

2/82

# THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Director's Corner

This month I have a little of "this and that" to share. An old subject, but one which bears repeating is volunteering. When I say that the volunteers make the Southern Oregon Historical Society the organization that it is, I am making no idle statement. At our last count we had a list of 125 volunteers and this number does not include the names of our board of trustees. These dedicated people have given us 6,085 hours of their time in 1981. The members of the Golddiggers Guild, about 30 ladies, are often busily involved with fund-raising projects as well as with serving as hostesses for our social functions.

The Jacksonville Museum Quilters are 15 to 20 thimble-pushers who repair and maintain our quilts and teach quilting classes as well. One of our outstanding programs is the annual quilt show held in July. The Quilters work earnestly all year to make this show a very special event.

Our most recent volunteer group is the Jacksonville Museum Performers. Currently numbering between 15 and 20 members, they produce original plays, written by the performers themselves, based upon local historical themes and events. They present programs at area senior centers, convalescent homes, and at meetings held by various community groups (please see below and page 20 for more on the Jacksonville Museum Performers).

Many volunteers work directly with staff members. Their assistance is essential and we probably do not do enough to show them our appreciation. We will be hosting a luncheon on April 22 for those who will be able to attend.

In February we will present an exhibit of textiles, appliqued and embroidered by the Hmong Women of Southeast Asia (see page 8). SOHS members will receive, at a later date, an invitation announcement which will include further details. The display will include many textile items from the SOHS collection as well as those from Asia.

The time and place of our spring bus tour has not yet been decided. If you have any ideas, please pass them on to us. As our membership grows so does the variety of individual preferences for tour locations. We will appreciate your input.

Finally, on April 2, a special program to feature Marjorie O'Harra will take place in the ballroom of the U. S. Hotel, Jacksonville. Mrs. O'Harra will talk about people and places in southern Oregon. There will be a reception and autograph party to celebrate the publication of her new book, Ashland: The First 130 Years.

Bill Burk

**Wanted:** TAX DEDUCTIBLE CAST-OFFS, or attic-stored items you no longer find useful. The Jacksonville Museum Performs would greatly appreciate any costumes you would like to see put to use again. Especially needed are period dresses, early men's suits, men's felt hats, women's bonnets and laced and buttoned shoes. Members will gladly pick up your gifts.

Call Marjorie Edens, 899-1711, or Elizabeth Vickerman, 772-4606.

### THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## A YOUNG LADY'S TOILETTE IN 1900

Writers in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* declare: "In 1909 one could not breathe freely for dust raised by skirts." Surely authors of that noble publication could never be charged with exaggeration but wouldn't it then follow that as skirts go higher, the atmosphere correspondingly improves? If trailing dresses were the most serious cause of pollution today, we should be so lucky. The quotation is another barb aimed at the female's adherence to the foolishness of fashion. Men have always considered women's styles outrageous, and they don't easily tire of pressing the point. No doubt Adam chided Eve for the tricky way she wore her fig leaf. But the ladies, with delicate shrugs of their pretty shoulders, have been indifferent to unsolicited criticism. When the bone specialists announced that tight corsets were the ruination of the digestive system and that corset lacing disastrously squeezed the innards, the ladies pulled the strings a little tighter. When the pediatricists hollered that three-inch heels brought on fatigue and lordosis back curve, the ladies went for four inches. Devil take the fatigue and the L.B.C. Those concerned with a stylish silhouette couldn't be bothered with threats against their health and longevity.

One must concede though that by 1900 the demands of the couturiers went somewhere beyond reason. The poor little bod was imprisoned in a metal framework which pushed the top out forward and the rear out backward. The swanlike neck was so fortified with whalebone the lady could hardly move her head. This was some advantage because a quick movement of the elaborately coiffed noggin might upset the delicate balance of veils, flowers, fruit, ribbons and birds in flight which were crowded onto her hat. The sleeves were enormous, trimmed with puffs and frills to help conceal the twisted line of the figure. And this was the mode for at least five years. It's best not to dwell on all those permanently twisted ribs. Incidentally the lady could go through hellish physical torture for the sake of beauty but she wouldn't dream of dabbing a little rouge on her cheeks for the same reason; that would have been sinful.

A few years later when the designers eased up a bit, the well turned out promenadette could relax and even breathe normally without fear of ripping her seams and shockingly exposing her hidden metal-banded bodysuit. The ladies were visions, a fact revealed by the classy mannequins in the photographs on the following pages. In 1977 the Gold Diggers Guild presented a fashion show, *Really Not So Long Ago*, at the Rogue Valley Country Club. The models wore SOHS and privately owned ensembles. Photographs taken by Kenn Knackstedt are worthy of showing and reshowing. Some of these dresses are presently on exhibit in the museum.

For history and financial records, a run through milady's toilette might prove enlightening. *Question:* Should one start at the altogeth'er and work up to the fully clad conclusion or should one begin with the complete outfit and work backward? *Decision:* The start-to-finish method would be a less spicy and more scientific approach, and we're nothing if not scientific. Nancy Larsen, an expert in dressing the display models at the museum, graciously donated her expertise for the project. The styles and prices are from the 1897 Sears, Roebuck catalog. Yes, Virginia, there really is a Sears Catalog. Virginia will be limited to \$25 because her husband, a young executive type wage-earner, doesn't bring home much more than that in a week.

