

CFR 0881

Mr. G.W. Rynearson

CFR0881

To qualify as a Century Farm a farm must have not less than 10 acres with a gross income from farm use of not less than \$500 per year for three out of the five years immediately preceding application for Century Farm honors.

APPLICATION FOR CENTURY FARM HONORS--1974
(Rules Attached)
Deadline for filing application: July 1, 1974

PLEASE PRINT

Your name (Mr., Mrs., Miss) Mr. G. W. RYNEARSON

Your address: Route # 1 P.O. Box 1284 Town La Grande

Location of farm: RT # 1 Box 1284, La Grande Union
(Address) (County)

Acres in your farm today: 21 Acres in original farm: ~~10~~ 160

Does your farm comply with the definition at top of page? yes

Name of family member who was founder or original owner of farm (please print):
William & John RYNEARSON

Year founders settled on farm? ~~1867~~ 1864 Where did he come from? Penn.

How many families have farmed this land? 3

Are any of original buildings still in use? Original Home still ^{in use} but sell ~~rented~~ 4 acres

Who farms land today? You? X A renter? _____ A manager? _____ Other? _____

If you own the farm but live in town, do you manage the farming operation? _____

What relation are you to the original owner? Grandson

If you know crops or livestock raised on farm 100 years ago, please list Barley
Wheat, Oats, Hogs, Horses, Cattle, Chickens
Alfalfa

What do you raise on farm today? Wheat, Barley, Alfalfa, Cattle.

How many generations live on the farm today? (Names) 2 G. W. Rynearson
David N. Rynearson, Deborah L. Rynearson Michael W. Rynearson

Has the farm ever been rented? ~~Yes~~ No How many times has original farm been divided? 6

Please list on separate page attached other historical facts you know about this farm.

Do you declare that the statements made above are accurate and correct to the best of your knowledge? Yes

Mail to: Oregon Dept. of Agriculture
Agriculture Bldg., Salem, OR 97310

Bill Rynearson
(Signature of owner)

Submitted by G.W. Rynearson Rt #1 Box 1784 La Grande, Ore
(Name and Address)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

When the Indians came in the summer they were allowed to camp in Proctoral Grove & at the springs on the Rynearson place. For years Black Hawks came & spent part of the summer there. The Rynearson family & the Indians were good friends.

The first road built by Union county divided the Rynearson land. It was named Black Hawk trail because Black Hawks had used it as a trail long before the white came.

John & Bill Rynearson had one of the first blacksmith & gunsmith shops ~~on this place~~ in Union county on this place.

CERTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP OF CENTURY FARM

I hereby certify that the farm for which

George Wm. Rymarson
(Owner's name and address)

is applying for Century Farm Honors, has been in his family continuously for 100 or more years. According to the records in my office under my custody and control.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL THIS 7th day of June, 1974.

Shirley L. Bolin
* ~~County Commissioner-Recorder~~ County Clerk

June 7, 1974
(Date)

*Please strike office not applicable

W B Snodgrass ^{and H.L. 13.} to John Pymearson

Know all men by these presents that we W B Snodgrass and Mrs B Snodgrass his wife in Consideration of One thousand Dollars to us paid by John Pymearson do hereby bargain sell and convey to said John Pymearson his heirs and assigns forever the following described parcel of real estate to wit: The west half of the West half of Section 32 Township 2 South Range 38 East of the Willamette Meridian and containing one hundred and sixty acres. To Have and to Hold the same with all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging to the said John Pymearson and his legal representatives forever, That the said premises are free from all incumbrances, and that we will, and our heirs executors and administrators shall warrant and defend the same to the said John Pymearson his heirs and assigns forever against the lawful claims and demands of all persons whatsoever, In Witness whereof we have hereto set our hands and seals this 17 day of October 1871

U.S. Revenue Stamp \$1.00 Comd.

