



THE HISTORIC BUTTEVILLE STORE

Oregon's oldest continuously operating retail establishment
Founded in 1863

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BUTTEVILLE STORE



Historic Butteville

Version 1 - Please send us corrections or updates!

While the Historic Butteville Store can lay claim to the statement that it is ***the oldest continuously operating retail establishment in Oregon***, in the late 1800's there were multiple "mercantile" enterprises in the thriving community of Butteville. The historical record is not completely clear about ownership and succession of all these enterprises, but the lineage of the Butteville Store is traceable.

The earliest and most important "merchant" in the larger Butteville area in the mid-1800's was Francis Xavier Matthieu a French-Canadian retiree from the Hudson Bay Company. We know that he managed the Hudson Bay Co. receiving warehouse and company store at Champoeg, "until the 1861 flood that wiped out the town of Champoeg. While damaged, Butteville survived the flood.

H.S. Lyman in his article *Reminiscences of F. X. Matthieu* (Oregon Historical Society, 1900) states: "He was in the mercantile business for many years, after 1850, at Butteville, with George Le Roque, and in all business relations and in public affairs has maintained a reputation for unquestioned honesty."

Matthieu owned a donation land claim south of Butteville, was involved with La Roque in forming a steamship company that operated between Butteville and McMinnville. He and other leaders were instrumental in receiving a charter for the Butteville Institute, the first state sponsored school. Matthieu erected among the first buildings in Butteville, a general store that operated from 1846 to the mid-1860s. It is assumed that Matthieu's store was located on Butteville Landing near the river.

The following census information for Butteville illustrates the problem of precisely determining original ownership of the Butteville Store.

	Name	Listing	Age
1870 Census	S. Galland	Merchant	43
	F.X. Matthieu	Merchant	
	Gustavus Cone	Merchant	73
1880 Census	JJ Ryan	Farmer	29
	Solomon Galland	Merchant	53
	Benjamin Cone	Merchant	29
	F.X. Matthieu	Farmer	
1900 Census	Joseph Ryan	General Merchandise	
	Mitchell Gilbertson	Hop Merchant	
	William Schurer	Hop Merchant	
1910 Census	William Scheurer	Merchant, Grain & Hops	56
	Joseph J Ryan	Dealer, Grain & Hops	50

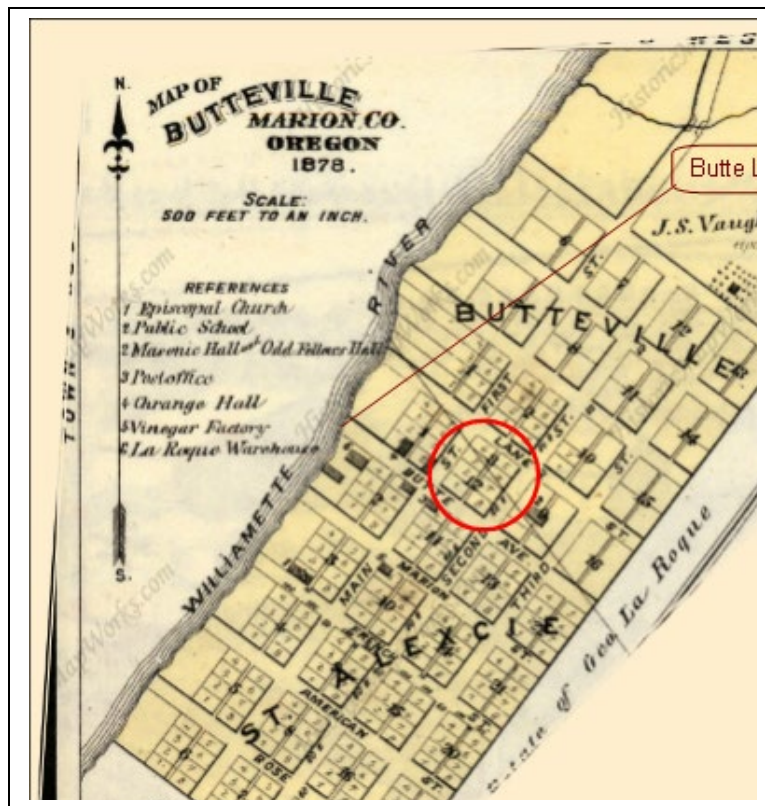
Per the 1870 census, Gustavus Cone is listed as a merchant. JJ Ryan appears in the 1880 census but appears to still mainly earn his living as a farmer, and Gustavus Cone is listed as a merchant while Matthieu is listed as a farmer. In the 1900 census Gustavus Cone no longer appears as a merchant, but Joseph Ryan does as the Store has passed to JJ's son, and is described in more traditional terms as purveyor of "general merchandise." Additionally, William Scheurer has appeared in Butteville as a hop merchant and became very successful, ultimately becoming Mayor and building the wharf footings at the Butteville Landing.

