

**MOOK-SEE
MOXIE
MOXEE**

**The Enchanting Moxee Valley
Its History and Development**

by Alice M. Toupin

The research required to obtain this information has been taken from the Yakima Valley History, By Prof. W. D. Lyman. Yakima Diamond Jubilee Book of 1885 to 1960. 100th Anniversary Book of Catholics in the Yakima Valley 1847 to 1947. Book on Kamiakin, By A. J. Splawn. I was also helped by my friends : Joseph Slavin, son of pioneer Andrew Slavin and Past President of Terrace Heights Grange and resident of Moxee Valley for over 60 years. Albert Bateman, son of pioneer Tom Bateman, also a resident of Moxee Valley for over 60 years. Mrs. Malvina Riel, daughter of N. LaBree and daughter in law of Francis Riel, who arrived in the valley in 1895. Also Charles Van Wechel, Harry Den Beste, and Mrs. Peter Meeboer Sr.

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The History and Development of the Moxee Valley

As we look at our beautiful Yakima Valley, we should turn back the pages of history to the year of 1855. The President of the United States, knowing of the vast amount of land available west of the rocky mountains, held a council with the chiefs of about 200 tribes, and granted them all the land west of the rocky mountains to the Pacific ocean. The treaty was ratified in 1859.

In 1847, missionaries found their way westward, becoming friends with the Indians: Educating and teaching them agriculture and irrigation. By watering the trees and plants they had planted, anything would grow in this arid country. The missionaries settled in the Ahtanum and built their first mission there, which was not far from Chief Kamiakin's village. Apple trees were planted there and are still producing.

Explorers, coming west in 1853 found rich land in the Yakima Valley. Government officials and officials of the Northern Pacific Railway Co. of St. Paul, Minnesota, knew of the potential of the west. They encouraged overland parties to migrate to the west via the Oregon Trail, which was at its peak.

A wagon train, led by James Longmire, consisting of 36 wagons and 155 persons, was the first to reach the Yakima Valley in 1853. Suffering thirst and hunger, they crossed the Columbia River at Wallula on rafts made of drift wood and in Indian Canoes. They then came through Sagebrush as high as their wagons, making their own trails.

In the early spring of 1853, Lieutenant George McClellan was sent by the Great White Father in Washington D.C. to buy land from the Indians which would be open for settlement. He found much opposition from Chief Kamiakin, so he had to go to Governor Stevens, who was Territorial Governor at the time, to make a report of this talk with the all powerful chief. Chief Kamiakin was not a chief by blood, but was elected by the thirteen tribal chiefs, who knew of his great wisdom and understanding. In the spring of 1855, Kamiakin called the Chiefs together for council which resulted in the signing of the treaty, ceding 10,828,800 acres (16,928 sq. miles) to the government, including the Yakima Valley.

The pioneers, suffering great hardships, started coming by the hundreds in wagon trains. Their faith and courage was strong, and so was their determination to settle the new land. They came from Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota and many other states from the middle west. People from New York, and Massachusetts were also to be found among these groups.

Late in 1855, fearing that these people would take up too much of their land and interfere with their trading, the treaty was broken by Kamiakin. He called the thirteen chiefs in council. This resulted in the Indian war of 1855 to 1858 in which the Indians were defeated and had to retreat to reservations assigned them by the U.S. Government.

In 1858, the Northern Pacific Railway, extended their lines westward from St. Paul, Minnesota, and did much to encourage immigrants to come to the new land. When the war was over, wagon train after wagon train came over the Lewis and Clark and Oregon Trails to the Walla Walla Valley, then to the Columbia River, crossing at Wallula or Priest Rapids. They came to the Yakima Valley through Konowak Pass (also known as the Donald-Parker pass) or at the Priest Rapids divide, about 25 miles east of Moxee, where the Silver Dollar Restaurant is, at the "Y" cutoff going to Sunnyside.

The Konowak Pass was most important to the early settlers. It was an old Indian trail and cattle route. Wagons traveled its course, coming into the Moxee Valley where there were luscious pastures, good bunch grass and fertile soil. MOOK-SEE, which meant "land of the tulee" was the Indian name. It was later changed to Moxie and changed again in 1888 to Moxee. The tulee reeds were abundant in the south-western part of the valley near the Yakima river and the Indians would camp there to gather these tulee to weave baskets and mats. They also used the mats to wrap their dead for burial.

In 1861, F. Mortimore Thorp, the first white settler to come to the Moxee Valley settled at the base of the cliff across where the Ahtanum creek empties in the Yakima river near Union Gap. He built a one room cabin there. The Yakima pioneer association placed a monument on the Thorp road commemorating the spot in 1941. He moved to Goldendale for awhile, then, fearing that someone might come to take his land, he returned to Moxee and made it his permanent home. He brought back a large herd of Durham cattle as there was good pasturage along the river bottom.

Many others followed him with their families. The Splawn, Hansen, Hubbard, Haines, Kerr, Cameron, Cheney, Scudder, Conrad, Bell and Bateman families settled in the western part of the Moxee Valley along the Birchfield Road, to the Yakima River. When the Thorps had returned to Moxee, they built a two story log cabin and Mrs. Alfred (Letitia) Haines tutored the five Thorp children and others, in the attic of the Thorp cabin. Children were taught there from 1861 to 1882.

Later, needing more room, a one room cabin was built about one mile south from where the Terrace Heights Grange Hall now stands. This was the first school built in the Moxee Valley. The first teacher was Mrs. N.J. Dickson, who had studied with the Providence Sisters at Yakima city where they had prepared her for teaching.

The flooding of the Yakima River forced the people to build the school on higher ground. In 1888 or 1889, James H. Conrad gave an acre of ground on the bench. It was called the Old Moxee School. Then, from 1896, the following schools were built: The Riverside School, which is now the civic center, the Moxee City School, located where the Moxee Elementary school is, the Holland School, located at the present east valley site, and the French School, a mile and a half from Moxee on the N.E. corner of the LaFramboise and Gamache road. Another school was built in Black Rock, about 25 miles east of Moxee, on what is now the Merrit Fines place. The reason for so many schools, which were mostly two room cabins, was because the children walked to school and therefore would not have so far to go. The district was consolidated into the Moxee School District No. 90 of Yakima County in 1910. Holy Rosary School, a private Catholic School was built in 1915 for boarders and day pupils, and included high school classes.

