A RECORD OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY OREGON

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E. S. McCOMAS JOURNAL

INTRODUCTION:

E. S. McComas was born in Adams County, Ohio, January 23, 1839, moved with his parents to Indiana in 1843 and then to Johnson County, Iowa, in 1860.

As a young man with many Southery sympathies he chose to go west rather than be impressed into the Northern army during the Civil War. The adventures of a trip west to the lands from which came fascinating stories appealed to him.

Throughout his life he was a lover of verse and song. Arriving in the west his dreams were put to verse; dreams that did not all come true, but never the less we will quote them to show his spirit:

MY JOURNEY O'ER THE PLAINS

Come all ye jolly miners, come listen to my song,
Tis about my journey oer the plains, twill not take you long.
Twas on the 14th day of May in the spring of sixty-two,
All things being ready, I bade my friends adieu.

I left my home in Iowa through mud and cold and rain,
And started for the west to take a trip across the plain,
Bound for Salmon River, that boasted land of gold,
To try and make my fortune, as others had, I'm told.

Our journey it was pleasant as we travelled up the Platte,
The country it is beautiful, although its rather flat,
We saw many things that were beautiful to behold,
As we crossed o'er the plains in our search after gold.

There was Chimmney Rock the ancient, and Rock Independence, too,
And many other sights that were beautiful to view,
At length we got to Larramie, we thought the time would never come,
And there we got some letters from the dear ones at home.

Near Pacific Springs we took the Lander route,
A rough mountain road, as we afterwards found out,
The mountains were very high, and the roads very rough,
And snow in the month of August to make us very tough.

There was many persons killed by Indians on the way,
But we were on our guard by night and by the day.
Though we seen bloody work that to others they had done,
Yet wisely for themselves, they let us alone.

And now on Powder River we have landed safe and sound,
With our pick and our shovels we'l go to digging up the ground,
While the boys back in Iowa must go to war and fight,
We'l stay here till water comes, and then we are all right.

And when the war is over, and our fortunes we have made,
Its then we'l have no use for our pick and our spade.
Here's a health to the girls that are waiting for us to come,
For then we soon shall see the dear ones at home.

A Henry Griffin while seeking the fabled "Gold Bucket Mine" had discovered plasser gold and the town of Auburn had sprung amid Griffin Gulch, Jackass Gulch, Five Bit Gulch, Fortyniner Gulch and Hogen, in what is now Baker County. Upon reaching this area McComas gravitated to Auburn; then to the Powder River plasser mines.

1864 found him in LaGrande and he stayed in Union County nearly all of the next 45 years to engage in many activities and business adventures. In 1866 he was elected county clerk. In 1868 he and John E. Jeffrey founded the Mountain Sentinal in LaGrande. It was moved by him to Union in 1874. 1877 found him a member of the peace commission who went to Wallowa Valley to talk with Chief Joseph.

He was interested in the Black Hawk Gold Mining and Exploration Company. The McComas and Dumphey Mining Company helped promote the sugar beet industry in the Grande Ronde Valley, established the "Grande Ronde Chronicle" in LaGrande. In 1895 founded the "North Pacific Mining Review" at LaGrande.

Possibly one of McComas's most interesting adventures was the manufacturing and sale of his "Whirlwind Kidney and Rheumatic Remedy", which we will briefly describe: McComas had befriended Chief Whirlwind of the Umatilla Indians by helping him avoid having his long hair cut. Whirlwind was very proud of his waist length hair. In turn Whirlwind had come to McComas's aid in a land deal. The two men were close friends.

Whirlwind gave McComas the formula for an Indian medicine made from native Bluemountain plants. McComas manufactured the medicine and put it on the market with a flashy advertising campaign. It was listed by wholesale drug firms of the West coast and continued to sell while the production continued.

A couple of months ago the writer talked to the late Merlyn Allen who ran a drug store at Elgin. Mr. Allen said that the Whirlwind medicine may have had some merit because folks would come back for more. He thought that sales might have continued if the supply had continued.

McComas's last Union County home was a small farm just across the river east of Elgin, on the left of the road to the cemetery presently owned by Harlan Graham. Shortly after he moved from this farm to Wallowa; he died there September 4, 1911.

For detailed history of the 1860's we quote

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Started May 14th 1862 at 3 o'clock from home to Washington Territory. Company: George Walker, C. M. Westfall, Luther Dickey, E. S. McComas.

Started May 14th 1862. Bid friends adieu and started. Travelled to Byington Creek & encamped the first night. (May) 15, came through Iowa City and from there to Esqr Walkers and took dinner. Then came west 10 miles, and encamped here.

Neil took an overdose of eggs here; also had indications of a hard storm but we prepared for it, and after some hard wind and thunder it passed over. Roads very bad. (May 16) Came west 15 miles, encamped with 5 teams from DeWitt, Iowa. Layed by and aired our things. At night we had singing, fiddling and a dance. In the morning of 17 we had a heavy rain. Could not start early, only drove eight miles. This evening Luther and George come up with us, and Westfall took the colic and was bad sick.

Today, 18th, rain all day roads bad. Luther and Westfall both unwell. Camped near the Green Mountain house and had a poor camping place. Put our horses in the stable, and rained all night. Luther slept in the house. Westfall and Luther both still unwell.

Today come through Brooklyn. Drove 20 miles. This morning George and I had a fuss with the landlord about wood; talked dutch to him and made him dry up. Come to Skunk river and camped, turned the horses loose. When we went to catch them I undertook to catch Paddy. He throwed me into a buyo & run over me and throwed me clear under & hurt my leg.

Started from Skunk River and come to Newton, Jasper Co.. Here Luther and I wrote home. Thence west 10 miles. Layed up until noon and aired our things. Here a sharp fellow come to us and we traded Westfall('s) gun and my coat for a watch and oil cloth. Camped within 8 miles of Ft. Demoin. Here we run out of home made bread, and George made flapjacks.

Got an early start, come through Ft. Demoine and thence west 13 miles to Sugar Creek and encamped. Today we crossed Demoine River and Coon River. Trav. 21 miles. Started early and come to the county seat of Dallas County called Adel. Here crossed Middle Coon River on a ferry boat. Travelled today 22 miles. Camped on Cotton Wood Spring Creek. Passed through Redfield & Morrisburg and Dalminntha.

Sund., 25. Crossed Middle River a very small stream. Today we crossed the great Western Divide which separates the waters of the Mississippi & Missouri. Drove 18 miles &

encamped on Turkey Creek. Layed by till Monday. Luther baked bread.

Mond., 26. Come through Grove City, thence to Louis. Encamped 3 miles from Louis a small town on the Nishena Botena River. Had one of the hardest storms I ever saw. Got our things above deck all wet, had to sleep with wet clothes till morning.

Tuesday 27. Came 7 miles. Stopped to get corn; no person at home. We had heared that they had corn to sell at 25 cents. We measured up 2 bu. put 50 cents under the door step & come on. Drove today 25 miles, crossed the west branch of the Nishenabotena. Today saw a dog completely give out; considered it first sign of hardships to come.

28th. Come 25 miles. Got within 2 miles of "Council Bluffs", camped on Mosquitoe Creek. At night we come to town. Luther, Corneil, myself and a fellow by the name of Don Clark went around town. Took him to see the "Elephant", had an old time.

29. Today we left Corneil with the wagon. George, Luther and I went to the Bluffs to prospect for our outfit. Told Don Clark in the evening that they were enquiring about him in town and were going to have him arrested for depradations committed the evening before. Told him he had better run if he saw any person coming on horseback. Saw a man coming soon & he run about a mile and hid. Had to go and hunt him up in the evening.

30. Moved our camp to town. I sold Luther's wagon for $33.50 here. Luther went in with us; going to hitch four horses to our wagon. Very rainey today. Here Corneil and I traded off our partnership watch. May 31. Bought our outfit and packed up.

Sunday June 1. Stayed in camp today. Luther bought a poney, saddle and bridle for $36. Stood guard this evening for the first on account of horse thieves. Council Bluffs is a hard town; horse thieves, gamblers and appear to rule the place.

2nd. Crossed the Big Muddy Missouri, come through Omaha City and thence west one mile. Here George went to Florence to see his uncle. 3rd. 5 miles. Come today to Elk Horn. 20 miles. Encamped with a big train. Here we saw the first Indians. They were Pawnees. 4th. Drove 18 miles, come through Fremont. Here our dog gave out. Here had a poor camping place. Lots of Indians come to camp to beg and steal. I burned one's back with my sun glass and gave another bread with cyyan pepper. They sloped.

5th. Drove 21 miles. Come through North Bend, crossed Shell Creek. Encamped with a very large train but turned out from the correll and stood our own guard.

Frid. 6. Drove 16 miles, come through Columbus and crossed Loup Fork of the Platte. Had to unhitch George's horse today and let him follow, he was so lame. Here Westfall was so homesick he layed down and could not do anything. This evening saw Sim Burge on his way to California.

7th. Drove 13 miles. Had to work 3 horses. Stayed on the banks of the Platte. Here Dr. Jones' horse come very near dying; had to lay bye over Sunday. 8th. Layed bye till Monday, done chores and played Ecre. 9th. Started early, encamped on the Platte at warm Slough. Drove 25 miles. 10th. Travelled without any event of note 25(miles).

11th. Come to Evan's Ranch 12 miles, here got our wagon tire re-set; cost us $4.00. Thursday 12. Just as we got ready to start the Iowa City boys come up with us. We were glad to see them. Come on till noon, 18 miles. Here Luther's mare got choked. Run her and poured lard down then drove to Boyd's Ranch, 8 miles. Here is the Nebraska Centre P.O..

13th Come opposite Ft. Kearney, 8 miles, waited for John Henley to get his wagon tire re-set. Drove 8 miles and encamped. 14th, come to Elm Creek in the forenoon, 15 miles; poor water and grass. Thence to Buffalo Creek, 15 miles. Today the wind blowed the dust so bad that we could hardly see.

Sunday, 15. Layed by till Monday. George Walker and I went hunting. George snapped three times at an antelope with an empty gun. Walked 15 miles without water; hot day was very dry.

Monday, 16. Started early drove 12 miles and encamped for noon on the prairie. The country through here is smooth and level as far almost as the eye can reach, without any timber and very little water except the Platte which is always so muddy that it looks like dish water. Days hot nights cool. Then drove to the Platte in the afternoon, 12 miles. This morning a ragged man who pretended to be crazy come to our camp. He said he was going to Salt Lake. Encamped with the city boys.

17th. Drove 12 miles, eat dinner on the prairie by a station. Paid here $2.00 for a bushel of corn then drove 8 miles to Paatte. 18th. This morning George Walker, Ed Harrison and me went hunting, saw no game. Drove to the "Pawnee Springs" beautiful springs surrounded by a natural fortification of hills. Drove 12 miles. Here again the crazy

man come to camp about 12 o'clock at night.

19th. Come 12 miles and eat dinner at "Boiling Springs" beautiful springs of clear cold water named from the manner in which it boils out of the ground. Crossed Black Mud Creek which was very bad. Passed Sim Burge & train. Thence 11 miles to a good spring. Here encamped with 83 wagons. Had a dance at night. 20th. This morning come to where the bluffs come to the river. Drove 13 miles over sand hills, had a very hard day on our team. At night had a regular nor-west thunder storm. Westfall's horse was sick tonight.

21st. Drove 10 miles to Rattlesnake River. Dinner. Come to a bad slough & swamped all four of our horses down. Had to unload our things. Dr. Jones broke his wagon tongue. No wood now for 80 miles back none before us for 150 miles; use buffalo chips Platte Valley coal.

22nd. Layed bye today. Carried wood 2 miles. Elected Andrew Hunter for our captain. 23rd. Come 18 miles. Come over one sand hill of one mile which we had to double teams. Passed Ash Hollow on the opposite side of the river. 24th. Come 12 miles. Crossed Castle River a very small but beautiful river. Passed Castle Bluffs opposite side of the river, thence 12 miles to Platte.

25th. Drove 12 miles. Passed ancient bluff ruins. These are large bluffs of soft white rock some of them 200 ft. high. They look like old ruined castles. Here I took the first sight of Chimmney Rock & Court House Rock. Drove 15 miles. Met 100 Mormon teams going to Florence, N. T. for emigrants.

26th. Passed Court House Rock & come within 8 miles of Chimney Rock. Drove 22 miles. 27th. Passed Convent Rock today. The Iowa City boys drove on faster than we wanted to; we let them go so here we parted. Had a thunder shower as we passed Scotts Bluffs. Drove 27 miles. 28th. Encamped on a small creek; lots of Sioux Indians come to camp. Drove 25 miles. Sunday, 29th. Moved up 14 miles to Raw Hide Creek in sight of the Black Hills. 30th. Went 14 miles to Ft. Larramie & layed bye the rest of the day. Went to the fort and had an "adventure".

July 1st. Come from the fort, got 4 letters. Come 8 miles & encamped. 2nd. Luther went after letters back to the fort. Drove 8 miles & come down a very bad hill. Let our wagon down with ropes. 3rd. Drove 16 miles over bad roads in the Black Hills.

"Friday, July 4th, 1862". Passed Larramie Peak. Drove

18 miles. 5th. Passed 86 Mormon teams, drove 18 miles. George & I went hunting, killed one sage hen & crippled a wolf. "Played hell". 6th. Layed bye washed and baked. 7th. Drove 15 miles, camped on Platte near some Canadian French trader ranch. 8th. Come 10 miles. Had poor grass, come 8 miles had good grass. Rained a mild rain till 10 o' clock which stopped the mosquitoes.

9th. Come 25 miles through awful sand & bad hills. Had to let our wagons down with ropes. Come to the lower Platte bridge. 10th. Here we crossed to the south side of Platte on the bridge and come up 5 miles to avoid a big sand hill. Crossed back. Only cost 50 cents. They charged wagons that had come all the way on the south side $5.00. Come 10 miles and stopped where the mosquitoes were thicker than any person who had never been west of Omaha could imagine.

11th. Travelled today over bad roads. Come 14 miles & camped at a deserted station where the people had left on account of danger from the Indians. Formed our wagons into a line of defense from the house to the stables. Doubled the guard but saw no Indians. This was at Willow Springs.

12th. Come 10 miles to a good spring for dinner then 8 miles to Grease Wood Creek. Here Luther Dickey got mad at George Walker and swore he would take his team off in the morning. "Sunday," 13th. Eventful day. Luther was going to take off his team & other things & leave us. We settled up & George & I owed him $7.75 each. We here sold him our interest in the wagon and harness for $50.00. Here got a man by the name of Tom Baldwin to haul our things. He is going to Oregon. We kept George's horse to ride. Baldwin and I here chased 4 men on horseback about 10 miles; thought they were loose horses. Come to "Independence Rock," 14 miles. Went over the rock & read names & wrote mine. This is a large stone of granite some 400 yards long & 250 or 300 ft. high on the bank of Sweet Water. It contains the names of thousands of travellers and gold hunters.

14th. Went up to Devil's Gate; could not cross Sweet Water. Come back to the Rock, crossed on a toll bridge & come up again to the Devils Gate, 7 miles. 15th. Travelled up Sweet Water 10 miles. Passed the Pound Gap where the Denver Road comes in. Come 8 miles & encamped on the river. Swam our stock over & back for grass.

16th. Started early. Come 6 miles. Met a company of soldiers. Stopped for grass, then come 10 miles further. Passed the three crossings, come through bad sand. 17th. Come in sight of the first snow on the mountains. Passed Ice Springs. Had a cold rain & hail 17th of July & nearly froze

with our overcoats on. Drove 20 miles without grass. Camped on Sweet Water.

18th. Forded Sweet Water & come 5 miles for dinner. Come 6 miles to South Pass City. This afternoon I was taken sick; bones ached head ached. Thought I was going to have the mountain fever. 19th. Our stock started to stampede last night but we stopped them. Drove 10 miles & one of our men saw 50 Indians. 20th, Sunday. Layed bye.

21st. Come to Sweet Water. Had an introduction to Old Bridger. He gave us a description of the road to Ft. Hall via of Lander's Cut off. Come 12 miles, fell in with & formed into a company of 16 wagons with a Dever company. We number about 35 men. Elected William Jack captain. Come along the base of the Wind River Mts. I went hunting & got sick.

22nd. Come 8 miles. Crossed the last crossing of Sweet Water. Are now going through the Great South Pass along a creek, the last water that puts into the Atlantic Ocean. 23rd. Crossed Little Sandy, drove 25 miles, crossed Big Sandy & encamped. No grass here. Entered a large & beautiful valley in sight of the snow on the Green River Range or Eastern Rim of the Great Basin. 24th. Started just at daylight & before breakfast drove 10 miles & found grass here. Stopped for breakfast here. We left Old John, George Walker's horse to die of rattlesnake bite. It was like leaving a friend tried & true. Drove 10 miles to Green River or Rio Colorado.

25th. Could not cross without making a ferry out of our wagon boxes or going 10 miles down to a little ferry owned by a couple of emigrants. Went down & encamped. Had a dance. 26th. Crossed our wagons on the ferry. Had to swim our stock. Had lots of trouble to get them over, come near getting one man drowned. Got all over by 12 o'clock. Here we left 5 of our men who bought the ferry. Come 5 miles to a small creek and encamped. This is where a great deal of depradations have been committed by the Indians & white Jayhawkers on the emigrants. We will here keep a sharp lookout. This evening a party of 5 men from another train come up to us with the ferrymen who crossed us over the river. They had taken them prisoners thinking them to be horse thieves as their horses had been stampeded the night before. They proved their innocence by men in our train who were acquainted with them & will travel with us a few days. Their names are Waters and John McGavern.

27th. This morning we heard the firing of about 100 guns which we thought was from a train attacked by Indians. Come about 2 miles & saw a band of Indians & white men cross the road ahead of us. As they appeared to be tired we now suppose the firing to be from a fight between two companies

of Jayhawkers. Come 8 miles to Bear Creek. Here is the grave of a man killed by Indians. There was a fight here in which two more white men were badly wounded.

28th. Drove to Lead Cache Creek, 10 miles, thence 4 miles to another. 29th. Here started up a deep canyon, along a creek called Squaw Creek. Here had the bad roads. Come 8 miles George Walker Bill McFate & I went hunting & scouting. Saw no game but lots of Indian sign. Come 5 miles & encamped in the ravine surrounded by cedar & pine timber, good place for Indians to attack us. Had no trouble.

30th. Drove 8 miles to a creek called Piney. Here one of Baldwin's oxen fell down & died in a very few minutes & Watson broke his wagon. Stopped for dinner on this creek in the pine timber surrounded by high mountains covered with snow. Come 11 miles, passed the grave of a man who had been murdered or killed by the Indians & buried by a train ahead of us. Camped in the canyon.

31st. Started very early, drove 13 miles over the worst hills & canyons I have seen yet. It was cold enough last night to freeze ice strong enough to bear the weight of a man. Stopped for dinner in the middle of the road. Willows so thick we could not get out of it. On Le Barges Fork of Bear River had to follow the channel of the creek for 4 rod with our wagon over boulders as big as a washtub. Drove 4 miles & encamped. Had no grass till tonight of any account for 3 days.

August 1, Friday, 1862. Drove 8 miles over the mountains to Smith's fork. Here we entered a beautiful valley of good grass good water good wood. Cattle all tired men all tired & mad except me & George. Here we stopped about the middle of the afternoon to lay bye a day and a half. 2nd. Layed bye. I washed up our clothes mended patched today in the afternoon. Everybody is busy, some shoeing cattle some baking some washing some patching clothes mending boots fixing wagons making a whip lash cleaning a gun. Everyone has something to do. Ah, how different a life is this than living in the States.

3rd. Sunday. Layed bye till noon. Here George Walker & I got a man by the name of Saml. Hindman to haul our things. We will now cook our grub with nothing but a frying pan to cook in but that is enough for two certainly & a frying pan will cook more than we will have to cook in it soon & then we can throw that away. We come 9 miles this afternoon & encamped in a beautiful park in the mountains. This afternoon Baldwin lost a fine stallion with a disease which appears to kill almost all the horses that die on the roads.

They get stupid and commence swelling, generally in the breast & die in a very short time.

4th. Started early, drove 20 miles. This afternoon a man by the name of Neil Dowey & Myself saw where 2 bear had crossed the road. We followed them about 2 miles & killed one of them. At night we went over mountains & fallen pine to our bear with 7 other men & carried it to camp. We got in all tired enough today.

5th. Started early, drove through a canyon of about fifteen miles & encamped in a very nice valley. We today made arrangements to have Mrs. Hindman cook our grub. We now sleep on the ground in the open air. Heretofore we have slept in Mr. Watson's tent but as he lost a horse yesterday and had to leave one wagon we cannot use it any longer. Well we are tough & a tent is very unhandy to get in & out of so we are better off.

6th. Started early. This morning Neil Howey, George Walker and I went hunting. We saw no sign of game. Walked 15 miles. Passed a large lake with rushes growing in it. Drove 20 miles, had to carry our water 2 miles. 7th. This morning we saw four bear track in the road and seven of us went after them. Dave Rook and I found a cavern in a rock with bear sign. We followed it in about sixty feet and found its nest. We heard the bear go back farther into the cavern but could not follow owing to the hole going up about ten feet. One of the women, Mrs. Mann, took the scurvy. We travelled about 20 miles.

8th. Started early this morning. Our captain & one of our men with two others started on to Fort Hall & went in advance of the train some eight miles and found an Indian who they supposed to be a scout. They went on and saw about twenty Indians and come back. Soon after we saw about 12 men coming to our corral. We got our guns in trim but they proved to be a party of Californians on a prospecting tour who had just had a fight with a party of Indians. They had fourteen horses shot and also all their packs taken and four men wounded one shot through the lungs one through the hips one through the thigh and one in the knee. We took them in & waited for another train to come up to get a doctor. Bound up their wounds the best we could. With them & the other train who will very probably travel with us we number something near 90 men. Travelled today 10 miles.

9th. Layed bye all day. 18 men of us went out to look after the Indians and found 4 men killed and scalped laying in the road with indications of a hard fight. Their wagon was left, flour coffee bacon & laying scattered around.

We found a wagon track leading off toward the hills. Followed it about three miles & it got so late in the evening that we could not get to the corral before dark so we could not follow any further as we were afraid that they would attack our train in our absence at night. As we come home saw 15 Indians. I stood guard tonight. The Indians come in the night within 200 yards of camp. I gave the alarm & roused the train. They let us alone that night.

10th. Drove 10 miles. Come to where the men were killed. Took them and put them in the wagon. Brought them to where we camp, gave them as decent a buriel as we could. 11th. Drove 6 miles, come to a deep canyon. When our train was fairly in the canyon our scouts come in on the run & reported Indians. G. Walker, Neil Howie & I with 3 others took to the rocks to gain the high ground so as to fight them away from the train. They come up & proved to be a part of the train who had been attacked going back with the ferrymen & some friendly Indians to bury the dead. Drove 2 miles through the canyon & entered a large valley with a round mountain some 8 miles further.

12th. We layed bye till 2 o'clock. Found it 800 miles to the Salmon River mines & 200 to Deer Lodge Valley. Nobody new where they were going. Some wanted to go to Oregon some to California some to Walla Walla & some to Deer Lodge. Walker & I were for Deer Lodge but could not get our things hauled. Here my friend Neil Howie, Madison, Wisconsin, left us for Deer Lodge. We drove 3 miles & encamped.

13th. Drove 8 miles, crossed Port Neuf River on a ferry boat made out of two skiffs. Layed bye till morning & wrote a letter to Lit and father to send to Salt Lake by our wounded Californians, four of who left us here for the States. Eight go on with us. Here also Tom Laven struck for Salt Lake to winter. We go to Walla Walla Valley.

14th. Drove 20 miles, encamped on the bluffs near Port Neuf's junction with Snake. Mosquitoes oh God! 15th. We drove today 14 miles. Come to the American Falls on Snake River forty miles from Fort Hall. Here the river rushes through a chasm over rocks plunging & whirling.

16th. Drove 15 miles, crossed several small streams and had very heavy roads on account of the rain yesterday. Had a shower of rain today a very uncommon thing in this country. Come in the forenoon to where 13 wagons had been attacked and taken by Indians, one man & one woman killed and three more wounded. The man's name was C. Bullwinkle from New York, Aug. 9. Come in the afternoon to where another train had been attacked and found the graves of 5 men, one my old friend Andrew I. Hunter from Iowa City killed Aug. 9th, 1862, one G. Luper, from Iowa, Massin O. Liffe

Aug. 9, G. W. Adam aged 24 years killed Aug. 10. James E. Steel, Rufus C. Mitchell, James A. Hart, R. G. Parmley, Jarremiah McMann were the names of the men that we found scalped Aug. 9th. McMann we did not find - Martin Moran was the name of the first man that we come to that had been killed by Indians. He was one day's drive west of Green River.

17th. Last night our cattle got scared at a dog and come near stampeding. We thought the Indians had come to try us a round. Every man was out with his gun in double quick. Travelled this forenoon 10 miles & crossed Raft River. From here we have to make eighteen miles without water or grass. Layed bye till 3 o'clock and started over the sage plains. Roads very rocky. Come 6 miles and encamped. Put the cattle in the corral without water or grass. Found here the grave of Mr. G. W. Sanders of Keokuk, Iowa, died July 27th. He had his horses stolen by Indians at Green River & stayed & hunted for them & exposure & trouble throwed him into a fever from which he died. Also found the grave of Miss E. I. Adams, killed by Indians Aug. 9th, '62 aged 26 years. Here the Smith Weston train had been attacked by Indians. They killed 4 Indians & wounded 8 more without getting any of their men very much hurt. This road seems to be a continual battle-ground. We look for them every minute.

Monday 18th. We started this morning before breakfast at daylight & drove to Willow Creek, 12 miles for breakfast or dinner. Got there at 10 o'clock. Layed bye till 2 o' clock, started out & drove 4 miles and one of the train broke an axel tree. Stopped & corrolled & waited until morning. 19th. Got a late start, drove 10 miles to where the road struck Snake River. Drove then to Goose Creek, 8 miles and stayed all night. Here the wild rye grows as high as a man's head on horseback. Saw a great many sage hens here. 20th. Drove 15 miles over very rocky roads. Stopped for dinner near Snake River and had to lay bye the rest of the day to fix another wagon. I stood guard here the after part of the night.

