

HUDSON COMMUNITY

By MRS. ERVIN ABRAHAM

Communities have to get started somewhere, some time, and by someone. One of the oldest communities surrounding Rainier is the Hudson area settled as early as 1860 by an Indian fighter with the U. S. Army, Samuel K. Hudson and his family. Hudson first settled in Cowlitz county, Washington.

The community is bordered by the Columbia river on the north; Apiary and Fern Hill districts on the south; Rainier on the east and Delena on the west. The topography lies a little smoother, that is, hills are not quite as steep and the level land lays more favorable for small farms.

Beaver creek is the main stream heading in the southern area. The stream, bordered by ferns and other water loving plants, meanders through Hudson Park enhancing the grounds.

One thinks of the Hudson community as quiet and dignified where family living is unpretentious and satisfying. It is mainly a community of families with no stores or shopping centers. Once it boasted a postoffice and school; only a school remains.

In the early beginnings tall virgin fir and cedar trees grew to great height everywhere and blocked out the sun. A tiny spot had been opened before 1860 by an unknown man who cleared a few acres, built a home, planted an orchard and then gave up the struggle. The little hole letting in the sun was made near the present Beaver Valley Grange on the

Frank Rinck farm located across the road from the Green Mountain cemetery.

Samuel K. Hudson, who took part in several engagements against the Klickitat Indians moved with his family into the only cleared land. Hudson was born in Arkansas in 1826. He came west during the California gold rush days in 1852. He crossed the mountain passes by covered wagon into Oregon. He and his wife filed for a homestead near the head of Cold Creek slough in Cowlitz county. Their cabin was built against high hills and could be reached only by crossing the slough. There was no back entrance to the place.

Misfortune over came the family when the Cowlitz river, so filled with debris that Indians could hardly find their way through it with canoes, flooded following a long rainy season in the fall of the year. It was reported to have been one of the worst floods of the Cowlitz river. The Hudson family lost all their livestock. Carcasses of sheep were found hanging high in cottonwood trees, swept there by the turbulent waters of the Cowlitz. The family packed bag and baggage and moved across the Columbia river to the open spot in the Hudson area about three miles west of Rainier.

Indians in Columbia county were reported to be friendly, but they too, feared the fighting Klickitat Indians and asked that white families go with them to



HERBERT HUDSON AND WIFE LESLIE

hide in the tall timbers. Members of the Hudson family did at times seek protection in a block house built in Rainier for the purpose of protecting pioneer families. To supplement his veteran of Indian war's pension, Hudson engaged in some farming. He also purchased more land.

Pioneer families who settled soon afterwards from various places included the Ira Parcher family, and families of John Nelson, Frank Banzer, O. Anstine, Andrew Ray, E. Rice, A. Adkins, R. R. Burns and John Richards. Many descendants still live in surrounding areas. The trials and hardships of the families is legend among the pioneers.

Cordwood cutting used by river boats, logging and some agriculture was the pioneer's way of life. A cedar mill was located near where the Hudson school now stands. A postoffice and school were established. Samuel Hudson was the first post master. The

community name was derived from the first post office and first post master.

Samuel K. Hudson donated an acre of land for the Woodbine cemetery now joined with the Green Mountain cemetery. Members of the family were laid to rest in the Woodbine cemetery.

At least five generations have since grown up in the community. James C. Hudson, a second generation was born in Cowlitz county but came with his parents to Hudson at the age of eight. Herbert Hudson, now 78 years of age, third generation, married to Leslie Larsen, of pioneer stock, has retired in Rainier and spends his time flower gardening.

In reporting the history of his grandfather he recalls his own most harrowing experience in the wooded country of his grandparents when he laid his gun on an old fir stump only to have a large wolf come between him, his gun, and a heifer calf.