

## Descendants of pioneers to honor Groseclose patriarch

By Diane Pettit  
of the Tribune

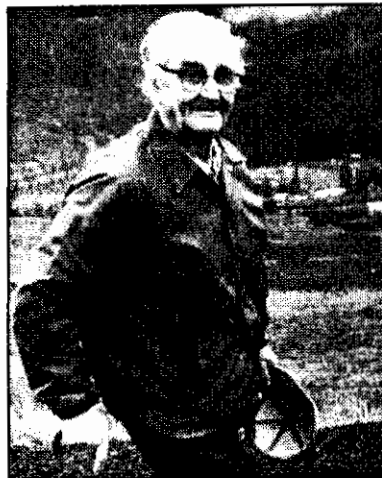
**T**he first time Ed Groseclose of Juliaetta saw the Potlatch Valley the year was 1902 and he was 9 years old.

He and his parents and his brothers and a sister stepped down off the train after a week-long journey from Virginia onto a wooden platform at a Y in the tracks known as Potlatch Junction, 12 miles east of Lewiston.

It was spring and the hillsides rose greenclad on every side of the little flat where the railroad tracks branched and the Potlatch and Clearwater rivers ran together.

There wasn't a soul in sight, save two Indians who watched in silence as the family unloaded their possessions in a pile beside them on the platform.

But they weren't alone in this new country, Groseclose said. His father had sent three brothers ahead to scout land, and within just a few years, there were a dozen families — including three families of Grosecloses — that came



Juliaetta's Ed Groseclose has lived to see six generations of descendants grow up in the Potlatch Valley. Today, friends and relatives honor Groseclose as he observes his 90th birthday.

Page 1C

West to the Potlatch Valley from the same 30-square-mile region of Bland County in Virginia in search of free land.

The descendants of those families will be among those who attend an open house today from 1:30 to 4 p.m. at the Juliaetta Community Church to celebrate the 90th birthday of Ed Groseclose.

Steve Kimberling was probably the first from Virginia, taking up land in the valley after he lost a place on the Palouse during the terrible, wet year of 1893.

Groseclose said his three brothers came West in 1901, looking for land to raise cattle. They landed first at Oakesdale, Wash., and then drifted down to take a look at the lands that had opened up on the Nez Perce Indian reservation in Idaho.

The brothers arrived at the Potlatch Valley in January. "There was two feet of snow up on the top of the canyon, but down in the valley the grass was up to the tops of their shoes," Groseclose said. "The wild horses was all fat and there was good land for the taking," he said.

The Groseclose brothers decided they had found what they were looking for, and each took up 160 acres.

"But in all the time I've been here, there's only been 10 or 15 years of good grass like that in the fall of the year," Groseclose said with a laugh that rocked him back in his chair. "But we never had money enough to leave again," he said, leaning forward again with a big grin.

Groseclose loves to tell of the early days in the valley, particularly stories with a laugh in them. His memory is sharp, and tends toward the lighter side of making a little off small parcels of steep ground, and then 20 years of pick-and-shovel work for the railroad.

He's also an encyclopedia of the people, places and happenings that are the history of the valley. He ranged all over the area on foot and on his pinto pony as a boy, living and working at times at his folks' place on Fix Ridge above Juliaetta and then on his brothers' farms along the river. He attended school at Lapwai, on Fix Ridge, at the Arrow School and at the old Pilot Rock School near the mouth of Little Potlatch Creek.

He started running cattle up to summer pasture at Teakean, a thickly-forested area east of Cavendish when he was a young man. Thousands of sheep and cattle were driven up the Potlatch Valley and into the mountains each spring, and then down again in the fall.

He married Dixie Baugh Wilson the day before Christmas in 1916.

Their families had been friends back in Virginia. The newlyweds lived for about a year on her brothers' homestead in the valley. The little, square gray-boarded house stands empty beside the highway now.

The Grosecloses lived at Teakean for 10 years, horse logging, cutting poles, making shakes and posts and raising a family. Teakean in early years was dotted with sawmills that supplied much of the rough lumber used to build the barns and houses in the treeless lower reaches of the Clearwater and Potlatch rivers. Groseclose said logs were brought down from Teakean to the Clearwater River near Peck on a flume in those years, and then lashed together in rafts or floated down river.

He remembered that a man named Jim Jump shot 80,000 railroad ties down the flume in about 1910 and floated them down the river. That was more than 15 years before the Clearwater Timber Co., now Potlatch Corp., started the log drives from the North Fork country.

Groseclose said he and his family burned out at Teakean in the winter of 1928, so they moved down to warmer climes at Agatha, a community on the Clearwater River near Lenore. One of the children was sick with scarlet fever, and the whole family was immediately placed in quarantine that lasted for weeks, he said.

Those were the hard times, but Groseclose said he managed to land a job with the railroad in 1938.

"The job was supposed to last 10 days, but then a man got sick and I ended up working 153 days" — 10 days short of the amount of time a person needed to "get rights" (seniority) with the railroad. Groseclose was 45, and the railroad didn't want to hire a man that old, he said.

But then a car jumped the track between Lenore and Peck and the railroad called out every available man. Groseclose put in another 20 days, and that was the beginning of his 20 years on the section crew for the Camas Prairie Railroad.