21st. Drove 12 miles, dust six inches deep to a small creek for dinner. Drove 10 miles to another creek and encamped. 22nd. Last night the Indians stole four head of cows from out of our drove. They come close up to the wagons and drove them away with four men on guard. In the morning we concluded to follow. Moved the train on a hill to take a stronger position. Fifteen men volunteered, me among the rest. We followed them about twelve miles up a deep canyon, looking for an ambush every minute, but could not overtake them. Got back at sundown. Had a trial last night in the train about a stolen purse.

23rd. We drove 18 miles. Ten mile from camp this morning we crossed Canyon Creek. Here found where 8 Indians had come down the canyon before us. Stopped for dinner and eight of us followed them, but they come on down the creek below where the train camped. This evening seven men with pack horses come close to us, and rode on past us to camp, which looked very suspicious. We expect to see them again, think they are outlaws in connection with the Indians as this is no place for seven men to be without more. The country is here a vast plain covered with artimesia or wild sage brush composed of burnt rocks and damned bad dust and inhabited by horned toads rattlesnakes and the damned Snake Indians. Passed bye where Cap. Kenneday's train had killed 3 Indians & had one man wounded on Aug. 20th.

24th. Left Canyon Creek, had to make 17 miles without water. Come ten and stopped on the plains, then come to Snake River and encamped. A train of 65 wagons left here three days ahead of us. 25th. This morning an Indian come into camp on his poney. Some of us were in favor of shooting him and some not. He had come with three salmon to trade off. Come 8 miles to Salmon Falls some two miles. Here the opposite side of the river is about one hundred feet high in bank and a large river comes in about half way down the bank. It has sunk someplace and breaks out here the same as large springs. It is covered over with rocks and falls in like the waters over a mill dam.

26th. We had to lay bye today on account of Mrs. Davis being sick. Today is not doubt a very busy day in the States. It is with some here. Some are washing some mending some baking some playing cards some reading some trading with the Indians who are around camp all the time.

27th. Had to make another long drive of 18 miles without water down to where we would again strike Snake River over such roads as are not to be found in any other country only this. Hot and so dusty that a driver could not see his oxen. Got through about sundown. Stood guard here three miles from camp. Layed down at one o'clock in the sage brush and slept till morning. 28th. Had another drive of 18 miles without water. Started at ten o'clock. Very bad roads and hard hills. Got through after dark. Come along a canyon about 3 miles here where there was not a breath of air & the dust raised up so thick that a person could hardly get their breath.

29th. Last night the Indians come and stole a poney from the train. Drove 12 miles. 30th. Come 8 miles over very bad roads. We are now fairly on the desert of poor feed for 150 miles & feeding flour. Come 7 miles this afternoon. Here our Capt. Wm. Jack resigned and after a good deal of talk and jaw Mr. Wm. Carseley was elected. This afternoon

two of our boys tried to come down the river on a wagon box and got wrecked & had to swim ashore. One of them lost his pants. Sunday 31st. Drove 14 miles. Passed large sand mounds to our left. Here Hull's division left us. So hot that we could not drive till late in the evening.

September 1st. Waiting on the boys to drive up the cattle on Snake River. The first day of fall. We have been all summer coming here and are now going to try it in the fall. Come 7 miles to Catharine Creek or Middle River. Met a pack train and about 100 soldiers going to Salmon Falls. We found two hundred soldiers encamped on this creek and also the Iowa City boys with also Capt. Kenneday's company. We was very glad to see them. It looked almost like home to see a face that we knew was once familiar to us in Iowa. Found them in tolerable good spirits. A. J. Cassady was shot in the hip with a boll and John Henley shot in the arm by an arrow.

2nd. Layed bye all day on this creek and recruited our stock. Loafed in camp all day. A scene in camp in such a time as this is one of curiosity indeed. Looking up this creek from where I sit the three trains with the soldiers' encampment looks like a town. Tents are spread, women washing & cooking, children playing, men busy at all different occupations, horses picketed, droves of cattle laying around.

3rd. Hitched up and drove 15 miles before we stopped for grass. Camped on Snake River, found grass in the hills two miles from the road. Today found a skeleton near the river. Camped near the Iowa City boys also near Kenneday's train.

4th. Drove 18 miles. Come in the forenoon eight miles to the river for dinner. Then come ten miles to Castle Creek. Here are large hills of burned rock which look like old ruined castles. Camped near Kenneday & Bristl's train. 5th. Started from Castle Creek, drove 7 miles to Burnt Rock Creek. Here had no grass at all. Here we rested and watered our cattle and prospected for gold. Found from five to fifteen grains or colors of gold in each pan. Here we had to climb the worst hill on the Oregon road. Doubled teams and got up by four o'clock. Had then to go 18 miles for water & grass. Drove 7 miles and encamped on the table. 6th. Got up at 3 o'clock, and started for water before breakfast. Got in at 9 o'clock. Drove 9 miles got breakfast and then come 8 miles to Current Creek. Layed bye till morning. Had a dance and negro performance.

Sunday, 7th. Layed bye all day. Went up Current Creek prospecting. Could raise the color. Come back and in the afternoon had preaching in our corral by Capt. Bristle the fighting Capt. of the Iowa City train. Had a sermon from the

8 Chapters & 28 verse of Romans. It was a curious group for to be at church, the men with Bowie knives and revolvers to their belts, in their shirt sleeves & buckskin pants, with one exception. One old fellow sit up as stiff as a churndash with a starched shirt and a linen coat on. It did not look much like a basket meeting in the States where roast turkey & roast chicken, pies, cakes, and everything good such as we dream of seeing are on the table or in the basket..

8th. Got an early start. Drove to Boiling Springs, seven miles. These are two large and beautiful springs, the water looking cool and inviting with a sulphuric smell but it is so hot that a person can not hold their hand in it. Sufficiently hot to boil eggs. Drove 10 miles beforenoon. Had to wait at noon to repair a broken wagon. Come 6 miles and encamped without grass. The country all the way down the Snake River is one of the most desolate and dreary waste in the world. Light soft ground with no soil on top, looking like an ash heap, dust six inches deep and as light as flour. When a man travels all day in it he looks like a miller. You can see nothing but his eyes and them look red. The dust is here so light that it sometimes raises 300 feet above the train. The ground is covered with two of the most detestable shrubs that grows, grease wood and artimecia or wild sage. The whole face of the country shows that it has at some time been burned to cinders.

9th. Got out early. Drove 10 miles to a point on the river, then come ten miles broke a wagon and had to leave it this afternoon which hindered us some. Camped on the river. 10th. Drove 5 miles down the river, then left the Snake River and come 10 miles across to the "Owyhee" River. Crossed this and layed bye to kill a beef. Here one of the boys went back to get an oxen that had been left & found it shot and its throat cut by the Indians. He started back and an Indian shot at him which hurried him in to camp.

11th. Had to drive another long drive without water. Started early, drove 10 miles without water, made a dry camp at noon, then come 8 miles to the "Malhue" River and encamped. This afternoon we met two men carrying the express to the soldiers at Catharine Creek and got from them the first news in regard to the war in the States. Heard that Maj. Gen. Hallick was now Secretary of War. Encamped on the Malhue.

12th. Crossed the Malhue and come 7 miles through an alkali valley which might properly be termed Carron Valley from the great number of dead cattle which are here. Come in the afternoon 9 miles to a spring. This afternoon it clouded up, and the wind commenced blowing, and turned cold. It looks slightly like freezing to death, now slightly like

starving to death, very much like being blowed away in a hurricane, and a good prospect of being killed by Indians, to say nothing of dieing for want of tabacco. Through all these fiery ordeals we expect to come out all O.K.. This evening a man come to us who had left two teams behind and started to overtake two that are ahead of us. The Indians come to him on the Malhue and took his pack off & took what they wanted.

13th. Started out this morning, the cattle looking very hard on account of the cold rain during the night. Come 9 miles to a small creek, stopped for dinner, then come 4 miles to Snake River. Today I counted twenty seven head of dead cattle laying along the road.

Sunday, 14th. We are just four months from home today and four months it has been too of dust hard work and hard fare. We drove 5 miles to Burnt River and encamped in the long dreaded Burnt River canyon near a pile of sculls of a train that were massacreed in '52 here. After we had come over four hundred miles together to come through this canyon united, our Captain resigned and we are now going it every fellow for himself. I traded my shotgun today for a double barrelled rifle.

15th. Everybody for themselves this morning. Some started at daylight and some when they got ready. Kenneday's train ahead of us, Bristle's in the rear, we travelled up the canyon 16 miles and encamped in it on the river. Ten wagons strong now look out for Indians.

16th. All got up this morning with our hair on and nothing wrong. Started up the Burnt River canyon. Travelled four miles up the river, then left it and followad up one of its branches 5 miles, then come again to the river 8 miles and encamped on one of its tributaries. Today we have been entering a more fertile country than we have been in during our forty years pilgrimage in the wilderness. The sagebrush is beginning to run out, grease wood is getting scarce and in its place we find large meadows of wild rye. Everybody are in a hurry but us. We pass and repass small trains of five or six wagons. Some call themselves the Wild Cats some the Pole Cats and all such names the boys of the different trains give each other. Thirty miles more will take us to the new mines on Powder River to the new miners town of Auburn, our present destination. No doubt some of us would like to see a house once more, it would indeed look like home. Home - I wonder how far it si from here there. It would take a bigger head than mine to run back over all the road and recollect it.

17th. Left Burnt River this morning and struck across the hills. Travelled 8 miles, come up a very steep hill about 3/4 of a mile high and eat dinner. Then come 4 miles up a

small creek. Here we had to make 18 miles to Powder River without water. Eat our supper, watered the cattle and come 5 miles and encamped. This afternoon George Walker went on ahead to get our saddle and did not come back.

18th. Started early. Come 8 miles to where the emigrants seaparates, those going to the mines turn to the left, those going to Willammett and Wallah Wallah Valleys to the right. Here was a grand division. Some men who had come together from the States, one would want to go on and the other would want to go to the mines. Things were thrown around in all shapes. Some were going through with packs, some without. Here was a general shaking of hands and bidding good bye. The people of the train had come so far and travelled so long and passed through danger together over such a long and toilsome journey that many of them had become fast friends. Our team turned for Auburn. We came 5 miles to a hole of water and stopped for dinner.

19th. Come to Auburn. Found it a town of about 200 houses. Saw a man hung, miners at work.

20th. Stayed with the Iowa City boys all day & wrote home. Sunday, 21st. Layed around camp and finished my letter.

22nd. Come to Auburn, bought two town lots to build our cabins on. 23rd. Moved up to Auburn. From this time up to the 28th busied ourselves by cutting and hauling logs for our cabin.

28th. Started for The Dalles, 250 miles, with a wagon and three yoke of oxen to get provisions for winter. Started alone, drove 10 miles to the foot of the mountains. Encamped alone in Powder River Valley, cooked my own supper smoked my own tabacco & slept in my wagon. Drove 24 miles.

29th. Drove 20 miles to Grand Ronde Valley. Here I overtook our old Capt. Wm. Jack and five others of our train going to the Dalles after provisions. Come down a hill two miles long & 10 steep into Grand Ronde.

Oct. 1st, 1862. Last night it snowed on the mountain. Drove 11 miles. 2nd. Drove 5 miles beforenoon. Here we took the new road to Ft. Dalles. Crossed Grand Rone River 16 times. 3rd. Come to where we crossed and followed up Boulder Creek. Crossed this 27 times. Camped at the last crossing. Here we heard our cattle going off in the night. We thought they were being driven off, armed ourselves and went after them but found it a false alarm.

4th. Snowed on us last night. Drove 20 miles through a cold rain. Got to the foot of the mountains. 5th. Drove to Birch Creek, 5 miles. Still snowing and raining. Today I seen the first corn I have seen growing since I left home. Drove 8 miles made a dry camp. Sunday, 6th. Drove 18 miles to Butter Creek. Come 2 miles in the afternoon. I am now writing by the campfire, the coyotes howling all around me.

7th. Drove 16 miles, made a dry camp. 8th. Drove 8 miles to Well Springs then come 8 miles, made a dry camp. 9th. Come 7 miles to Willow Creek, come 8 miles, made a dry camp. 10th. Come to Rock Creek, down this five miles. 11th. Crossed John Day River, drove 11 miles to Mud Springs. 12th. Come then to Spanish Hollow. 13th. Come to DesChutes River, 4 miles, crossed this on a ferry, cost $4.00 a team. Come to within 6 miles of The Dalles.

Monday, 14th. Got the The Dalles. It is now five months today since I left home and I am within sight of the snow capped summitt of Mt. St. Helen at Puget Sound and at the foot of Mt. Hood.

Nothing much of importance occurred on our journey back. Got back safe and sound. Got to Auburn November 11th and found the folks all well. George was working at $2.50 per day. The town which started early in the spring now contains as many as 1,000 houses and some 60 stores. A Spaniard killed two men here with a knife. The miners took him and drug him down town by the heels and then hung him. A greaser shot into the crowd and wounded 3 men. The miners shot him. We have traded for the one half of two claims on freeze out gulch and now are working them.

Friday, Dec. 12. The first snow of any consequence fell here today.

Sunday, Dec. 21st. Worked in our claims all week. All well. This is a beautiful day. Last Tuesday Ed Harrison got some Iowa City papers which were read by us all with deep interest.

December 25th. "Christmas" in the mines. We worked all day in the claims from the fact that there was nothing to do for amusement, unless we went and got "drunk" which none of us were disposed to do, altho it seemed from the number of drunken men on the street that nearly every person engaged themselves that way.

December 31st. The last day of 1862. Today we worked in the drift all day and rocked out 8 dollars besides got out about 500 wheelborough loads of dirt to sluice in the spring.

A JOURNAL FOR 1863

January 18 & 19 was two of the hardest days work that I have ever experienced up to this time. Ed and Charley Harrison and myself started for Bear Gulch 16 miles from Auburn. We started about 11 o'clock on Sunday the 18th, expecting to get through by night but when we got to Minersville, 8 miles, we found we could not make the trip. It had snowed on us all day and we were carrying each 60 pounds. We stayed all night with a miner and slept on the floor. The next day, Monday, 19th, we started on our next 8 miles, the snow from 2 to 3 feet deep in the trail and snowing as it only can in the Blue Mts.. We got through just at dark, all of us about as near gave out as we ever were - hungry, tired, but jolly as coons, not desponding nor no complaining.

January 23rd, 1863. This was my birthday, being twenty-four years old. Celebrated this important occasion by working to get ready to do our first rocking on Bear Gulch.

February 1st, 1863. Today C. M. Harrison and myself went to Auburn to bring us some more grub having run out of both grub and tobacco of course it was impossible to get along.

February 2. We hired a mule and put on about 175 lbs. and started again for Bear Gulch but on the home stretch our mule commenced to lose ground and when within about four miles of home it gave out, got down in the snow. We had to unpack the mule and leave our provisions piled up for the night come on, the snow blowing so that one of us had to go ahead to hunt the trail and had to carry the feed for our mule ourselves. This time I was nearer gave out than on the 19th of January. I had a good appetite too, so much so that raw beef and flour tasted delicious.

February 13th. Twelve months ago today I was teaching school in Oakland, Louisa Co., Iowa and attended a dance at Thomas Kelson's one year ago tonight. Nine months ago today, the day before I started for this trip, I was busy at Palestine, packing up and preparing for the journey. Today I am on Bear Gulch, Baker County, Oregon trying hard to make grub with rather a dull show.

February 15th. Sunday. Today was spent in practicing on snowshoes, writing letters and in the solitude of the Blue Mountains in Pine Woods Palace surrounded by tall snow capped peaks and green pine trees, the snow at least four feet deep.

February 22nd. Washington's Birthday. C. M. Harrison and I went to Minersville and carried up each 25 lbs. of flour and celebrated the day by giving three hearty cheers for Washington in the solitude of the Blue Mountains.

March 4th. We have got through the winter and spring finds us not starved to death. We still keep our appetites and good spirits. Today Ed Harrison any myself went to Auburn on snowshoes after grub.

March 5th. George Walker and Ed and I started for Bear Gulch with a hand sled fastened on a pair of snow shoes with 200 lbs. of provision. Got to Minersville the first day. George came up with us to commence to get out sluice lumber.

6th. Ed and me went up the north fork of Powder River about eight miles to get a whip saw. Made the trip in good time on snowshoes. 7th. I went down to Auburn on snowshoes today after some medicine for C. M. Harrison's sore eyes. 8th. Came back from Auburn.

March 20th. Went to Auburn after provisions. Ed got the sad news of the death of his little boy. 21st. Come to Minersville on the trail with 30 lbs. on my back. From Minersville carried 50 lbs. of flour eight miles to Bear Creek on snowshoes. 24th. Finished hauling sluice boxes from McCullock's camp on a hand sled. 29th. Wend down to Auburn, come back to Bear Creek. 30th. Took a severe pain in my temple and left eye and had to lay bye one day.

April 1st. Commenced sluicing on Bear Creek; one set of sluices. 8th. Commenced hauling sluices from Howell's Gulch to Powder River flatts, two miles from Castle La Grande. Saw three camp fires and thought the Indians had come after our "skelps". Come back and got our guns and seven of us went back and found it to be a pack train from Canyon City bound for Boise River. In the afternoon eight of us carried 4 sluice boxes over. We are now going to try mining after fine gold. George has gone to Auburn today (19) after quicksilver for that purpose.

April 23. Come to the conclusion that as we had worked about three months on Bear Creek, and run in debt about $30 each, that we had better consider it a military necessity to withdraw. So George and I packed up and came to Auburn, and the next day hired out for $4.00 a day each.

May 4th. Started for the Eagle River mines. Came ten miles to the toll gate and encamped. I am travelling with a man by the name of A. Eaton. We are taking two ox teams. He is moving a family to the "Cooster Diggings". May 5th. Come to Powder River and took our things over in a canoe and swam the cattle. Hauled our wagons over with a rope, had one to upset, and had to go in and get wet. Come 4 miles and stopped till morning.

May 6th. Travelled 10 miles in the forenoon and stopped for dinner. Then come 12 miles and encamped on Powder River near the mouth of Goose Creek, wind blowing a lively young hurricane. 7th. Waiting today for a boat to come down the river from Auburn to ferry here. Layed around camp all day. Saw one man who said he had prospected the whole country for fourteen days and had only got sixty cents. Saw two men who said they had rocked out $77.50 in one day, and carried their dirt fifty yards. They showed us the dust. Such are the reports from all new diggings.

8th. No boat came yesterday. We are still waiting for the boat and laying around with nothing for amusement. Oh for a few copies of the New York Ledger. 9th. Oh Ye Gods, another day has to be passed in pure and unadulterated laziness waiting for the boat. I'll made no comments on this day's work.

Sunday, 10th. Concluded this morning to make a raft. Another man and me rode 4 miles and carried in poles to make oars for our raft, built a raft out of lumber that had been left here by some persons on their way to the Kouster Diggings. Got our wagons and stock over by sundown. Only had two men fall overboard all day. Camped on the west side of Powder River, tired and wet.

11th. Started over a rough rocky country. No road, have to wind around the head of ravines and drive over boulders and through sage brush. Stopped for dinner on a high rocky hill. Had to carry water one mile. From where I am writing I can see two snow ranges of Mts.

12th. Got in to the Kooster Diggings last evening. Prospected Eaton's claim today. 13th. Prospecting a quarts lead today; found what the boy shot at.

One Year. What changes take place in one year. One year ago I was at home, it being the day before I started for the "West". I was then busy preparing for the trip. One year ago tonight I bade Litt good bye. I am now in the Kooster Diggings in the Snake Indian country with what might properly be called d---d poor prospects.

May 14, 1863. One year from home. Prospected a quarts lead in the forenoon. Went fishing to Powder River in the afternoon. Took our blankets and stayed all night. Killed nine mountain rattlesnakes and one "copperhead", of the old kind.

May the 15th. Slept on the bank of Powder River. This morning in returning to camp, came up canyons and over burnt mountains and beds of lava which no white man ever set foot

on before. Moved our camp some four miles in to a nice grove of pine timber. I am now sitting by the fire baking bread as I have the honor of being chief cook. Took up three claims this afternoon.

16th. Prospected. 17th, Sunday. Took a tramp over to Noyes camp and rambled around over the country. Concluded they had rich diggings and put up notices for ten claims. 18th. Packed our tools grub and blankets over the mountain to Noyes camp to prospect. Rained, so we could do nothing in the forenoon. 20th. Packed back to camp Walker. Intend starting home to Auburn this afternoon. I am baking bread while Chamberlain is cutting timer to make a raft to cross Powder and Eaton is hunting the cattle. Come to the river in the afternoon.

21st. The river very high and the wind blowing very hard. We made our raft and got safely over by noon. Come 16 miles. 22nd. Got to Campbell's Ranch by 12 o'clock. Here swam our cattle with the wagons. Got in to Auburn by dark, back again from the Eagle River mines. Went to work for $4.00 a day.

June 1st. Bought the entire interest in the Monroe and Company claims. 3rd. Water failed on freeze out. 4th. Went to work on the Auburn Canal Company's ditch to get in water: $3.00 a day and board. Worked on the ditch till Saturday noon.

June 13. Hindman and I came to town. Sunday 14th. Went back to the ditch. 26th. Saw a bear. Another fellow any myself went after it and he shot at a log which he thought was the bear. Got a good joke on him. 27th. Come in to Auburn and quit the ditch. We will now go to rocking on our claims. Worked all week.

July the 4th, 1863. Today was spent in working in the claim till about two o'clock A.M.. Then I went down town and helped the post master distribute the mail. This was a very quiet day for the 4th. There was two or three dances in town. Tickets $5.00. I did not go.

A RECORD OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY, OREGON

PREPARED: November 23, 1959

BY: Mrs. Hellen McClune, Dorothy (Smutz) Hicks, Annetta (Johnson) Adakim, Grace (Wright) Powers

COPIED BY: La Grande Senior High School, La Grande, Oregon

DATE: April 24, 1961

This paper was presented at the November 23, 1959, meeting of the Union County Historical Society. It relates the experiences of early Thanksgiving days of their ancestors in Union County.

THANKSGIVING, 1886

By Mrs. Elias Adskim (Annetta Johnson Adskim)

In the fall of 1886 Peter and Mattie Nelson had lived for almost four years on a pre-emption claim on Trout Creek, just west of the present site of Enterprise in Wallowa County, Oregon. Times were hard in Wallowa County; everything had to be freighted in, over the frightening "Wallowa Hill," and supplies were scarce and expensive. The winters were long and cold; what a man could raise on his land could not support a family. Very few settlers had any money at all. A few of those who remained in the Valley eventually prospered. But Peter and Mattie Nelson were ready to give up.

With their three sons and a daughter--a baby daughter was buried in the Alder Slope cemetery--they started about the middle of November, in a covered wagon, for the Grande Ronde. The railroad had reached La Grande four years before (Peter Nelson had worked for a time on the railroad grade from Huntington to La Grande,) and there was said to be plenty of work for all. The first night they camped about where the town of Wallowa later stood, or perhaps a little nearer the mouth of the canyon. The second night they reached the Lias Richards home on Cricket Flat. Lias Richards had come from the same place in Idaho that the Nelsons had left a few years before on their trek westward.

With pioneer hospitality, the travelers were welcomed, and stayed about a week. Peter helped Lias dig a well; (water is still hard to get, on Cricket Flat,) but after a time Lias got discouraged and quit. The well was never finished. The Richards

family stayed on the Flat about two years more, getting water in the summer from a little creek that flowed past their place, and at other times from the spring on the Becker place a little further up the hill.

Mattie Nelson was especially anxious to be on the way; so they all piled in the wagon again and started out for Grande Ronde. It had snowed most of the time they lingered on Cricket Flat, and they had no idea where they would find shelter in the long cold months ahead.

Slowly the team plodded over Cricket Flat down Owenby Hill, across the river and through the little settlement of Elgin, and along a rough timbered road around the hills toward Summerville, then quite a thriving town near the foot of Mount Emily, with timber much closer to the town than it now is. It was the eve of Thanksgiving Day, 1886.

They stabled the team in a livery stable at Summerville, run, it is remembered, by a Mr. McKenzie. If there was a hotel, and there probably was, they could not afford to stay there, so the liveryman told them to spread their blankets on the hay. Across the street, in a two-story wooden lodge hall, a Thanksgiving Ball was going on. Far into the morning the dance continued and the Nelson children went to sleep with the music of waltzes and polkas in their ears, while the snow lay almost two feet deep outside.

In the morning they started south along the snowy road, broken by home-going dancers toward La Grande. As they traversed the valley, the snow became less deep, and before long it was raining and thawing. Toward evening of Thanksgiving Day, they reached La Grande.

Ever since the coming of the railroad in 1882, the buildings in Old Town had been moved one by one down to the new town, and in 1886 house-moving was still going on. Jack Childs and John Hough each owned a house-moving outfit, and almost the first sight the children had of their new home town was of houses being pulled over log rollers by horses operating a sweep.

The Nelson wagon drew up at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Long, whom they had previously known, located in an open space near the railroad. The house sat at about the present location of the McDonald Electric Company on Elm and Jefferson Streets. Where the Slater Building was later erected there was then a livery stable. The covered wagon was placed in the yard, and the Longs allowed the travelers to make a fire outside, to cook over, and there Mattie cooked whatever they had for their Thanksgiving dinner on the eve of Thanksgiving Day. The rain was still

falling on the melting snow, and it rained for days thereafter, and the mud got deeper and sloppier. Within a week, Peter Nelson had obtained from Mr. Noyes, who had a little lumber yard down the street to the east, lumber to erect a small house on the lot presently occupied by the Smith Moving Company, so they had a roof over their heads well before Christmas. The house was later moved across the street and down a block to Spruce Street, where it still stands.