Executed in presence of
John Carr
M B Mallery

W B Snodgrass (Seal)
Mrs M B Snodgrass (Seal)

State of Oregon
Union County
This certifies that on this 17 day of October 1871 before me the undersigned personally appeared the within named W B Snodgrass known to me to be the persons described in and who executed the within instrument and acknowledged the same to be his free act and deed, and Mrs B Snodgrass wife of said W B Snodgrass on a private examination made by me separately and apart from her said husband acknowledged to me that she executed the same freely and voluntarily and without fear or compulsion from any one,

W W Baker
Justice of the Peace

Recorded November
the 15th 1871
J M Black
County Clerk

STATE OF OREGON, }
COUNTY OF UNION, } ss.

I, Shirley L. Bolin, County Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the County _____ Court

of Union County, State of Oregon, do hereby certify that the foregoing copy of Deed Book A Page
653 a deed from W.B. Snodgrass to John Rynearson.

_____ has been compared by me with the original,

and it is a correct transcript therefrom, and the whole of such original Deed

as the same appears Of REcord _____ in my office and in my custody.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court

this 7 day of June, A.D. 1974

Shirley L. Bolin County Clerk

By Charlotte M. Skaggs Deputy

FILED

MAY 26 1950

C. L. GRAHAM
COUNTY CLERK

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ELLA RYNEARSON

BY *H.M.H.* *[Signature]*
~~DEPUTY~~

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That I, ELLA RYNEARSON, of La Grande, Union County, Oregon, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, over the age of twenty-one years, not acting under any duress or fraud, and viewing the uncertainty of human life and desiring to make provision for the control and disposition of my property to be carried into effect after my death, do hereby publish and declare this to be my last will and testament, and I hereby revoke any and all wills and codicils thereto that may have been made by me heretofore.

FIRST: I direct my Executor, as hereinafter named, to see that all my just debts are paid, together with the expenses of my last sickness and funeral, and that my body be given decent interment suitable to my station in life.

SECOND: I hereby devise and bequeath to my granddaughter, Phyllis Rynearson, (one of the children of my deceased son George Rynearson), the sum of Ten (\$10.00) Dollars.

THIRD: I hereby provide that all of the household fixtures and household equipment situated in my home and located on my farm property North of La Grande, Oregon, shall go to my grand-daughter, Bess D. Scriber, who is the daughter of my deceased daughter, Bess J. Scriber.

FOURTH: I hereby provide that the Southwest one-fourth of the Northwest one-fourth of Section 32 Twp. 2 S., R. 38 E.W.M., Union County, Oregon, and all of that part of the Northwest one-fourth of the Southwest one-fourth of said Section 32 lying north of the County road known as the "Black Hawk Trail" shall be divided into two equal parts by a line drawn north and south through said lands as above described, and the west one-half is hereby devised share and share alike to my grandchildren, Frances Rynearson, and George William Rynearson, (children of

my deceased son, George Rynearson) share and share alike, and the east one-half thereof is hereby devised to my granddaughter, Bess Scriber, who is the daughter of my deceased daughter, Bess J. Scriber.

FIFTH: I hereby provide that all of that part of the northwest one-fourth of the southwest one-fourth of Section 32 that is owned by me and that lies south of the County road known as the "Black Hawk Trail" running through said premises, and all of that part of the southwest one-fourth of the southwest one-fourth of said Section 32 lying north of the north bank of the Grande Ronde River, and that is owned by me, shall be divided into two parts by a line running due north and south across said premises so described and immediately adjacent to and west of the large barn now situated thereon; and all of that part of said lands so described that lies west of the said line I hereby devise to Frances Rynearson, and George William Rynearson, (children of my deceased son, George Rynearson), share and share alike and all of that part of said described premises lying east of said line is hereby devised to Bess Scriber, the daughter of my deceased daughter, Bess J. Scriber.

SIXTH: I hereby provide that all of the rest and residue of my property of whatsoever kind or nature and wheresoever situated, shall be divided into two equal parts, with one part thereof being hereby devised to my granddaughter, Bess Scriber, the daughter of my deceased daughter, Bess J. Scriber, and the other part thereof being devised to my grandchildren, Frances Rynearson, and George William Rynearson, (children of my deceased son, George Rynearson), share and share alike.

