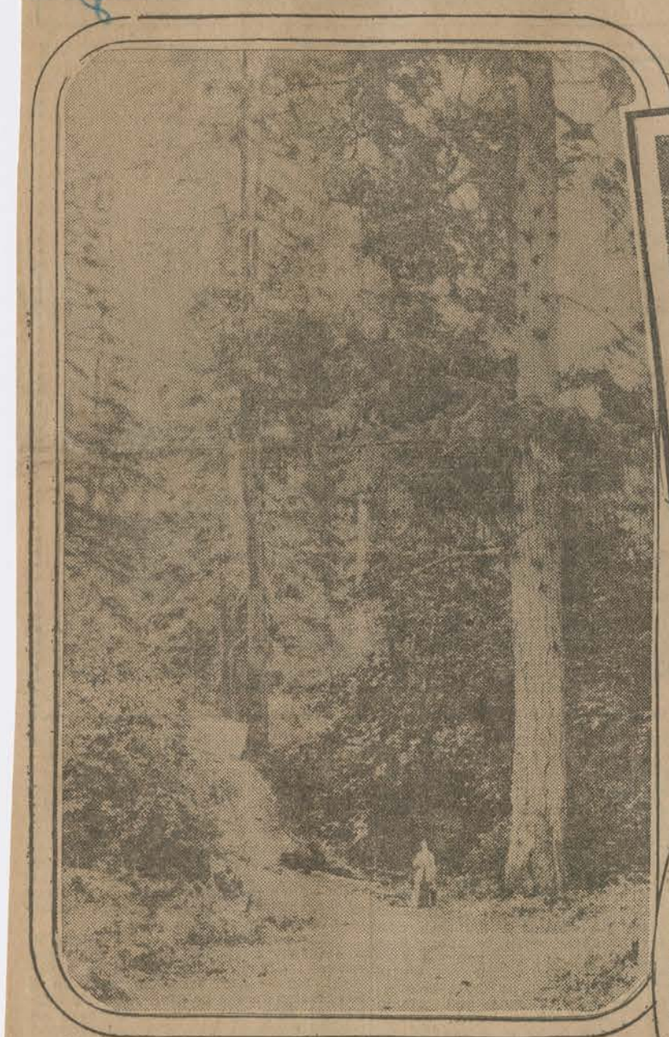
TILLER, HALF-WAY HOUSE TO CRATER LAKE, IS ON MAP

Most Fascinating and Unique Is Scenic Nook in Cascade Mountains in Oregon, Where Fourth of July Programme Starts Echoing in Mountains at 2 o'Clock A. M.



Tiller One of the Main Streets

The Tiller Stage

The Half-Way House

Through The Cathedral Woods

Joe Rainville

Gray Wolves

The Foot Race

A Bad Horse

About All The Law Allows

A Timber Clamp in Winter

BY CHARLES A. BRAND.

CRATER LAKE has had at least 39 ponderous magazine articles written about it up to the time of this publication in the Year of Our Lord 1912, and probably many more, running all the way from The American Journal of Science to the Good Roads Magazine. The United States Government has published one book of 167 pages and two bulletins on the same subject, but not one word about little Tiller, one of the most fascinating and unique spots in all the Cascade Mountains, and in reality the tourist's halfway house to Crater Lake.

You know it isn't enough to have merely a destination if you are out for a pleasure trip. An automobilist gets "bicycle-faced" when he has only a destination and drives for that alone, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, scorching through a dusty country with his chin to the wheel—the steering wheel—and his weary eyes constantly straining for nigger-heads, ruts and ditches. A man may get there in that sort of way, but why call it a pleasure trip? It takes three things, yea, even four, to make a pleasure trip, and they are things which everyone can have. First, an automobile? By no means. First, a destination, and it need not be very far from your own home if you have the other requisites of a pleasure trip. Second, money? Rubbish. Second, some queer and quaint and interesting or beautiful things to see along the road. And third, a friend—these three, and the greatest of these is the friend. It must be a friend whom you know well enough so that you can ride with him or walk with him for an hour without speaking if you want to, to whom when you do speak you can say what you mean; one who answers the little girl's much-quoted definition of a friend—a person "who knows all about you and likes you just the same."