Early settlers in the Holland District were Gerritsen, Van Wechel, Den Beste, Mieras, Riel, and Houle. Later came Duffield, Drake and Slavin families.

Settlers in the mid-eastern part were Gamache, Belaire, Langevin, Desmarais, Sauve, Charron, Brulotte, and Ganos. Later came Regimbal, Hillstrom, Beauchene, LaBree, Rivard, and Deeringhoff families.

Those in the eastern part of the valley were Peck, Shannon, Meeboer, Bronkhorst, Whitmore, Van Diest, Atckock, Woodcok, and Skidmore. Most of these came in 1886. To many of the settlers, a

church to attend became very important. The Scudder family solicited enough money to build a church on what is now the Leon LaFramboise place. It was of the Presbyterian denomination. The Dicksons gave a piece of ground, where the Victor Belaire's now live, and built a church of the Congregation Faith. He also built a two story house for a Mrs. Allen, who had lost her husband and was left with ten children. This house still stands just west of the Belaire house and is still being used.

Catholics had to drive ten miles to go to mass in Yakima city. In 1899 the Catholic Missionaries came from Ahtanum, once a month, to say mass in the Artesian School. After a while some people objected to using the school for mass, so it was decided to hold services in the homes large enough to accommodate the people. When they became too crowded, the Rev. Father Friva, who was the administrator at the time, urged his people to build a church. It was built one mile east of Moxee City on what was known as the Leslie Brooks place, north of the Hanford highway and east of what is now Holy Rosary cemetery road. On March 21, 1900, the first mass was said in a partly finished church under Father Friva's direction. A board was cut in two to serve as an altar. The benches were planks nailed to the side of the building on one end and the other end resting on nail kegs. On April 10th, 1900, the church was dedicated to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

In 1901 the Holland Dutch people built the Dutch Reformed Church on the premises where it stands today. The name later was changed to the First Reformed Church. The first pastor was Rev. Stevens Howling. Each of these denominations had their own cemeteries which are still being used, except for the old cemetery which is located on the south end of the Merrit Fines place. It served the people of Black Rock, Morning Side, and Cold Creek areas. There are twenty graves there of which only eight markers are legible.

In 1904, Antoine LaFromboise, a blacksmith, purchased some land from the Moxee Company on which the Presbyterian church was built. He remodeled the building for his business and took down the steeple from the church. It also had a stained glass window in it which he offered to the catholic church. They could not use it so he then offered it to the dutch people who had just built a new church. The window is still in the First Reformed Church.

The Missionaries had taught the Indians to irrigate by making little ditches so they could water more land at one time, rather than by watering each plant individually. It impressed the Indians so much that Chief Kamiakin had the first irrigation ditch made on his place. It proved to work out so well it was an inspiration for the early settlers.

Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Fowler, who had settled in the Moxee Valley, brought water in a ditch to their places in the mid western part of the valley. These ditches carry their names and are still being used. The water was obtained from creeks near the Yakima River by the railroad bridge. Other settlers acquired more than 1600 acres in that area, and formed what was called the Moxee Company. They brought-in water from the Yakima River, near Rest Haven. It was known as the Moxee Ditch and is still being used.

The eastern part of Moxee had been successful in getting water through the drilling of artesian (or self flowing) wells. However, the increased number put a strain on the water table, and pumps had to be used to keep the pressure up for irrigation. Some of these wells, from 600 ft to 1,000 ft deep, were not all artesian, but they gave the farmers enough water for their own use.

One of the powerful wells that was drilled was on what was called the "Morningside Orchard." A Mr. Manning was sent from the east to plat the acreage and he planted fruit trees that did very well for a time. The well was not sufficient to take care of all the acreage and pumps had to be used but they proved too costly. This turned out to be just a land promotion deal for a company from Massachusetts and it was abandoned in 1920. The well is still there but has been capped. Another powerful well was obtained on the Raoul Langevin place on Walters Road.

In 1901, George Rankin and W. T. Clark owned land north of the Postma Road and east of the Duffield Road, on a hill. Though they did have an artesian well, it was not sufficient to take care of all the land so they sponsored the building of the Selah Moxee Canal. It would be built on higher ground and serve other farmers on the upper part of Moxee. The intake is in the Selah-Wenas area of the Yakima River, coming east into the Moxee Valley, then south and turning west, emptying into a waste ditch near the river at Union Gap. This brought several hundred acres under cultivation.

There was a lot of talk of a higher irrigation ditch to be built, and in 1941, after 40 years, the Roza Canal came into being and was completed. It brought thousands of acres under cultivation throughout the Moxee Valley and eastward. This required three tunnels to be built. The intake of water is several miles up the Yakima-Ellensburg Canyon where the Roza Dam is located. It then comes into the Terrace Heights area, east around the valley, west to the tunnel at Konowak Pass, then south and east again all the way to Prosser. It also served many farms which had been watered by artesian wells. The rest was sagebrush and bunchgrass, which was only good in the spring for grazing.

The crops grown in the Moxee Valley were mainly alfalfa, grain, potatoes, grapes and fruit. In 1892, F. E. Derrinhoff was sent by the Northern Pacific Railway Co. to test land in the Moxee Valley for raising sugar beets. He was so impressed by the fertility of the soil, he bought an acreage of land and brought his family out the next year. He drilled a successful well and got his family settled. He then helped other families to do the same.

The sugar beets were tried but they blighted and proved unprofitable so were discontinued in the valley. Tobacco was also grown but the variety proved too strong and was abandoned. Grapes and fruits proved profitable and many acres were planted.

Cattle raising, both beef and dairy herds, was abundant in the western part of the valley along the Yakima River. The Scudder sisters, Alice and Lucy, who operated a dairy for many years, were located on what is now known as the "Hop Nick Ranch."