Mr. and Mrs. Long made a living by baking and selling pie and cake to travelers on the passenger trains which stopped at the depot a short distance away. They had three daughters. One married Fred Proebstel, another married a man named Crandall, and the third was still a child when they left La Grande for Portland a few years later.

There was no Thanksgiving feast of turkey and mince pie for the Nelson family that day in 1886, but the children always remembered how thankful they were to be out of Wallowa at last.

They were poor; but most people were in those days, at least according to our standards. They were, however, not content or resigned to being poor--and they didn't expect the government to do anything about it. They had hope, and health and strength and comparative youth, and there was opportunity all around them. They didn't know they were making history; they didn't feel themselves a part of any romantic westward movement; they wouldn't have known what a historical society was. They just did the best they could, and were thankful to be in America, in Oregon, in the Grande Ronde Valley.

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Note: The only daughter of the Nelsons, Mrs. Stena Johnson, (widow of O. O. Johnson) and their son Joseph Nelson, now reside in La Grande (November, 1959). Jim and Fred, their other sons, are deceased. Fred never married. Jim left one daughter, Mrs. Veda Stratton, wife of a Union Pacific official, living in Omaha. The other grandchildren are the writer, wife of a farmer in the Grande Ronde Valley, Alfred J. Johnson, an attorney of Portland, and Dr. Lee C. Johnson, Professor of History at Eastern Oregon College and a member of the Board of Directors of the Oregon Historical Society.

ANNETTA JOHNSON ADSKIM

A RECORD OF THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY, OREGON

PREPARED: November 23, 1959

BY: Kate Gekeler Redhead and Velma McCall Brown; Presented by Dorothy Smutz Hicks

COPIED BY: La Grande Senior High School

This paper was presented at the November 23, 1959 meeting of the Union County Historic Society. It relates experiences of early Thanksgiving days of their ancestors in Union County.

Taken From: "Tales Our Grandmother Told"

PIONEER THANKSGIVING

It had been such a long trip across the plains. We had all been very hungry for something green to eat. We heard that a man in Ordell Canyon had vegetables to sell to emigrants. Mrs. Yount and I started there one day. Each had twenty-five cents, each a baby and one pony between us. One would lead the pony while the other rode and held both babies, then we'd change places. When we got there prices were so high our quarters would hardly buy a thing. We both were so disappointed we just could not keep from crying. Mr. Predmore felt badly too, and ended up giving us some turnips, cucumbers and other vegetables.

Pa and I had bread I made from flour he earned freighting from The Dalles to Boise--and coffee of barley bought in Walla Walla for twenty-five cents per pound. I had a few dried peaches I'd hoarded all the way across the plains. I used to cook--just one in a tin cup--with lots of water. I'd soak bread in this and feed it to the baby. I was afraid to cook more as I was so hungry for them I was afraid I might eat one.

Grandma, Grandpa, and baby, Will, shared their cabin with old Brownie and Jerry one very cold night. Grandpa came in from a raging storm saying, "I guess poor old Brownie and Jerry will be dead by morning, they are too thin to stand this for long." Grandma thought of how faithfully the two animals had pulled them along the trail. Quickly she gathered her household belongings into one end of the cabin--Brownie and Jerry were stowed into the other end. Brownie was later sold to a butcher--a fact which worried and saddened Grandma always--as she felt the good cow should have lived on carefully cared for as long as possible as a reward for her faithfulness to them.

Grandpa Gekeler fenced his claim by a rail fence made of rails which he cut. At this time the family was living on bread and water and greens made of thistles cooked with

meat rinds brought across the plains by Grandma who had intended to use them for soap making.

Grandma on one occasion was quite delighted by a little jar of molasses left for her by a traveler who had spent the night with them. He insisted on so doing to pay for food for his team. Very carefully she portioned it out to Grandpa and the baby, taking none for herself so as to make it last longer. In one family the mother melted all her tallow candles to make gravey for her children.

The first spring here found everyone planting large gardens. Their hopes and toil were in vain for tiny beetles destroyed every plant. The second winter was very cold. On one occasion a stage driver was found frozen to death, his lines in his hands and the mail sacks beside him.

We never let Grandma stop without begging for an Indian story. The Indians especially bothered settlers living in or near the mountains. One day a family returned home to find that Indians had been there in their absence. Their cat had been dipped again and again alternately in molasses and in a feather bed which the Indians had torn open. The poor animal was a horrible sticky mess, many times its original size. The woman was dismayed to see lumps of her home-made yellow butter plastered on fences and trees. The Indians had not found it pleasing to their taste so had amused themselves throwing it.

These and other stories of hardships of the pioneers should cause uf to pause a moment--survey our present bountiful lot and be grateful that so much is ours; realizing at the same time our inheritance. Had it not been for those people we would not be here.

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George and Catherine Gekeler had a family of eleven children:

1.	George William	who died in childhood in the East
2.	William Franklin	Married Edith Carter
3.	Edward Samuel	Married Sarah Wickens
4.	Mary Ann	died of whooping cough at 6 months
5.	Minnie Amelia	Married William J. Hughes
6.	Charles Robert	" Linnea Johnson
7.	Dora May	" Irwin D. Smutz
8.	Fannie Alice	" Ernest H. DeLong
9.	George Oscar	" Lena Bagain
10.	Alma Pearl	" William Art McCall
11.	Nellie Lorena	" Roy J. Spencer

A RECORD OF THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF UNION CO NTY, OREGON

PREPARED: November 23, 1959

BY: Grace (Wright) Powers

COPIED BY: LaGrande Senior High School, LaGrande, Oregon

This paper was presented at the November 23, 1959 meeting of the Union County Historic Society. It relates experiences of early Thanksgiving days of their ancestors in Union County.

EARLY DAY THANKSGIVING

Eighty years ago our parents and grandparents were just as loyal to Thanksgiving as we are today, maybe more so, for they were eighty years closer to the origin of it and how will we know what time does in the way of obliterating things in the past. To us it has grown in to a turkey feast day with hardly a thought of why the turkey, although we do maybe remember from our early history book lessons that wild turkey was the only edible meat to be had by our Pilgrim Fathers, other than deer or other wild meat and it was their desire to give a food offering to themselves and families and to Almighty God in Thankfulness for their newly discovered homes in America. Vegetables and pasteries were few, if at all for the first Thanksgiving dinners. I well remember when Thanksgiving was looked forward to with a great deal more preparedness than now. It was the first big day to celebrate and get together after the 4th of July, and they are four and one half months apart. Now those four and one half months are so filled with celebrations for the many events that progression has brought about that we scarcely have days enough to get them all in. To name them would take too much time.

In the early days Thanksgiving was a day for neighbors from far and near to get together and bring the best food they could prepare from their own gardens and farms. We now call it "pot luck", but that phrase was unknown then. They just brought food. Chicken and dressing was the main meat dish, for until the last sixty years turkeys have not been raised successfully in the West or Mid-West. Thanksgiving in the early days was hog killing time on all farms and that meant wonderful back bones and ribs, not spare, but called spare ribs. Each family made twenty-five or more pounds of sausage. A farmer with a fat beef would kill it and divide with his neighbors, hanging from a sixty to one hundred pound chunk in their wood sheds to freeze as freezers

were unknown then. Later another neighbor would butcher a beef and it would be shared around in like manner. In case quarters were sold outright the price was usually 4¢ a pound. That was back in the nineties. Parts of these good meats always entered the Thanksgiving menus, and always dried apple pies along with mince and pumpkin pies. Not as many salads in the Pioneer dinners but plenty of baked squash and parsnips. Eighty years ago sweet potatoes were not to be had here but a sixty gallon barrel of cider was a common thing in most cellars. It went well with the doughnuts our mothers and grandmothers all knew how to make. They had many gallons of lard stored in five and ten gallon stone jars. A cellar was as necessary as a well for all root vegetables had to be stored in frost proof places. Vegetables were not canned then as now, but some were dried.

My parents homesteaded what is now known as Medical Springs, on the 4th day of December 1867, which is 92 years ago now or will be next month. They only had one neighbor three miles away for three years but by six years time there were eight homestead families within a radius of ten miles, called neighbors. Their names were Martins, Souths, and Vanorders in the Park, five miles, Harsins, Turners, Lewises, Miles and Wilsons on Big Creek. I'd like to say the Martins who settled in the Park became the parents of our member, Rebecca Kockensparger, and eleven years after my parents homesteaded on old Big Creek I arrived to add to the population of that place.

My Mother has told me how the neighborhood gatherings usually were held at their place because their cabin was larger than any of the others. It was 12 feet wide and 16 long, one room made of logs with a fireplace in one end and later they added a small plank kitchen on the other. When these eight families would arrive the first thing was to take down the two beds and carry them outside and set them against the cabin, then carry in the wash bench and cover it with a quilt to set on as there was only four chairs and a home-made rocker, maybe a few home-made stools and several 16 inch lengths of logs which had not been split into wood. While the men were busy talking crops the women were all in the 8 x 12 kitchen getting the meal that later would be served in the front room. It would consist of all the things I have mentioned before. The children, all small, would be everywhere. This was a few years before I arrived. My Mother had eleven free years to help her man with the farm. She was a good milker. The night of a Thanksgiving dinner two wagon loads of miners and their wives would arrive from the Virtue Mine, twenty-five miles away, to have a dance in this big house of 12 x 16 feet. It would last until daylight when they all could see to drive the long miles home. Virtue Mine is twelve miles East of Baker in the sage brush hills and was the first big paying mine, outside of Auburn, that operated many years in Baker County.

Back in the years of this historical sketch there was no Post Office nearer than Baker and Union. The Indians, as

they would be going by to Snake River to fish for sturgeon, all knew to stop in Union and bring the Big Creek mail as far as their friend Dunham's house, where my Mother would always reward them by giving them all the cold biscuits she had on hand. Later years, forty years or so when they had built a hotel I've heard my Father say the Thanksgiving dance they would give would be the biggest of the season because it had been so long since people had been to a dance. There was also more whiskey consumed, and required several good floor managers to keep things straight.

A RECORD OF THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY, OREGON

PREPARED: November 23, 1959

BY: Mrs. Ruth Hughes; Mrs. Hellen McClune.

COPIED BY: La Grande Senior High School

This paper was presented at the November 23, 1959 meeting of the Union County Historic Society. It relates experiences of early Thanksgiving days of their ancestors in Union County.

THE FIRST THANKSGIVINGS OF PEOPLE ON THE YOUNT TRAIN 1862-63 GRANDE RONDE VALLEY

Come with me. Let's go back to one of our first Thanksgivings. All the neighbors and our family were gathered together at the old homestead which was located where the Mt. Emily Mill and the old sugar beet factory used to stand. The log cabin, which was west of the old Mike Carrol place in May Park, built the first fall we landed was with dirt floor and had no stove. A stone fireplace was our only heat. We roasted on one side and froze on the other.

I'm afraid that first Thanksgiving would have looked rather short on variety--as we think of the meal having variety today. We had plenty of deer, elk, antelope, wild geese and duck meat, as the men of the settlement spent much of their time hunting and trapping that first winter.

Grandpa Williamson used to say, "The Grande Ronde was sure full of cougar and bear when we first came here. Why, I remember being out in a wagon one night when the blamed bears kept me awake all night growling and pulling down the bushes for wild berries."

"I remember too, when my brother and I used to go to school with one of the larger neighbor boys because of the danger of wild cats and cougars."

But getting back to our thanksgiving dinner--Our Thanksgiving was pretty much of a home made affair. Some of the neighbors had saved out a sack of flour for the express purpose of having it at Thanksgiving and Christmas; otherwise we would have had whole wheat, ground in a coffee mill, and whole wheat boiled tender (called furmity).

Apples were a luxury as none were grown in this valley; the few apples they were able to get were freighted in from Walla Walla. Each child was rationed out a fourth at a time.

For the next few years the food variety was much greater, if you like dried choke cherries, elder berries, huckle berries, and sarvest berries. These were their only fruits until their orchards started to produce.

If we were fortunate enough to have snow at Thanksgiving, traveling was fairly easy and enjoyable; but if it were "black Thanksgiving" ---we would clomp through mud up to the axles of the wagons.

In spite of hardships all were happy and with much to be thankful for----our own homes; our own land; our own stock; (what there was of them); and a feeling of Oneness, and a purpose in life.

A RECORD OF THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY OREGON
PREPARED: JANUARY 1960
BY: BERNAL D. HUG
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THE CROSS ROADS AT LOCHOW LOCHOW

Through many many centuries of history an outstanding focal point of travel has been at the location of the new high school in Elgin. In fact this was the central point of an ancient Indian land; a land that itself held a unique position on the Pacific slope.

The valleys of the Grande Ronde were held in common by the various tribes. It was sort of an international area where all might come and be in peace. We say valleys because in the Indian method of speaking the river and its surrounding drainage area was given a single name. At some natural geographic division the river would often take on a different name rather than keep the same name from its source to its mouth as the white man speaks of a stream.

The portion of the Grande Ronde River in what we call Grande Ronde Valley and land tributary to it was known as Cop Copi which meant the land where cotton woods grow. From the lower end of the valley where Willow creek enters the river and the level valley is cut off by the surrounding hills was the start of the land of Hunaha which extended to the junction of the Grande Ronde and the Wallowa. The lower Grande Ronde in the Wenaha and Troy country was called Waluawa.

All three of these valleys were intertribal areas where the various tribes came to be in a land of peace, plenty, ramance, and sport. Due to the cold winters all went to the warmer regions of the Snake and Columbia during the cold months and used these valleys as a summer resort where the cool summer nights and abundance of vegetables, fruit, fish, and game could be enjoyed.

Near the center of the middle of these three valleys was a small forest of big yellow pines on a level location. This location was filled with big springs and bordered the river where fish traps could be maintained each summer to catch the run of salmon. It also happened that this forest was accessable by natural travel routes from all directions.

The favorable geographic location of this forest caused it to be the main camp ground of the "Valleys of Pease and Plenty". It was called Lochow Lochow which in Nez Perce meant the "Beloved Little Forest". When white man came to the area to live they called the level part of Hunaha "Indian Valley" and they built their town of Elgin on the site of old Lochow Lochow.

The Cross Roads at Lochow Lochow

Looking northwest from the southwest corner of the new athletic field at the High School which is to the right of the picture. Phillips creek flows toward us past the big pine at the left of the picture and crosses back of a small gravel hill the point of which being where we are standing. Where the creek crosses between these hills the trail crossed for Grande Ronde Valley. The canyon back of the pine tree is the location of the Umatilla Trail. The depression in the right side of the picture is the Gorden creek route of the Walla Walla Trail. The river is to our right. Trails went in that direction. From over the hills to the east came the Nez Perce Trail.

The Indian trails that had been used for many centuries actually forked on the school grounds of the present new high school. The trail to Cop Copi crossed Phillips creek between the cement gravel hill where the present city dump is located and the gravel ridge just south of the new ball field on the new school grounds. The trail to Waluawa went north and east down the river. The one to the Nez Perce land of Wallowa crossed the river just below the Chandler barn and followed roughly the route of the present Highway #82. The one to the land of the Walla Wallas went north west to the foothills and upper Gordon Creek, Spout Springs and the general route of Highway #204. The trail to the land of the Umatillas went west up Phillips Creek Canyon, Sanderson Springs and the road to Ruckle.

The Grande Ronde Valleys are fenced in excepting on the south end

by rugged almost impassable terrain. Only a few natural gates of passageways exist in this fence. The Indian trails used these and white men's highways follow the old trails quite closely excepting where modern bridges and heavy construction permit some improvements. The Ruckle route to Umatilla was much used by pioneers until a cloudburst destroyed the road on the Umatilla side. It still has a potential as a highway route to Pendleton.

How long did Indians come to "The Beloved Little Forest"? This is a fascinating question that we will consider just a little.

When Fort Peck Dam was being built in Montana Indian mounds that were to be flooded were carefully examined. Ruins of Indian sod houses very similar to the one that Sacajewea was living in when she and her husband were hired to accompany the Lewis & Clark expedition were found; and the interesting thing was than carbon 14 tests revealed that some of these old dwellings were 8,000 years old.

In the 1957 edition of H. M. Warmington's "Ancient Man in North America" published for the Denver Museum of Natural History over 50 locations are discussed where Indian artifacts have been found ranging in age from 4000 years to 10,000 years. The oldest he describes is on Santa Rosa Island off the coast of California where carbon 14 tests indicate an age of 29,000 years.

Some locations close to Eastern Oregon are:

Wikiup Damsite #1 where artifacts are buried below pumice attributed to the explosion that created Crater Lake.

Paisley where artifacts are much below Mt. Mazama (Crater Lake) pumice.

Fort Rock Valley which is a dry region of Central Oregon that shows many indications that in the past it was well watered and had lakes, many projectile points, grinding stones and other artifacts. Probably the most interesting is a cave where many sandals woven from sage brush fiber were found. These show very good workmanship. Carbon 14 tests indicate their age as 9,500 years.

Upper Klamath Lake where deposits show continuous occupation from at least 7,000 years ago.

Five Mile Rapids (5 miles east of the Dalles) which show continuous occupation from probably before 10,000 years ago until white contact.

Lind, Washington, Coulee which give artifacts 8,700 years old.

It would well be that the Cascade Mountains were not the barrier to rain that they now are. Various tribes have their legends about the quarrel between Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams when they spit fire at each other and destroyed a natural bridge across the Columbia. Carbon tests tell us that the Columbia was dammed at Cascade Locks 700 years ago. Likewise these tests indicate that 6400 years ago Mt. Mazama exploded to leave a huge crater that now contains Crater Lake.

These and many other volcanic activities have taken place since ancient men made the fiber sandals we mentioned. When the Cascade Mountains were being made, ash from volcanos was blowing in the south west winds to help form the wheat lands of the Columbia Basin and the finer ash was building our own Tamarack soils.

Through these milleniums people lived in a rather static state of progress. Long before the pyramids were built in Egypt and before the ancient Babylonian civilizations Indians had a civilization similar to the time when white men came. Modern Indians were very quick to adopt improved methods. Why did they not progress? Possibly

because lacked power. They are the one race of men who never had so much as a beast of burden before white man brought them the horse. Famine, pestilence and intertribal conflict kept their population in balance with wild food supply. They were very intelligent but continued in stable routine of life.

In the 1940's Eldon and Edna Rush who live near the mouth of Phillips Creek Canyon dug a basement under their house. The soil was removed by hand. Their place is close to a big spring and in days gone by was the upper end of the pine forest of Lochow Lochow. Indian atrifacts are commonly found in this area because Indians likes to camp under the big pines near this spring.

Indian atrifacts from the Eldon Rush basement. Upper row taken from top soil. The center projectile point from below plow level. The bottom row taken from 2 to 3 feet deep.

As the soil was shoveled and wheeled out from the basement some arrow heads were picked from the top soil. One large projectile point was found well below plow level. Some more stone artifacts were found at depths of two and three feet. At this depth the soil changed from a volcanic ash to a mixture of ash and rather large gravel.

Mr. Jim Burr who has worked for the past three years in Union County making a government soil survey went with the writer to visit Mr. Rush. The basement had been lined with concrete so Mr. Burr made test borings around the house and in the vicinity. He said that he could not make an intelligent dating for the buried Indian material

but thought it must have been here quite awhile.

Mr. Burr made one test hole about 100 feet west of the house that proved quite interesting. This was in what once might have been a slough or spring. He found some 18 inches of muck very heavy in organic matter, then about 2 feet of clean light colored ash, and shen some more organic muck. He thought that it might have been a heavy growth of tules and grass deposited for years in mud and water. A sudden large drift of volcanic ash had completely buried the area which remained wet enough to again support a growth of swamp vegetation.

Oliver LaFarge, the foremost authority on American Indians, states in his book, "American Indian", that the Umatillas got their first horses in 1739. Indian artifacts found in the Grande Ronde Valleys certainly are older than the date of the coming of the horse.

If Indians have walked over western United States for 10,000 years why should they have not walked into our valleys particularly since this is a land of plenty of food in the summertime? As they walked into the area they would pick the easiest ways through the mountain "fences" and undoubtedly our travel routes were established thousands of years ago as men, women, and children walked over the hills to spend pleasant summers where good food was available.

When white men came they found the old Indian trails logical routes of travel. French fur traders came from Wallula up the Walla Walla river and over the Walla Walla Trail to the Grande Ronde and on to the Snake river. Fremont in 1843 came into the Grande Ronde Valley from the south and took the Walla Walla Trail to the Whitman Mission and in his journal speaks of the little forest much frequented by Indians. In 1862 Walla Walla merchants paid Fred Nodine and "Three Fingered Smith" $300.00 to improve this trail so that pack trains could better reach the mines at Auburn and Boise from their stores. With the years better roads were built into what is now highway #204.

Likewise the Umatilla Trail soon became the white man's Thomas and Ruckle Road that carried much freight into the Grande Ronde Valley until a cloudburst washed out the Umatilla side and traffic shifted to the Oregon Trail route and the Walla Walla pass at Tollgate.

The Nez Perce Trail developed through the years to become Highway #82 to Wallowa.

Early white men came and built homes by the crystal clear springs amid the big yellow pines in the "Beloved Little Forest" of Lochow Lochow. Indians came in summer time and built their fish traps on the river and dug camas and couse and hunted game. White men and red men were friendly.

White men burned the big pines to warm their houses, made hay on the camas meadows and used the fish and game. Red men came in fewer numbers.

From May 1, 1879, to June 17, 1879, Captain Whipple maintained his Indian Valley Camp at the exact cross roads of the travel routes, very near to the present Elgin High School. This was the headquarters of his operations in Wallowa during the Chief Joseph War.

White men started a town in the "Beloved Little Forest". Their new railroad built a depot there. No one seemed interested in the

Indian name of Lochow Lochow. They called the new town Elgin. People of Elgin used up all of the big yellow pines. Now just young pines scattered about remind one that once it was a forest.

The many springs were polluted and an epidemic of typhoid caused the building of a city water system. Many other changes were made. In 1957 a third of a million dollar high school was built right on the cross roads of the ancient trails.

High School students might well ponder over the countless forgotten happenings as thousands of Indians for past thousands of years must have traveled through and sojourned at their site of learning. What a rich unrecorded story must be locked up at this location!

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

Stephen Franklin Richardson by Joel H. Richardson

February, 1960

La Grande Senior High School

Stephen Franklin Richardson (1842-1917) was born in the town of Canaan, Maine, on February 23, 1842. He was the 4th son and 6th child of Bryant and Rachel Goodwin Richardson of that town, and later of Hartland, Maine. The Richardson family first appears in Maine when his great-grandfather, Joel, settled in Belgrade in 1775, the third man to settle there. Joel came from Attleborough, Massachusetts, where his father John or grandfather William had moved from Woburn, where 3 Richardson brothers who came from England in 1630-36 had settled in 1640.

Rachel Goodwin was the daughter of Jeremiah Goodwin and Phannie Powers, daughter of Levi Powers and Mary Chase. The Goodwins were in Ketterv, Maine in 1652. The Powers came from Co-os County, New Hampshire, and trace back to one Ralph Shergard who came in the Abagail from London in 1639. Mary Chase was a descendant of Aquilla Chase Jr. of Cornwall, England who appeared in Hampton, N. H. about 1639. Aquilla moved to Newbury, Mass. in 1646, "and appears to be the first mariner to cross the Newbury Bar in a respectable size vessel. Records also show that he was arrested for breaking the Sabbath laws and was "admonished but not fined." Explanation of this breach of the law is that he arrived home from a voyage on Sunday and his good wife fearing she did not have enough for dinner, they went into the garden and picked some peas.

When father was about 6 years, his family moved to Hartland and settled about 2 miles west of Hartland village, and near the home of his maternal grandparents. Here he grew up, attending a small country school and one term at Hartland Academy, where he seems to have acquired an astounding knowledge of mathematics for so short a time. A diary and account book his father kept for several years shows that he worked for different neighbors, sometimes receiving $1.00 per day. I recall his telling about the Academy and carrying his lunch of corn bread and mince pie, and when he got away from the house so he would not be seen, throwing the corn bread as far as he could throw it. Others taking lunches had white bread, but the woman with whom he was staying then was too poor to afford white flour.

Sometime when in his early twenties, he accompanied his older brother Joel westward to Montana, and there worked in the mines. I think this experience left vivid impressions with him of early mining days and customs of the times in mining camps. I well remember his prejudice against playing cards, yet he greatly enjoyed a checker game, and was a skilful player when he would take time to play, which was very seldom. It was well that none of his children had any desire to play a violin, which to him fell in the same class as whisky, dissolute women and cards.

Following two or three years in the mining camps of Montana as a laborer, father returned to Maine. He once decided to buy out a prospector, and sent his brother to negotiate the deal, but Joel got into a chess game and played most of the night, and the claim owner meantime backed out. The claim later proved to be a valuable one. This was the nearest he ever came to making anything in mining.

He taught the country school in his home district one term, "just to show some of those objecting to hiring him that he could", but would not accept a second term. He bought a run down farm on which the buildings had burned, making a down payment of $25.00. He erected some sort of buildings, persuaded his sister to keep house for him. There was no such thing then as an 8 hour day, 12 hour day or any definite time to work. I have heard my aunt say that to get him in at dinner time she would ring the bell when she started dinner, and possibly he would get there by the time dinner was ready. I do not think he ever cared much about what he ate or when he ate. I have heard him say that he didn't eat because he was hungry, but to keep from getting hungry.

On May 21, 1870, he was united in marriage with Lilla Burrill, of Canaan, Maine, daughter of George and Olive Tupper Burrill. They were married by Sullivan Lothrop in St. Albans, Maine and went to live on the farm a mile west of Hartland village. Lilla Burrill was a descendant of John Burrill, Puriten, who was in Weymouth, Mass. in 1639, and of Reverend Thomas Tupper, who with 9 others, formed the first settlement on Cape Cod in 1627, at Sandwich. The fruits of this union were twelve children, 7 boys and 5 girls, 3 born in Maine, 4 in Wisconsin, and 5 in Oregon, of whom but four reached maturity; Frank, who married Jessie McMillan of Starkey; Joel, who married Helen King of Easton, Mass.; George, who married Ruth Cotner of pioneer Union County parentage; and Helen, who married John J. Broomfield of Michigan and Idaho.

