## Avery's Dam

**Historic Name:** Avery's Dam  
**Street:** AVERY'S DAM  
**City:** Corvallis  
**County:** Benton

**Current Name:**  
**Owner:** None listed

**Category:** Site  
**Location:** Urban

**Building Date:** C. 1860  
**Moved?**

**Original Use:** Dam  
**Current Use:** Other  
**Secondary Current Use:**

**Theme:** Engineering  
**Secondary Theme:**

**Style:** No Style  
**Secondary Style:**

**Builder:** Unknown

**Condition:** Poor  
**Integrity:** Low  
**Local Ranking:** NA

**Plan Shape:** NA  
**Number of Stories:** 0.0

**Foundation Material:** Unknown  
**Roof Form:** NA  
**Roofing Material:** NA

**Structural Framing:** NA  
**Primary Window Type:** NA

**Exterior Surfacing Materials:** NA  
**Decorative Surfacing:** Refer to Statement of Significance  
**Decorative Features:** Refer to Statement of Significance

**Alterations/Additions:** Refer to Statement of Significance

**Landscape Features:** Refer to Statement of Significance

**Associated Structures:** Refer to Statement of Significance

**Known Archaeological Features:** Unknown

**Setting:** Refer to Statement of Significance

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**Recorder:** Stephen Dow Beckham  
**Recorded:**

**Map:**  
**TLN:**  
**TRS:**  
**Quad:** Corvallis  
**Local Number:** 6B  
**SHPO Number:**
According to Jean Mater in an article in the Gazette-Times on June 26, 1957, Mary's River near Avery Park was the site of the Joseph Avery Dam. J. C. Avery opened a store on his Donation Land Claim in 1847 and about 1850 he developed a sawmill. The 'Upper Town' mill was powered by water from a dam which Avery and Solomon K. Brown erected in Mary's River. In 1855 Avery and E. Taylor built a grist mill on the site of the old sawmill. Mater's article in 1957 included a photograph of the dam with the caption "For almost 100 years water has spilled over a dam on Mary's River upstream from what is now Avery park. Built originally in the 1860's, the dam diverts water from Mary's river into what is called the 'millrace' that bisects South Corvallis. Purpose of the millrace was to provide power for the Fischer Flouring mill that stood for years where the Chapman Manufacturing company is now located on the Willamette River."

Preston Onstad, in an interview on March 11, 1976, questioned the authenticity of Mater's account.


Marysville Landing is located on the west bank of the Willamette River near the central business district of Corvallis, Oregon. The site was settled in the late 1840's by whites. Joseph Avery staked a Donation Land Claim near this site. He was joined in the area in 1846 by William P. Dixon. Avery operated a ferry, granary, and later a general store. Both Avery and Dixon platted their lands and the town of Marysville grew at the site in the 1850's. In 1855 Marysville was the site of the territorial capitol. In 1851 Marysville became the county seat of Benton County.

Howard McKinley Corning has written: "From earliest years, Marysville was on the road through the west Willamette Valley, by way of Yamhill Falls and across the Rickreall, Luckiamute, and Long Tom Rivers, to the upper Willamette and the Umpqua country. From there the road proceeded through the southern Oregon settlements and over the Siskiyou Mountains into California. Along that route in the gold-crazed years moved freight wagons and pack-trains, carrying the commerce that made Marysville an important way-point. Transportation of commodities employed hundreds of animals and drivers." (p. 112)

By 1872 Corvallis had grown to a city of 1,000 inhabitants. Along the banks of the Willamette at the landing stood three warehouses, a sash and door factory, a tannery, and other business firms.

Rotting piles remain at the land site.


Addendum to 1976 Statewide Inventory Form

The following information pertains to the marker dedicating the lower town Steamboat Landing site.

The dedication was planned during the 1957 Corvallis Centennial, but the actual ceremony and placement of the monument did not occur until 1975. The proposed plans for the 1st Street by-pass delayed the original dedication.
The Winema Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution spearheaded the project. They produced a 16" x 20" brass plaque which reads:

Site of the Earliest Boat Landing  
Lower Town, Marysville, 1851  
Presented to  
City of Corvallis, Oregon  
Centennial Celebration, June 1957  
by the Winema Chapter  
Daughters of the American Revolution.

Historical information to include on the marker was provided by Professor John E. Smith of Oregon State University, and the Oregon Historical Society. When no picture of the Canemah could be found, Harriet Warner supplied a picture of the Multnomah, the second steamer to come up the Willamette River a few months after the Canemah. This picture, and a brief description found of the Canemah, were used to make a bas-relief of a steamer for the marker.

Mrs. Robert (Irma) Taylor contacted T. J. Starker to arrange for a contractor to haul a 5 ton rock from the Soap Creek area to the site. Two local sand and gravel companies donated soil and rock fill. The O. S. U. Landscape Architecture Department constructed a bench and entry area at the marker site. Other local individuals and firms donated time, money and materials to the project.

During the 1950's, warehouses and buildings were removed from the waterfront to make way for the proposed by-pass. In the 1960's, when this plan appeared nebulous, volunteer workers from different organizations began beautification of the riverbank. Later, riverfront park was organized, which is being developed today.

Sources Consulted


Historic Name: Marysville Landing  
Street: MARYSVILLE LANDING  
Recorder: Mary K. Weber  
Recorded:  
Map:  
TRS:  
Quad: Corvallis  
Local Number: 10C
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Benton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name (Common)</td>
<td>Avery's Dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Historic)</td>
<td>Avery (Joseph) Dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Avery Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corvallis, Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Owner</td>
<td>City of Corvallis, Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Address)</td>
<td>Corvallis, Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Use</td>
<td>Dam &amp; Industrial Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Construction</td>
<td>c. 1860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Historical significance:

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Sources Consulted:


Recorded by Stephen Dow Beckham Date 26 June 1976