

## Hugh Cosgrove – pioneer, farmer, merchant, civic leader

### **Introduction**

Hugh Cosgrove, son of Hugh and Margaret (Fitzpatrick) Cosgrove, was born about 1811 in County Cavan, Ireland.<sup>1</sup> He died on 10 April 1901 in St. Paul, Oregon, and was buried in the St. Paul Cemetery. He married Mary Rossiter in June 1830 in Canada. She was born 3 May 1811 in County Wexford, Ireland, and died on 15 September 1873 at St. Paul.<sup>2</sup> His second marriage was to Amanda Barnes on 17 May 1877 in Clark County, Washington Territory. That marriage ended in divorce in 1883. He then married Jane Eggleston on 13 April 1891 in Marion County, Oregon.<sup>3</sup>

Hugh's father, an Irish farmer, took his family to Canada where there were prospects of free or cheap land. They settled in Dalhousie Township, Ontario, and Hugh worked on the family farm. It was there that he married Mary Rossiter. Hugh Cosgrove and family moved to Detroit, Michigan, in order to avoid the possibility of military draft. The "Patriots War," a rebellion between rebels in present-day Quebec and the British colonial powers, was on, and men were being drafted for army service. Hugh prospered in Michigan and then in Illinois. He was intrigued with what he heard of the prospects in Oregon and decided to move to that territory.<sup>4</sup>

An article from the 28 March 1901 issue of the Morning Oregonian summarized his life.<sup>5</sup> The article gives his birth year as 1808, but his son's "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove" published in 1900 gives his birth year as 1811.<sup>6</sup>

Hugh Cosgrove, Sr.

Woodburn, March 20 – Hugh Cosgrove, Sr., who resides eight miles west of Woodburn, is believed to be Marion County's oldest inhabitant. He was born in County Cavan, Ireland, Christmas day, 1808. At the age of 21 he married Miss Mary Rossiter, and moved to Detroit, Mich., then a frontier village. Three years later he immigrated to Illinois, locating on a farm upon which a portion of Joliet now stands. He remained there until 1847, when he joined Father Blanchet's party at the Missouri River, and pushed across the plains to Vancouver, Wash. He selected the homestead upon which his last days was being spent in the Fall of 1874, and has lived there since, except for two years spent at the mines in California – 1849–1850. For several years he was engaged in the general merchandise business at St. Paul. Four of the seven of Mr. Cosgrove's children are living. He has 31 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren. His first wife died about 15 years ago. In 1891 he married Miss Jane Wrightson. Among his hosts of friends he is known as the "Grand Old Man" of French Prairie.

The "Father Blanchet" in this article was Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet, brother of Bishop F. N. Blanchet. Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet was heading for the Oregon Territory where he would take up his duties as Bishop of Walla Walla.<sup>7</sup> Bishop Blanchet and his party of eight fellow missionaries were part of a 50-wagon train that embarked on their overland journey from Westport on May 8, 1847. They left the first train on May 13<sup>th</sup> and joined Captain Wiggins' train. On May 27, they joined Captain McGowan's train.<sup>8</sup>

### **1847 Oregon pioneer**

The Cosgrove family was wealthy for the times. In April 1847, they set out with three wagons drawn by three oxen each and fifteen cows. Hugh even had two swift greyhounds.<sup>9</sup> They joined a

group of thirteen families who shared the same pioneering dream. The families joined Lot Whitcomb's 147-wagon team. The train soon separated into smaller groups in order to maximize progress.<sup>10</sup> It may have been in one of the smaller groups where the Cosgrove family met Bishop Blanchet.

### ***The first year***

When the family arrived in Oregon, they stayed in a house at Fort Vancouver until they could decide where they wanted to settle. This drawing shows Fort Vancouver in 1855.<sup>11</sup> It may have looked similar when the family lived there.



Oregon's provisional government was established in the spring of 1843. It permitted inhabitants to stake out provisional claims and survey them by the metes and bounds method. According to the rules, any male could claim 640 acres. Within six months of recording their claim, they were to build a home.<sup>12</sup> Hugh first claimed 640 acres on the north side of Baker's Bay at the mouth of the Chinook River in what is present-day Pacific County, Washington.<sup>13</sup>

### ***French Prairie***

The Baker's Bay land must not have been suitable. On 10 July 1848, Hugh claimed 640 acres next to the St. Paul Mission on French Prairie<sup>14</sup> His neighbors were Brown and Gore on the east, Bishop Blanchet on the north, Robeyore and Sophey on the west, and Remeo on the south.<sup>15</sup>

The Cosgroves, with their Eastern finery, on their first appearance at St. Paul's church were admired, but they also provided amusement for the congregation who were used to more humble clothing. At five feet, eleven inches, Cosgrove was tall for the times, and he would have stood out.