In 1876, for reasons not known to me, father decided to leave Maine and move to Wisconsin. An uncle has told me he was doing very well, the farm had been greatly improved and good substantial buildings erected thereon; his standing was good thruout the neighborhood, and he had been elected and served one term in the state legislature in 1873. I suppose his pioneer spirit and his previous Montana sojourn lured him West again. He must have gone to Wisconsin, found a desirable location, returned to Maine and sold the farm and moved the family to Wisconsin.

Records from Corinthian Lodge No. 95 F. & A.M. show the following: "No. Anson Maine, Sept. 16, 1876. Whereas: The Master and Wardens of Corinthian Lodge No. 95, pray for a dispensation to receive and act upon the petition of Mr. Stephen Richardson at a special meeting, and if accepted to confer the degrees upon him in less time than the usual, vouching for good

and moral character, and it appearing that the candidate is about to leave the state. Now, therefore; Albert Moore, Grand Master of Masons for the State of Maine, by virtue of the authority in me vested, do hereby grant a dispensation to said Corinthian Lodge to receive the petition of said Stephen Richardson and act upon the same at a special meeting called for that purpose and if accepted confer the degrees upon him in less than the usual time, first giving notice and in all respects complying with the provisions of the 7th standing regulations of the Grand Lodge of Maine. Signed Albert Moore, Grand Master."

The records of Corinthian Lodge show that at a special meeting held Oct. 4, 1876: "After which reading of Dispensation of Grand Master Moore re:ard to Stephen F. Richardson's petition, said petition was balloted on and Stephen F. Richardson was declared elected, he was thereupon immediately Initiated an E:A: Passed to the Degree of a F:C: and Raised to the Subline Degree of a M:M:

Corinthian Lodge records show further that "Brother Richardson was dimitted March 1909" At this time father affiliated with La Grande Lodge No. 41 A. F. & A. M. of La Grande, Oregon, and continued his membership here until the time of his death.

Upon leaving Maine, father first settled at a small town called Olayton in west central Wisconsin, but soon thereafter built a saw mill and a store a few miles from Clayton. Around these soon grew up a small settlement that was called Turtle Lake. This point is now the intersection of two railroads. I supposed until a few years ago, father chose this location because of the junction of the 2 railroads, but then learned that the second railroad did not build thru there until 1884. Wisconsin by Winsconsin Writers Project, p. 470, states that Turtle Lake was started by S. F. Richardson in 1879, the Omaha Railroad was built thru there in 1877, and the Soo in 1884. So far as I know, this was father's first venture into the lumbering business, which continued to be his leading interest for the next 40 years. While in Wisconsin, he built up a considerable shipping trade, marketing his lumber in that state and in Minnesota. He had selling outlets in several places westward, and I would consider him a pioneer in the line yard business. I know of one Minnesota yard he persuaded a cousin to take over and operate, and at the time of his death was borrowing four or five thousand dollars of the profits this cousin made in the few years he had the yard.

Sometime in the early eighties, his brother Joel, who had made a considerable profit from his mining ventures, joined him in the Lumber business at Turtle Lake. Evidently their idea about conducting the business differed greatly, for by 1883 the partnership was dissolved. Father made the demand that his brother either buy him out or sell his interest. Influenced considerably by his wife, my uncle bought father's interest in the business, and in 1883 father came to Oregon. At that time the railroad was not completed and he came here

from Umatilla astride an Indian pony. A little later he was operating a mill at Five Points, a mile west of the present Hilgard, and had several men working for him who came from Maine, some of whom had been with him in Wisconsin. Whether he built a mill there, bought one already there, rented or managed one for someone else I do not know. Nor do I know what became of that mill. In July 1884, shortly after the railroad reached La Grande, he had the family consisting of mother, Frank and me come out from Wisconsin. We lived that summer in a log and rough boards cabin just west of the trestle a mile above Hilgard. Needless to say, mother was not very pleased with the situation. Indians got intoxicated and came and lay under her windows and on the doorstep, and I was afraid of the Chinamen working on the section, and ran yelling "Shiny monies" every time I saw one of them. Among the men who came out with father in '83, two later became well known here: Henry Sanderson on account of his iron leg, which he made himself, he being a blacksmith, and William Gleason later mayor of Sumpter in its boom days.

Following a summer spent among the mountains here, which evidently was beneficial to me-the family doctor had told friends I would never return to Wisconsin alive-mother, Frank and I returned to Wisconsin. Early in 1886, our home was sold, a box car chartered, loaded with furniture and other possessions, including our dog Dan and a man to care for the animals, was shipped. The family came by regular train and were here several days before the emigrant car arrived. Father had meantime acquired an interest in a mill at Stumptown and there we lived for the next 2½ years, at first in an old house on the point near the underpass to the lower flat, then in the last house on the lower flat, and last in the old Foster house that had been the toll gate and stage station.

Sometime between his first coming and when the family moved out permanently, father became associated with H. C. Putnam, a banker at EauClaire, Wisconsin, for the purpose of making investments here. They bought horses, cattle, sheep and timber lands. Investments in the latter were quite large considering the times. Union County indexes show there were 31 recordings to H. C. Putnam et al between Feb. 20, '84 and April '85, at which time Mr. Putnam conveyed his half interest to father in a long deed that uses up 13 lines of the index record. Mr. W. A. Worstell, an early express agent here, has related to me that he once delivered $20,000 to father that came in by express. A brother-in-law of Mr. Putnam came out to look after his interest and soon tired of the country, and what to him was probably rough living, and returned to Wisconsin, thus shifting all the responsibility of handling the business upon father.

A fire in 1886 or 87 destroyed the mill at Stumptown and that partnership was severed. Father bought a new mill and ran it there for a time, then moved it to a new site about 6 miles above Hilgard on the Grande Ronde River. Here he continued lumbering until he sold the mill to Butler and Johnson late in 1890 or early in 1891. Hilgard being nearer the mill

than stumptown, and shipping facilities better, father built a small house and the family moved there in the fall of 1889. There was no school at Hilgard at that time and my brother Frank attended one term at Five Points, the school house being on or near the old cantrell Place now occupied by Ira Cantrell. The next year a schoolhouse was built in Hilgard at the west end of the town. The first school was taught by a Miss Edith Stephenson from La Grande. Soon after moving to Hilgard, father built and opened a general store, the second one there. The other one was owned by the Island City Mercantile and Milling Company, and managed by Edwin P. Staples. Old records show that the store made a substantial profit during the time father had it. An inventory of Oct. 31, 1890 may be of interest as to what was carried in a store then and as to the value.

Groceries (Including Hay, Barley and Potatoes)	$1301.98
Glassware, Queensware, Stoneware	109.02
Clothing Underware and Overalls	466.66
Drugs	259.86
Boots and shoes, Rubber goods, and Arctics	1093.52
Straw Hats	33.91
Wool and Fine Hats	157.13
Hardware, Tinware	725.66
Dry Goods Notions	1631.99

Profits accruing in business from Sept. 7, '89 to Nov. 1, '90, about 14 months 5,770.17
This does not include any rent for buildings or insurance or bad debts. "I think Invoice about 10% too high, which would make $5200 net." In handwriting of George W. Buck, bookkeeper.

In 1891 we left Hilgard to move to a farm in the valley, an interest in the store was sold to Frank Alden and he took over its management. A year or two later it was destroyed by fire.

I cannot recall ever hearing father or anyone speak of shipping lumber from Stumptown, and do not think there were any shipping facilities there until the time of the Grande Ronde Lumber Company, and the change of the name from Stumptown to Perry. About the time we moved to Hilgard, father disposed of the Stumptown property, as well as most of the timber tracts he had up the river to the Grande Ronde Lumber Company a corporation formed by Wisconsin people, most of whom were members of the L. C. Standley family. He did, however, ship lumber from Hilgard, and it may be that he was first to ship from this section of Oregon. His Hilgard books show that he shipped to Ogden and other Idaho and Utah points in 1890, and that for some of it he received $9.50 and $10.00 per f.o.b. Hilgard, and $17.00 f.o.b. Ogden.

As before mentioned, father disposed of his mill in the fall of 1890 or spring of 1891. He had decided at that time to retire from the lumber business and started investing in farm lands. Previously, he had built a store building and a two story house in La Grande on Fir street between Adams and Jefferson Avenues. The store building still stands at 213 Fir,

and the house at 1417 Washington Ave. where it was moved many years ago. Sept. 25, 1890 he bought from James H. Slater and wife 240 acres of land in what is now known as the Mount Glen district. He planned building there, as there were no buildings on the place, and had a well dug on the west end of the middle eighty. However, before he got around to build, Mrs. John T. Hunter, a widow, passed away, and the Hunter estate was for sale. It consisted of 360 acres situated directly west and south of the Slater place. There were 7 heirs but one of them was missing, so father bought the interests of the other 6 and a contract was entered into that he would pay for the other seventh the same amount he had paid the 6 brothers and sisters at any time a title could be given for it. Their attorney said it could be done if the brother did not appear within 7 years from the time of his disappearance. This farm had a set of old buildings on it and the family moved there in April 1891.

My Uncle Joel, who had bought father's interest in the mill in Wisconsin, had meantime failed, and had come West again hoping to make another gold strike in Montana. He had been with us at Hilgard the previous winter, and was outfitting to make another trip to Montana. My older brother Frank was going with him. Father and mother had decided to make a visit to Maine and Massachusetts, as well as to their former home in Wisconsin, so father's sister and husband were induced to move from their home near Hilgard to the farm and live there while father, mother, George, then a baby, and I were on the eastern trip. Uncle Joel, Frank, and one or two other men I do not now remember, left the farm about April 25th for Montana. On April 28, we came in from the farm late in the afternoon and sent the team back, going to the Stultz Hotel across from the depot to wait for the train that would take us to Omaha, thence to Minneapolis. A day in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and we went on to Turtle Lake for a few days and then continued on to Boston. We visited in and around Boston several weeks, then, accompanied by Grandmother Burrill, who had come there before our arrival, went to Maine for a few weeks. We returned home in August.

Father thought he was retiring permanently from the lumbering business when he sold to Butler & Johnson, but either in 1891 or '92, he entered into a contract with the Grande Ronde Lumber Company to log 60 million feet of timber. The logs were to be landed on the river bank between Hilgard and Starkey. Some of the terms of the contract that I remember were that the company was required to accept not less than 4 million feet per year and father was not obligated to deliver more than 7 million feet per year. Any merchandise the company handled at its store was available at any time to father and his employees, but any order for work done if paid before May 1st in cash was subject to a discount. Father received his pay, other than what he took out of the store, in a substantial draw February 1st, a settlement and a second payment May 1st, and the final payment Sept. 1st, for logs delivered the previous winter. The logs were "decked" along the river in huge piles, and by the company "driven" down the Grande Ronde River to Perry during the high

waters of the Spring. This contract was completed the winter of 1899-1900.

We lived on the farm 8½ years, during which time acreage was increased by the purchase of the Hardenbrook and Dillingham places, each of 160 acres, mostly wood and pasture land. Logging was father's chief interest, and he was away from home the greater part of the time in winter from September to March. Three summers he made trips to Wisconsin. The first time he sent a drove of horses overland, my older brother and three or four hired men driving them. Father joined them somewhere in the Dakotas. Some of the men hired proved untrustworthy and when going thru the part of the country from which they came several of the horses disappeared, as well as a revolver, father's vest, watch and chain were stolen from the hack. The second time he took horses east to sell he shipped two carloads. The last time he went to try to collect for some of those previously sold, and this time he came near being killed. He had reclaimed a horse that was not well broken and was somewhat vicious. In leading the horse thru a pasture he became entangled in the rope and was thrown and dragged a considerable distance among rocks and stumps. I was told many years later, when visiting there, it was a miracle he was not killed. I will remember his return home from that trip. He had not advised us of his coming, and mother and I driving into La Grande with a horse and cart met him coming out with Mrs. George Coleman, a neighbor. He was still quite bruised and lame from his accident and told us that he bought a new pair of pants in St. Paul but had not changed into them until he got to Pendleton. He said that people would come along and say "Mister, do you know your pants are torn," "Gor-ri, I guess I knew they were torn, but I was to sore to change them."

Father never thought the farm paid anything. I did not agree with him and made an attempt once to prove him wrong. I started to charge him with everything he took from the farm to the camp, but was ordered to stop as he "wasn't going to be charged with things on his own books." I know that considerable went from the farm to cut logging expenses each year, but was unable to prove my contentions. There were horses to replace killed or worn out ones, hay and grain, cattle and hogs for meat, and even huge crocks of butter that mother packed in the summer. A large portion of the hay grown was not grown at the camps as hay could be bought in the Starkey country and a long haul saved, so the farm hay not needed for wintering the stock was baled and sold. The range horses would winter on straw and browsing, and as we did not grow much grain, stacks of straw were bought from neighbors and the horses turned into the fields to eat from the straw piles.

In 1892 a new stable and 7 rooms of a new house were built. Later 5 more rooms were added, one of which was a bath room, which I think may have been the first farm bathroom in the valley. Before selling the place, a large barn was built, some of the Hardenbrock place cleared and set in orchard, and several acres more, mostly apples, set out west and north of the old Hunter orchard.

The years 1899 and 1900 brought the most and greatest changes in our family life within my memory. Early in the year, father bought a half interest in a feed, wood and grocery business in La Grande, and sent me in from the farm to work in the store and keep the books. A couple of months later, the business was moved into the store building he owned on Fir Street That summer he did considerable logging on the farm, and hired a small mill to cut the logs into lumber which he sold. The lure of the Seven Devils Region was then attracting many people. Several mining companies were at work there, and many thought it would become a successful mining section. A railroad started building to the mines from Weiser, Idaho. Father was not interested in the mines as such, but in the country that would be opened up by the building of the railroad, and in the timber that would be used by the railroad in building to the mines. In September, he bought a sawmill near Salubria, Idaho, and the owner's contract to furnish ties and timbers for the rail road. Government timber was used for this purpose, and there was little good timber near the mill. Father immediately moved the mill up the Weiser River about 20 miles into timber adjacent to the right-of way of the railroad, specified in the contract as point of delivery.

The farm was sold and the family moved to La Grande. The larger part of the farm, 680 acres, was sold to L. V. and J. S. Perry, brothers, from Utah, who resold much of it to numerous relatives and friends and formed a Mormon settlement which they named Mount Glen. This soon became quite a flourishing community with a ward, church, school and amusement hall, all of which have now been moved away or discontinued.

When next year the railroad had reached a point opposite Salbria, and the town of Cambridge was started. Father bought lots there and put in a general store and lumber and building materials yard. The La Grande partnership was dissolved and the merchandise shipped to Cambridge. I went up in March, and shall never forget my disappointment in the place. I suppose I had pictured something very different from a few rough shacks, 2 or 3 stores under construction, a hotel quartered in a large tent, and numerous small tents dotting the half snow half mud, treeless section on which the town was mushrooming.

Financial difficulties prevented the railroad from carrying out the original plans of building into the Seven Devils, and when 10 years later it was extended to its present terminus, it swung south at Price Valley to New Meadows, instead of north into the Seven Devils. We operated the store at Cambridge a year and a half, then moved the merchandise to Council, to which place the mill had been moved when the railroad reached that point. Both the store and the mill business were continued here until 1904, then in the spring the store was sold, father arranged for the building of a new home in La Grande at 2001 Second Street, and later in the year disposed of the sawmill and returned to La Grande. Before returning here he had bought 23 acres of land near the La Grande Flouring Mill, 13 acres of which had been planted to orchard, and 140 acres of land near the Island City Cove road. Later 145 acres more were acquired and a

set of farm buildings built. For a few years he engaged in farming and stock raising, but never made the farm his home. Having more leisure than he had ever had in former years, he took a short fling in politics, and was elected state representative for Union County in 1908, an honor that I am sure he thoroly enjoyed, as well as the satisfaction of beating two opponents in the primaries.

Further extension of the Pacific and Idaho Northern Railroad took place in 1910-11. Father had retained a quarter section of land in Price Valley when he disposed of his other Idaho property, and now that the railroad had built thru it. he returned to Idaho in the fall of 1910 and bought another mill and moved it onto this land where there had once been a pioneer stage station. A store was built, and next year he was appointed postmaster for the sawmill town of Tamarack. Two other mills soon located here, and for a few years it was quite a busy lumbering center.

By the end of 1913, father decided to retire from business. He sold the store and mill to one of the other mill companies, taking stock in the company as part of payment, and returned to La Grande. He built another and smaller house in 1914 at 803 Adams Avenue, where he continued to live until his death in June 1917, following a stroke the previous November. Mother survived him by a little more than 10 years, passing on at the same place in August 1927.

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

Robert Deal By Nell Mahaffey, His granddaughter

Prepared: February, 1960

Copied by: La Grande Senior High School

A group of twelve young men, all neighbors, gathered one evening in April, 1864 at the farm home of the parents of 23-year-old Robert Deal, of near Barnsville, Ohio to talk over joining the immigration to the far west.

They sat about the room discussing all angles of the subject. Robert had a letter in his hand which he had recently received from his older brother, Richard who had gone west two years before and was located at La Grande, Oregon. He was in the freighting business and had worked up to be leading freighter on the Umatilla road.

"Read the letter, Robert and let's hear what Richard has to say," suggested one of the boys. (They all knew Richard and were interested in his welfare.)

The letter was much like the few others Robert had received from his brother since he left home.

"Come west to the land of opportunity," he wrote. "You will never regret it if you value freedom and independence. There is good business here in freighting. Why stay back there where the war is raging and everything is unsettled? I'm settled in a beautiful valley, the Grande Ronde. It's located in the heart of the Blue Mountains. These mountains get their name from the atmosphere--an unusual blue haze--which surrounds them. Great loads of freight are hauled into the mining districts to the south and east from a point on the Columbia river.

"Come, get yourself an outfit and begin. (You can skyrocket yourself into a careerman over night.")

"I for one am all for it," said Robert folding the letter and putting it back in the envelope.

"I am too," said another and so on and on until everyone declared his desire to travel the trail.

The Civil War was on and the affairs of state were bad and growing worse. There was confusion everywhere and young men hardly knew just what to do.

"We are liable to be drafted any day. Most anyone would just as soon take a chance on gettin' struck down by a Redman's tomahawk as a Southerner's bullet," they reasoned. They talked and planned till far into the night.

Close to noon about three weeks later the twelve young men started on the great adventure. They left Henrysburg,

a nearby town and went to Wheeling, West Virginia, then to Cincinnatti by boat and from there by rail to St. Louis, Mo.

At St. Louis they bought their ox teams, wagons, and supplies needed by immigrants crossing the plains.

By the time everything was paid for Robert Deal had but $75 in greenbacks and worth only 50¢ on the dollar. But what of it! Many a young man started west with less than that.

They were a happy bunch, those young fellows with their slow stepping oxen moving across the plains, headed toward the setting sun.

To break the monotony of the long evenings the fun-loving Robert singing and jigging before the flickering campfire, would amuse his companions. There was always of action, tuneful songs and yarn spinning mixed in.

After leaving St. Louis the immigrants crossed the Missouri river and traveled up the Platte and then followed the trail through to Cheyenne, Wyoming, on through the Rocky Mountains, crossed Snake river above American Falls. Without mishap they arrived at Virginia City, Mont. where they went into the gold mines.

At that time Virginia City was a new boom town, a bustling miners' community where some of the wildest scramblings of the gold rush days of the old west took place. A picturesque mining town, nestled in green pleated hills, between three mountain ranges in Montana's big Madison county.

Bill Fairweather and five companions made a lucky strike in Alder Gulch, near the site of Virginia City in 1863, and hardworking miners as well as riff-raff from everywhere flowed in.

Zooming up around the gulch were hustling miners communities, each with a floating population of approximately 4,000 men and women. As was always the case gold-rush inflation set in. (Whiskey was the only plentiful commodity.) Vegetables and flour had to be freighted in from Utah. Sixty dollars was the price of a turkey dinner. Eighty-five dollars was gladly paid for a subscription of the Montana Post. Pickings were rich.

Robert Deal didn't take to this kind of life, even for the sake of gold. He became restless and anxious.

The others wanted to stay. He decided to move on and bidding his eleven companions good-bye he joined a train that was passing through, bound for Oregon. He arrived in La Grande, Sept. 12, 1864, (his brother Richard's 26th birthday.)

Grande Ronde valley looked very different that day than it does now. In places grass grew as high as a man's head when on horseback. The people who had come previously had set-

tled around the foothills and along the river.

A post office with Edward Patterson in charge, a hotel, small stores, a blacksmith shop, a school house and a few homes made up the settlement which was located where "Old Town" stands now. A grist mill stood at the west end of the village, near the mouth of Mill Creek canyon. Fields of wheat flourished where today is the modern city of La Grande.

Robert Deal immediately started on his career as freighter. He followed this fascinating profession for 20 years, using ox teams the first ten years and horses for the next decade.

He freighted to every town from Umatilla Landing on the Columbia river to Boise City, Idaho City, Silver City and other points in Idaho. One whole summer he hauled flour from the mill at La Grande to Idaho City, 50 miles from Boise.

Although it has been a controversial subject, Robert Deal was always positive that it was he who freighted the first printing press into La Grande.

On his long treks the young freighter had plenty of time to nod and dream by the campfire of a petite, dark-haired girl he left behind. All his waking hours he saw visions of her.

In the fall of 1868, when the cattle were unyoked and turned out, he went east and while he was there a wedding took place. He married his sweetheart, Margaret Ball, of Barnsville, Ohio, a descendent of the same family to which Mary Ball Washington, the mother of George Washington, belonged.

In the spring of 1869 young Deal and his bride left for Oregon. They sailed from New York to the Isthmus of Panama on the "Arizona." After crossing the Isthmus by rail they boarded a boat for San Francisco, Portland and Umatilla Landing. They were on the water 36 days. Upon reaching the Landing they took the stage for La Grande.

A home must be provided for his bride so Robert Deal bought a farm located on the immigrant road near La Grande. The place owned by Dr. Payton, a young physician who had crossed the plains in 1862 with the Iowa train.

The newlyweds moved in, he to engage in farming, stock raising and freighting.

It was time now to round up the cattle and get to work again.

That same year he, with other freighters were sent by the government to Camp Harney with wheat, oats, and barley. La Grande was the central loading zone for this big grain movement. The caravan of 16 wagons drawn by the slow but sure-footed oxen made an imposing sight as it wormed its way around the foothills and through the canyons on its way to southern Oregon.

Camp Harney in the Steens Mountain country and located near where Harney City was founded ten years later, had recently been established by soldiers sent into that area to protect California miners from maurading Indians when the miners were on their way into mining fields in Idaho and Montanna.

Talk about freighting into the great wide spaces, this was it. The roads were poor, scarcely more than dirt trails through miles and miles of sage brush. They were not bad traveling in dry weather but in wet weather they were a slippery mess. Dust was not only bad but many times scab rock outcropping in the road bed made traveling rough and hard on the heavily loaded wagons.

Progress marched on in the west as it did in the east. In 1874 Robert Deal disposed of his ox teams and he replaced them with horses, using eight and often ten head to a wagon. He owned some of the best draft teams among the freighters.

Nobody ever got more joy out of wrangling horses than did young Deal. In the winter sometimes the wheels of the great loaded wagons would freeze in the ground and it was then that George and Charlie, the two outstanding wheelers, would show their mettle.

Life at the Deal farmstead was a happy and contented one. In the course of time Della, the first child was born, then William, the first son and second child.

When these children grew older they would watch for the stage as it came around the bend entering the valley from the west. As the stage would get oppositie them they would call to the driver, "Where is our Daddy?"

Many times the driver knew. The occurrence became so regular that sometimes he would have a piece of paper rolled in a little hard ball and as he got near enough the children, he would hurl it at them. They would scramble for the bit of paper and excitedly get it straightened out and on it would be written, "Your Daddy is at Pelican station." Other times the driver would lean over and shout as he dashed by, He is at Pelican." Or some other message for them.

Robert Deal seldom made long freighting trips alone. Four outfits usually hauled together, those of Robert Deal, Lou Snider, Ben Grandy and Al Acton. Acton later settled at Pilot Rock.

On short hauls Deal would take his young son with him. Those were happy days for the youngster who perhaps would have followed in his father's footsteps and been a freighter, too, but for the coming of the railroad.

Ben Grandy had a son about the same age as William Deal and his name was William, also. The two boys spent considerable time together.

One day William Grandy was at the Deal home. Mrs. Deal became suddenly ill. Her husband was gone, bringing a load of freight from Umatilla Landing. She figured he would be (somewhere near the other side of) Pelican, the stage station located 12 miles northwest of La Grande. With his big load it would be hours yet before he would get home. She wanted him very much as the stork was flying very low over their home. What should she do?

Finally she thought of the Grandy lad. He was as good on a horse as a circus rider.

"William," she asked anxiously, "would you mind doing me a favor?"

"What would you like me to do, Mrs. Deal?" he inquired politely.

"Go meet my husband tell him I am ill and for him to hurry home."

William was on his horse in a flash and away he dashed up the immigrant trail. He met Deal on top of the hill about where Mrs. Deal thought he might be, and delivered the message.

"All right, young man, you give me your horse and you climb on this wagon and take the load in." Deal commanded.

In later years when relating the incident Will Grandy said, "I climbed on the Wagon. Mr. Deal handed me the lines and the whip and explained just what I was to do. I had never driven a team like that before and when I looked down on all those horses I was never so scared in my life. But I brought the load in without mishap."

AL ACTION IN THE WHEAT FIELD

"Look!" said Al Action excitedly to his companion as he pointed toward a ridge at the left.

There they were just as the teamsters had feared--Indians, a party of them standing horseback on the brow of the hill, all armed and bedecked in war paint.

Action and Robert Deal were taking a load of freight east from Umatilla. They had passes through Pendleton and had reache a section of the country where the redskins had been molesting freighters. They didn't think they had been seen. They quickly cached the wagon, unhitched and unharnessed the horses. They turned them all loose except one which they mounted and rode for their lives.