Mountain River Needed.

But this is only three; it takes four things to make a real pleasure trip; that is, if you can arrange it—a destination, something to see along the road, a friend, and a little mountain river! Given the first three, and then, the way running along the bank of a mountain stream with its deep pools and waterfalls and silvery rapids and flashing trout, and you can have a pleasure trip, one of the kind that makes you younger and more simple, more frank, more true, even though you may be only two hardened bachelors. And here is a secret, too: Robert Louis Stevenson says that the soft music of a little river "quiets a man down like saying his prayers." And this secret is slipped in here for some city pavement-walkers who are tired to death for just that kind of quieting, but do not know it, and will find it in our Cascade Mountains this Summer. Does not Cascade mean waterfall?

Now, to come back to the Crater Lake road and its charming Halfway House. Did you know that there was a gash cut back nearly to the heart of the Cascade Mountains, through which one can drive an automobile—or an old horse—without once going higher than 1300 feet above sea level? And a road that for almost the entire distance is as perfect an automobile road as one could wish? Well, there is, and that is the road to Tiller, the Halfway House to the Crater Lake National Park, and it runs along the bank of the South Umpqua River all the way. At the inner end of this gash into the mountains, where the valley has narrowed down to almost nothing and there is just room enough for the little river and the road, lies Tiller, a town which is not a town, and a Summer resort which has never been discovered by the Summer resorters.

Valley Exceedingly Rich.

The ride to Tiller, from the time when one leaves the Pacific Highway at Myrtle Creek till he emerges from the "cathedral woods" in front of the old log store at Tiller, is a memorable experience, passing, as one does, in a few hours and by almost imperceptible degrees from the broad, quiet beauty of the lowland valleys to the grandeur and sublimity of Oregon's mighty Cascade Mountains. This is one of the richest little valleys in Oregon. Bearing prune orchards, great fields of grain, alfalfa and corn line the wayside. There are great hay barns that remind one of Ohio, and fine stock standing on the gravel bars knee deep in the cool water of the river. There is something to see every step of the way.

Canyonville, if you go that way, is the only town along the road. It is one of the earliest settlements in the state—a quiet, sleepy little place that looks as if it had been planted there years ago and then been quite forgotten. The coming of Hank Nichols and the stage is a daily event of absorbing interest in Canyonville—for there is a stage from the railroad back to Tiller—and, of course, a large part of her citizenship may usually be found assembled at the postoffice to receive this vehicle of the United States Government in the style to which she has been accustomed. There is nothing on wheels that outranks the stage at Canyonville save only the hearse.

But on we go along the river bank, the valley narrowing a little. The finest prune orchard in the state of Oregon is passed on the right, and lots of others about as good, away back here a mile from the railroad. Thank heaven, back here there is no sign of the Seeing-dollars Automobile of the real estate man, and no widows and orphans have as yet been afflicted with 10-acre tracts.

Scenes Like New Hampshire.

At Days Creek you would swear you were in New Hampshire. You are getting farther and farther back into the mountains now. Days Creek is a stage station and postoffice, but more important than that, it is a store where you can buy soft drinks and the most delicious fruit when it is in season, and where you can rest yourself and stretch your legs and get a drink from the well and be shown the house in which George Neuner was "raised."

Perdue is another of the same, only George Neuner was not raised there. The people there are all named Perdue. Beside the store there is only one house, but the mountains are alive with Perdues—there are said to be 197 of them in the immediate vicinity. The last six miles of the way, from Perdue to Tiller, leave no doubt in one's mind that he is in the depths of the mountains, though he would never guess it from the road, and the cherry pop and lemon sour of Mrs. Perdue are the same delectable beverages that are shipped by the millionaires in our great cities, New York and Roseburg.

The river has changed to a brook, dashing, wild, rocky, with here and there great, deep pools of bottle-green water in whose depth you can see the trout lying like weathervanes, all pointing up stream to the boiling, foaming water at the upper side of the pool. Part of the way the road, a broad, comfortable road, runs around the brow of a cliff, blasted out of the solid rock. Above, up the mountain side, is the forest primeval, and below, the river. Scattered all along the way are little dumps of rock chips that have been thrown out of the abandoned tunnels of prospectors, and the way is lined with them. In one place you pass a complete cyanide mill representing an investment of thousands of dollars—the tombstone of many a hope as well as many a dollar. Close to the road are the log cabins of a number of homesteaders shaded by the enormous Douglas firs and cedars with which the mountains are covered. And now you are in the suburbs of Tiller. The road makes a little bend, and you are there.