In 1892, Tom Smith brought a band of 2300 head of sheep to pasture on land he owned where the Alex Deccio place is now. He then went on to pasture them in the Cold Creek area where bunch grass was plentiful. Other sheepmen were Robert and Daniel McKie, located on the north side of the valley. Ernest Berg's sheep camp was where the Fred Lenseigne place is now. Alex Taylor had a band of more than 10,000 head of sheep in his camp which was located right across the road from the Albert Desserault ranch. They grazed their sheep in the area of the Black Rock and Cold Creek to the Columbia River.

In 1877 Charles Carpenter brought hop roots from Oregon and the Puyallup Valley into the Yakima Valley. A short time later, J. D. Bradford of New York was instrumental in planting hops in the Moxee Valley on the Derrinhoff Ranch. Hops were originally brought into this country from Europe in

1866. They were originally grown in small amounts to make bread yeast and home brew. Hops proved so satisfactory in the Yakima Valley, especially in the Moxee area, that the Moxee Company in the Birchfield region and the French settlers planted many acres of them. Moxee became the "Hop Capitol of the world" in the 1930's. Farmers grew more hops to the acre in the valley than any other part of the world.

The first yards were planted with the roots 4 feet apart with poles about 8 to 10 ft long, put in the ground along side the root. A nail was put at the top of the pole and when the vine had reached the top, the head was thrown over the nail to keep it from slipping down. At picking time, one would pull the "arm" or side branches as far as could be reached and pick off the burrs. When no more arms could be reached: he would call "Hop Pole" and a man would come and pull the pole out of the ground and lay it down so that the top or end of the vine could be picked. This method proved very costly. Later, the successful plan of the trellis yard was put in. A wooden peg was forced into the ground next to the root. Poles were put in about every 8 ft, supported by wires stapled to the top and cross wires to hold them in place. Twine was tied to the top of the wires, down to the peg, for the vine to wind itself around clockwise, until it reached the top. This also required manual labor to train the vine. This was called first training. It took three different trainings to bring the hops to the top of the wire. Arching was the next job. This was bringing two or three vines together about 4 ft from the ground and tying them. This enabled the farm equipment to pass through the yard to ditch and cultivate. Arching could be done by children from the age of 12 and up. In the early days, they were paid 75 cents a day for a ten hour day. In 1895 wages came up to \$1.00 and then in 1905 to \$1.25. In 1911 they were raised to \$1.50 per day which made an income of \$9.00 per week and made everyone happy. Several children in one family could usually work. The adult wage at that time was from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per day for a ten hour day. Many farmers furnished the families with a house and water. Milk was sold to them for 5 cents a quart.

The growing of hops has now changed a great deal due to the mechanical equipment which has been developed. A rotary machine has been developed to prune the roots instead of using a hop hoe to dig around it, trimming it with a "Hop Knife" then covering the root again. The training is much the same except that in growing hops for machine picking, one training has been eliminated. Tractors are used to move the equipment instead of horses. The yards were raised 15 to 20 ft high so as to expose more of the vine to the sun and to make it easier to pick with a portable machine. These portables had been brought into the valley from California by William Gamache Sr. in 1947.

Before this date, picking was done by hand and required hundreds of people to harvest this perishable crop. Harvest usually took around 30 days. People came from all parts of the state to pick. Many made it a kind of picnic and camp out. With the opportunity to earn some extra money, all members of the family worked. The hop growers furnished tents, straw for beds, lumber for tables and benches, camp stoves and wood. Picking was done by hand and the hops were put into coffee barrels, lime barrels and even nail kegs, for the smaller members. The Indians even picked hops in their shawls and blankets. When they felt a hundred pounds of green hops were picked, they dumped them into a wooden box (called a hop box) built to hold about that amount. They were paid \$1.00 a box. If the box was not quite full enough the pickers were asked to add more. The hops settled quickly in hot weather and there was much dissatisfaction in this method. Later a stand was made with two funnel shaped chutes and two burlap hop bags were hooked to this stand. Dumping the hops into the bags, they could be weighed by two men carrying a tripod. They weighed the sacks and paid the pickers 1 cent a pound. A punched ticket noting the weight of each sack was given to each picker. These tickets could be cashed at the stores in the community or at the grocery wagons, which came into the camp grounds and

fields twice a day. Many preferred to hold them until the end of harvest and cash them in a lump sum from the employer.

Indians from many tribes were encouraged to come to pick hops as a means of earning money for themselves. Chief Moses of the Sinkiue Tribe in the coast region urged them first to go to the Puyallup Valley to pick hops as they matured in that valley before they did east of the cascades. They then came to the Yakima Valley. Other tribes who came were the Wanapums, from Priest Rapids, The Nez Perce from Idaho, the Yakimas from the reservation, the Okanagans, and even some from British Columbia, Canada.

On weekends, the Indians gambled and many people went to see them play the "Stick Game," the "Bone Game," Dice and Cards. The largest Moxee Indian Camp was at the Bert McKelheer ranch in Moxee, where the Joe McKelheer and Hilda McKelheer ranches are now. At the end of the hop season the members of other tribes would congregate for a final big game and would bet their horses, saddles, blankets, baskets or anything else they had. This would go on all day Saturday and Sunday. Some even gambled their entire earnings of the season. There was never much trouble as they trusted each other's honesty. Some Indians went home poorer than when they came and others went happily because of their good luck and new possessions. The largest Indian Camp in the Yakima Valley was at the John I. Haas Ranch in Toppenish. The sing-song tunes which signified the game the Indians were playing could be heard for quite a distance.

When the portable picking machines were brought in, hand picking was discontinued and much manual labor was eliminated. In 1940 W. E. Rivard built a stationary picking machine called the "Fontaine Machine." The hops were brought in from the fields to the machine by tractors with flat bed trailers or on flat bed trucks. The removing of the branches and leaves from the hops was done by hand. The hops were then conveyed to the hop kiln for drying. In 1947, Arthur Toupin of Moxee invented a smaller stationary machine which proved satisfactory but his health failed and he could not continue the manufacturing of it.

The early hop kiln was a wooden frame building which was two stories high and were about 24 feet square. The hops were dumped on the second floor which was made of slats and covered by a burlap kiln cloth. The stove was of cast iron long enough to hold slabs of wood about 4 ft long. The stove pipe, about 8 in. in diameter, extending nearly to the second floor, provided the heat that dried the hops. It took from 14 to 24 hours to dry a kiln of hops 20 to 24 inches deep. The greener the hops, the longer it would take to dry them.

