

George Nurse, Founder of Linkville

By Oregon Journal Collection

Born in New York in 1820, George Nurse, pictured here circa 1900, entered the Oregon Country through California in the early 1860s. In 1860, the Federal Government granted the states swamplands, and by 1867, Oregon opened these lands to settlers. That same year, after securing 160 acres from the state, Nurse established Linkville on the eastern bank of the Link River, between Klamath Lake and Lake Ewauna.

Nurse registered the first plat of the town in 1878. He rafted lumber 42 miles down Klamath Lake from Fort Klamath sawmill to build a store and hotel which would accommodate area settlers and passing travelers. "Generous to a fault," Nurse donated land from the townsite to settlers promising to build a home and later provided sites for a school, courthouse, and cemetery. Newspaper correspondents covering the Modoc War and Army soldiers marching through Linkville later publicized Linkville's accommodations and Nurse's generosity.

After wearing many hats in Linkville, including six years as postmaster and a brief turn at registrar of the land office, Nurse moved in 1883 to Yreka, California. Linkville was renamed Klamath Falls in 1893, and today, the Link River Bridge crosses the river at the site of Nurse's store.

Further Reading: McArthur, Lewis L. *Oregon Geographic Names*. Portland, Ore, 1992.

Klamath County Historical Society. *The History of Klamath Country, Oregon*. Dallas, Texas, 1984.

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