SEVENTH: I hereby nominate and appoint, The First National Bank of Portland, Oregon, a national banking corporation, as the Executor of this, my last will and testament.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my seal to this, my last will and testament, at La Grande, Oregon, on this the 15th day of April, 1948.

Wm Ella Rynearson (SEAL)
TESTATRIX

IN THE PRESENCE OF US AS WITNESSES:

J. E. Dyer

H. A. Gurbrich

We, whose names appear as witnesses hereto, do hereby certify that the foregoing and within named ELLA RYNEARSON, who is personally known to each of us, did in our presence declare and publish the foregoing instrument to be her last will and testament, and she signed the same and affixed her seal thereto and we, at her request and in her presence and in the presence of each other, signed our names as witnesses as they appear herein.

Dated at La Grande, Oregon, this the 15th day of April 1948.

J. E. Dyer

H. A. Gurbrich

BOTH RESIDING AT LA GRANDE, OREGON

STATE OF OREGON, } ss.
COUNTY OF UNION, }

I, Shirley L. Bolin, County Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the Circuit Court of Union County, State of Oregon, do hereby certify that the foregoing copy of
Last Will and Testament of Ella Rynearson - In the Matter of the Estate of Ella Rynearson
 has been compared by me with the original, and it is a correct transcript therefrom, and the whole of such original Will
as the same appears on file and of record in my office and in my custody.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court

this 7th day of June, A.D. 1974

Shirley L. Bolin County Clerk
By Deputy

WARRANTY DEED

27062

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That Bruce J. Rynearson and Marcia L. Rynearson, husband and wife, hereinafter called the Grantors, in consideration of One Thousand Dollars to Grantors paid by George W. Rynearson and Martha J. Rynearson, husband and wife, hereinafter called the Grantees, do hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said Grantees and their heirs, successors and assigns, that certain real property, with the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or appertaining, situated in the County of Union, State of Oregon, described as follows, to-wit:

203832
A700

Commencing at a point where the center line of the county road known as the Black Hawk Trail intersects the west line of the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 38 East of the Willamette Meridian (said point being found by survey to be 3340.4 feet south of the northwest corner of said Section 32); thence south 80° 15' East along the center line of said Black Hawk Trail 165.5 feet; thence south parallel with and 158.7 feet east of the west line of said SW 1/4 Section 32 a distance of 786.5 feet to a 42" rod placed on the fence line on the north bank of Grande Ronde River; thence westerly along said fence line to the west line of said Section 32; thence north on said section line a distance of 305 feet more or less to the point of beginning.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM a parcel of land conveyed by deed recorded in book 129 at page 356 deed records of Union County, Oregon, particularly described as follows: beginning at the point where the south side of the road (known locally as "The Black Hawk Trail") that runs east and west through the W 1/2 of the W 1/2 of Section 32, Township 2 South, Range 38 EWM, intersects the west line of said Section 32; running thence south on the Section line 100 feet; thence east 100 feet; thence north 100 feet, more or less, to the south side of said road; thence west along the south side of said road, 100 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

SUBJECT to easement for county road (Black Hawk Trail) over and across the north side of said land; subject also to easements for utilities and ditch rights as same appear of record or exist on and across said premises.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the above described and granted premises unto the said Grantees and Grantees' heirs, successors and assigns forever.

And said Grantors hereby covenant to and with said Grantees and Grantees' heirs, successors and assigns, that Grantors are lawfully seized in fee simple of the above granted premises, free from all encumbrances, and that Grantors will warrant and forever defend the above granted premises and every part and parcel thereof against the lawful claims and demands of all persons whomsoever.

WITNESS grantors' hands and seals this 22 day of January, 1970.

