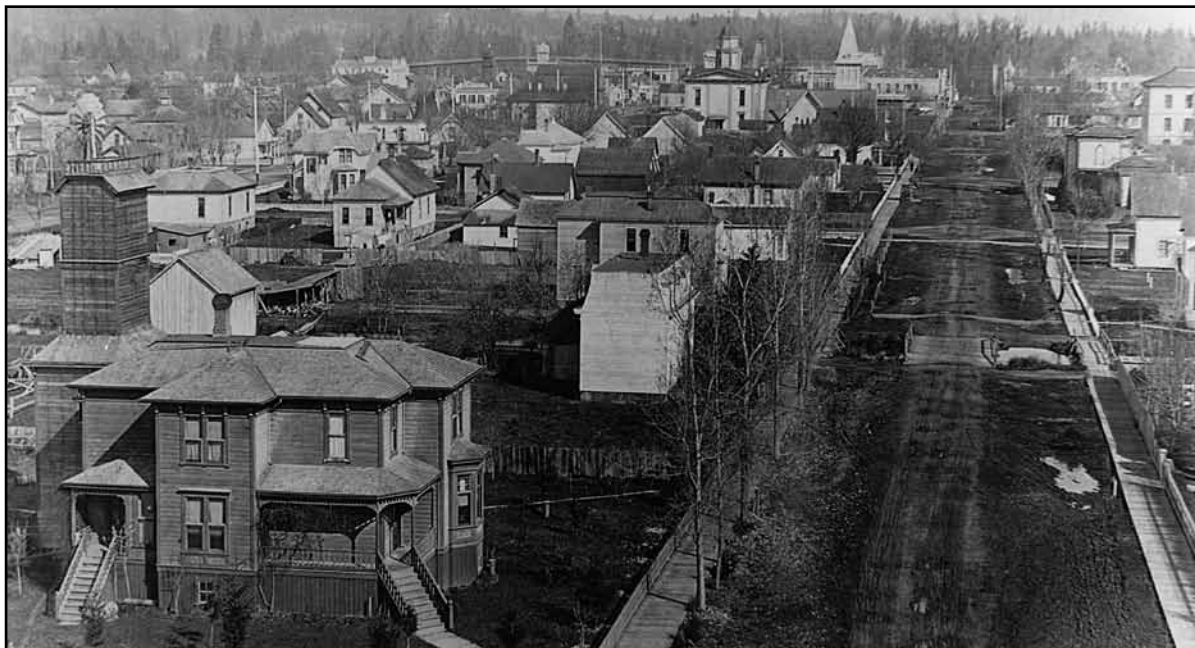


# MONTEITH DISTRICT HISTORY

The Monteith District, located on the west side of downtown Albany, is named after Walter and Thomas Monteith, the founding brothers of Albany. After arriving in Oregon from New York, these two Scotsmen bought the squatters rights (in 1848) to a claim held by Abner Hackleman and Hiram Smead for \$400. The Monteith brothers built the first frame house in Albany c. 1849 and much early history centers around the Monteith House. Albany's first indoor sermon was preached in the house by Rev. Kendell in 1850. The United Presbyterian Church organized there, Indian treaties were signed there, and in 1856 political leaders met there to establish the Oregon Republican Party. The Monteith House, now restored, is open as a museum. During the mid-1800s, Albany was a hotbed of political activity. Residents of the Monteith district were mainly Republican merchants and professionals with Union sympathies. Residents of the Hackleman district to the east were mainly working class Democrats who sided with the Confederacy. Throughout early history, the Monteiths and the Hacklemans were literally on opposite sides of the fence. They even went so far as to plant a hedge separating the two sides of town near Baker Street. The Albany Cannon (currently on display at City Hall) was used in Albany in the 1860's to celebrate Union victories. It was stolen by Southern sympathizers and thrown into the Willamette River where it remained until its discovery in 1933. Later the cannon was stored in a barn and remained out of sight for another 50 years.



*Above Photo Courtesy of the Albany Regional Museum, from the Robert Potts Collection, Remembering When Vol I #49. Looking north on Broadalbin St. c. 1895 from the old Albany College. The home in the foreground and the white house on the corner are still standing.*

It was returned to Albany by the Monteith Historical Society in 2013. The Monteith district is graced by a number of churches. Whitespires Church (page 19), is located at the corner of Washington and Fifth. It was built in 1891 and is noted for its stained glass windows and Carpenter Gothic details. Its

spire is the highest point in Albany. Albany also holds claim to the first church built as United Presbyterian in the United States in 1853.

The "Old School" Church Presbyterian congregation built the Gothic stone fortress at the corner of Fifth and Broadalbin in 1912-13. St. Mary's was the first Roman Catholic Church in Albany. Built in 1898, the original church burned in 1989. In 1851 work commenced on the Magnolia Flouring Mills, built and

owned by Thomas and Walter Monteith. Located on the Calapooia River, the mill was open for grinding in 1852. Before the mill began operating, the first boat ever to travel the upper Willamette River arrived in Albany. The steamboat's name was the "Multnomah." Through it, shipping potential for Albany's manufacturers and farmers increased. The Monteith National Register Historic District was listed on the 29th of February, 1980. The original Monteith District included 381 properties constructed during the period of significance, 1849- 1915. Many distinct architectural styles grace the District. Included are Federal, Craftsman, Classical Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, French Second Empire, Stick, Eastlake, Colonial Revival, Rural Vernacular, Transitional Box, Bungalow, American Renaissance, Depression and WWII era Cottages, and eclectic hybrids that combine elements of these styles.

In 2000 the National Register nomination was amended to adjust the period of significance to include the years from 1915 to 1945, thus adding single- and multi-family residences constructed in the district as infill between WWI and the end of WWII. These resources included excellent examples of Craftsman, Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Minimal Traditional, and Depression/World War II-Era Cottage styles. The Monteith District boundary was officially expanded November, 13, 2008, to include 78 properties abutting the original district that share a similar historic association and feeling.



*Above: Dawson House (40). Built in 1910 by the owner of the Owl Drug Store. Note the "Owl face" on the top gable.*