. 2, Cornelius, where descendants of Dr. Wilson Bowlby, pioneer Oregon physician, still farm part of his donation land claim, established in 1852. Pictured are (from left) Howard, fourth generation; Fred, third generation, and Shawn, 2, and Kenneth, 3, fifth generation.—(Argus)

Third Washington county farm family to qualify for "century farmer" title is that of Fred Bowlby, Rt. 2, Cornelius.

Fred, his son Howard and four grandchildren represent third, fourth and fifth generations of Bowlbys to live on the property since Dr. Wilson Bowlby, pioneer physician, established donation land claim there in 1852.

Dr. Bowlby, a noted Oregon resident who was member of the last territorial and first state legislature, resided on the property until 1860 when he moved to Forest Grove.

Physicians in that day and age had their work cut out for them. Roads in many cases were only cow trails. Bowlby's practice took him throughout the entire area from McMinnville to Portland, often requiring two or more days for a single call.

Sons Take Over

Next to take over the land were John and Theodore Bowlby, the latter Fred's father, who purchased an additional 160 acres adjoining the 320-acre claim.

In 1894, Theodore's sons Fred and Randolph took over operation of the farm, buying out the other heirs.

Dr. Bowlby did little farming on the largely wooded tract, although he did set out an orchard. His son raised mostly wheat, tilled by ox team, and some livestock. "He just let them roam," Fred recalls.

Start of Bowlby dairying operation began in the late 1880's, and increased under Fred's management to peak of 40 registered Jersey milk cows. Outbreak of mastitis, coupled with low butterfat prices, marked the beginning of the end for the dairy, which was abandoned in 1922 in favor of general crops.

Howard Bowlby now does almost all the farming on portion (over 100 acres) of the old donation claim, raising corn, canary

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squash, beans and strawberries. His brother John farms adjacent land purchased in 1865. Theodore Bowlby, and grows corn, wheat and clover for hay and seed.

Qualifications Repeated

Any county farm family which has farmed the same land, or part of it, for over 100 years, qualifies for the "century farm" title, and will be awarded scroll at state fair, donated by Oregon Historical society and state department of agriculture.

Farmers qualifying are asked to submit affidavit to County

Judge Joe Jaross. He and County Agent Palmer Torvend will certify as to the validity of each claim.