Not shown in the census data is George Herren, another successful merchant operating a store, as reported in the Woodburn Independent in 1890. He opened his business with \$6,000 in inventory and it had increased to \$24,000 by 1890 confirming that Butteville was the major community in the area.

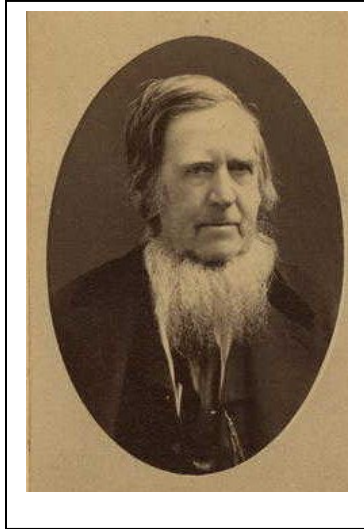
The Matthieu store near the Butteville landing closed in 1861, apparently a victim of the flood, and the store owned by JJ Ryan and his descendants is one of those that survived all of Butteville's economic fluctuations, continuing into the 20th century and down to today.

The Butteville Store Property

The Butteville Store today, is located on Lots 1 and 8 of block 12 as shown on the 1878 plat map of the town. This block was part of the original Alexis Aubichon Donation Land Claim.



Detailing the origin of the store requires two tracks: first property ownership and separately construction of buildings.



Gustavus A Cone



George Fleckenstein



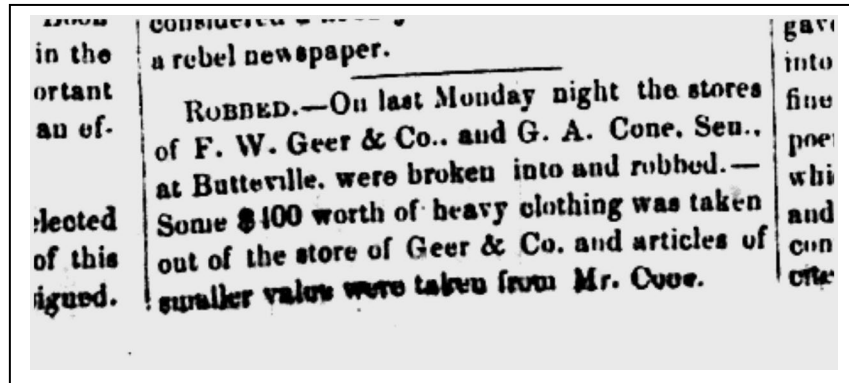
Joseph J Ryan

The Cone Store

Gustavus A. Cone was born in Vermont and moved to Butteville in 1849 following time in the California gold fields. He lived on a Donation Land Claim downstream from town and purchased Lots 1, 2 & 3 in 1865 and constructed a two-story building on Lot 1 which held a store on the ground floor and a hall above.

Later he rented the upstairs hall to Odd Fellows Lodge No. 59. Cone died in 1881 and is buried in the Butteville Cemetery, his store closed. and his heirs sold the property and building to the Odd Fellows Lodge. After the Odd Fellows Lodge closed, the building housed the Willamette Trading Company.

This is the store that made news when it was one of two that were robbed in January of 1865, as reported in the Oregon Statesman newspaper.



The Fleckenstein-Ryan Store

In 1876 Henry Fleckenstein purchased the west and east halves of Lot 8 and merged them into a single piece of property. On that property stood a house of some kind that he lived in and operated some type of store. Fleckenstein was a distiller who produced bourbon whiskey in the alley behind the house, that was referred to as Still Flats.