Bruce J. Rynearson (SEAL)
Marcia L. Rynearson (SEAL)

George W. Rynearson
Martha J. Rynearson
Jan 29 1970

Century Farm: '100 years enduring service'

By DAWN OHRLING
Of The Observer

George William Rynearson, James Henry Standley and John S. Davis, were early settlers of the Grande Ronde Valley. Whatever drew them — the desire for their own land, the open spaces, the beautiful countryside — had enough attraction to keep them here for the rest of their lives.

And the attraction that held these men to their land did not die when they did. Instead, it must have been deeply shared with the members of their families because now, over a hundred years later, their descendants still live on the same land.

This year the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Historical Society designated the property of Bill Rynearson, Rt. 1 Box 1284, J. Dale Standley, Rt. 1 Box 1645, and Lula Cantrell, North Powder, as "century farms." They were three of the 26 farms recognized in the state this year and the only ones in Union County.

To qualify as a "century farm," a farm must have been farmed by the same family for 100 years or more, must be at least 10 acres in size, never have been rented and the owner must reside in Oregon. It must also have a gross income from farm use of not less than \$500 per year for three out of the five years preceding a "century farm" application.

These three Union County families have more in common than just receiving their Century Farm Cer-

tificates the same year. They have, like all "century farm" families must, a deep sense of history, close family ties and a source of pride in their ancestors and themselves for, as the certificate reads, ". . . 100 years enduring service in the finest agricultural tradition of the state of Oregon."

William George Rynearson and his brother, John, came west from Iowa and in 1864 homesteaded 160 acres of land approximately two miles northwest of La Grande. They raised wheat, oats, alfalfa, hay and also pastured cattle. Two other Rynearson brothers, Abe and Lemuel, opened La Grande's first blacksmith shop in 1862. William and John later had a blacksmith shop on their farm where they shod horses and oxen and were once called upon to devise a brace to hold a man's broken jaw in place while it healed.

The Rynearson farm still operates a business, Bill's Excavating, owned by William's grandson, Bill Rynearson.

Rynearson's father died before Rynearson was born, leaving only him and the surviving women in the farm to run the farm. Consequently, the land was divided and sold piece by piece, leaving Rynearson with 24 of the original 160 acres.

"I've worked on this farm ever since I've been old enough to work and I'm really thankful I was able to hang onto what I have," said Rynearson.

He and his wife, Jean, live on Black Hawk Trail Road near the house Rynearson's grandfather built in 1865. The old homestead is still occupied.

Black Hawk Trail Road, named after Chief Black Hawk's wife, was the first dedicated road in the county, according to Mrs. Rynearson.

Rynearson said the Indians used to camp on the Grande Ronde River behind his grandparent's house each spring and that his grandmother, Ella Taal Rynearson, used to sell them hay and often received moccasins and other gifts from them.

The Rynearsons have three children: Debbie, who lives at home, Michael and David, both of La Grande.



Bill Rynearson

Six years after the Rynearson farm was founded, James Henry Standley came back to the Grande Ronde Valley from Missouri and homesteaded 240 acres of land approximately 10 miles northwest of Island City. In the 1850's, Standley had been in this area with the calvary and fought Indians in the Mt. Glen uprising.

Besides farming, Standley ran a freight wagon between Walla Walla, Wash. and La Grande. He met his future wife, Christina Shaw, at the Ruckel stage stop where she was working. They were married March 18, 1869.



Lula Cantrell

Standley died in 1934 at the age of 93 and his land was divided among his three children. One of his children, Louie, stayed to farm and lived a few hundred yards down the road from his father. He was married to Mina Glenn who was raised on what is now the Glenn-McKenzie farm, which is also a "century farm."

J. Dale Standley now farms the original homestead which, through rental and purchase, now totals 600 acres. Part of it is owned by Standley's sister, Mildred Beedle, Reno, Nev.

Besides peas, wheat, grass seed and hay, Standley has cattle and 40 Arabian horses. He has been on the farm most of his life and feels there is a lot to be said about farming.

"There's something about tilling the soil and seeing the crops grow," he said. "There were years that weren't too lucrative, but it's a way of life, and you're your own boss."

