



MESSAGES

FROM OREGON

MESSAGES FROM OREGON M.J. MURDOCK CHARITABLE TRUST

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**THE OCEAN IN VIEW!
O! THE JOY....
GREAT JOY IN CAMP.
WE ARE IN VIEW
OF THE OCEAN,
THIS GREAT PACIFIC
OCEAN WHICH WE
HAVE BEEN SO LONG
ANXIOUS TO SEE.**

— Capt. William Clark,
November 7, 1805



COASTAL RIVERS

South of the Columbia and north of California, scores of wild green rivers come tumbling down out of the evergreen, ever-wet forests of the Coast Range. These rivers are short—twenty to sixty miles, most of them—but they carry a lot of water. They like to run fast through the woods, roaring and raising hell during rainstorms and run-offs, knocking down streamside cedars and alders now and again to show they know who it is dumping trashy leaves and branches in them all the time. But when they get within a few miles of the ocean, they aren't so brash. They get cautious down there, start sidling back and forth digging letter in their valleys—Cs, Ss, Us, Ls and others from their secret alphabet—and they quit roaring and start mumbling to themselves, making odd sounds like jittery orators clearing their throats before addressing a mighty audience. Or sometimes they say nothing at all but just slip along in sullen silence, as though they thought that if they snuck up on the Pacific softly enough it might not notice them, might not swallow them whole the way it usually does. But when they get to the estuaries they realize they've been kidding themselves: the Ocean is always hungry—and no Columbia, no Mississippi, no Orinoco or Granges can curb its appetite.... So they panic: when they taste the first salt tides rising up to greet them they turn back toward their kingdoms in the hills. They don't get far. When the overmastering tides return to the ocean, these once-brash rivers trail along behind like sad little dogs on leashes—past the marshes with their mallards, the mud flats with their clams, the shallow bays with their herons, over the sandbars with their screaming gulls and riptides, away into the oblivion of the sea.

The river I lived on is on the northern half of the Oregon Coast...

— David James Duncan, from *The River Why*



BOOK ONE

The Collins Story

Not Unto Ourselves Alone Are We Born

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The Collins Story

Not Unto Ourselves Alone Are We Born

Clockwise from upper left: The Heisler #3 and #4 were transferred from Golinza to Kellettsville; Enos Blausen, a long-time Collins engineer stands in front of the #6 in Nebraska; Pennsylvania: the S&T 'Mary Stanton' sits abandoned on Big Coon Creek in 1940; Teddy's locomotive, the T. D. Collins (Photo circa 1887), was used on the Fox Creek Tram.



Teddy's mills in Golinza, Nebraska, Kellettsville, Mayburg, Pine Hollow, and Bucks Mills were now connected to the Pennsylvania Railroad that carried his timber throughout the East. In addition, the S&T incorporated to carry passengers as well as freight.¹²⁰ That is, as long as the S&T was running and the tracks hadn't been flooded by the spring thaw or closed by the winter snows. In its later years, the S&T became known as the "Slow & Tiresome," although not due to any fault of its own. The government began constructing a flood control dam at the lower end of Tionesta Creek taking over a section of the S&T track. The remaining track and equipment began to deteriorate, and by September 17, 1943, all service on the S&T had stopped.¹²⁷

FAMILY

Small Only In Numbers

A man can aspire to owning every tree he can lay his hands on. He can build railroads, drill for oil, and pan for gold. He can help the helpless and preach to the Godless. But he can do none of this alone.

Teddy's intimate supporting cast included a brother, a wife, and a son, and they were anything but insignificant. The first was Joseph Collins, actually Joseph VanHalen Collins, who often signed deeds and documents as J.V. Collins. He was Teddy's older brother by two years. Next came Mary Stanton Collins, Teddy's wife, who, by all accounts, matched his fragility and rectitude step for step. Everell Collins, also known as E.S. Collins, was Mary & Teddy's only child. On E.S.'s shoulders would sit, often uncomfortably, all the expectations of a driven and demanding father.

Brother, Where Art Thou?

If you read the bits and pieces that are scattered around about Teddy and Joseph Collins, you come to two rather different conclusions. The first might go something like this: Teddy and his brother, Joseph, came to Pennsylvania together, started in the lumber business at Turkey Run with three other men from Pennsylvania; owned the Nancy Griffin oil property and other oil and lumber properties; owned and operated the Walnut Bend Oil refinery; and owned and operated The Collins House hotel in Oil City, Pennsylvania. Those are the bones of one tale; two brothers sometimes joining in business ventures together and sometimes not. But that account completely obscures the other story of two very different men, who were irrevocably bound by blood.

Where Joseph wanted an instant and easy fortune, Teddy wanted to build his wealth through the acquisition of land, trees, mills, and minerals. When Teddy made his money, he considered all his possessions to be given to him in trust by God, and because of that, he should be a good steward and a generous giver. On the other hand, whatever money Joseph made seemed mysteriously to slip away. Teddy had one wife and one child. Joseph married twice and had sixteen children. Teddy was determined to learn more, work harder, and use every opportunity at his disposal to turn plans into profit. Joseph was given to impulse, to the quick fix. He let opportunities turn into burdens that he was incapable of managing. Teddy's hobby was building churches. Joseph's hobby was building hotels, although together they searched for gold. Whatever their differences, they were together in business ventures for many years.

One of their joint projects was building The Collins House in Oil City, Pennsylvania. It's unknown whose idea it was to build this fashionable hotel, but Teddy and Joseph both worked on it together. The Collins House was handsomely furnished and boasted 150 rooms and a dining room. Construction began in 1872 and it opened for business in 1875. Considered by many as one of the most elegant hotels in the region, it cost \$100,000 to build and \$30,000 to furnish.¹²²

The Collins House was opened with great splendor; the menu for the inaugural banquet was as rich and varied as offered by any restaurant in the land. And a list of fine wines was included.

The legend connected with the building of the hotel is that Teddy Collins wanted a place where he and his craftsmen could stay, free from the temptation of liquor.¹²³ — W. E. Clinger

It was no secret that Teddy Collins abhorred the use of alcohol. He wouldn't sell it in his stores and didn't want it in his communities.¹²⁴ But under Joseph's influence, the Collins House offered the wayfarer both food and drink. This may have been the reason that Teddy finally sold his interest in the hotel on February 25, 1882 for \$35,000.¹²⁴ Joseph continued on at The Collins House as owner and resident manager until 1887.¹²⁵

So who was Joseph Collins, the father of sixteen children, the husband of two wives, the partner of Teddy, that makes him an essential part of this story? Joseph's first wife was Mary Medes, and together they had four children. Mary died in 1859. During those times, when a wife died, her husband sometimes married her sister, and so it was with Joseph. Happy Medes, Mary's sister, became his second wife and they added twelve more children.

Teddy Collins named one of his railroad engines, the #3, "Mary Stanton," and established the Mary Stanton Collins Hall at the Bareilly Theological Seminary in Bareilly, India.¹²⁶

E.E.C. Salmon

Teddy's railroads dismantled: 1925 – Tionesta to Nebraska 1940 – Nebraska to Mayburg 1942 – Mayburg to Sheffield 1943 – Last rails lifted¹²⁷

Collins History

While Teddy would never outright complain to his brother about finances, he did write to Everell that Joe Collins, Joseph's son, "wouldn't do a thing to better himself as long as there was somebody to do it for him. He was a complete failure."¹²⁸

E.E.C. Salmon