Old Inn Is Delightful.

The stage station is a log store on the front of which is a sign proclaiming to a waiting world that one, C. DeF. Bartrum offers for sale within all that may be called general merchandise. Near by the store and facing the road and the river is the Halfway House, one of the few log hotels in the mountains, and a delightful, rambling, two-story old inn that is as unexpected as it is welcome in such surroundings. You are at the very jumping-off place, or jumping-up place, for all roads run up from Tiller. You are at the inner end of that deep gash cut back into the mountains, in the midst of the Indian country and at the edge of the Umpqua National Forest Reserve, 25 or 30 miles from the railroad, and yet you have a hotel with every modern convenience, where you may pause before making the next stage of your journey.

Directly in front of the closely clipped lawn, on the river bank, is one of those rare medicinal springs which are sometimes found in the mountains. This one has been prized by the Indians for a great many years and is of real value as a laxative. Strangely enough, it gushes out of the solid rock below the level of the water of the river and has not been get-at-able except at very low water till recently. Now it has been confined and raised above the water of the river. A foot bridge has been built out to it, and drinking at the spring is one of the regular exercises of the day at Tiller. Honesty requires the statement, however, that the first enthusiasm of strangers over this spring frequently gives way to conflicting emotions and that the verdict passed upon it is not always favorable, or even kind.

It was the night before the Fourth when the writer last found himself a guest at this inn, and the night before the Fourth is usually a short night. Tiller celebrates the Fourth. This year she notified all the country around by means of great posters that she had chosen a new slogan, "Tiller, Oregon—She's On the Map!" and that all hands were invited to come into the mountains to "Hear the eagle scream and celebrate the Fourth among the tall trees." To add emphasis to the posters she hired the famous "Hungry Seven Band" to discourse doleful music all along the way from Roseburg to Tiller on the day before the Fourth.

Programme Opens at 2 A. M.

Well, maybe the eagle didn't scream! The first blood-curdling noises came about 2 o'clock in the morning when Emerson, one of the best-known trappers in the mountains, and some of his compatriots, arrived from the railroad with the ice cream, a whole load of it. The settlers in the cabins all along the way rubbed their eyes and wondered if they were about to be scalped by Indians in honor of the Declaration of Independence, but it only took a minute to distinguish the words "Tiller! She's On the Map!" and then they all thought of the ice cream and realized that it was the Fourth of July. The old folks turned over for another snooze and the small boys almost shed tears to think that they, too, could not have been with the patriots on the ice cream wagon.

This outburst of enthusiasm had hardly died away when Tiller was almost hurled out of bed by a terrific explosion on the side of the mountain. The reverberation roared and rolled up and down the gigantic mountain valleys and bounded back and forth from peak to peak till it finally passed away like a rattle of skeleton muskets in the distance. It was magnificent, and no Alpine echo sold to tourists at so much per second was ever

[illegible] one had jumped up now and [illegible] were beginning to hum, when, [illegible]! Off went another! People [illegible]ged and looked behind them, and [illegible]y mountain and hill around shot [illegible]k its answering salute till the [illegible]ole thing was lost again in a swirl [illegible] indistinguishable echoes. Tiller's "safe and sane" Fourth was certainly getting under way, and—bang! Another mountain had blown up, and bang! The Day of Judgment and the Crack of Doom had cut loose and were playing a mad game of peelaway in the mountains and people began seriously to wonder whether they would be found among the sinners or with the redeemed when it was all over. Thirteen times the earth shook and the mountains threatened to fall. Thirteen times the wicked repented in the hope that it was not too late, and then the firing ceased. People crept out from under cover and looked around. A steady procession of folks were pouring into the little square in front of the store—on horseback, mule-back, in wagons and on foot. Indians they were, some of them, as fine specimens of athletic humanity will read and sees, and some of them well read and educated and refined.

