

# Oregon Pioneers Oral History Collection, 1975-1976

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Oregon State University. Dept. of Journalism.
<b>Title</b>	Oregon Pioneers Oral History Collection
<b>Dates</b>	1975-1976 (inclusive) 1975 1976 1975 (bulk) 1975 1975
<b>Quantity</b>	0.5 cubic foot, including 31 audiocassettes, (2 boxes)
<b>Collection Number</b>	OH 01
<b>Summary</b>	The Oregon Pioneers Oral History Collection consists of 33 interviews conducted primarily in the summer of 1975 by Oregon State University students to document various aspects of local history from 1880 to 1929 in preparation for the United States bicentennial in 1976.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">Oregon State University Libraries, Special Collections and Archives Research Center</a> Special Collections and Archives Research Center 121 The Valley Library Oregon State University Corvallis OR 97331-4501 Telephone: 541-737-2075 Fax: 541-737-8674 <a href="mailto:scarc@oregonstate.edu">scarc@oregonstate.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open for research.
<b>Additional Reference Guides</b>	<a href="#">Preliminary container list</a> available online.
<b>Languages</b>	English

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## Historical Note

The Oregon Pioneers oral histories were conducted in the summer of 1975 by Oregon State University students enrolled in J 407A Seminar: An Oral/Written History of Oregon Pioneers offered by the Journalism Department. The interviews were used to prepare a publication, *Pioneers*, published by the Journalism Department and the Summer Term Office that included articles on pioneers, the Yaquina Bay Life Saving Station, Philomath College, the Siletz Indians, Fort Hoskins, the Willamette River, regional railroads, Eddyville, and Chautauqua events in the area.

## Content Description

The Oregon Pioneers Oral History Collection consists of 33 interviews conducted primarily in the summer of 1975 by Oregon State University students in a journalism seminar to document various

aspects of local history from 1880 to 1929 in preparation for the United States bicentennial in 1976. All of the interviews were conducted in the summer of 1975 with the exception of the Helen Johnston interview, which was conducted in March 1976.

The following individuals were interviewed as part of the project: Edith E. (Peggy) Allworth, Virgil Avery, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Carey, Chester and Rita Chambers, Alice Coolidge, Chester Cosgrove, Catherine Ann Cracraft, William Payne, George Buxton, Ralph Schindler, F.A. and Violette Gilfillan, Dan S. Hart, Melvin S. Hawkins, George and Bessie Hughes, Minnie McMurtry, Ethel Morgan, Floyd Mullen, Bessie Murphy, Dale Propst, Winnie Propst, Robert E. Sommers, Robert Rilatos, Florence Adell Smith, T.J. Starker, A.L. and Mollie Strand, Beatrice Eddy Wilcox, Baird Woodcock, Violet Updike, Richard Andor Christiansen, Bertha A. King, Minerva Kiger Reynolds, and Helen Johnston. The name of an interviewee who discussed bootlegging in the area during Prohibition is not given.

The interviews describe Corvallis, Philomath, Kings Valley, Benton County, and the surrounding area (including Newport and Yaquina Bay) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Topics include railroads and ferries, Corvallis businesses, the Fischer flour mill, logging and lumber mills, agriculture, Chautauqua events, pioneer families, and the Siletz Native Americans. A few of the interviews address topics relating to Oregon State University, such as the Memorial Union, the President's home on campus, and the name change from Oregon State College to Oregon State University.

Interviewers include Judith Carlson, Lorraine Charlton-Ruff, Janice Tiland, and Darrell Wolfe.

The collection includes both audiocassettes and transcripts for almost all (30) of the interviews. For two of the interviews (Robert E. Sommers and T.J. Starker), only transcripts are available. There is only a sound recording (no transcript) for the interview of Minerva Kiger Reynolds. Copies of the publication, *Pioneers*, that was prepared using in the interviews are also included in the collection.

## Use of the Collection

### Preferred Citation

Oregon Pioneers Oral History Collection (OH 01), Oregon State University Archives, Corvallis, Oregon.

## Administrative Information

### Processing Note

This collection is not fully processed; this guide is preliminary.

### Acquisition Information

The oral histories were placed in the Archives' collections in 1975. The sound recordings and copies of the transcripts were housed at Horner Museum for a period of time and transferred back to the Archives from the Horner Museum collections in 1996.

### Related Materials

Several of the interviewees, including Minerva Kiger Reynolds and Bessie Murphy, are featured in the film, *Heart of the Valley*, about the history of Corvallis produced in 1976. This film is part of the News and Communications Services Moving Images (FV P057:634). The [Journalism Department](#)

[Records \(RG 096\)](#) and [Photographs \(P 208\)](#) provide additional information about journalism instruction at Oregon State. The [A.L. Strand Oral History Collection \(OH 07\)](#) includes several interviews pertaining to Strand's presidency at Oregon State. The Horner Museum Oral History Collection (OH 10) includes another interview with T.J. Starker. The Archives' collections include the papers of Edward C. Allworth, [F.A. Gilfillan](#), and [T.J. Starker](#).

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## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Agriculture--Oregon.  
Ferries--Oregon.  
Pioneers--Oregon--Benton County.  
Prohibition--Oregon--Benton County.  
Siletz Indians.

### Corporate Names :

Oregon State College--History.  
Oregon State University--History.

### Geographical Names :

Benton County (Or.)  
Corvallis (Or.)  
Kings Valley (Or.)  
Lincoln County (Or.)  
Philomath (Or.)  
Willamette River (Or.)

### Form or Genre Terms :

Audiocassettes.  
Oral histories (document genres)

### Other Creators :

#### Personal Names :

Carlson, Judith Carol.  
(creator)  
Gilfillan, F. A. (Francois Archibald), 1893-1983  
(interviewee)  
Starker, T. J. (Thurman James), 1890-1983  
(interviewee)  
Strand, A. L. (August Leroy), 1894-  
(interviewee)

Finding aid prepared by Elizabeth Nielsen.  
2009



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