

Life in Caldwell in the 1830-40s The Answers!

1. 250 people, Caldwell included then all the surrounding towns as well.
2. Hawaiian Americans are not recorded and the last names in the census suggest they were not present.
3. Mountain lion; the last one was killed on Roseland Avenue in 1832. Almost all the predatory animals were hunted out and killed by the farmers to protect their live stock.
4. Stray domestic animals were kept on the Green, now the corner of Roseland and Bloomfield Avenue. Until the 1870s domestic animals were fenced out of farms and gardens and not fenced in to pastures and farms and ranches. Most animals came home to be milked and fed.
5. About 9 lbs for a mature ram; modern animal husbandry began in the 18th century without understanding genetics, just careful examination and selection of characteristics. Sheep doubled in weight on average from 1740-1840s. Also, crop rotation with winter crops, allowing animals to graze and fertilize the fields but not let them lie fallow every third year, meant that there was food for the animals all winter long (and for people), so all the animals did not have to be slaughtered each fall and could grow bigger and heavier (and wooly).
6. Oxen, unlike horses, have cloven feet. Cloven feet meant they could walk on rocky ground without splitting their hooves and had good traction. Have you ever tried to dig a hole in Caldwell? Oxen can also walk at a steady pace for longer distances pulling their loads. Oxen do not, however, back up and need a wide space to turn around.
7. Grover's mom and servant had none of those aides. Stoves to burn wood for cooking were invented by Benj. Thompson in 1833; improved and produced in 1834 by Philo Stewart (the Oberlin Stove) but were expensive and not readily available until a decade later. Kerosene lamps became available after kerosene was discovered in the 1850s.
8. None of those services except the militia. Caldwell was incorporated in 1892; before the services if they existed were provided by the county or the larger Caldwell.
9. Tanneries were "factories" where animal skins were treated to produce leather. The Caldwells had many trees to provide the bark, animals their hides, and seasonal labor. Tanneries tan hides by soaking the flesh off with acids made from tree bark. They stank. Tanneries were not permitted in cities whenever possible, the beginning of public health laws.
10. Only one, smallpox. That vaccination was achieved by giving a person a mild case of cow pox. Jenner, the early advocate for small pox vaccination, was born in 1749 and died in 1796. There was no knowledge of germs just what appeared to be a better protection from the disease among workers with cows. Any large gathering of people, without social distancing, makes spreading disease easier. For example, Washington almost lost the continental army to smallpox; he made the army be vaccinated while in Morristown. During the Civil War Lincoln caught smallpox; the Confederate army was plagued with malaria and the Union army with measles. They were all deadly diseases at that time. Smallpox is the only one now very rarely experienced.