Now the hop kilns are mostly made of concrete blocks and iron. The warm air is blown into the kiln from gas burners placed in their own fireproof buildings. A kiln of 36 inches deep can now be dried in 12 hours.

The hop presses used to be a cable wrapped around a winch on the outside of the kiln. One end was fastened to the press cover and the other end to a single tree, drawn by a horse, which would tighten the cable to compress the hops into a bale weighing about 200 pounds. This is done much quicker now by just pushing a button. Three men operate the baler and many pounds of hops can be baled in a day.

Farming has been highly mechanized the past twenty five years due to the high cost of labor and production. (Labor and taxes have forced the farmer to cut cost of production where ever possible. Also, due to the large amount of hops grown, hand labor could not begin to harvest the crop on time).

In 1910, The Northern Pacific Railroad wished to extend their lines from Yakima east to the Columbia River. They contacted Mr. Phil Ditter of Yakima, who was president of the Ditter Brothers Store, to talk to some of the farmers and business men who had little stores in different parts of the valley. The railroad wanted them to move their businesses to a centralized location agreeable to all. They then would extend the line ten miles out of Yakima and make it easier for the farmers to ship their produce and centralize their buying. The railroad company then built a spur track at Birchfield and a weighing station and depot in the spot which is now Moxee City. This station is still in the original spot. It is now being used as a laundromat and beauty parlor.

The first store moved was one operated by Arthur and Theophile Champoux, which was located on the northwest corner of LaFramboise and Bell Road, just east of the Wilson Machine Shop. This store was moved to the south end of the lot now occupied by Kohl's Tavern. It handled groceries, smoked meats and feed. Then L. Paul LaFramboise moved the blacksmith shop and his house from where the Lawrence Eckman place is now, to where it still stands in Moxee City. It is owned by Frank Kohls.

Mr. Ditter advised the Catholic parishioners that he would donate property in the city for the church. The church had been located about one mile east of Moxee. It was moved to the lots where Holy Rosary Church is today. A farm house nearby was purchased and moved to the south side of the church and was used as a rectory. Later the parish hall was moved east of the church which completed the parish building complex. Mr. Ditter had platted the town from the 40 acres he had purchased from Leon Charron Sr., who had the original 95 acre tract. This was the birth of Moxee City.

The new buildings sprung up. Mr. Ditter built a two story building across from where Toupin Hardware stands now. The popular place in Moxee City was the second floor of the Ditter building which was used as a community center. The basket socials, wedding dances, and social affairs were held there. The lower floor was divided and Mr. Dona Boyer from Minnesota came to Moxee and opened a drug store in one half, while living in the other. He was a registered pharmacist and it was a big help for the people not to have to drive ten miles into Yakima to get prescriptions and sundry items. Two years later he built a concrete block building just east of Toupin Hardware and added a soda fountain.

In 1910, Mr. Michael O'Laughlin from St. Paul, Minn., on his way to Toppenish, heard of the new town and decided to come to Moxee. He built what is now the Toupin Hardware store. He put in the first gas pump, tires and varieties of oil for automobiles, and farm equipment. The oil was measured by the quart or half gallon, pumped out from 50 gallon drums. About a year later, his brother James O'Laughlin joined him. James wrote insurance for cars, trucks, farm liability and fire. He then added the line of hop supplies consisting of hop twine, baling twine, kiln clothes and baling cloth. His brother Michael handled the hardware items of sewing needles, hop knives and files.

In 1910 Elie Charron built a store building which opened as a grocery store, operated by Robert Lance. Harvey LaBree and his brother-in-law, X. Regimbal, built a butcher shop along the east side. Moxee at that time could boast of a shoe shop and a couple of years later, a hotel, barber shop, pastime

tavern and two lumber companies. They were the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Co. and the Tum A Lum Lumber co. (also known as Potlatch) and later Cascade lumber co.

The first barbershop was operated by Nickolas Herber, later sold to Ubale Dessalier, then to Walter LaCoursiere. Lester LaCoursiere joined his father in this line of business and later became the owner.

In 1914, Mr. Joseph McGrath, who had been working in the "Ruff Bank" in the southeastern part of the state, came to Moxee. He talked to the various farmers and business people about trying to raise enough capital to start a bank. They formed a corporation and a brick building went up on the corner of Seattle and Iler Street, east from the Ditter Hall. Mr. McGrath was elected clerk and manager and Mr. Louis Desmarais was elected president. The bank was quite an asset to the community and saved the people a trip to Yakima to do their banking. It operated satisfactorily until the depression of 1929 when so many small banks were closed.

Harvey LaBree decided to go into business for himself and purchased the building operating as a tavern from Peter Herber. He put in hardware. Later he built a brick building north of the bank and put in groceries and a meat shop along with the hardware. His son Lloyd joined him in the business and later they bought the bank building, adding it to their store, and put in a variety line. Lloyd still operates this business.

In 1925, X Regimbal and his brothers, Arnie and Dona, built a concrete building on the corner where Kohls Tavern is now. Later they sold it to David Benoit, who operated it as a grocery store until it was gutted by fire in 1954. This lot was later purchased by Frank Kohls. Two or three years after his tavern, on the east side of Moxee Ave., was destroyed by fire, he built the Kohls Tavern which is in business today.

In 1911, E. J. Dupree purchased the Champoux Grocery store and added a line of shoes, work clothes and yard goods. Needing more room for his expanding business, Mr. Dupree purchased the grocery store operated by Robert Lance and later by Mr. Asselin, who decided he did not like business life. Mr. Dupree then added a fresh meat department and hired a butcher, Leo Delorme, to handle that line. Helping in the store were Mr. Dupree's son Edmond and daughters Alice, Lucy and Cora. Mr. Dupree sold to Peter Glesener and his son John, in 1921. They owned a variety store in Toppenish but wished to get into a different business. Mr. Dupree and son moved to Grandview and purchased a dry goods and shoe store which they operated a few years before moving to the White Center area of Seattle. In Seattle they purchased a dry goods and shoe store, naming it the "Dupree Dry Goods."

