

BENTON COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY II  
1984 - 1986

COUNTY AREA: Soap Creek                      RESOURCE #: 576

PHOTO #: 00 17-20, XX 20-21              PROP. CLASS:  
ORIGINAL USE: Townsite                      SIZE:  
PRESENT USE: Agricultural

PROPERTY ADDRESS: In the vicinity of the intersection of Tampico Road  
and Soap Creek Road.  
T 10S R 5W S 24  
TAX LOT: 300, 104, 105, 500

COMMON NAME: Tampico  
HISTORIC NAME: Tampico

PRESENT OWNERS: State of Oregon, c/o O.S.U. Business Affairs, P.O. Box  
1086, Corvallis, Oregon 97339  
Kathleen Merrill, 29047 Harvey Lane, Corvallis, Oregon 97330  
OWNER'S ADDRESS: See above

ORIGINAL OWNER: W. J. Crouch

ARCHITECT:  
BUILDER:

THEME: Benton County History: Early Settlement  
PERIOD/ DATE: Pioneer Period/ c. 1854-1860  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNATION/ TYPE: Historic townsite

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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND IMMEDIATE SETTING

The former townsite of Tampico is located approximately nine miles north of Corvallis in the vicinity of the current intersection of Soap Creek and Tampico roads.

NOTEWORTHY LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Upon a cursory examination of the former townsite, there were few features observed on the landscape which probably date to the Tampico years. Along the west side of Tampico Road, before the Soap Creek intersection, are several very large Douglas Fir trees. Reportedly, these trees were planted in 1858. Possibly another group of firs, perpendicular and to the west of those on the road, were also planted in 1858. The only other feature observed was a slight depression in the ground in the approximate former location of the schoolhouse. Corresponding possible privy depressions were also noted.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The first settler in the immediate vicinity of what was to become Tampico was D.D. Davis. Mr. Davis' house was located close to Soap

Mc Arthur, Lewis A., Oregon Geographic Names, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, 1974.

Davis, Edward Erwin and David Davis, "Our Pioneer Ancestors," Family Genealogy on file Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath, Oregon, 1978.

Brauner, David, Personal Communication, 1985.

## SOURCES CONSULTED

Given the density of occupation, undoubtedly subsurface cultural material exists in the location of the former town. The archaeological component of the Tampico site may be significant for the potential to yield information on life in Benton County during the 1850's. Although several recent activities such as driveway construction and tree planting have certainly impacted a portion of the townsite, several areas do not appear to be disturbed by any major impacts. The importance of Tampico as a potential archaeological site is enhanced by its short span of occupation.

During the 1850's, there was a rivalry between Tampico and Corvallis. A song about Tampico written in the 1850's, which consists of 12 or more verses, provides much historical information on Tampico and includes one verse about this rivalry. The rivalry ended abruptly in 1860, however, when the town of Tampico ceased to exist. Green Berry Smith, who acted as a money leader for many of the Tampico businesses and residents, eventually gained possession of all the land within the plat of the town of Tampico. In 1860, Mr. Smith annulled and vacated the plat.

scraped and in good condition. This track was 600 feet long and was kept racetrack north of town. Tampico was known for its gambling being a popular activity. On Saturdays, men would gather to have shooting matches and horse races. Tampico had a reputation as being a rather "lively" place with schoolhouse was also used for religious purposes.

In November of 1857, a survey plat was filed with the county for the town of Tampico. The plat, which was surveyed for William J. Crouch, had eight blocks with each block divided into eight lots. First street was the Territorial Road which was at that time the major route from Portland to the Umpqua region. Most of the buildings which were built in Tampico were located along First Street. Between c. 1855 and 1860, Tampico consisted of the Davis residence, which also served as a boarding house, a store known as the Crouch and Co. Store; the Arcade Saloon, built in 1858 by Bill Bowers who was also owner and bartender; the Wash Roberts boarding house; a livery stable; a blacksmith shop, which also had a turning lathe to manufacture items such as wagons and chairs; a boarding house owned by Wm. Beattie; and a schoolhouse. The

on the west side of Tampico Road today. Mr. Davis became postmaster of the Soap Creek post office in 1854. The name of this office was changed to Tampico in December of 1854. A store was kept in the Davis house by James O'Neal. In 1854 or 1855, D.D. Davis built another residence, the first building to be built in what was to become Tampico. The residence was used as a store and a hotel.