Standley and his wife, Jean, live in the house his grandfather built in 1896. And there is a good possibility that it, along with the rest of the property, will remain in the Standley family for many years to come because living down the road is the fourth generation of Standley farmers.

James Dale Standley II also chose to be a farmer and is living in the home his father was born in. Standley said his son has traveled extensively and decided to come home and farm

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Continued from page 13
because, like his father, he enjoys it. The Standleys also have two other children: Linda Boylen, Beaverton, and David, Corvallis.
The John S. Davis farm, approximately 5 miles west of North Powder, was founded in 1872. Davis came west in 1861, living in California and Montana before homesteading 80 acres along the Powder River in Baker County. It is now owned by Lula Cantrell, Davis' granddaughter, and her husband, Bill.
Davis raised both crops and cattle and was described as "one of the well-to-do and successful farmers of the county and a skillful and wealthy stockman" in the "History of Union

La Grande, OR
Observer
Sep 25/1974

and Wallawa Counties."
In 1874, Davis married Susie Dealy, daughter of Dave Dealy, an early North Powder settler who built the house Mrs. Cantrell was raised in. She said that her father, John W. Davis, was a cattleman and shipped many cattle out of the valley in the 1840's and 50's. When he died in 1863, the ranch was left to his wife, Minnie. When she died in 1971, the Cantrells, who had been teaching in the Portland area, moved to the ranch.
The Cantrells now live on a 10-acre plot and rent the rest of the ranch to Michael Mason of North Powder. They have four children, Dorothy, Patricia and Linda Culp, Patricia Patterson, Canada; Linda Culp, Warrenton; and John Peterson, Hines.

Century Farm: '100 years enduring service'

Rick Read - Wm Rynearson Century Farm - article for March 22 issue

From: "David Yerges" <kdyerges@eoni.com>
To: "Rick Read" <rickr@ohs.org>
Date: 03/20/2001 9:36 AM
Subject: Wm Rynearson Century Farm - article for March 22 issue

The William Rynearson Century Farm

By Trish Yerges

"This farm is over 130 years old," said Bill Rynearson, present owner of the William M. Rynearson century farm on Blackhawk Trail Lane of La Grande. "Five or six years after the farm turned 100 years old, a friend suggested that I apply for a century farm certificate," explained Bill. He did just that and received his honorary certificate at the Oregon State Fair in Salem. Today his century farm certificate hangs proudly on Bill's kitchen wall. Since his grandfather, William M. Rynearson, homesteaded the quarter section in 1864, it has been operated by several family members including Bill, who since 1951, has been taking his turn at the family plow. Bill, who will turn 70 years old this coming April, explained how his grandfather developed it, his father farmed it and how he has worked to keep it.

William Rynearson was born September 6, 1845 to Joseph and Elizabeth (Webster) Rynearson, both from pioneer families in Pennsylvania. He had seven siblings, among whom were Abe W. (1830), John (1834), Lemuel, Margaret and Elizabeth. In 1864, when William was 19 years old, he came across the plains following his brother Abe, who settled in the Grande Ronde Valley in 1862. Upon arriving, he went to work for Abe and settled on land just east of Abe's farm. A year later in 1865, their brother, John, arrived in the valley with the Joseph Faile train. He also settled on an adjacent property so that, with his acquisition, a broad span of Rynearson land developed on both sides of the Grande Ronde River. Part of their combined properties later became known as La Grande's Rynearson Addition.

William was married on December 30, 1879 to Ella Taal. Ella was born December 17, 1860, the oldest of ten children in G.M. and Lew (Rysdam) Taal family. William and Ella had four children, Mamie (b.June 9, 1880-d.Oct. 20, 1882), Bessie (b.Sept. 7, 1884), a premature son, and George (b.April 27, 1888). The family lived on a self-sufficient farm including a two story house that Bill said "was built without a stud." William also drilled a well and built the following outbuildings: a blacksmith shop, a barn, three octagonal granary storage bins, a hog house, a root cellar, a smokehouse and a garage. Of these the house, garage and granary bins still remain on the property.

