

## Memories of Glamorous Years of Past Recalled at Lang Syne Society Dinner

Saloons Furnish Lunch.

Memories of glamorous years ago in the halcyon era before the gay '90s were recalled last night by 250 Portland business and professional men who gathered at the Portland hotel for the 21st annual reunion dinner of the Lang Syne society.

"Do you remember?" "I recall," "Wasn't it back in '80?" and many another familiar expression could be

heard all around the dining room of a hotel which most of those present saw stand incompleting for years on a one-story foundation. The story of how Henry Villard promoted the venture and ran out of money before the structure had risen well past its foundation was one of the chief reminiscences of the night.

But probably the most popular anecdote related during the dinner was that about Ben Holladay and the one-horse streetcar. The man who gained fame for his association with the pony express of the western plains was the driver of the streetcar which plied along First street from a point near where the Steel bridge now stands south beyond Jefferson street.

"Well, sir, do you know that Ben would often accommodate a lone passenger—particularly if the 'fare' were a woman—by unhitching the horse and taking him around to the other end of the car to haul it in the opposite direction rather than inconvenience the patron by making him or her wait until the scheduled return trip?" some oldtimer would remark and then somebody at the next table would hear the laughter and recount it all over.

The Lang Syne society members range in age from mere striplings of a half century or more to many who are well past 80. At one table sat 17 men, all of whom had passed the 80-year mark and one who is 94. This veteran of veterans is W. P. Berger. Others at the table were: John B. Cleland, 85; R. J. Holmes, 87; L. G. Schell, 83; Charles H. Thompson, 83; Alex Muirhead, 80; Will J. Idleman, 85; W. J. Kiernan, 83; C. T. Belcher, 82; Sam F. Gill, 80; John Mackinlay, 83; W. F. Hummel, 81; George H. Himes, 89; Joseph Simon, 83; John P. Schmeer, 86; A. B. Croasman, 87.

The old-time Portland of which Paul R. Kelty, speaker of the evening, told was the city as it stood in 1888 when the present editor of The Oregonian came here as a country boy from Lafayette in old Yamhill county.

"I made the journey," said Mr. Kelty, "on the old narrow-gauge railroad. My train was a combination freight, express and passenger, and it took from 8 o'clock in the morning till about 5 o'clock in the afternoon to negotiate the distance.

"First street was the principal thoroughfare of the time and it was crowded with one and two-horse drays and trucks and a multitude of express wagons which rattled over the cobblestones. The heart of the retail district was on First street.

"The Portland hotel was just then rising on its foundations, but the famous hotels of the day were such as the old Esmond, still standing down near the water front, and the St. Charles catercorner from it. Then farther up town, on First street, was the Gilman house. There were others and many fine restaurants.

But one didn't need to go to a restaurant to find a meal. There were 157 saloons and many of these furnished a lunch with a 5-cent glass of beer—some of the lunches were almost full-course dinners."

The speaker gave intimate glimpses of some of Portland's best-known residents of the late '80s. One of those he remembered was Julius L. Meier, now governor of Oregon, as the boy stood in the entrance to the clothing department of his father's store to welcome customers.

Then there was the eloquent and learned lawyer, Henry McGinn, and George E. Williams walking up the street in a tall silk hat, and the courtly Henry W. Corbett as he stood behind the rail in the old First National bank, and Harvey W. Scott, famous editor of The Oregonian in that era, silk-hatted and frock-coated, strolling down the sidewalk in deep meditation.

### Ferries Carry Traffic.

"The presidential election of 1888 stands out in the serried memories that fill my mind," resumed Mr. Kelty. "I well remember the scene down in front of Gunst's cigar store on First street with the crowds milling around a bulletin board on which stereopticon slides flashed the results, and every once in a while somebody shouting, 'Come on in and get a 'General Arthur' cigar.'"

"In that period most of the travel across the Willamette river was by ferry. The old Stark-street ferry, the one at Jefferson street and the old Albina ferry are still fresh in my recollection. The Morrison-street bridge was new then and people paid 5 cents to walk across it."

A. L. Barbur, president of the society, presided at the dinner. John F. Logan called the roll of those taken by death since the last meeting. John B. Cleland spoke in behalf of the honor table of octogenarians. Rev. W. G. Eliot Jr. delivered the invocation. The Lang Syne quartet, Dom J. Zan, Dr. Banner B. Brooke, Edward Drake and H. L. Idleman, accompanied by L. Carroll Day, sang some old-time harmonies. And just before the company rose to sing "Auld Lang Syne," William L. Finley Jr. wound up the program with a showing of wild life films.

Mazamas to Hear Finley—William L. Finley, naturalist, will talk on the subject, "Sanctuaries for Wild Life," at the social meeting of the Mazamas in their clubrooms in the Pacific building at 8:15 p. m. today. The lecture will be illustrated with motion pictures. He also will show a reel of pictures taken on the 1919 outing of the Mazamas on the south side of Mount Rainier. 700722/ 4-25-34.