Realizing that the big work horse could not travel very fas carrying double, Acton slid off and ducked into a nearby wheat field. The Indians were camped not far away and he was afraid to take the chance of escaping. For three days he stayed there wit outfood and water. The only moisture to releive his torturing thirst was what he got by constantly chewing blades of grass. To his immense relief tho Indians drifted away in the third nigh

Later, after some trouble he and Deal retrieved their deserted outfit and went on their way.

THE INDIAN SCARE

In 1874 a school called the Blue Mountain University was erected in La Grande near the site of the present Central school building. During the famous Indian scare in Union county, 1878, this building was put to a strange use.

The Indians had become troublesome and were getting worse.

The Bannock and Piute tribes met in Idaho and traveled in the mountains until they came to Birch creek in the Pendleton Country. They intended to drive the white people away and destroy Pendleton.

Along this creek farmers had settled. About 20 of them thinking to scatter the Indians went horseback about ten miles up Birch creek where they camped for lunch.

The horses had no more than been unsaddled and acattered out than the Indians turned loose on the farmers, shooting among them from a high ridge. Some were killed and others had a hard time holding the Indians back. Finally General Miles, who had been ordered from Walla Walla arrived.

The Indians made no attempt to put up a fight when they saw the soldiers but retreated toward La Grande. To smooth things over the Umatillas killed Egan, Chief of the Piutes. Other Indians killed three teamsters as they retreated.

During the scare the people in La Grande went to the Blue Mountain University where the windows had been quickly fortified with sacks of flour. The school building was to serve as a fort in case there was an Indian attack. People remained there ten days. Many an excited report cam to the anxious watchers that the redskins were coming.

Mrs. Deal was so freghtened that her husband told her to pack her valuables. He put them on a wagon so that they and she and the children would be ready to flee with him to safety. He took the sewing machine, plow, and some other things and hid them out in the wheat field. But the savages kept to the mountains and broke up into small parties, scattering in every direction.

Year in and year out Robert Deal and his fellow teamsters freighted.

Freight in and freight out was hauled winter and summer, spring and fall, in immense, sturdy wagons built to carry from eight to ten tons.

During the cold winter months heavy winds whipped the heavy tarpaulens on the wagons and ripped at the covers. Chill breezes swept through the canyons and cold driving rain fell steadily. Sounding through the still, cold air in the early morning was the clop, clop, clopping of the horses hoofs over the smooth surface of the frozen ground as the faithful freighters steadily plugged away at reaching their destination.

The winters were cold in the mountains, too, and there was lots of snow. After a storm big trees that had fallen across the road, and the snow that had piled to the depth of several feet in the narrow passes, all had to be cleared away. It was then that teamsters would be two weeks coming from the Dalles to La Grande.

It sometimes took three months to take a load of freight from Umatilla Landing to Boise. From ten to fifteen miles a day was the best time that could be made.

Summer found these men with their freight teams traveling over alkali depressions, dry creek bottoms and lake beds and miles of sage brush flats, with tropical heat pouring down. They traveled through wildernesses of sage brush and the wagon wheels sucked in the soft sand for miles.

At this season there was another side of the picture. At night were the cool mountain air, the crickets obligatos, the sagebrush or firescented campfire where the teamsters boiled their slumgullian, fried their bacon, brewed their coffee, and baked their bread in the trusty Dutch oven. Then there was the speckled and rainbow trout flashing through the crystal stream. Again Robert Deal shortened the long evening hours before the flames of the campfire, with his songs and jigging. He had a good tenor voice and knew how to use it.

Deal freighted lots of loaf sugar of which Indians were fond. He always felt uneasy when he had a load for fear they ou would take a notion to help themselves to what he had on board.

In later years after his freighting days were over and the years of those perilous and uneasy times were behind him, Robert Deal would say, "Yes, I was lucky. Lady Luck always perched on my Oxen yoke." Indians were unfriendly along his long route of travel, but never once was he nor his fellow freighters molested.

At the advent of the railroad, Robert Deal's freighting days were over. He then devoted his time to farming and stock raising. He had the reputation of always owning good horses and cattle.

His friends and neighbors like best to think of him riding a black horse which answered to the name of Bill.

Bill was a pure bred riding horse and was the winner of blue ribbons at the fair. One of Robert Deal's proud moments in his later years was when he would exhibit Bill's blue prize winning rosettes to his friends.

The horse had naturally grown old-so had his master. They understood each other. When Deal would lead him to the mounting block in front of the barn, Bill would always turn his head around to see if his master was properly seated in the saddle before he would move.

One day the black favorite was kicked by another horse. His leg was so badly broken that he had to be shot.

"I won't get far now. My faithful steed is gone," the master mourned.

In January, 1935, Robert Deal died at the age of ninety-five years. His wife, Margaret died in 1913. Besides Della and William, there were three other children: May and Daisy, who died in infancy, and Robert Lee.

On the Deal farm today is one of those old freighting wagons, now eighty years old. The running gears are used ocassionally by Robert Lee Deal, the only one left of Robert and Margaret Deal's five children.

There is also breeching harness which was used on the wheelers of the freight teams. The harness is in good condition and could still be used.

After Margaret Deal passed away in 1913, Robert was lonely and felt a longing to once more see his old home in Ohio and his friends and neighbors. So he made ready for a month's visit and left by train to retrace in comfort the journey he had made amid hardship so long ago.

Arriving in the old home town, he found time had made it changes there. Many friends and neighbors had passed away or were themselves changed, just as he had.

So, in little over a week, he returned to the Grande Ronde Valley, for here was the home and friends he loved.

About the author:

The author of this pamphlet was really Robert Deal himself, who at 95 years of age called his grand daughter Miss Neil Gail Mahaffey to his side and asked her to read an account of his life which he had written. In the conversation following he told of other pertinent facts and experiences of early years in the Grande Ronde Valley.

Neil took notes and assembled what grandfather had written along with the notes taken that day and prevailed upon Mrs. Carrie Huff Spencer (who had been collecting and writing material on other pioneers) to complete the story of this man.

Miss Neil Gail Mahaffey attended grade and high school in La Grande; graduating from high school in 1910. Following post graduate work in La Grande and advanced work in Baker, Oregon, she became a teacher at the suggestion of J. A Churchill the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Oregon.

Later graduating from Southern Oregon College in Ashland she continued teaching primary work in the city schools of Oregon for a total of 45 years. She belonged to the National Educational Association, Oregon State Teachers Association, and is a member of Zita Chapter, Delta Kappa Gamma and of the First Presbyterian Church of La Grande.

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

The Spinning Wheel by Anna McDonald Oliver

Prepared: February, 1960

Copied by: LaGrande Senior High School

P R O L O G U E

The Coming American

Bring me men to match my mountains:
Bring me men to match my plains,
Men with empires in their purpose,
And new eras in their brains.
Bring me men to match my prairies,
Men to match my inland seas,
Men whose thoughts shall pave a highway,
Up to higher destinies.
Pioneers to clear Thought's marshlands,
And clear so old Error's fen,
Bring me men to match my mountains,
Bring me men. W. S. Ross.

****

In the record of the life of a successful man, whether he be a merchant, a professional man or a farmer, there is always much of interest; especially is this true in the case of a man who began the battle of life in a new country, where the comforts and conveniences of life were so meager that the resourcefulness of each individual must of nescessity be pushd to the extreme in order to maintain health and happiness.

There is much discussion at the present time of earlier days and of successful people of that time. Our papers are full of it. Just why this has been brought about, I do not know unless it is because of the fact that we are going through a "Reconstruction Period." In recent years of depression, our people have been compelled in a moderate degree, to go back to the primitive life of the Pioneer. Thus it is that the whole social and industrial life of the community is harking back to what some wish to call "The Golden of the West."

These days had the hardships, but they also had much happiness in the art of creating and they were full of romance as well. It is not wise therefore, that we recall the happiness as well as the trails of these People?

It is the recalling of pioneer history, coupled with the urgent requests of nieces and nephews to know more of the history of our family that has inspired me to collect material on the history of the MacDonald family, and to tell something of the part that a certain spinning wheel played in the life of the family.

If the spinning wheel were given its autobiography, it would begin something like this: The scene was the shop of an elderly cabinet maker, a shop where children loved to congregate to watch the wheels go round and to listen to the friendly conversation of the owner of the shop.

"I am just a mahogany picture frame, some scraps of lumber that is being turned about in a turning lathe to be made into spindles and a treadle."

A conversation is going on thus: "What are you doing here with all these pretty spindles?" "I am making a wedding present." "A wedding present?" "Yes, a spinning wheel." "You must think a lot of someone to make so beautiful a gift." "Yes, I am making it for one whom I have known since she was a little girl, bringing in the first pink and lavender heather and boating in a tub on the loch. On the last Sabbath the betrothal of Jeanne Grant and John MacDonald was read at the kirk. They expect to sail to America soon after the marriage and I am thinking of the limited space for baggage on the sailing vessel, so I am having some difficulty in fitting the wheel accordingly That is the reason that I must make it compact and rearrange the usual setting of the wheel."

"That will be a useful gift in a new country. Yes, it will be useful in any country, for now-a-days every girl learns to spin and in America there are few factories and this little wheel will be a useful instrument."

The spinning wheel soliloquizes, "I wonder what all this conversation means? In the past all that I had to do was to hang on the wall to hold a picture and it was so stupid. But now they say I go to America and help establish a home there. This sounds interesting. I will tell you about it later."

Now my dear nieces and nephews, I will tell you about your ancestry.

Grandfather Grant was a merchant in Shieldaig, Ross-Shire, Scotland. His business occupied the lower floor of a stone building that still stands and is still occupied as a store. The upper story of this building was the residence of the family which consisted of five girls and two boys.

Grandfather also had a partnership in three merchant boats that plied the coast of Scotland furnishing merchandise to small communities. His favorite ship was called the "Agnes" and it was on this ship that Grandfather was on a voyage when he became ill. Mother was a mere child at this time but remembered going with the family as the boat entered the harbor to meet her father. It was his custom to be on deck to wave a greeting to his family and when he did not appear her mother, said; "Children, your father is ill." Grandfather was carried to his home and lived only a short time.

Grandmother, in her youth, had an education for culture and a homemaker. This education gave her an outstanding position in her community, but did not prepare her for a livelihood.

There is in our family a sampler made by Grandmother Grant. The date says "Sewed by Margaret McKinzie, Stormway, Feb. 1808."

The older children had been given the advantage of a good education but the two younger girls, Jessie and Heanne, were deprived of this, getting what they could from the village school. The people of Northern Scotland spoke the Gaelic, and the schools were in the English language.

The MacDonald family lived in the same village and the two families were close friends. The MacDonalds were mechanical men and gardeners. These gleanings are partly from conversations of my parents and with Scotch friends whom lived in the same community. Had I had more of an inquiring mind at the time of such conversations, I would be able to give a more accurate account.

I am told by a number of a later period that most men of father's time, in this village, became professional men and I am convinced convinced that his parents wished to prepare him in the same way. But father was a restless boy who loved best the people of the outdoors. He was a restless boy who loved best the people of the outdoors. He was a friendly boy and was often asked to accompany the minister on his trips to the fishing villages where he made calls to christen children.

One of Father's stock stories was of an event that took place on one of these visits. "The minister was to cross the mountain to visit a small secluded village and he asked me to come on the long walk for company. In this community there was a boy thirteen years old who had escaped to the mountains every time the minister came so he had not been baptized. And as usual when we arrived, this boy could not be found. So strong was the belief of these people in the necessity of baptism, in order for salvation, that the whole community turned out to search for him and brought him down and put him in the ocean aw the minister proclaimed, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost."

The people of Shieldaig observed the Sabbath in a manner that may seem strict to us. All preparations, as far as possible, were made on Saturday. Shoes were shined and placed in row. Household water was brought from the public water source, but not the drinking water. It was quite proper to go for water with a pitcher but never with a pail on Sunday.

At the age of sixteen father was sent to Edinburgh for an education. This would seem to be the opportunity of his life, but, here again, the restless spirit demonstrated itself. The close confinement of the Edinburgh school became too restrictive for this one who loved the big out of doors and he ran away and went to sea. He spent some years on trading vessels, going into ports of England, Wales and as far north as the midnight sun.

The Scotch were strong for nick names and Jeanne was known as little Jane. Jane and John had been engaged for a long time for John must save enough for the establishment of a home and to save money was not one of his virtues, not with standing the Scotch reputation.

About three weeks before the wedding day the couple went to church together. Jane wore a black taffeta dress made with full skirt, tight bodice with flowing sleeves that had an under sleeve of lace that was held tight at the wrist. With this she wore a dolman of the taffeta. At the regular morning service the betrothal was announced by the minister.

After the wedding a dinner was served and presided over by Grandmother Grant. The wedding gown was cream India mull with a dresden design, a costume that seems to be coming into vogue again. A cream colored cashmere shawl accompanied this costume for the bride, it also carried the dresden design in the border. This dress is still a family possession.

Among the wedding presents were some heirlooms. These have been carefully treasured and most of them are in the family now. The gift of the cabinet maker, the spinning wheel, was there polished and ready for its venture in the new land.

The trip to America was delayed two years on account of the illness of Grandfather McDonald. After the death of Gradnfather, Grandmother McDonald decided to come to America also, as most of her family were either there or were going. A sister of father's, Mrs. George Frazier, having been bereft of her husband, who was lost at sea off the coast of England, decided to join the company. There she felt she could give her three sons a better chance in life. The sons were William, Hector and Colin. Besides the new additions to the party, there was now a six month old baby, William McDonald.

I have often thought of Grandmother Grant as she bade farewell to her youngest daughter, leaving for a far off country. This was the third daughter to leave her native land, two older girls sailing after marriage for Australia.

To us, reared in America, this urge to leave the native land seems strange. There must have been a great desire for possession. In Scotland great tracts of land are the property of Loards and the farmer is only a tenant, called a crofter.

The spinning wheel in its compact crate was among the chests and other precious possessions.

To father this journey was a continual source of joy and mother said it was difficult to keep him from answering the commands of the officer. To mother, she said, after five weeks of tossing over the crested waves of the Atlantic, Castle Gardens was a Paradise.

A memorandum kept by father is as follows: "John McDonald and family left Shiedaig, May 26th, sailed from Liverpool, England, June 5th. 1857. Arrived at New York, July 8th 1857."

Father followed farming here but war came and again came the urge as expressed by Kipling in The Explorer:-

"There's no sense in going further-
it's the edge of cultivation."
So they said, and I believed it-
broke my land and sowed my crop-
Built my barns and strung my fences
in the little border station
Tucked away below the foothills
where the trails run out and stop.
Till a voice, as bad as Conscience
rang interminable changes.
One everlasting Whisper day and night-repeated-so:
Something hidden. Go and find it.
Go and look behind the Ranges-
Something lost behind the ranges,
Lost and waiting for you. GO".

At this time there was a great immigration from the middle west to Oregon and Washington on account of the Land Grant bill passed by congress, granting homesteads to settlers, in these parts. Father and mother had not been happy on the plains of Illinois. They missed the mountains of Scotland.

The spinning wheel had become a very useful implement by this time for now, besides William, there were John, Christina, Ellen , Peter, Alexander and Mordo, five little ones demanding stockings and mittens.

In May 1863 a company of friends started on the long journey for Oregon. Father placed his household goods in one wagon. This was to be in charge of William Frazier, who had come to make his home with them at the death of his mother. He was fourteen now. Father and family occupied the second wagon.

This company was to join a caravan of one hundred wagons at Omaha. At this time Indians were particularly troublesome so the train was to be conducted through the greater danger by a government escort of thirty six mule teams and one hundred and fifty men under the command of Captain Crawford.

This great calvacade of emmigrants and soldiers proved too formidable for the wandering Indians to attack and they were permitted to pursue their course unmolested.

In a conversation with Will Frazier long after this journey and had become a successful businessman in Portland, he said: "That summer crossing the plains to me, a fourteen year old boy, was just one long picnic and was one of the happiest times of my life." Continuing, he said: "There was one instance of that trip that stands out above all else. At Council Bluffs the company of Scotch people of Kewanee stopped off for a day. There was much preparation, cooking and much conversation. At first, it was all mystery to me but at last Aunt Jane let me know that a swain was to come down from Iowa and that a wedding feast was being prepared.

The wagons were placed in a circle which helped to give a feeling of closeness, an altar was built of stones and wild flowers brought for its decoration. A minister came from Omaha and the marriage of Alexander Cameron and Jeanette McCrase was performed with all the dignity that circumstances permitted and ended with a blessing on the union of this couple and a call upon God to be with the young people on their long journey and in their home. Continuing, "No wedding has ever impressed me so much."

October the 5th the company entered the Grande Ronde Valley and so charmed were they with its beauty and possibilities that some of the company decided to call it home. These were the Shaws, the Murchasons, the McKinzies and the McDonalds. The McCraes, Camerons and the Dewers continued on to Walla Walla.

Instead of homesteading father bought a farm of 320 acres with a house or cabin. This place situated at the foot of the Indian Trail near Mt. Emily, with a wooded background, a beautiful stretch of meadow as a foreground and babbling streams running through it was the home for the McDonald family for many years.

Supplies for the first year must have come from Walla Walla, the older settlement. Then came the Rinehart grist mill and the Oliver saw mill. As soon as possible a new house was built. It was a log house and father hewed the logs. The saw mill supplied the lumber for floors and additions. A fire place in the sitting room and one in mother's bed room are places around which pleasant memories linger. When company came we were often shooed off to mother's room after supper, where we were given special privileges. Especially was this true when Uncle and Auntie Smith came, as they often did. They were delightful people but were Spiritualists and usually wandered off to Spirit Land before the evening was over. Mother thought this was not good bed-time stories for children.

Before this house was occupied by the family it was used for the polling place for the first election of that district.

The first homes were entirely on the edges of the valley where spring streams and meadow grass could be found. The rest of the valley was one waving sea of bunch grass. The grass, so called for the way it grew in bunches, grew two feet high or more and stock could live out all winter as there was always feed above the snow.

Soon the pioneers had stock, gardens and machinery, but there had to be a source of making money, so freighting became the vogue. Soon the tinkling of bells announced the passing of heavy wagons drawn by several spans of horses or mules, all guided by one line. There were three toll gates opened up across the mountains, the Meacham, the Thomas and the Ruckles and the Woodard.

The Meacham is now the Old Oregon Trail, the Woodard is the newly completed Langdon Lake road and the Thomas and Ruckles road leads into Langdon Lake road. Two of these roads led into Summerville and this was a busy village.

Father did not do freighting but he did go each fall to Walla Walla for apples and took them to the mines were he received his pay in gold dust. He always brought in one load of apples for home use until his own orchard supplied the family.

On these trips to Walla Walla there was one package that always brought joy to us younger children. Each year an unfailing gift was the "Chatter-Box". Books were scarse, but the bi-weekly Oregonian, the Youth's Companion and the Christian Advocate were regular arrivals.

Now Father had a small flock of sheep and here is the place for something more about the spinning wheel. Wool must be washed, spun into yarn, then washed again and knitted into stockings, sox and mittens for this big family. And this was not all for wool mattresses and wool comforters made good warm beds. Now can you vision such a busy mother? the bur-r-r of the spinning wheel could be heard almost daily. Mother often kept a book beside the wheel and when weariness of the spinning came she would relax by reading. Is it surprising that I associate the spinning wheel with the life of the family? On winter evenings, the sitting room where the family gathered; some with books, others with a checker or chess game and later the whiz of "ping pong"could be heard from the dining room and occasionally the sound of sleigh bells announced the arrival of friends who came for an evening and it only took a few people to add to our group to make a real part. For refreshments there was always on hand pop corn, apples, cookies or doughnuts. Mother almost always served callers with tea and cake. If you should go to Scotland now you will find that this custom prevails there still.

Sunday morning, without fail, the entire family, hired men and guests gathered for devotionals. Father read a chapter from the bible and the Lord's Prayer was said in unison. We had little Sunday School experience until we went away for education.

The most that we knew of the bible we got at mother's knee. During my time, we usually went to church, first to the Southern Methodist until the Presbyterian Church was established. Camp meeting was held quite often near our home. There were a few elderly ladies who on occassion got religion and expressed it by shouting"Glory Hallelujah." At these camp meetings many people came and camped and on Sunday people came from all over the valley bringing their well laden picnic baskets. Before this time there was the Circuit Rider coming across the mountains on his faithful horse, with saddle bags hanging on each side of the animal and followed by his pack horse. He would appear at one of the homes where he knew he would be welcome. Immediately the host would send his boys out on horse back to deliver this message: "There will be meeting at school house this evening at early candle light. Come and bring a candle."

One of these men was said to be expecially profound. This was father Newton. He was very dramatic also. The story goes that he was much concerned about Darwinism and was preaching most emphatically on the subject one day. As he drew toward the climax, a young man somewhat affected by drink strolled up the aisle of the school house clanking heavy spurs and stopped to warm his hands at the big stove which invariable stood in the center aisle. Father Newton just

struck a pose with thumbs in arms of his vest and said: "Reason however you will you will come back to this question "how come ye here?" From the region of the stove in stentorian tones, came the answer: "Come a'horse-back,___"

Father was superintendent of building the Thomas & Ruckles toll road and this not only took him from home much, but also took much of the profit of the farm. During a freshet the road was so damaged that it was put out of order for a time at least. Following this a greater shock came when William died of pneumonia. William had taken the mangement of the form in father's absence and this also included a farm out in the valley now. He was mother's advisor and mainstay, always an understanding son and his going was a great grief to us all.

While father was supervising the building of the Thomas and Ruckles road, he became acquainted with many of the Indians of the Umatilla reservation and theyreservation and they regareded him as a friend. Some of the meadows in our community became a sea of blue at early summer when the camas bloomed. The Una tillas came each summer to dig the camas bulbs. This bulb they baked barbecue fashion then pounded into a powder in a pestile and later baked as bread. One farmer objected to the women entering his field and drove them out. They returned with the men and defied him, saying that they had dug camas there for many generation and would continue to do so. I wonder if they were right.

One summer when on their visit to alittle Umatiilla girl died. The chief, Chief Homely, asked father to make a casket for her. This he did and lined it as best he could. Mother and father were asked to attend the service and a corner plot in our orchard received her body. This corner was protected by a fence and Maggie McLean and Christina were accustomed to place flowers on the grave. One day as they arrived with dogwood violets, grass flowers and blud martenzia they were startled to find an open grave. Frightened they hastened to tell the news and on investigation it was found that the Indians had departed for home. Later the chief said that on their departure they took the casket to their cemetery.

Father enters politics. He was made county commissioner and held this position until he declined to have his name used on the ballot longer. However when the new commission met, they created a new office-"road and master"-and appointe father to this office. This took him an long drives and as he always loved company I sometimes went for companionship. Ithink I could tell a lot about how roads were looked after those times. I believe father knew every bridge and culvert and every person in the county and it was to his liking.

Those were the days when the mother in the home had to be the nurse and often took the place of the doctor. Mother must have been an exceptionally fine nurse for if a neighbor had sickness they came for her and if she protested, strong men sometimes pleaded with her until she left her own work and went.

You may wonder how this family got any education beyond the country school. Everyone was sent away for a time. The older ones went to Blue Mountain university and perhaps a business training in Portland. Ducan and Hector had two years at Bsop Scott. I had one year at Ascencion and one year at Pacific. It did not take a mint of money to do this or we would have been deprived of it and I know some of the family would have loved to go farther had the purse been bigger.

Perhaps we unconsciously derived much from the guest in our home. Mother was willing that we should invite our friends that we met while aways, teachers or boys and girls. This brought interesting people close to us.

A number of cousins came from Scotland and stayed with us until they learned the ways of a new country. This was a time for pranks on our part as well as help.

The wife of a sea captain came to the McKinzie home and we enjoyed initiating her into the ways of the west, and she in turn could teach us much. She had traveled with her husband much of the time, dressed interestingly and her hands showed that she had had little acquaintance with kitchen work. How I admired these! She was eager to learn to ride and took part in all western sports and was much fun. She was inquisitive about corn-on-the-cob and this furnished us with an opportunity of initiating her into the "American Corn-eaters." With her it was a case of "first endure and then embrace."

In the eighties a lovely new home was built. Soon after this the children began to go to homes of their own. The parents, though lovely, were phiosophical enough to accept the inevitable and looked forward to the home coming when the house again often rang with happiness and laughter.

I count that one successful who has lived eighty years and more can say with browning:

"I find the earth not gray but rosy,
Heaven not grim but fair of hue."

The pioneer may not be rich in lands himself but he can say with the explorer:

"You go up and occupy.
Ores you will find there; wood and cattle;
water-transit sure and steady (That should keep the
railway rates down) coal and iron at your door.

God took care to hide that country til He judged His people ready,
Then he chose me for His Whisper, and I've found it and it is yours!
Yes your "Never-never country"-
Yes, your "edge of cultivation"
And "no sense in going further"-
'til I cross the range to see.
God forgive me! No, I didn't. It's
God's present to our nat ion.
Anybody might have found it but His Whisper came to me."

Modern machinery for a time pushed the spinning wheel into oblivion. Then it was launched on a new career. As such it mad its first appearance "The Faust Spinning Son" when sung by Ina Wright Herbst at the Steward Opera House. Since that it has been in demand as a symbol of the industry and her marvelous genuis of pioneer mothers whose upermost thought was her love of her home and family.

As such a symbol may the spinning wheel someday occupy an honored place in t he Union County Historical Building

ANNA McDONALD OLIVER.

The foregoing is copied from articles published in the WALLOWA SUN, issues April 7th and April 15, 1938.

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

The Chinese In Union County by Frank M. Jasper

February, 1960

La Grande Senior High School

The history of the Chinese in Union County is linked with that of the entire Pacific coast. To understand it fully we must know something of the larger background formed by developments in other parts of this region.

