

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Wayside Parks**

The wayside parks through Oregon and Washington are a joy to see and to use. The location of the parks is announced within a half mile or so before the motorist arrives and there will be found tables, benches and litterbug cans. In many of these parks there are also rest rooms, running water and stoves, all for the convenience of the motorists.

Also, along the highways in these two states there are many more litterbug cans than we have in California and their existence is announced at sufficient distance away from the can to allow for safe stopping. We remarked many times how clean the roadsides were, and we believe that the lack of litter paper and beer cans, is because of these roadside parks and cans. Too bad California has not been able to provide more of these facilities for the motoring public. We certainly made use of them every day for a picnic lunch as we motored to and from British Columbia, and states who provided these pleasant conveniences.

Lassen Volcanic National Park, in northeastern California, preserves Lassen Peak and an area of 104,161 acres of Federal lands, containing spectacular volcanic exhibits which surround it. This impressive peak, from which the park derives its name, stands at the southern end of the Cascade Range and is the only recently active volcano in the United States proper. Its latest eruptions occurred between 1914 and, 1917. It was established as a National Park on Aug. 9, 1916.

Lassen Peak was named for Peter Lassen, an early pioneer in Northern California. He was born near Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1800, and came to this country when he was 30 years old. After he became acquainted with Northern California, he piloted emigrants from Humboldt, Nev., into the Sacramento Valley, using Lassen Peak as a landmark. Lassen was killed in 1859 while prospecting in Nevada, and was buried in Susanville, Calif.

There is a variety of beautiful evergreens in Lassen Park - pines predominating. A few incense-cedar and Douglas fir are found, as well, as mountain hemlock, aspen, cottonwood, willow, and alder. Wildflowers border the highways below the snow line and in the green meadows. We saw many deer but not a single bear in

any of the parks. They are still hibernating we were told and the young companions on this trip were most disappointed.

We paused at all the historic markers from California to Victoria and return. The markers in Oregon were the most attractive and told more of history of the state than do the markers in either California or Washington. They were constructed entirely of dark wood, with the letters carved and stained a silvery white.

Much highway and freeway construction is being done all through the north but we encountered no inconvenience because of this work on the entire 2,698 miles. We also would complement all the owners and eating places at which we stopped. They were hospitable, courteous, and more than willing to give information and answer numerous questions.

More history became real for the 10 and 13 year olds when we arrived at Donner Lake and visited the historic monument and site of the Donner Party cabin. They just could not believe that human beings, horses, and wagons ever crossed over these high rocky cliffs or through such a hazardous pass. The Donner Memorial State Park commemorates the ill-fated Donner party of emigrants who wintered there in 1846-47, when many died of exposure and starvation. The story is one of the most tragic of the Covered Wagon Trail.

The Donner Party's tribulations have ever been of great interest to readers of Western history. In 1928 the Pioneer Monument site was given to the state by the Native Sons of the Golden West. The monument had been dedicated in 1918, when three survivors of the Donner Party were present. Since that time, the state has acquired additional acreage.