Moxee could also boast of having a resident doctor. The first was Dr. Arthur. A few years later Dr. W. Cocklin came with his family and stayed until he went into the service during World War I. When he returned after the war, he decided to go to California and take a post graduate course. He then moved to Yakima. A little later, Dr. J. E. Bittner Sr. came to Moxee and though he was on limited practice due to his age, he administered to the people until his health gave way.

Arthur Toupin managed a hardware store in Crookston, Minnesota, since his return from World War I. In 1920, he came to Moxee to visit relatives. They advised him that the O'Laughlin Hardware Store was for sale. He thought he would look over the situation and being satisfied with the outlook, he purchased the store in February and returned March 1st with his mother and two sisters. About five years later, he purchased the insurance business and hop supply lines from James O'Laughlin and later

became a Deputy Auditor to write automobile and truck license renewals and transfers. He operated this store until 1947 when his health broke and his wife, Alice M. Toupin, took over with her daughter, Annette Pryor, and sons, Gerald and Richard Toupin. They were able to keep the business going as usual and it is still known as the "Toupin Hardware." In November of 1968 Mrs. Toupin sold the business to Robert and Patricia Kinzig.

The first garage was operated by Wilfred Sauve in the building formerly used as a photographer's shop by Fern Beaulaurier. (Mr. Beaulaurier had the shop for about three years and then decided to move to Toppenish where there were more people.) Later Mr. Sauve's son Isadore joined him in the business and the building was moved to where Isadore now has his twine cutting shop. A few years later Isadore and his brothers moved to a building just west of the present Silver Moon Cafe. This business was sold to Joseph Dumas, then to Longton-Kelley.

In 1913, Obart LaBree built the first service station on Moxee Ave. and Spokane Street. It is still in the same location and owned by Clifford Johnson.

A blacksmith shop had been built by Rock Desmarais across from the LaFramboise shop, and about a year later it was moved to the Desmarais farm. In 1922 Alex Rivard built the Moxee City Warehouse. It was a storage place for potatoes, hay and hops, for the farmers who had no warehouse. The warehouse was also a place to load the crops on the freight cars. Later it was sold to Eugene Riel and in 1936. Wilfred Rivard bought it and put in hop supplies and heavy hardware. He also took on the building of the "Fontaine" stationary hop machine. Ross Dwinell, his son-in-law, became manager and partner in this business. Wilfred Rivard also operated a hop ranch about a mile and a half south of Moxee City for 47 years. Marvin Yancey, his son-in-law, purchased this ranch and the Rivards retired to Yakima.

Now we go back to 1909 and 1910. The lights in the homes were all from kerosene lamps and candles. In 1911, The Pacific Power and Light Co. brought their lines from Yakima to Moxee City, extending them later to the Columbia River. What a joy it was to have even one light on a drop cord where all one had to do was to pull a chain or turn a button for light. This was also much safer. The good old icebox, scrub board and wash tubs, coal and wood range, and the "sad iron" that had to be heated on top of the range and reheated every few minutes, all took a back seat. The frost free refrigerators, electric stoves, washers and dryers, and dishwashers all make housework pleasant and much easier. Radios and television are enjoyed by most families in the Moxee Valley. Electricity has also relieved the farmers of much work that was done by hand.

Another first in the Moxee Valley was the telephone. John Wayenberg, who lived in a house right across from the south end of Morrier Lane, was as the first man to get a phone about 1905. Later-the Moxee Telephone Company was formed and the lines were extended to the rest of the valley. The phones were the old crank type which were hung on the wall. Sometimes there were as many as ten parties on one line. Some years later The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co. took over the Moxee Co. Now with the many improvements you can dial anywhere in the United States and almost everyone has a telephone.

In 1911, Father S. J. Arsenault, pastor of the Catholic Parish and a very good musician, formed the first band in the Moxee area. Members of the band were Phillip Gamache, Alex Riel, Edwin LaBree, Wilfred Capistran, Joseph Faucher, Egon Derrinshoff, Walter Swier, Henry Ossting, Ray Van Wechel,

Jacque Meyer, William Meyer, William Duffield, John Ekelman, Bill Ekelman, Tom Jongejan, and Arthur Glysteen. Bill Degooyer, who was a very good musician became "Band Leader" after Father Arsenault had given them a good start. The bandmen built their own hall across from the First Reformed Church and practiced there. In 1912 the building was moved to what is now the Leon LaFramboise place.

In the early years, the Catholic people of the community sponsored a Fourth of July celebration with all the valley people invited to attend. They had a parade through town. Pioneer William Belair, who played an instrument, decorated a wagon with willow branches and drove the band through the parade, much to the enjoyment of the crowd. The center attraction was located on the parish lawn. Concessions were put up, coffee, pop and hot dogs were served even in those days. Many families brought a picnic lunch. Horse races, games and races of all kinds were the excitement of the day. These were held on Yakima Avenue, the street just north of the Moxee City Warehouse, and a good time was had by all. The band broke up at the start of World War I as many of the young men went into the service.

Another attraction for the Moxee Valley was a race track built in 1913 on the Andrew Place just across from the Joe Slavin place.

Moxee also had its own basketball team organized about 1910. C.A. Payne, who was a teacher at the Moxee Central School and also superintendent of the Moxee School District #90, was coach. Members of the team were Walter Van Wechel, Steve Huysman, Peter Wayenberg, Palmer Dickson, Harold Van Wechel, and William Wayenberg.

Moxee also had a very good baseball team. They played against teams from other communities and especially against the "Yakima Bears," the team which they did beat a few times, much to the great satisfaction of the Moxee residents. The first ball park was the land west of Toupin Hardware before homes were built there. It was later moved to the athletic field that the Moxee Elementary School is now using. A grandstand was as built and many outdoor functions were held there.

In 1910, when the town was first developed, there was no water in town except for a private well on the Paul Brunell place, where George Cartier lived. Mr. Brunell was generous in letting people come to get water. It was a common site to see someone driving their horse through town with a stone boat and barrels to get water. In 1911, Leon Charron Sr. drilled a well 1300 feet deep and struck a very powerful stream. He had more water than he needed for the irrigation of his own place so he offered to pipe water to the city. This well yielded 3500 gallons a minute. It proved to be the purest water and the people of the city were thankful for the good water.