In 1848, Hugh's daughters Margaret and Elizabeth were two of the four students enrolled in the newly opened Young Ladies' Academy. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur ran the boarding school in Oregon City. Shortly thereafter Suzanne and Caroline Cosgrove entered the school and then Mary and Ann Cosgrove.<sup>16</sup>

The California Gold Rush lured most of the St. Paul settlers to the gold fields. In 1848, Hugh went to California. James McKay, his wagon train associate, was with him. Cosgrove did well there, and he invested his \$15,000 earnings in goods that he took to St. Paul where he set up a store.<sup>17</sup> When the 1850 census was enumerated, his real estate was valued at \$6,940.<sup>18</sup>

The image shows two sections of handwritten census records. The top section lists Hugh Cosgrove and his family members with their ages and genders. The bottom section lists other individuals, including James Costum, Susan, Caroline, Hugh, and Michael Hogan.

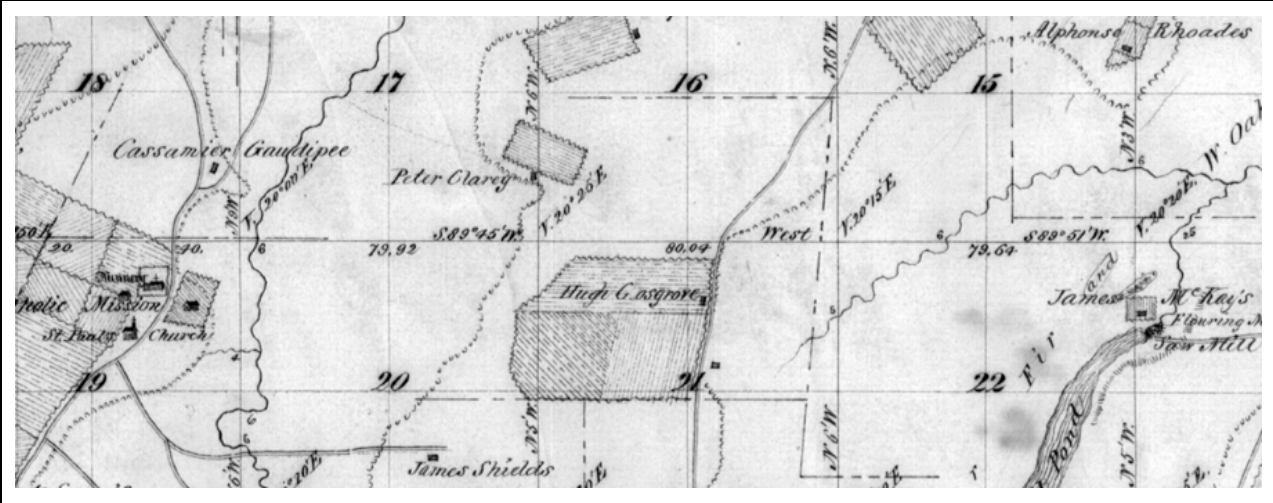
Name	Age	Sex	Value	Notes
Hugh Cosgrove	41	M	6940	Canada ✓
Mary	41	F		✓
Margaret	18	F		Canada ✓
Elizabeth	14	F		Mich ✓
James Costum	11	M		Mich ✓
Susan	8	F		✓
Caroline	7	F		✓
Hugh	7	M		Mich ✓
Michael Hogan	7.5	M		Mich ✓

