



THE MORNING STAR OF TILLAMOOK

A History of the Tillamook® Cheese Logo

Tillamook County grew rapidly after the first settler arrived in 1851 and the dairy industry flourished. Tillamook was soon overrun with butter and milk. Sending the extra milk and butter to other markets was a chore, as the locals had to use unreliable trading ships or take a long wagon ride over rough roads. Many trading ships were used. But late in the summer of 1854 the first pioneers in Tillamook were desperate. The last small sloop that sailed out of Tillamook Bay was reported wrecked on Peacock Spit at the mouth of the Columbia River. The cargo of salted salmon, potatoes and butter that was sent to trade for flour, sugar, salt, coffee and other staples was gone. It meant another winter on very short rations.

The settlers' solution was to build their own boat. They had to start with standing timber, as there were no lumber mills at that time. The boat was shaped into a 37-foot keel with a 6-foot hold using 6-foot by 8-foot timbers spaced 10 inches apart. These were covered with a 2-inch thick planking of Douglas fir, sawed by hand into 40-foot lengths.

The metal needed for spikes and fittings was hand-forged from materials left by the wreck of the *Shark*, a twelve-gun U.S. sloop of war, which broke up on the Columbia River Bar and drifted south to the beach at Arch Cape in 1846. It took six trips with four horses to pack it on the trail over Neah-Kah-Nie Mountain, across the Nehalem River and south to Kilchis Point in Tillamook Bay (a total of 289 miles by today's roads).

The rigging and sails were made from bolts of canvas, rope and blocks bought for \$10 from the Tillamook Indians who salvaged them from an 1851 wreck at Netarts Bay south of Tillamook.

The two-masted schooner, dubbed the *Morning Star of Tillamook*, was launched January 5, 1855, after a five-day delay of heavy rains and flooding. The ship spent only a year and a half servicing the pioneering Tillamook dairy farmers before being sold to Leonard and Green of Astoria to settle a bad debt of one of the owners. Later, the *Morning Star* was sold to shipping

interests in Olympia, Wash., and was lost in the Strait of Juan de Fuca in November 1860.

The *Morning Star* was the first ship built in Tillamook Bay and the first ship built and registered in the Oregon Territory. The second ship was started at the same site a few months later.

Morning Star II

In celebration of Oregon's centennial, the citizens of Tillamook County constructed an exact replica of the original schooner. The new *Morning Star* was built at the TCCA plant site, north of Tillamook city on Highway 101. The work was supervised by a professional shipbuilder and assisted by volunteer labor. Materials were donated with the main source of revenue stemming from gifts by local organizations and the sale of souvenir buttons.

The *Morning Star II* was launched in August 1959 and a 12-person crew of community members sailed the ship to the Oregon State Centennial Exposition in Portland with a six-ton cargo of Tillamook cheese. After its return, the ship eventually found a permanent home on the front lawn of the Tillamook Cheese plant.

The *Morning Star II* has since been replaced with another, smaller scale replica, which can be seen at the Tillamook County Creamery Association Visitors Center. June 26, 1992, the replacement ship was dedicated in front of the TCCA cheese plant. Constructed by master shipwright Richard Miles of Aberdeen, Wash., the ship once again proudly proclaimed its role in the development of Tillamook County's stable economy and rich tradition.

In 1966, the *Morning Star* came back into the spotlight when the packaging was redesigned. Because the *Morning Star* played such an important part in establishing Tillamook County's dairy industry, a representation of the ship was added to the label, making it easier for customers to identify genuine Tillamook cheese. The Morning Star logo was adopted to represent the cooperative, and has remained there ever since.