William's farm bordered the river and Indians from the Cayuse, Nez Perce and Umatilla tribes routinely camped along the river's bank as they dug camas. The squaws approached Ella with beaded jewelry and handmade crafts in trade for hay. They packed the hay in their blankets and carried them over their backs to their livestock at the camp. It was a regular occurrence for the Rynearsons to share their land with these Native American campers. William also used the river as his source of fish. In his blacksmith shop he forged fish spears which he used for his own fishing purposes. Recently, Bill discovered one that was buried in the dirt, a remnant of his grandfather's early spear fishing days. William and John enjoyed hunting deer and elk and were usually very successful as the animals roamed in great numbers in that area. On one occasion when they went hunting, they brought back a trailer full of deer to skin and butcher. This supply of meat lasted for years. William and John were apparently always on the alert for hunting opportunities as Bill explained, "I heard stories of how they would be working in the fields one moment, and then stop, leave their equipment set right there and be off hunting the next." The Rynearson brothers also engaged in handling hogs, so between the wild game and farm livestock, the smokehouse was in constant use. "The smokehouse had been used so much that it was pure black inside," Bill said.

Besides handling hogs, William and John became occupied in a few other business pursuits including buying and selling agricultural land, harvesting and selling timber, freighting and mining. In 1893, they took up mining a few properties at the head of the Grande Ronde River. One mine, which they owned exclusively, was called 'Last Chance', located between two placer districts in Camp Carson. It was a fissure vein, six feet wide of solid granite walls, valued at that time, at six dollars per ton. It was a productive mine for the Rynearsons. "Rumor had it that granddad and John hid their gold under a heavy anvil in the barn, but I moved that anvil and dug that floor all up, and there was no gold there," chuckled Bill.

William and his bachelor brother, John, shared their lives together until 1906, when John, 71, died of food poisoning. William inherited John's farm at that time. Their oldest brother, Abe, preceded them in death when he was knocked off a foot bridge by a floating log, swept away and drowned in the current of the Grande Ronde River in 1899. Abe's farm was left to "Cad" Catherine Anderson's daughter and later sold out of the family. William died nearly nine months after his brother, John, on June 7, 1907. All of the Rynearson brothers along with other family members were buried in the family plot at Hill Crest Cemetery in La Grande.

William's wife, Ella, remained on the farm and her nineteen year old son, George William, took over its operation. Unlike his father, George did not rely on a secondary business to support the farm. He did buy 60 acres of timberland, presumably from his mother's Taal relatives, who had large holdings in timber. Other than that, the profile of the century farm did not change, as he operated the farm with all the traditional methodologies of that era. "He was strictly a farmer," Bill said of his father. On July 3, 1913, George married Ethyl Frances Sweeney of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, and they initially lived in the Rynearson home with Ella, but two months later, Ethyl put in her request for her own house. George complied, trading hogs for lumber from Fox Hill with which to build it. It was built just west of the old homestead. Today, the little house is occasionally visited by Rynearson cattle as it weakly leans into the trees that have grown up beside it.

Their 12 years of marriage were blessed with three children, Frances (1919), Phyllis (1922), and Bill (1931). During Ethyl's third pregnancy, George became seriously ill. "He had been digging up potatoes in the garden in the rain and got sick with pneumonia. He was treated with sulfa drugs, but in those days they didn't have antibiotics or anything like we have today," Bill explained. Knowing his prognosis was grim, George told his wife that he was sure this last baby would be a boy and that she should name their son after him. George, 44, died of pneumonia on October 25, 1930, and on April 14, 1931, Ethyl gave birth to their only son. She fulfilled her husband's wishes and named the baby George William "Bill" Rynearson. "Dad died before I was born, so I never knew him," said Bill.