### Donation Land Claim

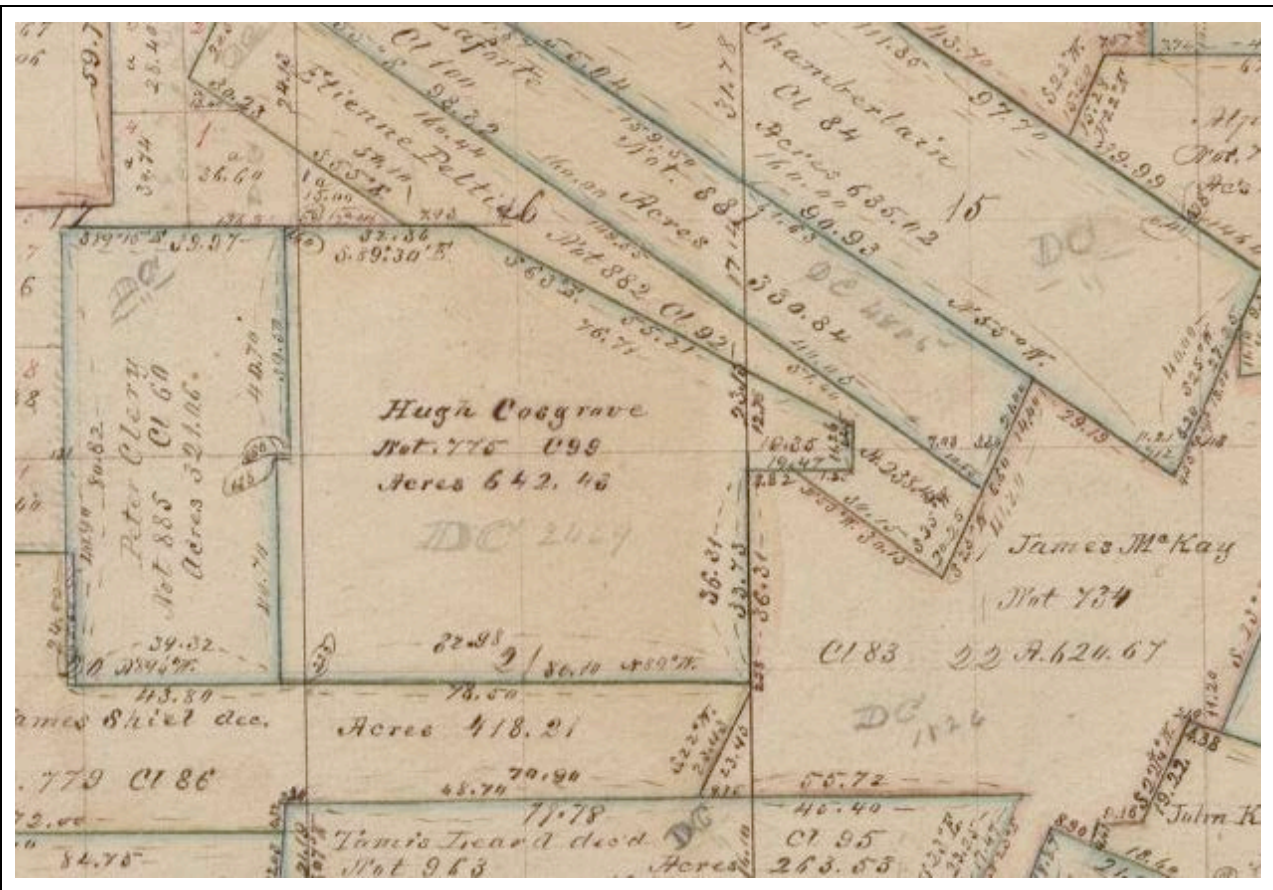
The provisional claims became null and void when Congress passed the Donation Act of 1850. That act, effective 1 December 1850, granted 320 acres to every white settler or American half-breed Indian who was over eighteen-years of age and who filed a claim. For married men, their wives received 320 acres in their own right. The claimant had to be a citizen of the United States, or they had to have made a declaration of intent to become a citizen. Hugh applied for citizenship on 17 May 1851, and Hugh and Mary Cosgrove applied for their full 640 acres in sections 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, and 22 of Township 4 South Range 2 West.<sup>19</sup>

This 1852 survey on the next page shows the location of Hugh's farm.<sup>20</sup> The shaded area indicates plowed ground. His home was located at the black square next to the "e" in his name. The farms that abutted his claim belonged to Peter Clarey, James McKay, and James Shields.

The road that borders the Cosgrove claim is present-day French Prairie Road. St. Paul Highway was not platted, but today it goes from St. Paul Church, through part of Hugh's farm, and then to McKay's.