In 1942, the city drilled its own well 1320 feet deep. It was artesian and the temperature ranged between 65 and 72 degrees. This well was a pleasure for some and a grief for others. The striking of this heavy vein caused the water table to drop so much that many of the wells in the eastern, part of the valley had to use pumps to bring their water up. These proved too costly for irrigation and some of the early settlers in the eastern area moved to other locations. After the coming of the Roza Canal, much of this land has been restored.

In the early days of Moxee, the streets were just dirt and there were no sidewalks, so the people got together and built wood sidewalks. Gravel was hauled to make the streets less dusty and to fill the

chuck and mud holes. The wood side walks were first built on Naches Avenue where most of the homes were and then down Her Street, which was the main street of town.

In 1916, Mr. Alex Rivard contacted the people on his block on Naches Avenue to see if they would be willing to share the expense of building concrete-sidewalks. The wooden ones had become a problem because of loose nails and boards. All agreed and concrete walks were built on the south side of Naches Avenue and west on Her Street. Then crosswalks were put to the church, east to Labree's Store and to the drug store. After some persuasion a crosswalk was built to Toupin Hardware. The rest of the sidewalks were put in. by each property owner on the east and west sides of Seattle Avenue to the Legion Hall.

In 1910 Moxee had no fire protection except for the "bucket brigade" organized by the folks of the town. After water was piped into the city from the Charron Well, a hose cart was purchased. Five or six hydrants were placed in the best locations and a voluntary fire department was formed. The ringing of the church bell was the signal of call to action. It was something to see the efficiency of this group pushing or pulling the hose cart, some fastening the hose to the hydrant and the others coupling the 3" hose with the nozzle. The hardware merchants brought stacks of water buckets and buildings were protected and fires controlled if detected soon enough. A shed had been built on the rear of the Labree Store for a jail, and was later used to store the "Hose Cart". This Was good because of its central location. Later the fire department had a modern fire truck.

The first post office has quite a history. In 1887. before the town was formed, mail was left at the Leonard Thorp place for the valley settlers, then in 1897 it was left at a little store built on Moxee Company land. The first experimental rural delivery route in the nation was tried in Moxee and proved satisfactory. Mail boxes were put up in various locations where mail could be delivered from Yakima and picked up by the settlers.

The people in Moxee City had no way to get their mail delivered. Michael O'Laughlin, the hardware merchant, felt there should be some way to get a post office. He set about getting the necessary papers from the Washington D.C. Post Office Department. He thought this might be too slow, so through some agreement with the postal authorities in Yakima, they promised to deliver the mail if a container was put on a post about one quarter mile south of Moxee, where other mail boxes were put up. He promised to do so and nailed a galvanized tub with a cover to a post. Every day, Charles Fredericks, who was a. bookkeeper for O'Laughlin, would go down with a shopping basket and gather the mail. He had built a trough which was divided alphabetically to sort the mail. He was then appointed to serve in the distinguished position of "Assistant Postmaster". When the fixtures arrived, which had individual boxes, (this section is now in the Yakima Valley Pioneer Museum), O'Laughlin partitioned one corner of his store and Moxee then had an official postoffice. Mail was brought out daily by the Northern Pacific Railway. Miss Marion McShane was appointed the first postmistress. Several people have served in that capacity since. They are Charles Fredericks, Arthur Toupin, Virginia LaBree, Clyde Simon, Ruth F. Walters, and George Cartier. Cartier held the position for 15 years, retiring in 1961. Mrs. Norma Johnson was acting postmaster until Lynn Sauve was appointed after taking a civil service examination. Before that time, it was under political party in power. The post office was located longest in the Northern Pacific Depot.

In 1920, the business leaders of Moxee City felt the city was not getting the revenues from the county to progress in the town. They decided to look into the benefits of incorporating the town. In

1921, with a populated area of less than 1/4 mile square, the town was incorporated. A mayor had to be elected, and Arthur J. Toupin, who had helped in this project, was elected and served two years. City councilmen had to be elected to assist the mayor in his functions. A great deal of enthusiasm was evident as all wished to improve the town and much seemed to be accomplished from then on.

Those who have served as mayor since are Alex Rivard, Harvey LaBree, Henry Gaudette, Obert LaBree, Lyle Brand, Arnie Regimbal, Ralph Whitehead, Lester LaCoursiere, J. M. Lamoureux, Floyd Jenkins and Malvina Riel. Most every other person living in the city held some office if they wished to serve. The city meetings were held in the Ditter Building until 1957, when the city decided to build a concrete building on the southeast corner of Seattle Avenue and Rivard Road. This building was large enough to partition a room for the meeting and a jail with two cells. These took only 1/3 of the building. The fire department had a fire truck housed in the shed by LaBree's Store and it was not protected from the cold of winter, so the city offered to rent the rest of the building to the Fire Dept. This way they had a heated garage and the truck was ready anytime needed. They anticipated getting a second truck so there would be sufficient room for both. A fire siren was installed on the top of the building and a blackboard put up to advise the late comers where the fire was. This proved very satisfactory.

In 1947, Moxee, Terrace Heights and the Central District got together to form the Moxee Fire Protection District #4. of Yakima County. Richard Lang was elected first Fire Chief. He was also serving as City Clerk and Marshall. He resigned a short time later to move to Ketchikan, Alaska. Woodrow Wright then served as Marshall and later was appointed Fire Chief. He served in that position from 1948 until 1957. Moxee could boast of a very good and efficient fire department.

In 1958, During Mayor Malvina Riel's term, the school teachers and patrons along with the mayor worked to get a "branch" library established. This had to be voted on and was passed. Then the city officials allowed them to put up shelves in the meeting room and the library was open to the public twice a week. Mrs. Theodore Regimbal assisted Mrs. Anita Kelley, who was appointed the first Librarian. Later Mrs. Regimbal was appointed librarian and still holds that position.

In 1958 the fire department of Moxee decided to build its own building about one block north on Rivard Road. This left an empty space in the city building. Mayor Riel worked to get the Post Office Department to move the Post Office to the City Hall Building, as it was in much better condition than the depot and had water facilities and good lighting.