Groseclose returned to the railroad junction at the mouth of Potlatch Creek. But by this time there was a depot there, and a store and a service station and even a lunch counter at what was now called Arrow Junction.

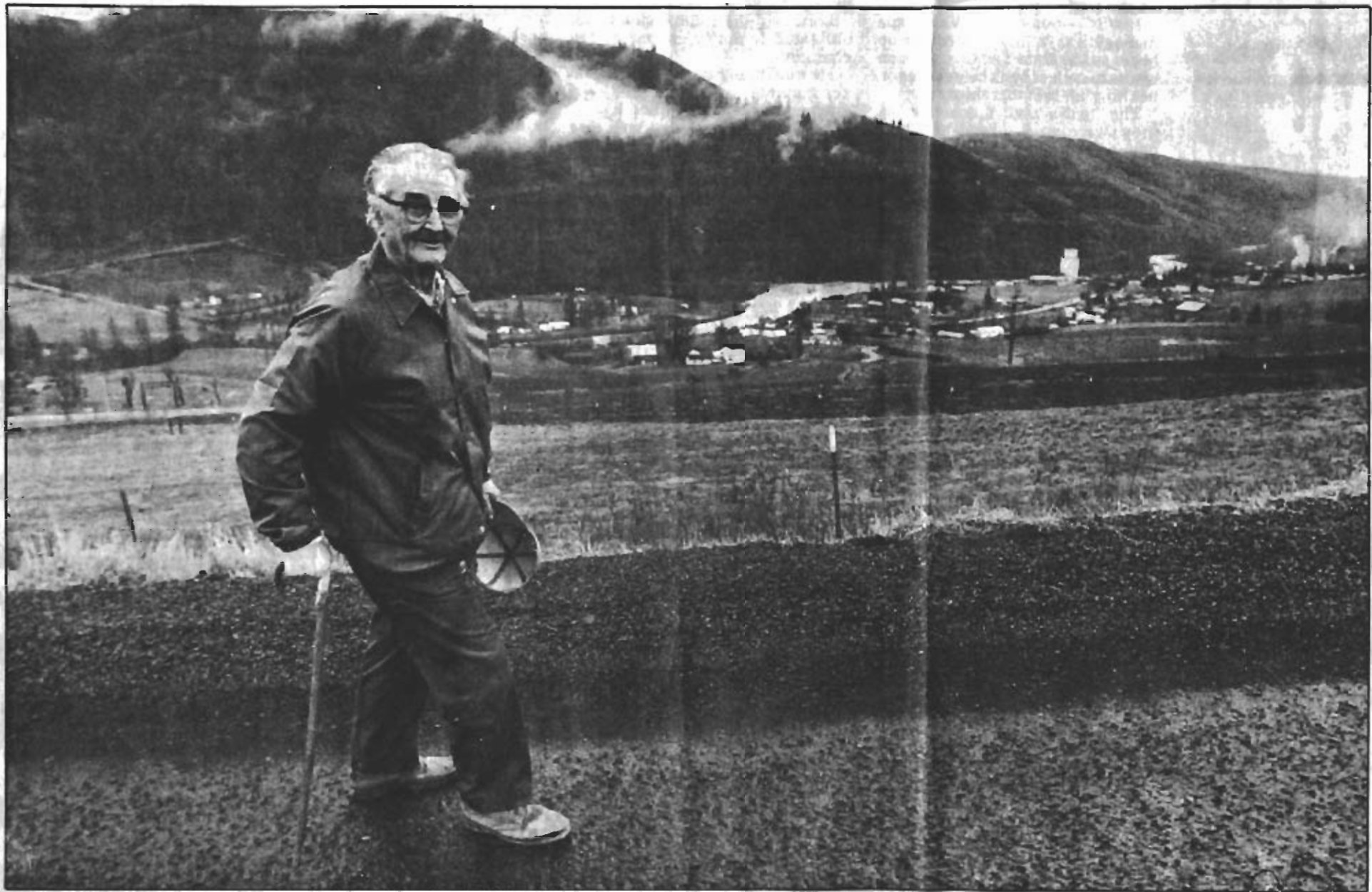
Groseclose said the name Potlatch Junction caused shipments to be routed there instead of to the

town of Potlatch, so the name was changed to Clearwater. But that caused confusion with the town of Clearwater, up the line near Stites, so the junction was re-named Arrow, perhaps for the wealth of arrowheads that had been picked from the sand and gravel at the mouth of the Potlatch River.

Groseclose and his family lived for the next 20 years in the little green section house, located nearby in the same spot where one of the monolithic concrete piers of the Arrow Bridge stands now.

He and his wife moved to Juliaetta in 1958, when he retired from the railroad. His wife died in 1980, and Groseclose moved with his son, John, and his family at Juliaetta. His other children are Virgil of Lewiston, Lura Butler of Juliaetta, Peggy Wunderlich of Orofino and Bonnie Morgan of Zella, Wash.

Groseclose had cancer surgery just before his wife died, but he has recovered. He planted a large garden last spring, and has some plants started for this year. He also tends some chickens and a few rabbits and is surrounded by grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren — the sixth generation of Grosecloses in the Potlatch Valley.



Tribune/Glenn Cruickshank

Ed Groseclose pauses at a site overlooking ~~the town~~ *Julia*