The earliest settlements of Asiatics on the Pacific coast have little or nothing to do with our story, but we are, nevertheless, interested to know that the prehistoric peoples who first inhabited America were not people of European origin. Let us quote from H. G. Wells:-

> "At some period in human history there seems to have been a special type of neolithic culture widely distributed in the world, which had a group of features so curious and so unlikely to have been developed independently in different regions of the earth, as to compel us to believe that it was in effect one culture. It reaches through all the regions inhabited by the brunet Mediterranean race, and beyond through India, further India, up the Pacific coast of China, and it spread, at last, across the Pacific and to Mexico and Peru. It was a coastal culture, not reaching deeply inland. This peculiar development of Neolithic culture, which Elliot Smith calls the Heliolithic culture, included many of the following odd practices:---1-circumcision, 2-the very queer custom of sending the father to bed when a child is born, 3-the practice of massage, 4-the making of mummies, 5-megalithic monuments, 6-artificial deformation of the heads of the young by bandages, 7-tattooing, 8--religious association of the sun and the serpent in worship, 9-the use of the symbol known as the swastika."

Mr. Wells also believes that in North America a group of Mongoloid tribes, having been entirely cut off from the old world, were moving southward and finally joined up with the Heliolithic culture which we havementioned which possibly came across the Pacific in ocean borne canoes. These two groups produced the earliest civilizations in America.

So, if discovery and precedence in settlement are really a basis for claim to priority in rights to ownership and colinization, the orientals have it over the Europeans.

Chinese imigration in large numbers to the Pacific Coast began with the discovery of gold in California, when the Whites, who wanted the gold but who did not wish to do the menial labor necessary to get it, found Cooly labor very profitable. These

were imported in large numbers from China. These were not only welcomed as workers at construction work in the mines, but they did the servile work on the railroads, and on fruit and vegetable farms. They also worked as domestic servants and in other forms of industry.

The year 1869 brought a change in the situation. The Pacific Railroad was completed and there was a great influx of White labor. Hostile feeling had been developing for many years, but with the rapid increase in White labor, it soon took the form of violence. There was a riot in Los Angeles in 1871, and fifteen Chinamen lost their lives by hanging. During the same year the United States Supreme Court decided that Chinamen were not eligible for citizenship. A Committee of Investigation, appointed by the Legislature of California in 1876 rendered a violently anti-Chinese report of three hundred pages. The man who presented this report to the Congressional Committee said:-- "The Chinese are inferior to any race God ever made. These people have the perfection of crimes of 4000 years. I believe the Chinese have no souls to save, and if they have they are not worth saving."

There came to be a great demand on the part of the people of the Pacific Coast for a national law curtailing Chinese imigration. Whereupon, in 1879 a bill was passed by Congress virtually prohibiting it. President Hayes vetoed this bill, on the grounds that it would violate the Burlingame Treaty which had been enacted in 1878. Some of the provisions of the Burlingame Treaty are very interesting in view of the popular attitude toward imigration in later years and up until the present time. Here are Articles V and VI:--

> "Article V: The United States of America and the Emperor of China cordially recognize the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage of free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects respectively from one country to the other for the purpose of curiosity, of trade, or of permanent residence. The high contracting parties, therefore, join in reprobating any other than voluntary emigration for these purposes. They, consequently, agree to pass laws making it a penal offense for citizens of the United States or Chinese subjects to take Chinese subjects to the United States or to any other foreign country, or for a Chinese subject or a citizen of the United States to take a citizen of the United States to China or to any other foreign country without their free and voluntary consent, respectively."
>
> "Article VI:--Citizens of the United States visiting or residing in China shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities or exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation, and reciprocally, Chinese subjects visiting or residing in the United States shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities, and exemptions in respect to travel, or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation. But nothing

herein shall be held to confer naturalization upon citizens of the United States in China, nor upon the subjects of China in the United States."

President Hayes contended that Congress has no right to violate a treaty; that this should be initiated in the executive branch of the government and confirmed by the Senate, and in no case should it be done without great cause.

During the decade from 1880 to 1890 the Chinese population in the United States increased from 105,000 to 106,688. Surely this small growth should not have alarmed anyone, and yet it did. So, in 1880 a bill was passed in Congress suspending immigration for ten years. This bill also required that all Chinese should register. President Arthur objected to this on the ground that it was discrimination, since it was not required of other immigrants. The Chinese were greatly offended by this bill.

Another law which met with much opposition on the part of the Chinese, because of its discrimination and consequent violation of our treaty, was known as the Geary Act and was passed in 1892. This required that all Chinese laborers who desired to remain in this country should register, and that those not complying with this provision were subject to deportation. The laxity of the government in enforcing this law led to the citizens in various communities putting the Geary Act into execution on their own authority. It is doubtful, however, if they ever took the pain to inquire as to whether any of the Chinese they took in hand had registered. It was enough that they were Chinese.

Upon the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad many of the Chinese who were employed in the construction of that enterprise migrated across the border, and took up residence in Washington, mostly in the towns of Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, and Portland, Oregon. Violence broke out in 1885, blood was spilled, and Chinese houses burned to the ground. So fierce did the rioting become that the United States troops were called out to put a stop to it.

Chinese came into eastern Oregon in 1862 with the opening of the mines. Large numbers of them were to be found in Canyon City, Baker, Sparta, up and down the Snake and Salmon Rivers, and in the Boise Basin. There was a law forbidding the Chinese from mining. But when the mines ran out and became so poor that they were thought unprofitable, they were sold to the Chinese. But many of the White men failed to find anything better, and when they came back to their former property and found it was being used with some profit by the Chinese, they joined the crowd in the cursing the Chinese.

Some idea of the large number of Chinese in porportion to the White population may be derived from a report of Boise Valley in 1870, after the mines had been largely worked out. Annie Laurie Bird, in her book, "Boise, The Peace Valley" gives the following figures: The total population of Boise County in that year was 3,834. There were 2,057 Whites, 15 Colored, 8 Indians, and 1,754 Chinese. This furnishes some indication of the number of Chinese residing throughout the mining districts of Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

But, since La Grande was not a mining town, there were very few Chinese in this part of the country. It was when the railroad was built in 1884 that large numbers of them came into the valley, and several hundred of them settled permanently in La Grande. Most of these settled in town where they became merchants, laundrymen, restaurant keepers, and cooks. Many people who live in La Grande today have never heard of the town of Oro Dell, yet only a few years ago during the time of which we are speaking, there existed near the mouth of the Canyon of the Grande Rounde a very substantial village. During the building of the Rail Road it must have had something like 800 inhabitants. According to Kate Hanley there were two stores owned by W. J. Snodgrass, two hotels, a wagon shop, blacksmith shop, two saloons, a post office, and a school house where Sunday school was held every Sunday. A large camp of Chinese laborers were stationed at Oro Dell. These men did much of their work with pick and shovel and wheel barrow. Ed Reynolds relates an amusing incident connected with another camp farther up the river:

"Joe Buchanan and myself, both driving four horse teams loaded with freight from Umatilla Landing were passing through a camp of Chinese laborers in upper Perry when we heard two Chinamen ki wying and screaming at each other. We stopped to see the fun. One Chinaman was washing clothes in a tub with a washboard. Presently he grasped the washboard in his hands and started for the other Chinaman. The other one, in self defense, pulled off his wooden shoe, and it looked as if there was to be an interesting fight, for they were both yelling "bloody murder" all the time. Our entertainment came to an end when the camp boss came out and stopped the fight. But it was surely funny while it lasted."

There was a time during this period when almost every hotel and restaruant in town had a Chinese cook, and many homes throughout the valley employed Chinamen in their kitchens. Some of the Chinese became excellent gardeners and raised produce for the local markets and for the mines. These gardens were often irrigated in the most primative fashion by carrying water from the river or well by means of two buckets, one on each end of a pole which was carried over the sholders. There were extensive gardens across the bridge from Island City on the west side of the road. Other gardens were near where the highway shops are now located in La Grande, in Old Town, and across the river on the Rynearson Farm.

Several families in the valley took young Chinese boys and raised them as one of the family. They did work principally about the house and kitchen. Chong Ben was one of these. He was raised in the home of La Grande's well known merchant of that day, J. M. Berry. The family acquired a sincere friendship for him, and he was highly esteemed by others.

Ah Hoa was another Chinaman who was taken into the care of Mr. Charlie Orai who at that time was in the government detective service. The father of Ah Hoa was a Ju Jutsu trainer. His mother died when he was two years of age. Later the father became ill and asked Mr. Orai to take care of the boy and to make use of him in any manner that he could. In order that the father might have a place to sleep he asked Mr. Orai to pay him fifty cents a week for the boy. He paid the boy $3.00 a week, of which fifty cents was handed over to his father. While Ah Hoa was with Mr. Orai, he learned much about the business of being a detective, and liked it. Mr. Orai also benefitted by learning to speak the Chinese language. This was from 1884 to 1885. Ah Hoa became an adept at police work, and in 1886 he went to work for Col. Shoemaker who was Federal Agent at the time. After some years at this work he was used as an inspetor to discover fraudulent Chinese residents who had been smuggled into this country, many of them across the border from Mexico. Mr. Orai stated that he seemed to have almost an intuituve insight as to who were the guilty persons, and proved to be of very great value.

One of his successful pieces of work was the uncovering of a counterfeiting ring at The Dalles. He entered the joint with ten cents, which he would gamble over and over again, of course keeping his eyes open and listening to the conversation. Hoa finally discovered the hangout in which the counterfeiters were doing their business, and it was planned that a raid should be made on the place while Ah Hoa was to be within gaming with the offenders. When the policemen entered Ah Hoa ducked and escaped between the legs of one of the policemen. Mr. Oai was assisting in this raid, amd was given a position where he could observe the men as they came out of the building in order that he might find where they were placed, but when he came to look for them he could not find them. Then Hoa came out, ran his hands over the wall, and opened a door revealing the dies. With a look of disgust at the stupidity of the other police, he remarked: "Damned White Man don't know anything."

A well known Chinaman of Union County was Toy L. Young. He was supposed to have been born in Helena, Montana, where his father was a merchant. He had a brother by the name of Sam, who was born about 170 miles from Peking, China. There were some who believed that Toy was also born there.

Toy succeeded in smuggling his brother across the border from Canada, via Tacoma, and from there to Helena. Toy Young owned a block in La Grande where the State Highway Shops are now located. He owned the Central Hotel in Baker, and built a hotel in North Powder. He was head of the Hip Sing Tong in this part of the country, and was a ring leader in the tong wars, but he got other Chinamen to do the shooting. He was, because of this, very fearful lest his own life should be taken, and made it his practice to walk home by way of the railroad track rather than on Adams Ave. Toy married a White woman. They had two children, both girls. The older girl married a white man who was somewhat worthless in character. The younger daughter worked in a department store in La Grande. One day a noted man from the East came into the store. It was love at first sight and they were soon married. He took her East with him, where it was not know that she was Chinese. Toy's brother, Sam, worked as a cook in the Somer Hotel and in several restaurants. He went to Wallowa where he opened a hotel which he ran for some time. He and Toy were not congenial, because Toy wanted to spend all their money on mines. Finally Sam went to Spokane, and it is not known what became of him. Kate Hanley testifies that Toy Young was "an unscrupulous bad man, who caused all the Chinese trouble."

A well known Chinaman in La Grande was Jim Livermore. He kept a restaurant in La Grande for many years. He later opened a restaurant in Enterprise which he operated for some time and then returned to La Grande. His partner was a very popular young Chinaman by the name of Billie Eng, who, as we will see later, became an accomplice in the shooting of Wong Wan Dick during the tong war, and who was himself later killed. We will deal more fully with this in another place. Jim Livermore owned a bit ranch in Wallowa County. He finally sold his ranch and went back to China.

Chin Han came to La Grande for the purpose of organizing a lodge of Chinese Masons. But he did not find sufficient material to do so. He was Grand Master of the Chinese Masons, and operated all over the western United States. In spite of his good qualities and superior ability, he was an addict at smoking opium. One day the Chinese joints were raided by the police, and Chin was among those arrested. They found him smoking opium. He handed his pipe to Charlie Orai, who kept it his possession for many years when he presented it to the writer of this story.

Kate Hanley relates an interesting story of how they happene to employ a China boy by the name of Ying. She says:

"The Chinamen would come to our house (from the camp at Oro Dell) to buy apples. My father had a large pit of apples near the house. Each man would buy his own apples, . . .ten cents worth. It was agreed that I should have the money if I would wait on them. Among those who came to buy was a boy who seemed to be of more than average intelligence.

One day my father said to mother: "I am going to try to get that intelligent boy to stay with us." When the boy was approached on the subject he said he would be willing to stay, if they could get another Chinese boy to stay also. My Uncles John and Bill Rynearson took one boy, and William Proebstel hired one to run a vegetable garden. Ying stayed with us for eighteen years. He was a fine honorable man. Eng Chung took the garden after Ying. He was a nice peaceful neighbor, later moving to "Old Town" where he had a garden.

While Ying was staying with the Rynearsons he did much of the house work besides the garden, orchard and other farm work. He was one Chinaman who did not hold himself sloof from Americans, and Americans were cordial and friendly to him. He was very sociable, and a member of the Masonic order. His father was above the average in intelligence. Finally Rynearsons rented him the garden and his vegetable hack was a familiar sight about La Grande. He was a great lover of flowers, and had a fine display of them back of his garden. One evidence of Ying's intelligence was that he decided that he needed a wife. So, he went back home, secured his wife, and, after an absence of one year, returned to La Grande and went into the restaurant business. Ying did not leave La Grande until the Tong War in 1917. Later he became state interpreter for Idaho.

Kate Hanley introduces us to another interesting Chinese Character:---"My father bought the old "New York Store" from Henry Anson and rented it to Hong Tuck who ran a store there for a number of years."

He became one of the leading Chinese Merchants. Whe Chinese New Years came around, he profited by a fine trade. But this was partially offset by his leberality in treating the many youngsters who would gather at his store. These treats were in the form of Chinese candy, nuts, specially treated watermellon seed, cocoanut, and preserved pineapple or ginger. The Chinese were very fond of Children. When Hong Tuck died he is said to have had a magnificent funeral procession. There was an elaborate ceremony, at which roast pig, food and sweets, also beer and wine were placed on his grave. He should have had no trouble sustaining himself on his journey to the celestial promised land.

The Chinese were good neighbors. Bess Scriber says that as a child she was often sent to one of the Chinese homes for some yeast to make bread. This was a special kind of yeast in liquid form. Mrs. Scriber says that sometimes drank a good portion of it before she got home. They were generous in giving help to their White neighbors. While the Chinese had many friends among the people of Grande Rounde Valley, the growing prejudice, dislike, and antagonism which was being manifest in other parts of the West finally found its way into this community.

As has been stated, the Chinese did some mining up and down the Snake River. In 1888 a mob fell upon a group of these miners in Wallowa County and ten of their number were killed. There is an interesting story in connection with this affair. The shovels which the Chinamen were using were left where they dropped them. Later some one noticed that one of the handles had been broken, and that this handle was hollow. It was further discovered that everyone of these handles was hollow, and that they contained gold dust.

The year 1893 was a panic year. Millions of people all over the United States were out of employment. It was felt that every Chinaman employed was taking the bread from a White family. Since feeling against the Chinese was very strong on the part of a large number of people these conditions fanned the sparks of hatred into flames of violence. A mass meeting was held in Steward's Opera House in La Grande to see what could be done about it. Ex-Senator Slater introduced a resolution which was unanimously adopted, "requesting the Senators and Representatives from this district to urge upon the President and others in authority the imperative necessity of a prompt, faithful and vigorous execution of the Geary Law, that deportation of all recalcitrant Chinamen might proceed with dispatch and the perpetual menace to their prosperity from the invasion of Asiatic coolie laborers be removed."

During the same evening another mass meeting was held at the Blue Mountain Grange Hall, near La Grande at which a stronger resolution was unanimously passed.

On Sept. 24 another mass meeting was held. This meeting was more militant in character. They had not met for resolutions but for action. That very evening they visited Chinatown and ousted the inhabitants. These were herded together, escorted to the edge of the town and commanded in no uncertain terms to keep right on going.

Among the leaders of this group of rioters were Ezekiah Gottner and Louis Oldenburg. When the mob came to the doors of the Chinese buildings, these two men placed themselves at the door pleading with the mob to keep back. They yelled, "Get back boys. Don't do this; you are breaking the law. Stop and go home," and more in the same vein. But the crowd pushed them aside as the fully intended that they should, and the work was carried out. But the ruse did not work and these two were arrested and thrown in jail with the others.

The command to the Chinamen to leave town was much easier to give then to enforce. A number of the Chinese took the next morning train to Baker, but most of them established a camp on the river about four miles above town. So these self-appointed guardians of the public welfare proceeded to the camp, again herded these Chinese together, marched them back to La Grande, and compelled them to board the west bound train. Some fourteen Chinese who were employed in the hop yards of H. J. Geer of Cove were loaded into a wagon, taken to La Grande, put on the train and told not to come back.

And these Chinese people never did come back to stay. How much of suffering and tragedy came to the banished people will never be known. But the White men, feeling that during those lean years every Chinaman was occupying a position which should be occupied by a White person, thought little of this; he was elated in spirit through his active zeal for what he believed to be a worthy couse. About fifteen of the Chinamen did return to settle up their business affairs, but they were given to understand that they were not to remain, and they made no effort to do so.

But this raid was not wholly successful. We have mentioned the Rynearsons and their faithful workman, Ying. There were some of the Chinese merchants and laundrymen who thought that this might be a good place to take refuge. So they managed to escape across the river and to take refuge in the home of Ying. But the mob followed. They came to the house and violently threw the door open. To their astonishment they saw, not the Chinamen they were looking for, but a red haired young woman sitting there in front of them with a shot gun across her lap. She had fire in her eyes, and testily said to them: "What do you men want?" "We have come to run the Chinamen out of town", they said. She answered them in a manner that left no doubt as to her meaning: "Well, you are not going to take any chinamen from here, now you gentlemen git." So the men "gitted" and the Chinese staid. This young woman was Cad Rynearson.

The men who took part in the raid were arrested and thrown into jail. According to the court records they were:- Hezikiah Cottner, Louis Oldenburg, Edgar Fitch, editor of "The Union County Farmer", John Green of Hot Lake, Ed Meade, a gambler and song writer, Joe and Chas. Mc Crary, Chas. Ladd, J. K. P. Burch, W. H. Murray, Jas. Howe, Chas. Nesley, Frank Bush, George Heffling, Thos. Hughey, Jno. Carpenter, Billy Furman, Jas Truesdale, Chas. Stacy, Bud Blaver, June Mason, W. G. Mc Clellan, Jno. Frizzel, Jas. Howe, Sam Jones, Bill Jones, Jno. Smith, Bill Smith, Jno. Johnson, Jno. Brown, Jas. Brown, Ed Brown, E. Coe, M. Smith, Tom Smith, Dan Smith, Abraham Smith, Fred Smith, Robt. Jones, Vic Jones, Mike Jones, [illegible]. Sill, A. Sill, Pete Smith, Pat Murphy, O. Olson, Larry Smith.

Editor Fitch continued to edit his paper while he was in jail awaiting trial. Previous to his incarceration he had been very ill with trachina poisoning from eating pork. In one issue of his paper occured this bit of verse:-

"Ye editor got bugs
By eating bacon that was stale,
He got 'em again,
He got 'em in jail."

Another little verse written by him while in jail was:-

"Ten La Granders are in jail,
Don't propose to give them bail,
We were after the pigtails for a fact
To enforce the Geary Act."

Public sentiment ran high in favor of the men in jail, and even the school children caught the spell which, to the people who were afflicted with this pseudo-noble sentiment, to be heroic Some of the young folk could be heard singing on their way to and from school the following verse written by Ed Meade:

"Ta ra ra ra boom de aye,
The Chinamen have had their day,
Shoot them with a bail of hay,
Ta ra ra ra boom de aye."

At the November term of court the law firm of Baker and Baker attempted to prosecute these men. Of course, there was no doubt as to their guilt, but public sentiment was so strong in their favor that it was impossible to convict them. After the acquittal the following verse appeared:

"Baker and Baker sat on the fence,
Picking their teeth with a monkey wrench;
Up came the crowd and gave a big whoop,
And Baker and Baker fell off in the soup."

But not everyone were swept off their feet by this mob sentiment. There were people in La Grande who abhored such lawlessness, and felt that the treatment given the Chinese was brutal, cruel and underserved. Among these was Dr. Honam who wrote a poem expressing his sentiment.

La Grande did not remain without a Chinese population. Just as the desire for laborers to do the back-breaking and tedious work had brought the Chinese to California in '49, so the coming of the sugar factory to the Grande Ronde Valley in 1898-9, with the consequent demand for labor in the beet fields, brought the Chinese back into the valley. The Chinese section of La Grande was once more established with its stores, restaurants, laundries, and other institutions not so worthy. As laborers in the beet fields, the Chinese did not prove wholly satisfactory. Because of reduced production as a result of neglected care there was some litigation for damages with the contractors who furnished the Chinese Labor.

The Tong Wars, which at that time were intermittant all over the country, did not spare La Grande. It seems to have begun in La Grande by the shooting of an old gardener by the name of Wong Wan Duck. Charlie Orai, who was in the government secret service said that this shooting was perpetrated by the Hip Sing Tong, of which the rich Chinaman, Toy Young, whom we have previously mentioned, was the leader in this part of the country. The man whom we have previously mentioned, was the leader in this part of the country. The man chosen to accompany the one who was to do the shooting was selected by lot. Toy Young held the straws, and Billie Eng and his Brother Sam drew straws. Toy Young is said to have so manipulated the straws so that Sam drew the short one. Wong Wan Duck was driving his familiar vegetable wagon toward town with a load of vegetables when he was shot. The assassins did not fully accomplish their purpose,

and Wong Duck recovered.

The second affair consisted of two attempts o the life of Eng Chung, who was also a gardner in Old Town. On Feb. 18, 1916 Eng Chung was shot, and then beaten on the head with the butt of a pistol. While Eng Chung was recuperating in the hospital, a Chinaman by the name of Lem Quon paid his hospital bill. Three other Chinamen, Chong Ben, Li Hung, and Wong one, were interested in this account in some manner, and were determined to compel him to pay back the money which amounted to about sixty dollars. On two different occasions Lem Quon, in the presence of Li Hung and Wong One, had been overheard to remark that, if Eng Chung did not refund that money he would take a couple of shots at him. On Feb. 16, 1917, three shots crashed through the glass doors of the Hop Lee Store, passing near Eng Chung as he was sitting near the s tove. Chong Ben was seen through the glass door and recognised as the one who did the shooting. Li Hung and recognised as the one who did the shooting. Li Hung and Wong One were identified as two of the three others who ran from the scene with him. These men were all convicted in the lower court, but acquitted in the supreme court.

Up to the time of the attempt on the life of Eng Chong there was little sensation created by these various shootings. But that which took place at about twelve o'clock, March 13, 1917, stirred the city of La Grande, and the entire county from end to end. There were two things which may have formed the motive for the killing of Billie Eng. The first resulted from the manner in which Billie Eng got his wife. The Chinese are said to be very unceremonious about the manner in which they secure their wives. We are told that when a man wishes a wife, he simply takes her, and she becomes his, indeed and in truth. He can sell her, trade her, keep her, and use her as he chooses. This is the theory, but we venture to say that the alluring wiles of woman often enables her to hold the sceptre in China as in other lands. Eng is said to have made a trip to Portland, captured a young Chinese girl, the wife of a man who was a member of an opposing tong, and brought her to La Grande as his wife. This, of course, placed his life in danger. In the second place, as we have told,he was very deeply involved in the shooting of Wong Wan Duck.

So, at about noon on March 13, 1917, people in down town La Grande were startled at the sound of several pistol shots. Tos e who were near the Post Office saw Billie Eng running down the street followed by Chin Ping who was shooting at him. Another Chinaman, Chin Borkey, was shooting at him from across the street. As soon as Eng fell, Chin Borkey tool to his heels and disappeared in the buildings across from the Post Office. But Ching Ping, having tasted the thrill of slaughter, went to where his victim had fallen, placed his pistol near his head and fired one more shot into his temples. He started to leave, then turned back, again held his pistol near the head of his victim and snapped it several times, but there were no more loads in the gun to shoot. Soon about two hundred people had gathered around the spot where Billie Eng had fallen.

Avery Harrison, who was an eye witness to what took place gives the following account:- "Skip Mc Donald and I were going home to dinner on March 13, 1917, and were a very short distance from the corner where the New Foley Building now stands. We heard the shooting and ran to the corner to see what it was all about. As we turned the corner we saw several people running. Among them was a Chinaman who was hurrying as much as he could. As he stepped to the walk we noticed that he had a gun in his hand and we started after him. Mc Donald was in front of me and was just about on the point of grabbing him when I noticed a movement in one of the side windows across the street. I said:--"Stop, Skip!", and I pointed to the window. So, we did not get our man."

Several other Chinese were seen to run across the street and disappear in one of the buildings. While the shooting was going on, the people on the street were in great danger. One bullet, after passing through the skirts of a high school girl, struck Mrs. C. E. George in the ankle. She afterward sued the Hip Sing Tong and the Huey Sing Tong for $10,493.00, but nothing was ever done about the matter.

Immediately after the shooting, the houses in which the men were seen to disappear were surrounded and search was begun for the men who had done the shooting. Soon one of the men was captured and taken to the jail in an automobile. Feeling ran very high, for Eng was highly respected. A mob followed after the car shouting:--"Drive them out of town," and other abusive phrases. The search for the other five men was continued until about five o'clock. Among the searchers were, Sheriff Lee Warnick, Chief of Police Lou Rayburn, Nate Zweifel, Charlie Orai, and Charlie Spencer. Testimony does not agree as to the exact manner in which the men were found, but it appears that something like the following happened: When the men entered the house they found themselves in a room the floor of which was covered with a rug. There was a commode and a sewing machine on the rug. Two women were in the room. One of them, Mary Young, generally known as "Chinese Mary" was sitting at the sewing machine sewing. Both of these women were talking Chinese. No one could understand what they were saying, but it was suspected that they were talking to someone not in the room. But, unbeknowns to the women, there was one man listening who could understand what they were saying. This was Charlie Orai, who discovered that they were talking to the guilty men and giving them information as to what was happening. Presently Mr. Orai called Lee Warnick and asked him to remove the rug. When this was done, they discovered a trap door which to all appearances had been recently constructed. The door was bolted from beneath. The Chinese were ordered to open the door. This they refused to do. At last, however, finding that resistance was useless, they opened the door. Underneath was a newly dug cave nearly three feet wide, three feet deep and about eight feet in length. Five men were hiding in this cave. Nate Zweifel jumped into the cave to bring the men out, but seeing four revolvers lying on a pile of dirt, he jumped back out again as quickly as he went in. The guns, however, were surrendered without trouble.