Smith, John E., Benton County Towns, in the John E. Smith Collection, Benton County Historical Museum, Philomath, Oregon. (Notes taken in 1926 by a Dr. Blake during an interview with James Hunter. Map of Tampico included.)

Recorded by: Mary Kathryn Weber  
Kathy Schutt  
May Dasch

Date: Nov. 11, 1985

BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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Photo No. XX 21

View to northwest

Tampico site



Photo No. 00 18

View to \_\_\_\_\_

Depression possible indicates location of early Tampico school.



Photo No. 00 19

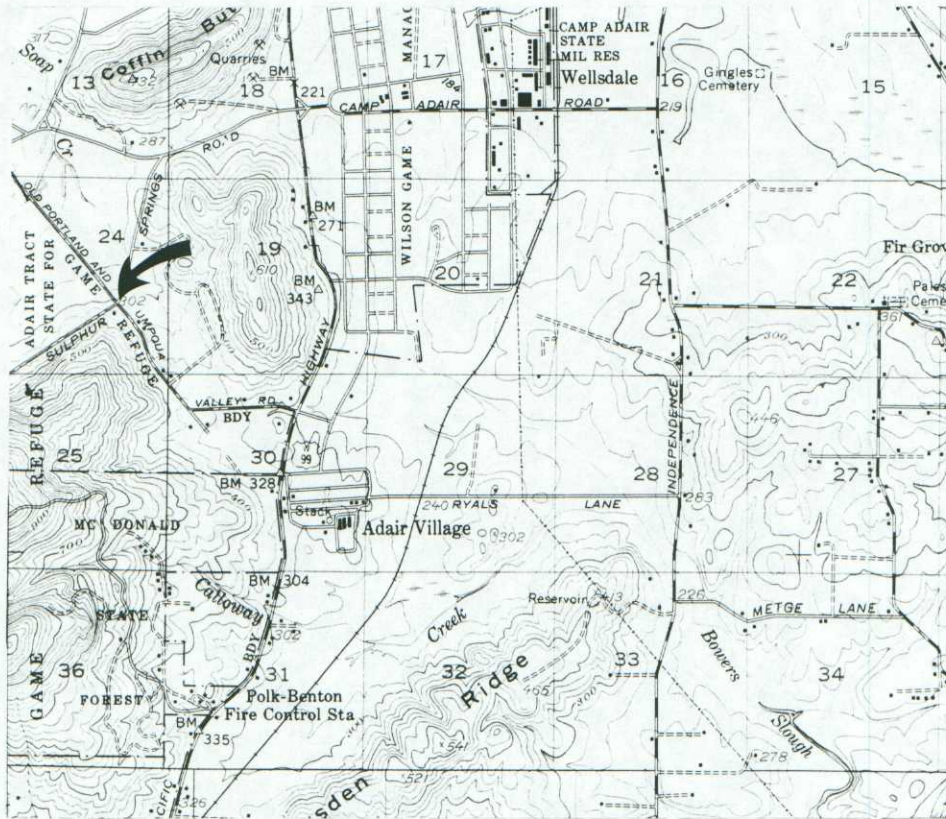
View to \_\_\_\_\_

Fir trees at Tampico. These trees are reported to have been planted during the 1850's.