When our Congresswoman, Catherine May, was in Yakima, she came to inspect both places and decided the new location would be much better. Two sections of the city building were remodeled, using the middle section for the post office and the east third of the building was finished to house the library. The Post Office was dedicated on November 4, 1961. The library was dedicated June 11, 1958 and was moved into the new section in 1962. Therefore the mission to house three services in a nice and attractive new environment was accomplished.

After the consolidation of the Moxee Schools in 1910, some of the schools were closed. People from the Black Rock Area had to bring their children to a designated place and someone would pick them up and bring them the rest of the way to school. Egon Derringhoff, who lived in the eastern part of the valley, drove the children to school in the years of 1914 and 1915 in a flat bed wagon rigged with sides and covered with a canvas. This wagon was drawn by a team of horses. Later a flat bed truck was

rigged with sides, benches and canvas cover. It was operated by Harold Jones. In 1926, the district bought a truck chassis and Mr. George Lavesconte of Terrace Heights built a bus body. He drove the bus for some time. Another of the early bus drivers was Arthur Glysteen. More buses were purchased and you can see the vast change today to what they had in the early days.

In 1928, the Moxee Central School was destroyed by fire, but a small two classroom room building was spared. Some classes were held there and other elementary classes were transferred to the Moxee City School. The high school classes were transferred to Terrace Heights until the new school could be built.

Arthur Toupin, who had a three acre hop yard next to the Moxee City School, offered to donate the land for the new high school. He wanted the school built in the city as it would have good water and sewer service, fire protection and the city marshall. After much discussion and an election, it was decided to build the new high school in Moxee City in 1931.

Peter J. Wayenberg donated to the district a couple of lots at the south end of this property to be used as an athletic field. The city elementary school building was then used to teach shop and for manual training. The new high school was built of concrete and a new elementary school was built in the central district and called the Moxee Central School.

In 1960, the high school was over-crowded and the problem arose whether to add to the present building or to move to some other location. There was much discussion and deep feelings about moving the high school out of the city. Through an election it was decided to move it to the Central District. Remodeling was done to the old high school to make an elementary school and Central was remodeled and added to for the high school.

Jack and Dixie Bledsoe first operated a grocery and meat shop in the Ditter Building and later moved this business to the former drug store building. In 1964, Bledsoes purchased the "Les and Jame" Cafe from Leslie Perrault and Lester LaCoursiere, who operated the barber shop. In May of 1965, this building was gutted by fire, but was rebuilt the same year and reopened in October.

Fires took tolls of many places in Moxee. Fire took two lumber yards, the Tum-A-Lum, and the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Co. Also the Moxee Hotel and the second story of the Ditter Building. The Holy Rosary Hall was moved near the school for added classrooms but was destroyed by fire in 1937. The High School classes for boys and the boarding of students was discontinued. The hall was rebuilt the same year and still stands on its original location. In 1968, due to lack of teachers available and the high cost of "LAY" teachers salaries, Holy Rosary School, after 55 years, had to be closed.

In 1920, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Toupin helped organize the American Legion Post and Auxiliary #162. The post was named, Henry Remmerden, after the first Moxee boy killed in World War I. In 1927, they purchased the former Congregation Church, which had been moved from the N.J. Dickson place about two miles east of Moxee into the city. The Legion then had a meeting place of their own. The building has since been remodeled and is still the American Legion Hall.

Many floods occurred, taking out bridges or approaches in the early days. In 1901 a flood took the bridge out at the old Moxee Crossing and ferries were provided to cross the Yakima River. Some of these ferries were built by Julian Sauve and his son Wilfred. In 1908 another flood took the newly built

bridge so a steel bridge was built to replace it. In 1917 another flood took the approaches out and the only way to get to Yakima was to cross the railroad bridge on foot. This was the only way some of the boys could get to Yakima to report for duty in World War I until the water receded. Some food supplies were brought to Terrace Heights by trucks going around by Pomona over the old wagon trails. This proved to be quite an undertaking.

Another serious flood was in 1935. It flooded much property along the river bottom, and a call to evacuate families in the area was given about 9:00 p. m. that night. The American Legion Post was called to evacuate the patients housed in the T.B. Hospital which was located on Riverside Road and the old Moxee Highway. They drove all kinds of trucks and boats, moving the most serious cases to Holy Rosary School where the Providence Sisters could care for them. Others were moved to the parish hall and cared for by people in the Moxee Community. Some families were moved to the Legion Hall and food was provided for them by the auxiliary. This was right around Christmas time and much gloom was in the air. The ladies of the auxiliary prepared a nice Christmas dinner which helped to brighten the holiday, until they could again return to their homes. Floods always caused great damage until dikes were built along the river and dams in the mountains were built to control the water.

Roads always were badly damaged, but with just the graveled roads and chuck holes, they were repaired. In 1940 the old Moxee Highway 11 A, from the river to Moxee City, was macadamized and much improved. It held the dust down to the pleasure of all in Moxee. When the new highway 24 was planned, the location of the concrete bridge was built about 600 to 700 feet from where the old steel bridge was. It was a better location against the pressure of the water. The new location cut out about three miles in distance from Moxee to Yakima. The new highway was built in 1955.

In 1949 the Yakima County road equipment was oiling some of the country roads and part of the highway going through Moxee City. W.E. Rivard solicited the people on the side streets and the business houses to have the balance of Iler Street from the end of the park paved. Also Seattle Avenue to Rivard Road where the city building was. It was to be paid by the property owners. He paid the cost for those who could not afford to pay at the time. Mr. Rivard payed even for oiling the strip along the school athletic field, to make a complete job.

In 1946, the Mayor called the business men together for the purpose of forming a Businessmen's Club. It was for developing and furthering the best interests of the city and the valley. They held dinner meetings at "Woody's Cafe" in town. After three or four meetings the project of a swimming pool was brought up by, Arthur Cain. The need and location for a city park was also decided. They felt the building of a swimming pool would be too much for just the few business people so other people in the community and various organizations were contacted. In 1947 the Moxee Commercial Club was formed and incorporated. The point of land south of Shakopee Avenue, now called Park Avenue, from Iler Street to the Rivard Road was decided on for a park. Work was started and the plot was cleared of weeds. The American Legion members, the Knights of Columbus of Moxee and the Terrace Heights Grange, offered their help. Water pipes were put in, grass and trees planted, and a nice community park has been developed.