Three of the guns were found to be fully loaded. One of them had been fired, all but one of its shell were empty. The barrel of this gun showed clearly that it had been used recently. Another gun was found in a woodshed near by. It had sunken into the snow, indicating that it had been thrown there while warm.---the cartridges were all empty, and the barrel of this gun also showed that it had recently been fired. Five men were taken from this hole. Two of them, Chin Ling, and Chin Borkey were the men who had done the shooting; the other three were Chong Bing, Ah Sam, and Ching Lem. Louie Moon had already been captured and was held in jail.

On March 15, Fred Curry, who was then City Recorder, called a citizen's meeting which was held in the City Hall. This meeting was attended by about 150 people, among whom were a large number of the leading citizens of La Grande. Fred Curry called the meeting to order and Fred J. Holmes was elected chairman. There were many inflamatory speeches made against the Chinese, including one made by Dr. R. E. L. Holt in which he said:--"It is not safe to have women and children on the street as long as there is a Chinaman in town." Most of the time of the meeting was devoted to the raising of a benefit purse for Mrs. George who was shot in the ankle. This amounted to $102.60. But the meeting was, by no means, confined to this action. A committee was appointed, consisting of thirty or forty men with Dr. Holt as chairman. This committee met on the following evening in the Elks Hall. When this Committee met, there were some who were in favor of taking the law into their own hands, and driving the Chinese out of town as was done in 1894. Others advised moderation, and cautioned against attempting to accomplish their purposes by other than lawful means. Moderation won the day. Dr. Holt's Committee made an invertigation of conditions in Chiantown, and the report showed that conditions were bad. The buildings were found to be unsanitary, there were opium dens and one house of ill fame. They conferred with the tong leaders concerning the best means to handle the situation, and it was decided that only the gunmen were to be expelled.

After the arrest of the six Chinamen, there were some who were impatient with the delay in the application of justice, for the trial had been delayed until sometime in June. A mob of about two hundred men, some of them from North Powder, assembled at Baker, and these, armed and masked, surrounded the court house in La Grande with threats of lynching. They warned that, if these Chinamen were not convicted of murder in the first degree, they would be shot in the court room. However ominous this appeared to be, there was no violence.

Each of the defendants were tried seperately. The prosecution was conducted by John S. Hodgin, District Attorney, and by the law firm of Crawford and Eaken. Cochran and Eberhard acted as defense attorneys. George Cochran was sent by the Chinese to San Francisco for the purpose of making a study of Chinese society, and the operation of the tongs and other Chinese organizations. We quote the following from his own account of what he found:

"When I was employed to defend the Chinamen, I was asked to go to San Francicco for a conference with the head men of the tong to which the defendants belonged. I called at the office of the Six Companies in San Francisco, and they directed me to the office of a certain Chinese, whose name I do not remember, and after a few days he came to the hotel and took me to a large hall where a meeting of the tibg was held. The only persons present were three Chinese who sat upon the rostrum at the opposite end of the hall. A fourth Chinaman sat at the opposite end of the hall, and there was my conductor and myself. In the middle of the hall was a sort of alter on which incense was burning. We talked over the situation and the coming trial of the Chinese. None of the Chinese present knew the La Grande Chinamen, or anything about the case. It seemed that, by reason of the fact that they were members of the tong, the tong was in duty bound to help them.

"They furnished me with an interpreter whom I brought to La Grande, and who sat with me through the trial. The state started out with one interpreter, and then sent to Portland and got another, a young Chinese woman who did most of the interpreting in the case. She was very well educated and used excellent English. She was a native of Portland and, apparently, had learned the Chinese language at home while growing up. My interpreter was a young fellow about 25 years old.

"The trial was begun on June 27, and was drawn out to great length because of the difficulty in obtaining evidence through interpreters, and, because in the case of Chong Beng, the jury disaggreed, and a new trial was ordered. Toy Young was the one first chosen to act as interpreter but, since he was a leader in the Hip Sing Tong, he could not be counted on for reliability. It was found that he was giving false interpretation to the testimony taken. He was dismissed and a person from the outside was engaged, as George Cochran has indicated above.

Mr. Cochran relates an interesting incident in connection with the trial:--"When the trial was going against me, the Chinese tong hired Judge Henry McGinn to help me. During one of the dramatic moments of the trial, when the testimony of the state showed that the Chinamen who were found in the basement were likely, the same ones who did the shooting, Judge McGinn leaned over to me and in a loud stage whisper that could be heard all over the court room and said:- 'George, George, how in the hell are we going to get those Chinamen out of that hole?" The effect on the jury was so tremendous that I immediately asked for a brief adjournment."

All the men, with the exception of Louie Moon who was acquitted, were found guilty of murder in the second degree and sentenced to life imprisonment. The case appealed to the Supreme Court and the decision of the lower court was sustained.

Kate Hanley has something to say concerning the later history of the Chinese in La Grande:-

"Chinatown finally disappeared. The older men had died and the younger ones came, but didn't seem to have a good business ability. The noodle parlors were so harrassed by hoodlums as to make it very hard for their owners. But good Judge Robert Eakin put a stop to that. A youngman, Lee Wright, came in one day and ordered a bowl of noodles. After he had finished eating the Chinaman wanted his money. At this, Lee gave him a terrible beating. Will Grandy just happened along, took the Chinese to a doctor, and proceeded to arrest Lee Wright. At the trial the boy mother represented her son. They both laughed when the Chinese came into the court room all bandaged up. Robert Eakin fined the boy one hundred dollars and he was banished from the town for on year."

At the present time the only Chinese inhabitants of La Grand are Chong Ben and Henry Wong, and his wife and child. Henry Wong is the son of "China Mary" Wong who was operating the sewing machine and sitting on the trap door that led down into the cave which concealed the five Chinese who were responsible for the killing of Billy Eng.

SOURCES

Consultation with persons who are personally familiar with certain events connected with the story. Included in the list are:---Kate Hanley, Bess Scriber, Will Sherwood, Charlie Spencer, Carrie Spencer, George Cochran, Jim Woodell, Nate Zweifel, Avery Harrison, Charles Orai.

The "History of Union and Wallowa Counties"

Records of the Circuit Court of Union County and the Spureme Court of Oregon.

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

EARLY HISTORY OF LA GRANDE TOLD NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB LADIES

By Mrs. George H. Currey

Prepared: February, 1960

Copied by: La Grande Senior High School

The following interesting paper on the early history of Oregon, Grande Ronde valley and La Grande, was written by Mrs. George Currey (Edith Huntington Currey), and was read before the members of the Neighborhood Club on Tuesday afternoon. To headquarters at Ft. Vancouver on the paper will be most interesting, as it will recall many of those old days when they partook of the social events and fears that are told of the early days, while for the younger generation it brings a realization of the hardships their parents have suffered to bring to them the luxuries of 1920.

Mrs. Currey used, in writing her paper, references, citations and information from "Oregon," by John B. Horner; Chapman's "History of Oregon," and "McLaughlin and Old Oregon," by Eve Emery Dye. The paper follows:

The subjects assigned me are "The History of Oregon, Grande Ronde Valley and La Grande."

Oregon originally comprised all of the territory north of California, west of the Rocky mountains, as far north as Alaska.

Although the Columbia river was discovered by an American and named for his ship, Columbia, and the territory had been explored by Lewis and Clark, and John Jacob Astor of New York had built the first settlement on the Columbia river and named it Astoria, with the stars and stripes to the breeze; yet two years later a British ship of war hauled down the American flag to give place to the Union Jack.

This whole region for years was held as a vast estate for England, where the Hudson Bay Company carried on an extensive and valuable fur trade employing the native Indians and Canadian trappers. This dominion was under the management of Dr. John McLaughlin, who was called the "Emperor of the West." He had his headquarters at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia river, and when in response to the call of the Nez Perce Indians who went to St. Louis in search of the "White Man's Book of Heaven," Jason Lee, Marcus Whitman and others came west to teach the Indians, paving the way for the coming of the white man, it was Dr. John McLaughlin who made their undertaking a success, by giving aid and encouragement.

WESTWARD EMIGRATION BEGAN IN 1843

During the years 1843, 1944 and 1945, there was a great emigration westward. Thousands of people came to Oregon; each year bringing a long train and although Dr. McLaughlin said when he heard of their coming, "Lord, Lord, what manner of men are these that scale the mountain tops and slide down the rivers like the Goths of old"; and he must have known that their coming was the beginning of the end of the British dominion, yet by his acts of kindness to the missionaries and the immigrant in those early days, he is known in history as the Father of Oregon.

Among those of the train of 1843 was the grandmother of Mrs. John Hodgin, who was then just six years of age. She and her baby sister fell from the raft while crossing Snake river and were rescued by an Indian.

Mr. Currey's mother, Grandma Currey, was with the immigration two years later. Her grandfather, Samuel Barlow, made the first clearing for a wagon road over the Cascade mountains. She was then only two years old, and crossed the Cascade mountains strapped on the back of a horse. This road is still called the Barlow road.

OREGON CONSIDERED WORTHLESS

After several attempts in vain to secure recognition of congress, the immigrants who had settled in the Willamette valley, formed a provisional government for protection, and a liberal land law. The American government at Washington was slow to realize the value of this territory and at one time congress was about to trade it off to England for a fish hatchery, considering it a worthless piece of property. Finally, after much controversy, England consented to take all of the land North of the 49th parallel, and Oregon was admitted into the Union as a territory, including what are now the states of Oregon, Idaho, Washington and part of Wyoming and Monatna.

The same Providence that led the Pilgrim Fathers to the rockbound coasts of Massachusetts, inspired these men and women and gave them faith and courage to overcome mountains, deserts and savage tribes to plant Christianity, civilization and laws in the wilderness of "Old Oregon."

It is said that there are more universities, colleges, high schools and churches in the 130 miles between Eugene and Portland than can hardly be found in the same area in any other state of the union.

PACK SADDLE BUYS PORTLAND

On the very day that Oregon was admitted as a territory, the story of the discovery of gold in California was brought to the state, causing great excitement, and a man by the name of Pettigrove traded the whole site of the city of Portland for a pack saddle, and with hundreds of others left for the mines.

In 1859, on St. Valentine's day, Oregon was made a state and appeared as the 33rd star on the Flag of the Union.

At the same time the Willamette valley was being settled, Grande Ronde valley was also becoming known. The immigrants who passed through this way never forgot it, many returning later to make thier home. We can imagine what must have been thier home. We can imagine what must have been their amazement when, after months of travel over the everlasting sands and through the sagebrush, when suddenly from the top of Ladd Canyon hill they looked down into the very heart of the evergreen mountains, beholding the valley, level as a lake, covered with tall, waving grass, untouched by the hand of man, and broken only by the crystal streams flowing through. The Indians tell us that this valley was once a large lake of water.

BEN BROWN FIRST WHITE SETTLER

The first white people to settle in Grande Ronde valley were Mr. and Mrs. Ben Brown, parents of Mrs. James Garrity and Miss Fannie Brown who are members of this club. Through the kindness of his daughter, Mrs. Ada Walters, of Corvallis, I have an article written several years ago by Mr. Brown, which I will read in part. He says:

"In 1861, there was not a house in Grande Ronde valley; I began one in the fall and it was the first house, built in what is now called Old Town, on which site now stands the L. H. Russell home. The town was named La Grande in the fall of 1862. Up to this time it was by common consent called Brownsville. A meeting was called, and as they learned that there was a Brownsville town in the Willamette valley, it was thought best to rename it. A Frenchman, named Henry Dause, had more than anyone else to do with calling it La Grande, a French name, and applied also by him to the valley 'La Grande Vallee.' There were eight men who came with me, besides by wife and two daughters, Esther and Ada. I owned two yoke of oxen and another man owned a plow.

"When we plowed for outsiders, we received $15 per acre. In the fall of 1862, I opened a hotel and a livery barn, and paid 50 cents a sheaf for oats. Union county was created October 14, 1864, and being organized in the crucial days of the Civil war, it was named Union county, with La Grande as the county seat.

UNION STEALS COURT HOUSE

"Here I want to relate an incident. When later the question of permanent location of the county seat was submitted to the voters of the county, Union was selected. La Grande contested the election and resisted its removal. Much to the chagrin of our citizens, one morning they awoke to the fact that Union had come over and loaded the jail and court records on large trucks, drawn by oxen, and hauled them away to Union, which was the permanent location until 15 years ago."

Mr. Brown says that the first wedding took place on January 8, 1862, the parties being Miss Francis Caroline Leasey and William Marks. The ceremony was performed by S. M. Black, who it was decided could do so, as he had been justice of the peace in Umatilla county; he simply moved his office over the mountains. I have heard it said that this same justice of the peace married a couple who later desired a divorce, and after much deliberation he decided that as he had married them, he could give them a divorce.

HOW IOWA WAS NAMED

In the fall of 1862, the same year that Mr. Brown built the first hotel and store, a large immigration of about 300 wagons with teams of oxen and horses left the middle states for the Willamette valley. It was late in the fall when they arrived in the Grande Ronde valley, so they decided to remain here for the winter. They built log cabins and made things as comfortable as possible. The place was called the Iowa settlement, and the school house of this district still bears the name of Iowa.

My mother, who was then 18 years of age, was one of the company. I have a part of her diary which she kept while crossing the plains. She tells of how happy they all were at the beginning of their journey, with their clean, new, well-provisioned outfits and how after a day of travel when they would make camp for the night, the women would bring out their crochet and tatting, while the men would make plans for the future. The young people would sometimes dance by the light of the moon. On Sundays they rested and held church services. But at last, after weary months of travel, oh, how different. Horses and cattle were dying, provisions were very low, good clothes all gone and the crochet and tatting lost.

WALKS 800 MILES

My mother said that in order to save the teams, she with many others walked the last 800 miles, every step of the distance. When they first came in sight of the Grande Ronde valley, she said, their rejoicing could not have been greater, had they been about to enter the "Promised Land."

One day soon after the Iowa settlement had commenced to build for the winter, a great excitement ran through the camp. A large company of miners from California, on their way to Nevada, had arrived and were going to locate for the winter. My father was one of those miners. He came to California from Maine, via the Isthmus of Panama in the gold discovery days of '49. The settlement at the foot of Mt. Emily soon grew to be almost a village. A deep snow fell early in the fall covering the valley with a mantle of white, unbroken even by a fence. It did not take the young men long to build bobsleds, on which to take the girls to La Grande and other settlements in the valley to attend dancing parties. This, as you may surmise, was the beginning of several romances that later lead to wedlock. It is said that Mrs. Caviness, mother of Mrs. Grace Molitor, was at that time the most beautiful girl in the valley.

GOES LONG WAY FOR LICENSE

My father and mother were married the next fall in La Grande, by a Methodist minister, having to go twelve miles above Baker for the license. They built a little house in Old La Grande, and with home-made furniture went to housekeeping. My father took contracts for building houses and later started a carpenter shop, employing men who manufactured furniture. All through the valley there are still pieces of furinture manufactured by that old turning lathe, that was run by horse-power. He also carried a line of wall paper, carpets, paints, window shades and lace curtains, and upholstered mattresses and lounges.

Uncle George Webb ran a hardware and tin shop. The building still stands where he made tin pans, pails and cooking utensils. Mr. Wilkerson, father of Mrs. J. T. Williamson, operated the first flouring mill which was located in Mill Canyon. W. J. Snodgrass, father of J. G. Snodgrass was L. L. Snodgrass, operated a saw mill at Oro Dell. These two later were in the general merchandise business. Joseph Palmer had a meat market, and he and Ben Grandy owned farms upon which the principal streets of LaGrande are now located.

J. L. Caviness had a brickyard. Daniel Chaplin was receiver of the U.S. land office. The office was built on the front part of his dwelling house, a part of which is now the home of William Miller. Senator J.H. Slater and M. Baker were the lawyers. We had two doctors, a drug store and a postoffice. We depended mostly upon traveling dentists and photographers.

BEATS REPUBLICANS ONE HOUR

In 1868, two newspapers were published, "The Grande Ronde Sentinel," Democrat, by E.S. McComas, and "The Blue Mountain Times," Republican, by my uncle, Attorney M. Baker. Owing to the rivalry of the two political parties, the promoters of these publications vied with each other to be the first in the field, with the result that the Democratic paper came off the press just one hour before its competitor.

Lee Warnick's father was sheriff before him many years ago. Arthur Curtis' fathur was county surveyor.

Mr. and Mrs. Gangloff lived on the old road on the way to Oro Dell, and they had the first fruit trees that were brought to LaGrande.

The Rynearsons Proebstels and the Nessleys all lived on the river. Some of the original homes are still standing. I wish I had time to mention all of the others who at that time made up the population of La Grande.

From my earliest remembrance, the town of Old LaGrande was well established. All of the houses were built of dressed lumber, painted and papered, with good furniture, carpets, beds, dining tables, white table cloths, plenty of dishes, with a few pieces of old silver and China. A few of the larger homes had hair cloth parlor sets, Brussels carpets and pianos. There were several organs and melodians. We had one union church. The women came to church dressed in black silk or alpacca dresses, and the men in black broadcloth suits, with long coats, white shirts, cuffs and collars, and the children were dressed up in their Sunday best clothes.

About the year of 1872 Dr. Nevious organized the Episcopal church, dividing the congregation into the Episcopal and Methodist churches and for many years these two organizations grew side by side as one people. In September, the year of 1874, the Episcopal church building was not quite completed, and for the wedding of Anna M. Webb and J. H. Stevens, which was the first held in the church, benches had to be carried in.

EARLY SCHOOL NEAR MILL CANYON

The public school then was a two-story white building and stood on the hill near Mill Canyon. I remember my first day in school. Anna Webb Stevens was my teacher.

In those early days the people were compelled to make their own amusement, such as singing classes, spelling matches and amateur theatricals. At rare intervals, a traveling show would play "Inogmar," "Two Orphans," "East Lynne" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," with sometimes a lecture, mostly on temperance.

But I wish I could again, as a child, go to the old town hall and in concert and play, hear Jap and Anna Stevens, Joe and Sanford Baker, Sarah Quimby, Ada Brown, Jimmie Stotts, Ella Wilbur, Hattie Kuhn, James and Olive Slater, Kittie and Will Kinsey, Laurie Kickey, Hattie McDonald, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Carter, and oh, so many others, who at that time, composed the social young set of La Grande. People then were never invited out to afternoon teas, they went to each other's homes and spent the day, taking all the children, the men coming at noon for dinner. The children always had to wait for the second table, (sometimes they had plenty, sometimes not). And, oh, my! how the women would sew and talk all the day long. I sometimes wonder what has become of this open hospitality; and when I hear people talking of establishing community centers, my mind drifts back to old La Grande, where they had community Christmas trees, community sings and community Fourth of July celebrations.

LA GRANDE A UNIVERSITY CENTER

In 1875 and '76 it was decided that Eastern Oregon should have a university, and La Grande was chosen for the location. Land was donated and an endowment was subscribed by the citizens. Under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal church of the Columbia Conference, which included at that time all of Eastern Oregon, a two-story brick building was erected and the Blue Mountain University opened with J. L. Carter president and H. K. Hines financial agent. There was for several years an attendance of from 200 to 300 students, coming from all parts of this Inland Empire. The faculty was composed of men and women who were graduates of eastern colleges, including Pres. and Mrs. Ackerman, of New York. In 1884, for financial reasons, the Blue Mountain University closed its doors. To this institution there are men and women in many states of the union today who owe a debt of gratitude for their early education.

The year of 1878 was the beginning of the Indian war that swept through Eastern Oregon, killing settlers, burning houses and stealing horses and cattle. On July 6, a battle occurred north of Pendleton, and on July 12, George Coggans, a prominent pioneer of La Grande, was murdered while crossing the Blue Mountains. It was thought the Indians would invade the Grande Ronde valley. The people erected forts, and the old Blue Mountain University was fortified and provisioned. It was understood that in case the Indians made an attack, the Methodist church bell would ring, and all would flee to the fort. For days, the anxious people watched and prayed. Had the Indians known how little ammunition there was in the valley and the scarcity of fire arms, the results would probably have been different. It is said that a Cayuse Indian, whose tribe was friendly to the "Whites" murdered the chief of the hostile tribes. These Indians, without a leader, finally disappeared or were captured and placed on reservations.

NEWS MONTHS LATE

La Grande then, as now, was on the main thoroughfare, you might say, the gateway or vestibule from the east to the west. Facilities for transporting the mail was first via the emigrant wagons, then by the pony

express, and later by the stage coach. Before the time of the stage coach, it took months to receive a letter from the folks back home, and Oregon was admitted into the union as a state several months before the fact was known at the capital at Salem. The Overland Stage passed through La Grande twice a day, from each way, and no other event was so important. Long before it came into sight the driver would blow a bugle-call on an old cornet, and whether by night or day, all would be in readiness at Joe Weathers' stage station, with six large, fresh horses all harnessed, impatient to be off. At the hotel a hot meal was waiting, passengers were fed, mail pouches were changed, and presto, like a fastflying meteor, they were off again on to the next station. And I want to say, if you never rode on an Overland Stage coach behind six horses, going at the rate of about 12 miles an hour over the grades of the Blue Mountains, you have missed a thrill that can never be replaced.

The freight trains came slower. Goods were sent by way of the Isthmus of Panama to Portland, from there by steamboat to Umatilla, from Umatilla to the interior by long freight trains--covered wagons--driven by several spans of mules, with their tinkling bells.

CATTLE BANDS DRIVEN EAST

Every year great bands of sheep, cattle and horses were driven from Umatilla county through La Grande on their way to Cheyenne, the nearest railroad station leading to the eastern market. There was just one way for them to pass through La Grande, and that was right down through the main street. We children used to watch the flocks of sheep go by, sometimes it would take nearly the entire day for them to pass, but when the long-horned cattle went through, we were kept inside.

The people of Oregon, from the first, dreamed and worked for the time to come when a railroad would be built, connecting the west with the east. That dream was realized in the year of 1883, and on the afternoon of November 24, the first through train going from Portland to the east, arrived at Huntington, where a celebration was held. Senator James H. Slater, of La Grande, was one of the speakers on that occasion. He was a passenger on the train en route to Washington, D. C. The last spike (a steel one), was driven that day, connecting the O. R. & N. with the Oregon Short Line. The coming of the railroad marked the passing of the old and the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Oregon. The brave men and women of the first epoch, who came to Oregon with ox teams-blazing the way for civilization-made it possible that we today may travel in a palace car, ride over hard-surface roads in a Packard No. 6, live in luxury, protected by laws unsurpassed by any state in the union.

When Oregon was admitted into the union, as a territory, there was inscribed upon the adopted seal an unfurled banner, bearing a motto which, now, as then, is significant of the ever progressive spirit of the people of Oregon: "Alis Volat Propiis"-"She Flies With Her Own Wings."

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

Liberty School by Carrie Huff Spencer

Prepared: February, 1960

Copied by: La Grande Senior High School

The history of Liberty school, which is located 2½ miles east of South La Grande on Gekeler Lane, dates back to 1870 but previous to that time a private school was taught by O. D. Andrews who later served in the state legislature in 1872 or '74. He taught without salary at his home, a little log house which stood where the home of Joe Harrison now stands. Several children of the community attended the school, including Mattie Childers and William Gekeler.

The seats were made of logs sawed in two, with the smooth side turned up. The textbooks were just what anyone had--testaments, newspapers or school books someone brought across the plains. There was no course of study for the teacher to wrestle with an with which to figure how all the subjects could be squeezed in on the day's program--only the three Rs were taught.

It is thus we have, as near as possible from memory of Mrs. I. D. Smutz and Mrs. Ernest DeLong, the historyof the very first educational enterprize in the Grange Hall district.

Liberty school district was organized Nov. 20, 1868, according to C. R. Gekeler who was the school clerk for more than 25 years and has the records from the beginning. The district was originally a part of No. 10 or the Island City district. Because of the increase of population No. 10 was divided and No 18 or Liberty was organized on the date mentioned above.

The first directors were John A. Childers, Jacob Newman and George Gekeler, with W. B. Campbell as clerk.

As public funds were not available the school house was built by donations, with Peter Kuhn and George Gekeler, carpenters doing most of the carpenter work on the building. Peter Kuhn, father of Syra Kuhn, a well known teacher in La Grande, lived on the farm now owned by Ernest Ragain. Mr. Newman lived where Clair Crossen now lives. George Gekeler needs no introduction as we are all familiar with that pioneer farm; the descendents are still living there.

The school house was built about 50 feet west and a little farther back from where the present one stands. For several years the teachers were paid partly by public money and the rest by subscriptions.

At first only six months of school were held during the year, a three-months term in the spring and the same number of months in the fall. This practice continued for several years.

Although the district was organized in 1868 the records show that it was 1870 when the first school was taught and William Skiff was the teacher. It was under the regime of Terry

Tuttle, the first school superintendent elected by the people of Union county.

Then from 1871 to 1873 inclusive, H. White taught the school. In 1874, Alice McComas; 1875, Sara Thomas; 1876, Alice McComas in the spring and Sara Thomas Quinby in the fall; 1877, Lila Richmond and Allie Cochran; 1878, Ollye Childers; 1879, Mattie Childers; 1880, Mary Davis and Edith Carter (Gekeler); 1881, J. K. Powell; 1882, Sanford Baker; 1883, Jessie Baker, Carrie Baker, J. K. Powell; 1884, Cora Baker, sister of Dora B. Schelke, and A.P. Darr and J. K. Powell again; 1885 Angie Peach and W. E. Pearson; 1886, Sanborn Kimery and Elder J. M. Jones; 1887, Ida Campbell and L. Carter; 1888, Lucy Wade and Leonard Couch; 1889, Angie Peach Van Tress and John McAlister and Bessie Murry; 1890, Lucy Wade and E. E. Munn; 1891, A. P. Smith and C. H. March.