The following 1864 survey shows the outline of Hugh's claim.<sup>21</sup>



### Merchant

As mentioned previously, Hugh Cosgrove used his gold earnings to purchase merchandise to be sold in a store on his land. He received a consignment of merchandise in July 1850.<sup>22</sup> He placed an advertisement in the Oregon Spectator newspaper in October and November of 1850 that he had fruit trees to sell.<sup>23</sup> In 1855, Hugh was taxed on property valued at \$4,400. Peter Clarey and James

Shields, his neighbors, were taxed on property valued at \$600.00. James McKay was taxed on property valued at \$3,890.<sup>24</sup> Hugh continued his business until 1856 when he returned to farming.<sup>25</sup>

### **Civic leader**

Hugh became an American citizen in order to obtain his Donation Land claim. He exercised his right as a citizen to sign petitions and to vote. He signed a petition for a change in the land law, a petition against a road through Keizur's farm (in 1852), and a petition to allow half-breeds to vote (in 1859).<sup>26</sup>

In 1854, Hugh was one of the commissioners for the Oregon and California Railroad Company. The company's objective was to build a railroad from Eugene to the Willamette River or the Columbia River. The plan was never realized, and the company name was later used by another group of men.<sup>27</sup>

In 1872, Hugh was a Champoeg Precinct Constable, an elective office.<sup>28</sup> In 1878, he was a delegate from Champoeg Precinct to the Democratic County Convention. In January 1892, he was on the Marion County jury list.<sup>29</sup> In March 1893, when the Brentanos petitioned for a re-survey of a county road, Hugh was appointed as one of the viewers to re-locate the road.<sup>30</sup>

### **Death**

Mary (Rossitor) Cosgrove died in September 1873 and was buried in St. Paul Cemetery.

When Hugh Cosgrove died on 10 April 1901 at St. Paul, W. R. McKay and Nicholas Gooding were appointed executors of his estate.

The eight heirs were: Hugh F. Cosgrove, Caroline Vantine, Susan Cosgrove, Emaline Wagner, Joseph H. Poujade, Annie Costello, Margaret Eldridge, and the heirs of Elizabeth Murphy.<sup>31</sup>



## Child List

**1. Margaret (Marguerite) Cosgrove** was born on 27 July 1832 in Canada. She died on 20 February 1875. She married Theodore C Poujade.

### Marriage

The 24 February, 1851, after the publication of one ban of marriage between Theodore Poujade, of-age son of Jean-Pierre Poujade, physician, and the late Marie Noble, of the mission of St. Louis, on the one part; and Marguerite Cosgrove, minor daughter of Hugh Cosgrove, merchant, and of Marie Roster, of this mission, on the other part. ... we, undersigned priest officiating at the mission of St. Louis, with the approbation of the parents of the betrothed, have received their mutual consent to marriage and have given them the nuptial benediction in the presence of the undersigned. Witnesses: Hugh Cosgrove, Elizabeth Cosgrove, Sophie Belleque.<sup>32</sup>

**2. Mary Ellen Cosgrove** was born 17 March 1834 in Michigan and died about 1859 in San Francisco. She married (1) James Costello on 27 October 1853 in St. Paul and (2) Jerome B. Jackson in February 1860 in St. Louis, Oregon.

**3. Anne Cosgrove** was born on 17 March 1837 and died on 30 August 1897. She married Freeman Edward Eldridge.

### Mrs. Annie Eldridge Dead.

The sad news has been received that Mrs. Annie Eldridge, relict of the late F. E. Eldridge, and of an old family on French prairie, was dead. The remains arrived at Gervais on the overland Monday morning. Death was sudden and occurred at Sodaville or thereabouts, and was caused by blood poisoning.

She was the sister of Mrs. D. F. Wagner, of Salem, and was born in Canada about sixty-five years ago. She crossed the plains with her father, Hugh Cosgrove, in 1847 and in 1852 became the wife of Mr. Eldridge. She was the mother of ten children, two of whom have preceded her to the grave; of those now living there are Hugh, Freeman J., and Addie, at home; Mrs. Albert Brown, of Portland, Mrs. Elsie Goulet, of Seattle; and Mrs. Minnie Breyman, of Portland.

The deceased was a kind and highly respected neighbor and beloved by all who knew her.

The funeral was held at the family residence at 8:30 o'clock this morning and at 9 o'clock. Requiem was conducted at the St. Louis Catholic church, over the remains, by Rev. Lane. Interment was had in the St. Louis cemetery at 10 o'clock.<sup>33</sup>

**4. Elizabeth Cosgrove** was born on 20 June 1837 in Michigan and died on 16 May 1899. She married Andrew Daniel Murphy.