The first officers of the Moxee Commercial Club were elected with E.L. (Bill) Duke as President, Louis Patnode, Vice President, and Floyd Jenkins, Secretary Treasurer. The trustees were Victor Belaire, Lloyd LaBree, Leonide Riel, Oscar Roy and Lester LaCoursiere.

The initial start of the pool facilities began in 1948, in the form of a bath house which was constructed with voluntary labor. Then a way to finance the pool had to be thought, up. It was decided to have a community festival in the early part of August, as most of the necessary hop-farm work was over at that time. Being such a large hop growing area, it was decided to call the affair "The Moxee Hop Festival". Jack Bledsoe was the first Hop Festival Chairman. Tickets were sold by the candidates running for the honor of being the first queen. She was chosen by the number of tickets sold. Miss Marie Bergevin was the first queen.

A very worthy prize was given to the one who had purchased the winning ticket. A parade was planned and other communities were invited to take part. A three mile parade was made up of beautiful floats. Many depicted the good old hop picking days and mode of travel. W.E. Rivard was chairman of this parade. His assistants were Kenneth Duffield, Ernest Rivard, Ted Regimbal and Ross Dwinell. The same committee continued for more than 15 years for the annual festival.

A tour of the Moxee Valley hop fields and kilns for out of town guests were arranged by Mr's. Rivard, Dwinell, Champoux, Balm, Gendron and Duffield.

Arthur Toupin, Floyd Jenkins, Arthur Cain and Joseph Durand were in charge of distinguished guests. They invited the mayors of other communities, members of legislature and congressmen, and men outstanding in the hop industry. Some who were able to attend were Congressman Hal Holmes of Ellensburg, Senator Perry Woodall, Mayor Buck of Yakima, R. Watkins, President of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, Sheriff Lew Evans, Owen Clark Prosecutor of Yakima County, Commissioner McDonald, and Lovering President of the Yakima Chamber of Commerce. Also present was Paul T. Rowell, Assistant Manager of the U.S. Hop Growers Association from San Francisco, Bishop G. Shaughnessy of Seattle, Merlow Lesh, Manager of the Washington State Hop Producers and Lester Lacoursiere, then Mayor of Moxee. Many rode through the parade and later gave short talks at the Moxee High School Auditorium pertaining to the hop industry.

Mrs. Barbara Beane was first Queen Chairman, assisted by Mrs. Victor Belaïre and Mrs. Walter Brulotte. The Queen was declared the day before the festival and kept secret until the coronation ball. The ball was held in the Moxee High School Gymnasium, where the crowning ceremony took place. A grand march was headed by the Queen and her escort, followed in line by her princesses and their escorts. A dance honoring the Royal Court closed the evening to prepare for the big-Saturday Parade. This procedure varied from year to year.

Food and game concessions were put up by the various valley organizations, under the Chairmanship of Arthur Toupin, J. Durand, A. Cain and Floyd Jenkins. Victor Belaïre, O.J. Gendron and Leslie Brooks arranged the program for horse racing and the parade of horses. Lloyd LaBree, Dave Benoit and Floyd Jenkins had charge of city decorations. Hervey Brulotte and Ira Schonewell were selected to arrange the teenage baseball game.

Mrs. Arthur Toupin opened her home to the visitors to relax and more than 150 persons accepted her hospitality as they gathered to meet friends.

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Rivard furnished the gladiolas which decorated the stage for the coronation and several of the floats.

What an experience was derived from the first hop festival where about 3000 people were expected. There was an estimated crowd of 8000 attending. This event proved so entertaining and successful, that one would look forward to it every year and many came from far distances to meet their friends and have a day of fun.

Jack Bledsoe and Pete Seibol had charge of the "refreshment" tent for many years. After two or three years, a carnival was added to the festivity. The representatives of the Pacific Power and Light company always took care of sufficient lighting and power for the various concessions. Lew Powers, Don Brady, and George Justice gave of their time for this purpose.

The money was made from the sale of tickets and dividing the profits from each of the concessions but this proved a little too slow to get enough money to build the pool. It would cost at least \$50,000, as it had to meet the specification of the Washington Athletic Association, in order to qualify for competition. An insurance policy program was taken up for the purpose of adding additional funds so as to enable the club members to start to build the 75 x 30 x 40 foot pool.

After twenty three festivals and the cooperation of so many of the valley residents, many of those who had served from the very first, Mrs. Annette Pryor who had been Secretary-Treasurer for the past ten years announced that the pool was completely paid for. An outdoor kitchen and a wading pool has been built and Moxee can boast of a very nice park where many families come for a swim and picnics. OUR BIGGEST REWARD WAS TO HAVE TAKEN THE CHILDREN OUT OF THE DANGEROUS IRRIGATION CANALS.

Several other businesses have come into Moxee through the years. A plant introduction and quarantine station was started in April of 1944, and operated by Burton Lake as Manager. He is still in charge there. The Washington State Hop Producers Picking and Drying Establishment, owned by members, was built. Simplot Soilbuilders, who handle fertilizers and do soil testing. The Western Woods Excelsior Plant. Welding and Machine Shops, Mobile Home Sites and many new homes have been built. Plots were developed from sagebrush land, which has made big changes in the valley from the early days.

We should be reminded that the heritage we are enjoying today comes to us through the sacrifices of the pioneers. They gave generously of their time and hard earned money in the development of the Moxee Valley and Moxee City to make it a better place to live.

Many thanks should be given to those, who year after year, have been so willing to serve without remuneration, as many hands working together can accomplish much.

This is the end of my history of the past. I'm sure there will be as great a future in this area. My sixty years in Moxee have always been blessed by having many good friends in the good times and also in the hard years. Moxee will always be home to me and my heart will always be there.

Sincerely.

Mrs. Alice M. (Arthur) Toupin

Resident of Moxee from 1908