After George's death, the farm was operated by Ella's son-in-law and Bessie Rynearson's husband, Clare J. Scriber, whom she married on December 3, 1902. When Clare died in 1939, Ella leased the land to various farmers in shares for the next 11 years. After her own death on May 17, 1950, forty acres of the century farm were sold to pay off outstanding debts. The residual portion of the estate (120 acres) was then divided among three heirs. The majority of the estate including the William Rynearson residence was given to Bessie Scriber's daughter, "Little Bessie" (b.1905), then Mrs. William Meroney. Two other equal parcels of 18.5 acres each were given to Bill and his sister, Frances. Frances' inheritance went to her son, Bruce Rynearson (b.1942) and was later sold. Bess Meroney also sold her inheritance out of the family, at which time Bill was able to redeem thirty acres of it. Consequently, Bill is now the sole descendant having unbroken ties to the Rynearson century farm.

Reflecting upon his childhood on the century farm, Bill joked, "I was raised by a bunch of women!" No doubt, because during the thirty years preceding his mother's death on October 29, 1960, she never remarried. Consequently, the women who raised him to manhood included his mother, two sisters, Grandma Ella and Aunt Bessie Scriber. He received his elementary education at the Imbler and Fruitdale schools and his secondary education at La Grande High School. "I remember going to Imbler school for 1st grade when I was about 4 years old. My mother had a job in Imbler as a telephone operator, and so she sent me to school when she worked. I went to Imbler school with the Westenskows, McKinnises, Wilsons and others. Then I attended Fruitdale School through 8th grade and went to La Grande for high school," Bill recounted.

In high school, he met Miss Martha Jeanne Bush, whom he married after graduation on June 26, 1949. "I married my high school sweetheart," Bill reminisced. After their marriage, they rented a little house behind Dover's in La Grande for \$25.00 a month while Bill worked as an apprentice at the Observer for \$27.00 a week. While working at the Observer, he heard of a job opening with a local sanitation business, so he applied there. He was hired and worked at this occupation for the next 13 years. Martha also worked at times, holding jobs at J.C. Penney's, Woolworths and Valley Sausage.

During these years Bill and Martha had three children, Mike (1950), Dave (1951) and Debbie (1955). "In 1951 when Mike was just a little baby, we moved into the little house on the Rynearson farm," said Bill. This little house was located immediately west of the William Rynearson home and was once the residence of the Chinese gardeners who worked for the Rynearsons and other neighboring farmers. The house was made with lumber from the Bowman Hicks mill and was built by the Rynearsons. It was unheated so "when my wife scrubbed the floors, you could skate on them," said Bill. During the summer of 1962, Bill and Martha razed this house and built a new home over the same site. In the process of preparing the ground for the new foundation, Bill discovered an underground tunnel dug by their Chinese tenants. It was just large enough for a petite man to crawl through on his belly, and it ran from under the kitchen of the house to the barn. "I filled it in," said Bill, but not without thinking about the history the Rynearsons and that house had with the Chinese.

The Chinese had come to La Grande with the railroad in 1884, and several hundred settled there permanently. They found employment as cooks, laundrymen, merchants, house servants and gardeners, among other things. Many farmers were hiring the Chinese because of their industriousness and work performance. Abe Rynearson convinced his brothers, John and William, to take in one young Chinese boy named Ying. Ying took up residence in the Rynearson's little tenant house and worked as a house servant, gardener and farm laborer. He became well liked and respected by the Rynearsons and La Grande citizens for his intelligence and the successful fruits of his labors. The Rynearsons eventually rented their garden to Ying, and his produce cart was a familiar sight in La Grande. Ying stayed with the Rynearsons for about 18 years before leaving La Grande during the Tong War in 1917.

