

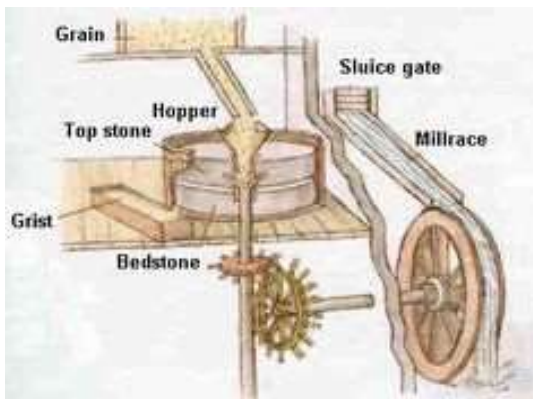
Judge Vaughn Serves 64years

Adapted from an article by Gordon Grable

In 1853 John Vaughn joined a wagon train headed to Oregon. Mr. Vaughn was 31 years old and had recently married Matheble Daniels. Like hundreds of others, the Vaughns left everything they knew, seeing Oregon as a land of opportunity. All went well until they reached Harney Lake Country and got lost. The party was in bad shape: they had none of the staples left such as flour, salt, sugar, tea and coffee.



It took two weeks before they found the trail again. They had to butcher some of the cattle and the tough unpreserved meat was their only food. They made it to the Deschutes River before, again, losing their way. This time they found a small settlement that helped them get back on track. Years later Vaughn told of paying a dollar for a small sourdough biscuit for his wife at this settlement. He hauled in his belt another hole as he watched her eat it. Though it was late summer, they pushed on to their destination.



The group eventually reached the Willamette Valley where they separated in search of land to homestead. The Vaughns settled at Cloverdale, north of Cottage Grove. The following year he built the first grist, flour, mill in what is now Lane County. After a few years he moved the mill to Delight Valley. To run the mill, he **flumed** the water from the river to the waterwheel, which then turned the grinding stone. People would bring their wheat to the mill to be ground into flour. Vaughn would keep part of the flour as payment, then sell it to area stores.

In 1863, Vaughn's wife died, leaving him with four small children. Soon after, a man named Johnson came stumbling into town with a tale of gold. Vaughn was not a miner but when he saw the glitter of yellow in Johnson's hands, he couldn't resist. After an exhausting search ended without finding gold, Vaughn, returned to his flour mill.

In 1868, at the age of 46, he married Sina Alexander. Vaughn had four children from his first wife and would go on to have seven more with his second. At the time having 11 children was not uncommon.

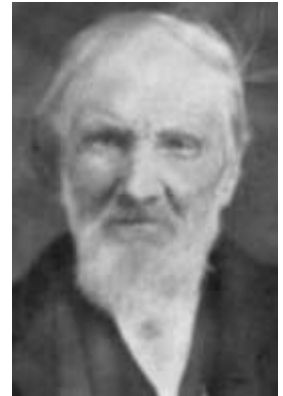
Around 1870 he became a county commissioner. He didn't like the position and resigned after one year. Vaughn was then asked to run for justice of the peace, he agreed and won easily. No man ever served with a better sense of justice. Judge Vaughn, or "Squire" as he was called by some, was a man who not only believed in the Golden Rule but lived it.



The judge became well known for his sense of justice as well as his disregard for a person's status. When a person appeared before him it made no difference what the accused name was or how big his bank account happened to be. So well regarded by the community, the judge was re-elected several times, serving for over 40 years in the position.

In the beginning of his career as a judge he continued to run his flour mill. It wasn't uncommon for him to grind grain all night. It was said that he could toss 100-pound sack of wheat around as if they were filled with straw. Yet this man stood barely over 5feet and weighed exactly 130 pounds. To those who knew him, his vitality and energy were remarkable. In 1894, at the age of 72, he closed his flour mill. After closing the mill he was in his office every day.

The years came and the years went, and Judge Vaughn had been in office so long he had almost become a fixture. There was one man who got the idea that he wanted to be justice of the peace. He ran against the judge many times. He would campaign around town, but it never did him a lick of good, come election time. The people just kept electing Judge Vaughn.



By 1911, all of the Vaughn children had left home, and the Judge had outlived most of his old friends. He stood with bowed head as one by one they were laid in their last resting place. Men who had done their part in founding a state, a county, a town. Ninety long and hard years were behind him and he was tired, very tired. He resigned his position. As his replacement he recommended the man who had wanted his office so long. The man, Alta King, finally got the office.

The judge went home to rest his weary bones in the old rocking-chair. From his front porch he could watch the trains go by. A new century had begun, progress was changing the landscape, and the whole state was moving forward.

The Judge remained an active member of the community. A few months before his death he was the featured speaker at a meeting of the Masons. The members were amazed at the **wit** and **vitality** of this nearly 95-year-old man. In the early morning hours of March 15, 1917, Judge Vaughn passed away. Considering the life expectancy of times, he had lived almost two lifetimes. The doctor who had attended him said that he just wore out like the old, old clock. The Judge was buried in Sears Cemetery, east of town.

Discussion Points

1. Using the diagram provided, why was water important to running a flour (grist) mill?
 2. What do you think makes a good judge? Do you think the information provided about Judge Vaughn would show he was a good judge?
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Vocabulary

Flume: A man made channel directing water from a river or stream to a desired location (in this case a mill)

Wit: Mental sharpness, inventiveness, intelligence, humor

Vitality: The state of being strong and active; energy