In 1891 a new school house was built. The old building stood on the school ground until 1897 when A. E. Huff, my father, who had purchased 160 acres of unimproved land of the Baker estate, bought and moved it onto his property, now known as the Zundell place. After moving the building onto his place father made it into the dining room and kitchen part of the one story dwelling he built.

During the few years the little old school house stood in the school yard one of the favorite pastimes of the children was to write their autographs on the inside walls. I remember the first time I saw the house after father moved it, and with what interest I felt in looking over those autographs, the names of the writers having been embellished with flourishes of dots and dashes and curlicues.

Those names were the wall decorations for about a year or until the rooms were papered. Among the names, I can remember those of Mae Eaton; Joie, Nannie, and Grace Childers; Fannie, George, Pearl, and Nellie Gekeler; Charley, Roy, Fred, and Jimmie Spencer; Charlie, Will, and Reese McAlister; Carrie, Charlie, Jessie, and Maud Bartmess; Will, Ben, and Marry Weather Bessie, Roy, and Ben Gekeler; Jessie Elledge, Lizzie Reynolds, Ratie, Nettie, and Johnny Golden.

C. D. Huffman was in charge when the school opened in the spring of 1892 in the new school house. Others followed in order named: Minnie Hough, Ada Leatherman, Mabel Williams, J. M. Johnson, I. D. Smutz, Susan Mc Ilroy, Emma Wade, Ella Adler, J. R. Larimore, Fred Fox, C. R. Gekeler, Mamie Harris, W.E. Ames, Bessie Riggs, Elizabeth Sutsin, Belle Sills, Rose Mulverhill, C. H. Perryman, Jeanette Wheatly, Maude Childers Johnson, Maggie Duggan, Katherin Riddle Pierce, Mrs. Emma Temple, Josephine Rodes, Mrs. Grace McAlister, Mrs. Tina Gekeler, Mrs. Dora Caton, Mrs. J. H. Deihl, Mildred Stoddard, Mrs. Inez Jenkins, Mrs. Mary Kail, Edna Brown, Gladys Owen, Mrs. J. H. Albertson and Mrs. Naomi Perry, the last of the long unbroken line of instructors.

Other early day board members besides the first ones mentioned were Joseph Yount who lived where Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gekeler lived; George Horsepool, grandfather of the late Harley Richardson who resided on the farm later owned by Mr. and Mrs. Will Hughes; Frank Bartmess who lived on the farm across the road from Blue Mt. Grange hall; D. A. (Bud) McAlister, father of Mrs. Mollie Moss, Will and Reese McAlister who lived where Reese now lives.

A few of the later board members- Ed Reynolds, Will Gekeler, Ed Stringham.

Still later: Ernest DeLong, I. D. Smutz, Will Sherwood, Carrie Spencer, Grace Grout, Wilma Harrison, Delbert Anson, Ruby McMahan, Irma Hyde and Mrs. Dartt served on the board. The present members are Lynn Smutz, Vernon DeLong, Mason Folsom, with Charles Smutz, clerk.

The school was suspended in the spring of 1943. Because of the shortage of teachers it was almost impossible to procure a good one, but the school never consolidated. School meetings are held regurarly and children attend school in La Grande, going by bus.

It is of interest that of all the pioneer families who have resided in the Liberty school bounderies, there was only one family who had children in the school from the very beginning, 1870 until the time of it's suspension in 1943--a coverage of 73 years. William, the eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. George Gekeler attended the O. D. Andrews private school and every year since that time, the names of Mr. and Mrs. Gekeler's children, then their grandchildren and last, their great grandchildren were on the school register.

Mrs. Edith Gekeler, who was Miss Edith Carter before her marriage, was one of the early teachers. She told me of this interesting incident that took place during the term she was in charge. Quote- "In the fall of 1880 I taught Liberty school and I boarded at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hemming. They lived one-half mile west of the school house at the farm we call the Waller place now. The house burned a few years ago. Miss Jamima Hemming, Mr. Hemming's sister, who had come over from England on a visit, was a guest there at the time.

"A romance sprang up between Miss Hemming and George Horsepool, Mr. Horsepool's wife having died a few years previous.

"On Dec. 16, 1880 they were married at the Episcopal church in Old Town, La Grande. I was one of the bridesmaids and Will Gekeler, whom I later married, was one of the best men. It was a grand wedding and it was followed by a banquet in the Hemming home. There were quantities of food left and the next day, Friday, the school children were invited to dinner.

At about one o'clock we all marched to the feast, the boys and girls pairing off. There were Frank, Mollie and Lou McAlister; Jake, George, Dill and Ann Bartmess; Minnie, Ed, Dora, Charlie and Fannie Gekeler; Walter, Ed, Charlie Boyer; Frank and Malissa Gillaspie; Lulu and Cora Childers; Cynthia and Alice Bartmess; Mary, Erta, Ella, George Alverson, Henry Reynolds, Scott Goodall, John Wallace and Ida Horsepool. Incidents that took place among my young charges during the dinner hour make another story.

"After dinner the children sang songs and recited poems. We had a wonderful time." Unquote.

Another school yarn told me by Marion Spencer:

This incident occurred in the old school house when J. K. (Cal) Powell was the teacher.

There was a platform at the front of the room on which stood the teacher's desk and chair. The blackboard was along the wall back of the platform.

The teacher was holding a very interesting session at the blackboard--the big girls needed help with their fractions.

"Now's the time to get a bite or two of that red juicy apple I've got stored in the corner of my desk, "thought Marion as he eyed Powell who was checking a problem one of the girls was tusling with. Marion thought the apple would taste better now that at recess.

He fished back in the desk, brought out the apple, cut it in two and gave half to Willie Barnes, his seat mate. (Willie lived with his father in the log house across the road from the McAlister home.)

The boys slid down in their seats and with their heads behind their geographies (the biggest books they had) they were having a hilarious time.

Glancing over the room to see that no mischief was in progress the teacher spied the hungry boys.

"Marion Spencer and Willie Barnes take your books and stand on one foot until further notice," he commanded.

The boys took their one-legged positions and began to study their reading lessons. It wasn't long before they began to get tired standing on one foot. To rest his weary bones Willie conceived the idea of climbing up the platform to ask the teacher how to pronounce a word.

No sooner thought then done.

Willie let his foot down to the floor and with his eyes glued on his book, he climbed the platform, walked slowly over to the teacher, placed his finger under a three letter word and

turned the book so the teacher could see. The teacher pronounced it. Willie went back to take his stand with Marion.

He stood another five minutes on one leg, then repeated his process of getting some rest. He got by again. Marion commenced to look bewildered. He wondered how much longer Willie could get by and what the teacher would do when he discovered Willie's little scheme. He didn't have long to wait.

For the third time Willie slowly stepped on the platform, walked over to the busy teacher, put his stubby finger under a simple word. The teacher gave the word a glance, then he flashed a knowing look at the pupil, then whizz bang! Willie got a clout at the side of the head that spun him around like a top. "You know what that word is," stormed the teacher. "Go back and double your time. Marion take your seat."

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The first Baptist church of La Grande was organized at Liberty school house on the third Saturday of November, 1873. A meeting was called for the purpose of organizing. Elder J. W. Booth, of Cove church, acted as moderator and F. T. Dick as clerk pro tem. The following were enrolled as charter members: Rev. B. H. Lewis, Mary J. Lewis, George Horsepool, Eliza Horsepool, H. P. Lewis, Maria J. Lewis and F. T. Dick. Elder Booth and Rev. Lewis were chosen to draft articles of faith and church covenant which were read and adopted. The church then called Rev. B. H. Lewis as pastor who served without salary. F. T. Dick was elected clerk and George Horsepool deacon.

The new church was to be called Liberty church. The meeting then adjourned to meet on the third Saturday and Sunday of each month. The meetings were well attended and there were some conversions. In June, 1874 the church sent delegates to the association meeting at Wingville, Baker county, at which time Rev. B. H. Lewis was ordained to the ministry and Mr. Horsepool deacon, and the church was received into the association. In 1875 the association was held with Liberty church and for convenience met at Ladd Canyon school house. Those were pioneer days, 3 or 4 families entertaining about 30 delegates and visitors. From 1880 on by invitation of Deacon Perkins, Business meeting were held in La Grande at his home. In June, 1883, the association was again held with Liberty church, the M. E. Church of La Grande kindly offering their house of worship. Membership had increased. On Mar. 24, 1884 G. T. Ellis was called to the pastorate and from this time on the church grew in strength and membership. At a called meeting it was decided to build a house of worship in La Grande and to change the name to the First Baptist church of La Grande.

The foregoing is an excerpt from a recent issue of the Pacific Baptist magazine.

Liberty Sunday School.

Liberty Sunday School was organized at the school house in about 1915 by John Crimes, a Sunday School missionary. It continued 17 years under the leadership of Earnest De Long. When the school disbanded in 1932, most of the members joined with churches in nearby La Grande.

A Record of the Historic Society of Union County, Oregon

About the author CARRIE HUFF SPENCER

Prepared: March, 1960

By: La Grande Senior High School

This author of historical articles for Union County Oregon came to La Grande at a very early age with her parents, the late Arthur and Annie Huff. The greater part of her life has been spent in Grande Ronde Valley. She taught in the La Grande schools.

While acting as newspaper correspondent she became interested in the study of Oregon History, especially that of Union County. In order that her written articles would be absolutely authentic much of her time was spent in research and gathering materials from dependable sources. She was very fortunate in having the privilege of interviewing many Union County pioneers themselves while they were still with us, as well as many sons and daughters of pioneers.

A RECORD OF THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF UNION, OREGON
PREPARED: April 16, 1960
BY: Bernal D. Hug
COPIED BY: Stella Mayfield School

THE STELLA MAYFIELD SCHOOL AT ELGIN

One of the high lights of the history of the Elgin community took place at the school house on Saturday May 28, 1949, when the Elgin consolidated district dedicated its new building and officially named it the "Stella Mayfield School".

Before completing her work at the Eastern Oregon Normal School at Weston, Oregon, Miss Mayfield taught in the rural districts of Pumpkin Ridge, Highland and the Indian Creek. After graduating she started teaching in Elgin. The first year she taught the second grade and after that she taught the first grade. From that time until her retirement in 1949, she taught continucusly with the exception of two sabbatical years when she attended Whitman College and the University of Oregon to complete her Bachelor's Degree in English Literature.

Miss Mayfield was born at Touchet, Washington, in 1884 the daughter of a kindly sweet dispositioned mother and a large, big hearted father who was a veteran of the Civil War and a Baptist preaching Elder. Elder Mayfield operated a farm and served as minister for local churches on Sunday. Neighbors of all walks of life and of all faiths had the highest of opinions of the kindly Elder.

When at the age of eighteen years the daughter, Miss Stella, commenced teaching school, she put into practice the fine qualities of her parents. Her high moral character and love of work inspired discipline. Her kind and friendly disposition and optimistic interest in her associates made her much loved and respected.

The writer feels that he is quite well acquainted with Miss Mayfield. One of the first schools he attended was at Highland where she taught. His seven children took their first grade in Miss Mayfield's room. He has continuously lived in the Elgin community and served for nine years on the Elgin school board when she was teaching. Today, although long since becoming a grandfather, he, like other Elgin folks enjoys visiting his old teacher and talking with her in the same personal way as he would his own mother.

But to return to the subject of naming the school. Miss Mayfield had carefully and lovingly guided about one thousand small Elgin children through their first year in school. Many of these still live in Elgin and others live nearby. All love her. They longed to show their gratitude to their old teacher. Why not name the beautiful new building for her, and why not do it now while she could be present? The idea "took fire" immediately. From all parts of the northwest came former students. Governor McKay of Oregon made the long trip to deliver the address and to officiate at the dedication.

The school band for the first time appeared in their new uniforms and Dr. Robin Maaske who was president of Eastern Oregon College spoke briefly. A large delegation from the veterans organizations conducted an impressive flag raising ceremony. The flag was raised on a new pole at the base of which was an appropriate plaque. Inside the base were sealed the names of the hundreds of students of the honored teacher.

It was truly a heartwarming day of love and friendship. School mates of years past visited together. Friendship prevailed among a throng who all had the one very dear friend in common. Then evening came and Miss Mayfield retired to her home among the trees down by the river and the others went to their various homes.

Miss Mayfield's spirit of integrity, love, and optimism never left her school. For forty seven years she had cultivated it in the Elgin area and it would not fail when she must leave, One of her pupils and associate teachers, Miss Mildred Schnore is now in her thirty seventh year as fourth grade teacher. Mildred has the spirit of the school. She makes frequent trips to the house by the river with the concern of a loving daughter.

A thirty two year old Elgin boy, Harry Trump, is in his ninth year as principal of the Stella Mayfield School which has seventeen teachers. He told the writer, "I took this position very reluctantly because a young man can hardly ever succeed in teaching in his home town, but strangely it has worked quite well". It is not so strange to the writer for Harry has the same integrity and kind understanding that made Miss Mayfield so universally loved.

Another Elgin young man, Raymond Scott, conceived the idea of a portrait to hand in the school building. He accomplished a wonderfully well conceived painting of a large likeness of the beloved teacher in color with oils. Every one is delighted in the way he has captured the features and character of the teacher as she was in the school room.

The PTA has arranged for an official unveiling program to be held February 22, 1960. They bought a frame selected by the art professor at Eastern Oregon College. The alumni are to furnish a special light to display the picture. This year's high school seniors have asked to have a part in the program in as much as they are Miss Mayfield's last first grade class.

For the story of the school and its naming, the stranger will find this record in the libraries of this school and other libraries of the county. Beneath the framed portrait will be a simple plaque with the following statements

STELLA MAYFIELD
ELGIN'S LIFE LONG FIRST GRADE TEACHER
LOVED BY ALL WHO KNOW HER

STELLA MAYFIELD
ELGIN'S LIFE LONG FIRST GRADE TEACHER
LOVED BY ALL WHO KNOW HER

A UNION COUNTY OREGON HISTORIC RECORD
PART 1 PREPARED NOVEMBER, 17, 1960
BY JOHN W. EVANS, LIBRARIAN, E.O.C.
PART 2 PREPARED IN 1954
BY BERNAL D. HUG

EVENSONG AND ITS HISTORY, PART 1

By
John W. Evans

Evensong is an annual spring pageant and a part of Commencement at Eastern Oregon College. One of the institution's oldest traditions, it is believed to be unique among college and university activities in this country.

Originated by Harvey Edgar Inlow, first president of the college, in the early spring of 1932, Evensong was first performed during commencement of the same year. The idea which suggested itself was that an evening of song, presented by students in an outdoor setting, might be made an appropriate part of graduation activities. The grand stairway, located north of the Administration Building at the intersection of 9th Street and L Avenue, seemed the logical stage for this type of performance. At least two songs had already been written especially for the school, and the president wished to have them included in the program.

A faculty committee was formed to develop the initial presentation. Kate L. Houx, Director of Teacher Training and chairman of the committee, wrote the script with assistance from Helen Stirling Moor, Dean of Women; music was arranged by Jennie Peterson, Director of Music; robes, color schemes, staging and other pageantry were designed by Caroline Williams Daniel, Head of the Art Department; and marching was worked out by Madeline Larson, Director of Physical Education. Suggestions and assistance came from various sources. Eva Wear, Training Department, pointed out the desirability of costumed trumpeters; Ed Daniel and Ralph Badgley devised a torch for the queen.

As originally conceived, and as it remains substantially today, Evensong symbolizes the acquisition of knowledge by students who then depart to carry this knowledge with them into the world. The Queen of Knowledge is selected near the end of spring term and her coronation highlights the Coronation Ball. This is an impressive ceremony, including a grand march and herald trumpeters in addition to the pageantry of crown and throne. The queen's official duty at this time is to rededicate herself and her subjects to intellectual achievement: "May you ever keep your purpose strong, your courage high, your loyalty true, and ever bear aloft the torch of learning."[1]

Evensong itself is pageantry on a larger scale, presided over by the queen, who bears a torch symbolizing learning. The program, in addition to appropriate ceremony with lines spoken by chroniclers, attendants and queen, includes a number of Eastern Oregon College songs; these are sung by the studentbody, which is ranged along each flight of the grand stairway.

Trumpeters and an orchestra provide accompaniment and incidental music. As twilight descends, graduates file past the Queen, lighting their individual torches (originally candles) from hers. This procession of graduates files down the stair in symbolic departure as undergraduates reascend in a symbolic return to their college and completion of their own educational training.

EVENSONG June 1954

Designed with appeal to eye, ear and general mood in mind, Evensong has been a successful and generally accepted tradition. The bright robes of queen and court, colorful dresses of undergraduate girls, and background of spring foliage are contrasted effectively with the long rows of seniors dressed in academic costume; the movements of processional and recessional, emphasized by the moving lines of miniature torchlights, are equally effective. As a musical presentation it combines the pleasant qualities of concert and evening serenade; time of day and year chosen are intended to create a mood both peaceful and inspiring.

Changes have taken place over the years, as might be expected. The script has been revised several times; selection of songs varies from year to year; details change. Kate Houx recalls a moment of dismay during the first Evensong when the queen's lamp of knowledge, already low on oil, was about to be extinguished by a gust of wind. "I can still hear one of the dignified graduates. . . audibly whispering from the side of his mouth,

'Hey Queen, here's a light.' Simultaneously, he was offering a match which he had somehow extracted from his street clothes under his Senior's gown. . ."[2]

Such near-disasters are fewer now that flashlights with miniature bulbs have replaced the candles, although battery and bulb failures do occur. Other refinements include a public address system, comfortable seating for the audience, and printed programs; but the theme itself remains unaltered, and Evensong today is basically as it was when first presented.

Symbols employed[3]

The Queen: The source of knowledge
The Torch: Transmitter of light
The Candle: Dispersion of light
The Steps: Medium of progress
Processional: Avenue of a continuous course
Recessional: Emblem of completion

The music

Songs of Eastern Oregon College are for the most part products of local talent. The Alma Mater was written by Iola Gooding Guard, Milton-Freewater, class of 1932. "Hail Oregon" was composed in 1932 by C. H. Cleaver, a La Grande resident; Gene Schultz, La Grande, class of 1938, composed "East Oregon." Dr. Henry Ehlers, former music director of the college, composed "Varsity" and wrote the words for "Pioneer Song," which he set to the melody of Sibelius' "Finlandia." These two songs were first used in Evensong in 1947.

Queens, 1932-1960

1932: Arlene Byrd, Pilot Rock
1933: Zenith Flynn, Austin
1934: Barbara Etter, Pilot Rock
1935: Evelyn Masten, La Grande
1936: Mary Richeson, Imbler
1937: Lucille Ott, Baker
1938: Joan Bannister, Pendleton
1939: Kathleen Williamson, La Grande
1940: Jean Davies, La Grande
1941: Shirley Parker, North Powder
1942: Betty Wagner, La Grande
1943: Catherine Fridley, Wasco
1944: Virginia Wilcox, Vale
1945: Kay Andrews Buck, La Grande
1946: Marjorie Chandler, La Grande
1947: Sibyl Smith, La Grande
1948: Rhoda Lloyd Chollet, Cove
1949: Ruth Boyd, Baker
1950: Hisako Kido: Nyssa
1951: Alyce Wada, Wapato, Washington
1952: Marlene Baldwin, Umatilla

1953: Janet Heisler, Jennings Lodge
1954: Glenda Gray, Springfield
1955: Virginia Cook, Nyssa
1956: Clara Weigel, La Grande
1957: Roberta Miller, La Grande
1958: Jean Adamson, Milwaukie
1959: Josie Ward, Forest Grove
1960: Jane Denison, Pendleton

The original presentation,
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 7, 1932.

". . . Even-song, presented by students of the normal school assisted by the La Grande Municipal Band on the grand stairway at the north entrance to the campus."[4]
The following is a list of students prominent in the first Evensong:[5]

Queen.....Arlene Byrd, Pilot Rock
Princesses.....Dorothy Parker, Cove
Gladys Billings, Imbler
Louise Hardman, Unity
Lucille Hudelson, North Powder
Ruth Leonard, Lostine
Vadis Slack, Enterprise
Chroniclers.....Austin Dunn, La Grande, Studentbody President
Lee Johnson, La Grande, Senior Class President

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1. Coronation script, ca. 1950.
2. Kate L. Houx, Evensong. La Grande, Oregon, n.d. Typewritten.
3. Arta F. Lawrence, Address delivered to studentbody, 1941. Typewritten.
4. The Beacon, June 6, 1932.
5. The Beacon, June 1, 1949.

EVENSONG: AN IMPRESSION

By

Bernal D. Hug

So you missed attending "Evensong" at Eastern Oregon College, college of the Mountaineers?

Come, memory; sit with my friend and me and recall for us this event:

Eastern Oregon College is located in La Grande, Oregon where the "Old Oregon Trail" crosses the south end of the Grande Ronde Valleys--valleys that have a unique Indian history as intertribal areas where Red men met in their land of peace, plenty, romance and sport. Evensong is a pageant, held each year at graduation time on an impressive double winding stairway which leads from the street up a small hill to the administration building of the college.

Our young folks have been driving to college each day from home out east of Elgin. We have lived their college experiences with them as they have told us about them at home. Graduation time is a busy time for students and they have already gone this evening. We must be going too, for Evensong will start just a short while after sundown.

It is a lazy June evening with a mountain crispness in the air. We head west on Highway 82, which is the route of the old Nez Perce trail into our valleys; soon we are crossing the concrete bridge over the Grande Ronde River where the Indians always built their salmon traps, and driving into Elgin where the main Indian camp of Lochow Lochow was located; then we turn south with the highway toward La Grande.

Through this country we see scattered dark blue and golden yellow wild flowers--survivors of the two important Indian vegetables, camas and cou se..

Camas in bloom

Looking down at blooming couse

We think of the long age days when the meadows bloomed blue with camas and the small hills were golden with couse and people were glad of the harvest of edible roots promised by the blue and gold. How fitting it is that our college has adopted these colors.

Evergreen covered mountains to the west are casting long evening shadows into the valley while the peaks to the east are highlighted by the setting sun. Ahead of us in La Grande nestled against the southwest foot hills.

In La Grande we turn down Ninth Street, which ends at the foot of the college stairway. Two blocks of this street have been roped off and filled with seats. We join the folks who are finding places to sit. The sun is now well behind Mount Emily and the few clouds in the sky are tinted with sunset colors. A slight breeze from the distant mountain snows reminds us of the extra wrap that we brought. Even the great mass of white blooming spirea that flanks the stairway suggests to us snow drifts on the college lawn.

Soon high on a small balcony of the administration building appear two heralds dressed in medevial costume and with long trumpets. Their clear notes reach out into the evening to announce the start of the pageant.

From a door on each end of the building pour forth undergraduates, all dressed in white shirts and pastel dresses. They come down on the two winding stairs and stop. The college orchestra and the college Queen with her great torch of knowledge take their places on a landing near the base of the stair. Lastly two rows of graduates in their black robes come down the outside edge to form a dark line between the spirea and the undergraduates.

The Queen rules as an oracle of wisdom, and the entire student body sing songs; songs of college, songs of hope, songs of sentiment.

As they sing the song of the pioneers, thoughts bo gack to a century ago when there was another commencement on this campus. Instead of the college buildings there is a circle of covered wagons. I hear the music of a banjo coming through the twilight. Young folks are singing around a camp fire. They are very happy tonight because after many weeks of plodding through dry sage and sand they have entered today a land of tall grass and evergreen trees. They are commencing to realize their dreams of beautiful Oregon-----commencing----commencement---hope of the future!

These old pioneers had a wonderful vision. I wonder how well they can see across the span of time by the light of their campfire. Could they imagine that one day this would be a college campus? How thrilled they would be if they could hear hundreds of students singing tonight of their own little "Evensong" around their camp.

Then one wonders with all of the penetration of the Queen's great light, just how well we can see the vision, the hope, the presistance, that earned that commencement of long ago. Their commencement made possible our commencement.

The Queen speaks. All sing "Alma Mater", then "Day is Dying in the West".

Graduates are filing down the steps and past the Queen. From her great lamp each lights a tiny light and passes down into the audience below.

A stir of wind causes me to look over to Mount Emily. I see her crowning snowfield in the moonlight. I think of the small streams of crystal water coming from this melting snow; streams that sparkle in the moonbeams as they trickle along the snow bank, on their way to nourish and water the valley below.

Some one speaks close by. I turn to see at my side a very familiar young man, dressed in cap and gown and holding a tiny light.

A RECORD OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF UNION COUNTY OREGON

PREPARED: 1862-67 (Introduction 1959)

BY: E. S. McComas (Introduction, Bernal D. Hug)

COPIED BY: Marlene Turner

E. S. McCOMAS JOURNAL

INTRODUCTION:

E. S. McComas was born in Adams County, Ohio, January 23, 1839, moved with his parents to Indiana in 1843 and then to Johnson County, Iowa, in 1860.

As a young man with many Southery sympathies he chose to go west rather than be impressed into the Northern army during the Civil War. The adventures of a trip west to the lands from which came fascinating stories appealed to him.

Throughout his life he was a lover of verse and song. Arriving in the west his dreams were put to verse; dreams that did not all come true, but never the less we will quote them to show his spirit:

MY JOURNEY O'ER THE PLAINS

Come all ye jolly miners, come listen to my song,
Tis about my journey oer the plains, twill not take you long.
Twas on the 14th day of May in the spring of sixty-two,
All things being ready, I bade my friends adieu.

I left my home in Iowa through mud and cold and rain,
And started for the west to take a trip across the plain,
Bound for Salmon River, that boasted land of gold,
To try and make my fortune, as others had, I'm told.

Our journey it was pleasant as we travelled up the Platte,
The country it is beautiful, although its rather flat,
We saw many things that were beautiful to behold,
As we crossed o'er the plains in our search after gold.

There was Chimmney Rock the ancient, and Rock Independence, too,
And many other sights that were beautiful to view,
At length we got to Larramie, we thought the time would never come,
And there we got some letters from the dear ones at home.