In 1881 Fleckenstein sold Lot 8 with the house/store to Joseph J. Ryan who had recently arrived in Butteville as an immigrant from Norfolk, England and was farming. Fleckenstein departed Butteville and with a partner opened Fleckenstein & Meyer Wines & Liquor in Portland.

Ryan lived in the house/store, over time expanded the store, and as he prospered added on to the building eventually also adding the saloon next door on Lot 8.



By 1881 we have a two lots facing Butte Street, one holding the Odd Fellows Hall and an outhouse, and the other holding the JJ Ryan Store and Saloon. The saloon ceased to operate during Prohibition

and the building was sold and relocated. Lots 1 and 8 remained separate until both were purchased by Grant and Viola Hill in 1962.



Odd Fellows Hall and Butteville Store in 1954

The Odd Fellows Hall on Lot 1 was badly damaged in the 1962 Columbus Day Storm and was afterwards demolished. After which we have the Butteville Store property as we now know it on Lot 8, with the Store to the east and the lawn area to the west.



Souvenir items from the ownership period by the Ryan family

Ownership of the Store properties is as follows:

Date	Seller	Buyer
1856-65	Alexis Aubichon	Various owners down to JH & M Boyd, John & Melissa Hug and AW Rynearson
1865	AW Rynearson	Gustavus A Cone (Lot 1, Block 12)
1876	JH & M Boyd	Henry Fleckenstein (W ½ of Lot 8, Block 12)
1876	John & Melissa Hug	Henry Fleckenstein (E ½ of Lot 8, Block 12)
1881	Anson Cone	Odd Fellows Lodge (Lot 1, Block 12)
1887	Henry Fleckenstein	J.J. Ryan (Lot 8, Block 12)
May 1943	Mary R. Ryan	Dossie & Eve Green (Lot 8, Block 12)
Jan. 1947	Dossie & Eve Green	Francis & Myrtle Matthieu (Lot 8, Block 12)
Dec. 1952	Francis & Myrtle Matthieu	AA and Ida Price (Lot 8, Block 12)
Sep. 1962	AA Price	Grant & Viola Hill (Lot 8, Block 12)
Oct. 1962	Odd Fellows Lodge	Grant & Viola Hill (Lot 1, Block 12)
April 1966	Grant & Viola Hill	Arthur Widman & Duane Christie
June 1973	Grant & Viola Hill*	Robert & Pearl Kosta and Richard & Joy Kosta
Aug. 1977	R&P Kosta and R&J Kosta	Theresa Wright
Aug. 1978	Theresa Wright	Ronald & Mary Ann Johnson
Jan. 1985	Estate of Theresa Wright	Mary Lockwood & Patricia Croman
	"break in transfer"	
Aug. 1989	Ronald Johnson & Mary Ann Johnson	Donald & Claudette Stenson
Nov. 1994	Donald & Claudette Stenson	Sydney Anne Springer
Dec. 1999	Sydney Ann Springer	Oregon Parks & Recreation Dept.

Credit to Berna Croco and Rob Forrest for the title and deed search efforts to trace the property ownership back to the original donation land claim owners.

The period of private ownership of the Butteville Store ended in 1999 when the property was donated to Oregon Parks and Recreation Department by Sydney Anne Springer.

Following that acquisition, the Store was operated by various concessionaires, including Rob Forrest and his wife Barbara, as a store and art gallery from 2002 through 2006.

** Second sale by Grant & Viola Hill appears to follow a repossession for lack of payment of debt.*

Prepared by Friends of Historic Butteville; November, 2022



Watercolor by Barb Forrest of the 1905 view across the river to Butteville

The Butteville Store was then operated by Friends of Historic Champoeg as an adjunct to the gift shop at the Champoeg Heritage Area Visitor's Center. In 2016 Champoeg Heritage Area approached Friends of Historic Butteville about taking over operation of the Store with the goal of expanding its role serving Park campers and visitors and its role in the community.

In 2017 Dinner and Live music offering on Saturday nights was added making the Butteville Store French Prairie's live Acoustic Music Venue. In 2021 Store operation was taken over by Jordan Scoggins and Half Pint Brothers, featuring handcrafted ice cream and specialty food service.