### Mrs. Elizabeth A. Murphy

Gervais, Or. May 17 – Mrs. Elizabeth A. Murphy, aged 67, died at her home near St. Paul, Tuesday evening, after an illness of six months. Death was caused by dropsy and heart failure. She was the wife of Andrew Murphy, who died May 30, 1896. Mrs. Murphy was born in Joliet, Ill., July 20, 1833. Her maiden name was Cosgrove. She

was the daughter of Hugh Cosgrove. She crossed the plains in 1847, and married Mr. Murphy in 1856, at St. Paul, Or. Nine children were born to the union, all of whom are living. They are: Mrs. H. P. Gearin, Champoeg; A. J. Murphy, Albina; Mrs. Ernest Brown, Vancouver, Wash.; E. T. Murphy, W. R. Murphy, Mrs. Bessie Van Wassenhove, F. J. Murphy, Miss Maggie Murphy, all of St. Paul, and M. H. Murphy of Gervais. The funeral will take place Thursday, at 10 o'clock, from the Catholic church at St. Paul, Rev. Faber officiating.<sup>34</sup>

**5. James Cosgrove** was born about 1839 in Illinois and died on 2 February 1863 in St. Paul. He married Mary Cavanaugh in 1860.

**6. Susan Cosgrove** was born March 1845 in Illinois and died on 9 April 1914.

**7. Caroline Cosgrove** was born about 1844 in Illinois and died in 1907. She married William D. Vantine.

Funeral of Mrs. Vantine

Was Resident of Portland for Thirty Years.

The funeral services of the late Mrs. Caroline Vantine, who died last Friday night, were held at the family residence, 801 Hood street, yesterday afternoon, at 2 o'clock and were largely attended. The pallbearers were: Milton W. Smith, Harry Hogue, John Carson, Mark Gill, John McFall and Frank Hart.

Mrs. Vantine had been a resident of Portland for more than 30 years, coming here from Idaho City, after the death of her husband, W. G. Vantine, a prominent merchant of Idaho and brother of the late Ashley Vantine, one of the great merchants of New York City. Mrs. Vantine was the daughter of the late Hugh Cosgrove, one of the prominent pioneers of Marion County. Ashley Vantine, a son, an attorney of this city, and a sister, Miss Susan Cosgrove, survive her. Another sister, Mrs. Emma Wagner and a brother Hugh Cosgrove, who reside in the East, were unable to be present at the funeral.<sup>35</sup>

**8. Hugh Francis Cosgrove** was born on 9 January 1849 in Oregon and died on 28 September 1932. He married Emma Stanley.

Hugh Cosgrove, 83, a farmer who lived near St. Paul, Or. died there Wednesday. He was born near St. Paul. He is survived by his widow, Emma A. Cosgrove, and daughter, Mary Ethel Clark of Hubbard, Or. His body is at Hall's undertaking parlors at Woodburn. The funeral will take place at 9 a.m. today from St. Paul's Catholic church, with burial at St. Paul's cemetery.<sup>36</sup>

**9. Marie Emaline Cosgrove** was born on 4 March 1852 and died on 23 March 1935 in Marion County. She married David F. Wagner.

Baptism: The 5 March 1851, by us priest undersigned has been baptized Marie Emaline, born the day before, of the legitimate marriage of Hugh Cosgrove and of Marie Roster. Godfather Amable Petit; godmother, Elizabeth Cosgrove.<sup>37</sup>