Peace Surely on the Map.

Where did they all come from? The night before it did not look as if there were 40 people within 40 miles, and now every trail was lined with them. Had the 13 guns dislodged them from their places up in the mountains, from their homesteads, timber claims and gold mine prospects? At any rate, they were coming in avalanches, to celebrate the Fourth at Tiller, which was emphatically "on the map."

But speaking of trails, the first man to come down the trail behind the inn after the firing, which seemed to come more from that direction than any other, trying to look innocent and as if nothing had happened, was the Supervisor of the Umpqua National Forest. Before he came out into the open he disposed of an empty dynamite box in the bushes!

Of course, the greatest feature of a celebration at Tiller is the roundup—the riding of bucking horses—with the all-day-and-all-night dance a close second. There were athletic sports of all kinds, presided over by some college fellows whom the mountains had shelled out for the day, and the Forest Rangers, who were enjoying a day off at Tiller. A patriotic oration was delivered by one of our Oregon statesmen from a decorated hayrack in the grove. Ice cream, peanuts, pink lemonade and all were consumed literally by the barrel, and in the words of county newspapers from Atlantic to Pacific, "a very pleasant time was had by all"—but nothing quite went to the spot like the Wild West show. When Mr. Bartrum, Supervisor of the Forest, mounted a platform and smote the front of the store 20 or 30 times with a board—for silence—and announced that Joe Rainville was to ride a "bad" horse for a purse, interest was at its height. These men in the mountains live in the saddle, and many of them have ridden the plains east of the mountains. Joe was one of these, and every one knew he could ride. But this was none of your traveling Wild West shows, planned to give thrills to people who had never been on board a horse.

The entire crowd at Tiller, women as well as men, look on at these exhibitions as connoisseurs. They can all ride horses. Most of them have ridden bucking horses, and you may be sure that none of the fine points of the game escape them. To be sure, they do not crowd for a place in the ring at these exhibitions because they thirst for instruction, reproof or correction any more than the Scotchman attends the kirk for these reasons. They go to view it as scientists and experts, to pick out the fine points, to tell that fair as this if a certain horse that they used to own could only have been there, and to have something to discuss on the trails and at the store for the next six months, or till the next celebration.

Riding Beggars Description.

As to the riding itself, it beggars description. From the time Joe Rainville mounted with a yell and a wave of his broad-brimmed hat till it was all over things were doing in such rapid succession and we were so busy keeping out of the way of the plunging centaur that the reader must be referred to other works treating specifically of this subject to find out just what took place. But Joe was the hero of the occasion and sat for his photograph, standing up, after it was all over.

Sometimes there are bucking horse events at Tiller which are not on the programme. Just up the trail from the store there is a strange, erratic path of growing string beans. It crosses the trail back and forth, runs 'way up into the bushes, doubles around a stump and back again, and every 10 or 12 feet is a large, circular bed of beans which looks as if it had been planted with a shotgun. The forest officers tell you with great glee that one of their new men had just been down to stock up with beans, which are the official food of the Forest Service, and had started back to his camp when his horse began to buck and run, spilling the beans as it went, the above-mentioned bean path representing the runs and the round bean beds the bucks!

In "the cold, graw dawn of the morning after" the tired dancers saddled their horses, turned into the winding trails from which they had come, and were swallowed up again by the mountains. The guests at the inn who were going on arranged for guides and horses, for mine host maintains a good stable where one can get horses or carriages for the remainder of the trip if he chooses. Perhaps 18 miles from Tiller the road joins the Medford automobile road to Crater Lake, and, by the way, strange as it may seem, the distance from points north of Myrtle Creek on the Pacific Highway to Medford is about 50 miles shorter by way of Tiller than by the ordinary route.

Crater Lake is another story. This one is just about what you may see on the way to it, for, remember that if you are taking a pleasure trip it is not enough to have a destination, even so glorious a destination as Crater Lake. You must have queer and quaint or interesting or beautiful things to see along the road, and it is these very things that make the Tiller route so vastly superior to any other road to the lake. The fact that it is half a day's run shorter is a very minor consideration. The real advantage lies in the charm along the way, and most of all in little Tiller and her quaint log inn.