

Front & Stark Streets, 1852

By Unknown

From the corner of Front and Stark, shown in this 1852 photograph, virgin timber is visible just a few blocks away. The mast of the brig, *Henry*, shows the close proximity of the river and piers that sustained this tiny cluster of shops.

The buildings look very much like those built in the eastern United States around the same time. Some early buildings were assembled from prefabricated sections that arrived by ship at Portland from the East Coast. However, most buildings were constructed using lumber milled in Oregon, many imitating popular Greek revival and Gothic revival architectural styles from patterns brought by new arrivals.

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in 1848 and the California gold rush that followed in 1849 created a tremendous demand for lumber, fruit, and wheat, all products that would come to be shipped from Portland to the regional market of San Francisco. Oregonians also sought their fortunes in the gold fields, but many stayed home or returned within a short time, believing they could profit more by exporting food and lumber to California miners.

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