***Photos from St. Paul Mission Historical Society Collection***

Mary Cosgrove



Inscription on back of photo

May 30, 1811 - Sept. 5, 1872

Mary Rositer Cosgrove our mother's mother born County Wexford Ireland



Hugh Cosgrove



Inscription on back of photo

Grandpa Hugh Cosgrove born County Cavan 1802, Dec 25  
St. Paul died 1901 Apr 10



Hugh Cosgrove Home – built 1875

## End Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sep., 1900), pp 253-269; pdf, *JStor* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609466> : accessed 5 February 2015).
- <sup>2</sup> Biographical Index Card File, Vital Statistics, Hugh Cosgrove; Oregon Historical Society, Portland. See also her tombstone, St. Paul, Oregon
- <sup>3</sup> "Early Oregonian Search," Hugh Cosgrove entry; digital index, *Oregon State Archives* (<http://sos.state.or.us> : accessed 2 October 2014). Oregon Historical Records Index, Cosgrove, Amanda vs. Hugh; digital index, *Oregon State Archives* (<http://sos.state.or.us> : accessed 2 October 2014).
- <sup>4</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sep., 1900), pp. 253-9; digital image, *JStor* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609466> : accessed 2 October 2014).
- <sup>5</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 28 March 1901, page 5, col. 3-4; digital image, *Historic Oregon Newspapers* (<http://www.oregonnews.uoregon.edu> : accessed 2 October 2014).
- <sup>6</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sep., 1900), pp 253-269; pdf, *JStor* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609466> : accessed 5 February 2015).
- <sup>7</sup> Joseph Schiwiek, Archdiocese of Portland Archivist, to Connie Lenzen, email, 20 February 2015.
- <sup>8</sup> *Journal of a Catholic Bishop on the Oregon Trail* (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1978).
- <sup>9</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," p, 260.
- <sup>10</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sep., 1900), pp. 253-9; digital image, *JStor* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609466> : accessed 2 October 2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Ft. Vancouver, W.T., digital file, *Library of Congress* (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.31557/> : accessed 14 November 2016).
- <sup>12</sup> Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, Abstracted; Volumes I-III, 1845-1849 (Portland: The Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1982), Foreword.
- <sup>13</sup> Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, page 175.
- <sup>14</sup> Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, page 237.
- <sup>15</sup> Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, page 237.
- <sup>16</sup> Sister Mary Dominica, *Willamette Interlude* (Palo Alto, CA; Pacific Books, 1959), 200-1.
- <sup>17</sup> H. S. Lyman, "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove."
- <sup>18</sup> 1850 U.S. federal census, Marion County, Oregon Territory, page 196 -7 (penned), dwelling 385, family 385, Hugh Cosgrove; digital image, *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 2 October 2014), citing NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 742.
- <sup>19</sup> Oregon Donation Land Claim #2469, Hugh Cosgrove.
- <sup>20</sup> Township 4 South Range 2 West, Willamette Meridian, Survey, Subdivision of Sections, 12/17/1852; U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (<http://www.glorecreds.blm.gov> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>21</sup> Digital General Land Office Map; digital image, *University of Oregon Library* (<http://library.uoregon.edu/map/GIS/Data/Oregon/GLO/index.html> : accessed 6 February 2015).
- <sup>22</sup> *Oregon Spectator*, 25 July 50, page 3, col. 2.
- <sup>23</sup> *Oregon Spectator*, 24 October to 28 November 1850 (advertisement).
- <sup>24</sup> 1855 Marion County Assessment, Oregon Provisional and Territorial Government Records #12277B.
- <sup>25</sup> Joseph Gaston, *Centennial History of Oregon*, Vol III (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912), 584.
- <sup>26</sup> Oregon Provisional and Territorial Government Records, 1841-1859, card index, Oregon Historical Society.

- <sup>27</sup> *Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Oregon* Vol. 30, Chapter XXIII, p. 696; digital image, Ancestry (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>28</sup> *Willamette Farmer* (Salem, OR), 15 June 1872, page 1, col. 3; digital image, *Historic Oregon Newspapers* (<http://oregonnews.uoregon.edu> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>29</sup> "Jury List," *Evening Capital Journal*, 15 January 1892, page 2, col. 2; digital image, Library of Congress *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 20 November 2015).
- <sup>30</sup> *Evening Capital Journal*, 10 March 1893, page 4, col. 4; digital image, Library of Congress *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 20 November 2015).
- <sup>31</sup> *The Daily Journal* (Salem, OR), 4 March 1902, page 4, co. 4; digital image, Library of Congress *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>32</sup> Harriet Duncan Munnick, comp. *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest: St. Paul, Oregon 1839-1898* Vol. II (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1982), M-1, p. 34.
- <sup>33</sup> *Daily Capital Journal* (Salem, OR), 31 August 1897, page 4, col. 3; digital image, LOC *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>34</sup> *Oregonian*, 18 May 1899, page 6, col. 2; digital image, *GenealogyBank* (<http://www.genealogybank.com> : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>35</sup> *Morning Oregonian* (Portland, OR) 26 Aug 1907, page 4; digital image, *NewsBank* (access through Multnomah County Library : accessed 7 February 2015).
- <sup>36</sup> "Hugh Cosgrove," *The Morning Oregonian*, 1 October 1932, page 12, col. 2; digital image, *NewsBank* (access through Multnomah County Library : accessed 20 November 2015).
- <sup>37</sup> Harriet Duncan Munnick, comp. *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest: St. Paul, Oregon 1839-1898* Vol. II (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1982), B-6, p. 35.