Actually, the seeds of trouble for the Chinese were sown much earlier in the Geary Law of 1892. This federal law required that all Chinese laborers register if they wished to stay in this country. Those not complying would be deported. The government's laxity in enforcing this law caused some prejudiced citizens to take the law into their own hands, especially in 1893, when an economic depression made jobs scarce for American families. Resentment grew against the working Chinese in La Grande, and a mob of locals took it upon themselves to round up the Chinese and put them on trains headed out of town. However, the Rynearsons were unbiased humanitarians, and they did not join in this cruel sentiment. They offered protection to Ying on the farm, and soon other fleeing Chinese crossed the river onto the Rynearson's property and came to Ying's house for refuge. A mob followed, threw open the door of Ying's house, and instead of finding a house full of frightened Chinese men, they were greeted by Abe Rynearson's red haired daughter, Catherine "Cad", sitting with a shotgun across her lap. She asked the men what they wanted, to which they insisted she surrender all Chinese over to them. With a fire in her eyes that matched her hair she proclaimed, "Well, you are not going to take any Chinamen from here, now you gentlemen git!" They did, and because of this young woman's courage, the Chinese stayed with the Rynearsons in safety. The men who partook in the mob action were soon afterward arrested and prosecuted.

Seventy years later, in 1962, Bill was putting the tunnel and its history to rest with his back hoe. Bill was not only preparing the century farm to become his family's permanent residence, but the headquarters of his new business, "Bill's Excavating". Since 1962, when he began his business, he has put in hundreds of septic systems for residents in this county. "I've gone through nine back hoes," Bill said. It was his business that helped him pay the century farm taxes and to buy farm equipment over the years. "I bought used equipment on time and then upgraded as I could afford it," recalled Bill. Reflecting on how a second income has enabled the family to retain title to the century farm, Bill said, "My grandad's blacksmithing helped support the farm. My dad didn't have a second business. He just farmed, but the excavating business helps me keep this place going," said Bill. Consequently, when he'd rather be spending his retirement fishing, he's working to keep the farm instead. "I'm

not retired, just tired," he said with his characteristic grin.

Bill's wife, Martha, died of cancer on January 29, 1988, after nearly 39 years of marriage. Since then, Bill has continued to operate the farm and run his excavating business. It makes for long days as he burns the midnight oil tending to the many duties associated with field work. He's currently leasing 250 acres in addition to the 42 acres of his century farm. On these acres he pastures cattle, having just 11 head at the moment, and plants alfalfa, barley and wheat. His wheat crops have produced consistently high yields, usually 90-100 bushels per acre. Besides his farm, livestock and commercial crops, Bill has his own personal vegetable garden where he grows corn, potatoes, green string beans, beets, onions and garlic among other things. He's certainly at home and comfortable on the Rynearson century farm. After all, "Everything I have is paid for. I don't owe a dime on it," Bill said with satisfaction. He has handled his inheritance responsibly and with respect for those who poured their own sweat into its furrows before him.

Contemplating the future of the century farm, Bill has some doubts whether or not it will be kept in the family. "There comes a time when you have to make some hard decisions," he said. For the time being, he's put off those decisions as he spends his days working the soil in one fashion or another.

Rick Read - John P. Good Century Farm, Union County, Oregon

From: "David Yerges" <kdyerges@eoni.com>
To: "Rick Read" <rickr@ohs.org>
Date: 04/08/2001 7:00 PM
Subject: John P. Good Century Farm, Union County, Oregon

Rick,

I did the Good interview last Saturday and got the info you requested as follows:

Name of applicant: Richard Good (current owner)

Township: 2TN
Range: 40E
Sections: 4,5,6,7,8,9

Specifically:

Section: 4
SW 1/4 of NW 1/4
NW 1/4 of SW 1/4
SW 1/4 of SW 1/4

Section: 5
SE 1/4 of NE 1/4
S 1/2 of Sec 5

Section: 6
SW 1/4 of NE 1/4
SE 1/4 of SW 1/4
All of SE 1/4

Section: 7
NE 1/4 of NE 1/4
NW 1/4 of NE 1/4
NE 1/4 of NW 1/4

Section: 8
NE 1/4 of NE 1/4
NW 1/4 of NE 1/4
NE 1/4 of NW 1/4
NW 1/4 of NW 1/4

Section: 9
NW 1/4 of NW 1/4