

Howell Prairie

Readers should feel free to use information from the website, however credit must be given to this site and to the author of the individual articles.

By Danielle Strom

Howell Prairie is located in Western Oregon to the west of Silverton, between the branches of the Pudding River. It is named after John Howell who settled here in 1843 and is described by early pioneers as a beautiful prairie.

John Howell came to Oregon initially in 1837 as a member of a survey team. This was the first time he saw the prairie that would eventually become his home and final resting place. It had a few willow and alder trees, but was flat otherwise. The tall grass "waved to and fro in the summer winds concealed numbers of deer, bear, wolves and other beasts of prey." This plain was the sight where local tribes held their great hunt because they could surround the prairie and drive its game toward the center.

In 1843, John Howell returned to the Oregon prairie, along with most of his large family and other relatives and friends who had heard the stories of Oregon. On September 20, 1844, George F. McCorkle, who crossed the plains with the Howells in 1843, also made a settlement on the prairie. Until the settlers erected fences several years later, much stock wandered at will over the prairie or was lost in the "high verdur."

On March 22, 1848, Temperance Howell, John Howell's wife, died and was buried within one hundred feet of the cabin they called home. The friends and neighbors of the Howell family were encouraged to bury their loved ones there as well. This cemetery was officially named Howell Prairie Cemetery in 1953 and is the final resting place of many early Marion county pioneers.

Bibliography

Down, Robert Horace. A History of the Silverton Country. Portland, Or: Berncliff Press, 1926.

Flora, Stephanie L. Howell Prairie Cemetery. Salem, Or: S.L. Flora, 1988

Lewis A. McArthur. "Oregon Geographic Names-III." Oregon Historical Society Quarterly 27, no. 2 (June 1926): 225-264

Marschner, Janice. Oregon 1859: A Snapshot in Time. Portland: Timber Press, 2008

McArthur, Lewis A. and Lewis Ankeny. Oregon Geographic Names 7th edition. Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2003