Photo No. XX20

View to southeast

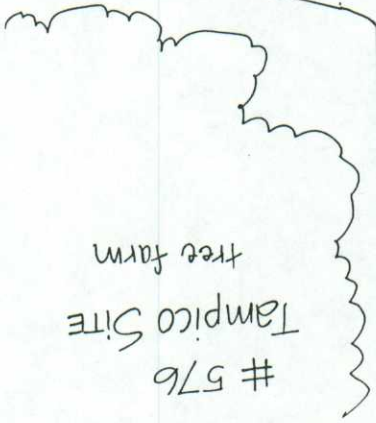
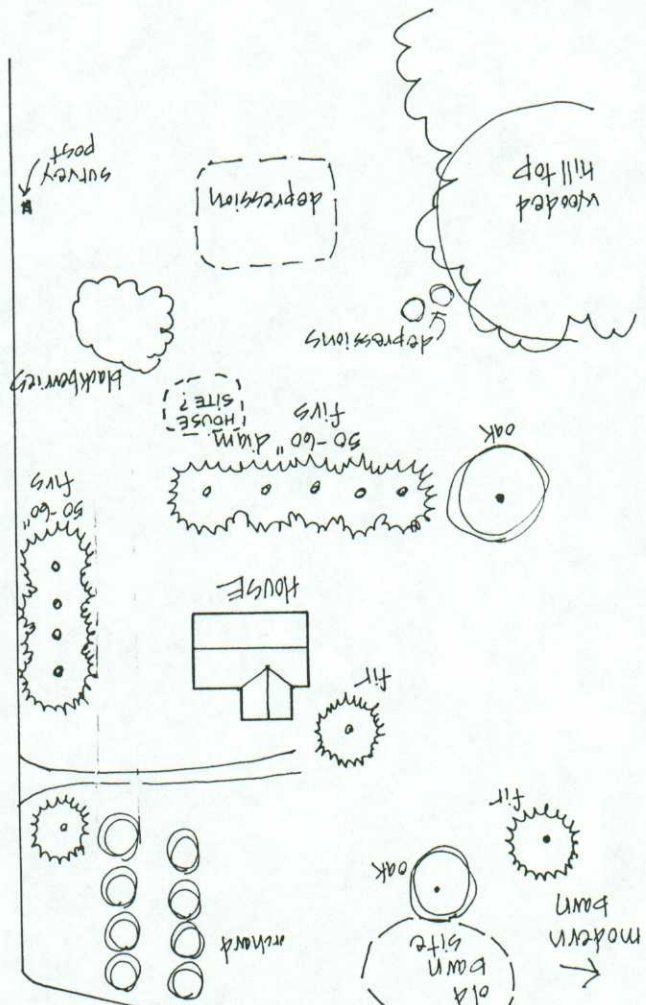
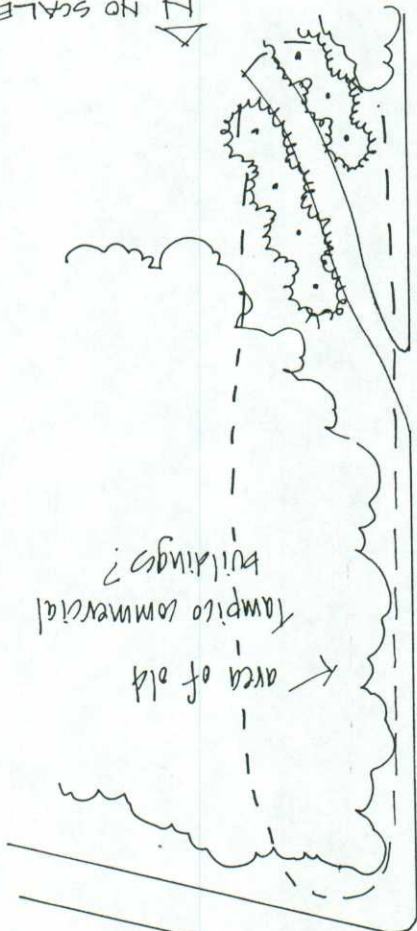


ALBANY QUADRANGLE

T 10 R 5 S 24

7613

NO SCALE



PORTLAND-UMFROVA HWY

site of Tampico

SOAP CREEK RD.

general location 1850's cabin game refuge

SOAP CREEK