Figure 1 shows the subject, Virginia, modestly and charmingly clad in her summer union suit and stockings. Sears avows that this is one of the most perfect union suits made, of surpassing beauty and strength, and it sells for 85¢. This



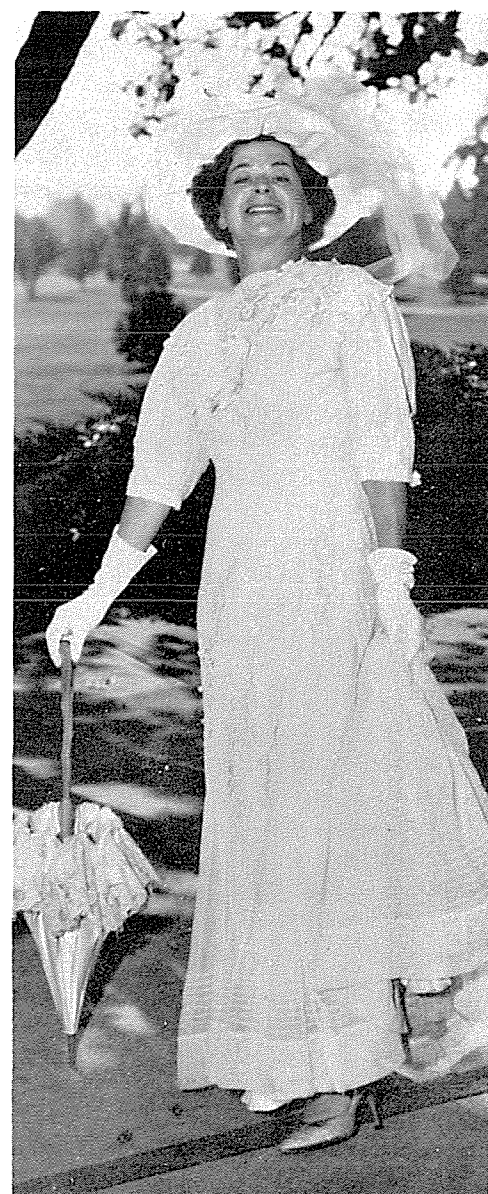


price is a little high but it's worth it for comfort. Her stockings are made of very choice Australian wool and they sell in all the big stores for 50¢ per pair, but Sears offers them for 35¢, a saving of 15¢ which is not to be sneezed at. The garters aren't cheap; they cost 59¢, postage extra, but, fiddle-de-dee, a lady has to be a little extravagant just for the fun of it. Instead of elastic garters, Virginia could have worn a hose supporter but, before she is fully dressed, she's going to have enough stuff fastened around that diminutive waist.

In Figure 2 she has donned her muslin drawers. They have tucks and delicate embroidery and retail for 35¢. Figure 3 shows the chemise, empire style with silk ribbon trim. This garment must have had some purpose but, at the moment, its function isn't readily discerned.

The corset is added in Figure 4. It is scientifically designed to give abdominal support and that means no more relaxing today for Virginia. This one is made with extension steel, side lacing and elastic gores at the bottom, all extremely useful if the lady adds a little *embonpoint* to her *derriere*. It's a bit dear at \$1.25 but it is *such* a necessity. The corset appears so dashing, she could even wear it on the outside, but she at once buttons on a corset cover (Figure 5). She's now pretty well clad, and if the boudoir caught fire, she could





1. Mrs. Greer Drew is modeling a dress donated to SOHS by Mr. Verne H. Pendleton. It was worn by Maude Mary Hill Pendleton in 1885. 2. The wedding dress from a private collection, shown by Jennifer Alley, was worn in 1884. 3. The third wedding dress, worn by the late Betty Luther, was donated by Margaret Shoemaker. It was worn by her mother, Sabri Petri Shoemaker in 1906.

run into the street with only a slightly immodest appearance. Of course the sight of her in this state of undress would titillate the firemen right out of their skulls. Her bustle is an extravagant item. Sears shows a perfectly suitable Ladies' Genuine Haircloth Bustle, padded with curled hair in three colors, for 56¢. But Virginia (Figure 6) is wearing a "Lily Langtry Special" which she purchased from a downtown corsetier for--hold your breath--\$2.50. It is a health bustle and is recommended as being "less heating to the spine than any others" -- and who needs a hot spine? This one also folds up to permit the wearer to sit down. It will spring back in place again when Virginia, having taken her tea, stands up to make her departure.

We'll hasten to cover up the Lily Langtry contraption with a nice petticoat (Figure 7), This garment is 4 yards around and has a ten-inch flounce of embroidery at the bottom. Harpers Magazine alleged that men find white lace very erotic and the well dressed lady will naturally reveal its snowy whiteness when she steps into her carriage. Naughty! Sears asserts this skirt is well worth



4. Mrs. Peter Rasmussen is wearing Grandmother Woodruff's green taffeta. It was donated by Mrs. A. L. Simpson and Mrs. Marietta Hamaker. 5. Mrs. Robert Ogle models a 1912 wedding negligee from her family collection. 6. Mrs. Fred Green wears a 1920 ball gown donated by Mrs. Helene Donker.



9



10



11





7. Mrs. Frank Alley wears a white linen dressing gown, worn by Mrs. William Holt of the Rogue Valley Manor. 8. Peachy Thierolf appears delighted with her 1910 coat. 9. Mrs. R.P. Richter is fetching in a beaded evening gown and accessories worn by Mrs. R.L. Ray when she was installed as Matron of the Eastern Star in 1927.

\$3.75, but sells it for \$1.85. It's a shame to cover it.

Stylists in Harpers magazine demand that ladies wear fashionable gowns designed for that special occasion. The magazine flatly states that a shirt and blouse makes a lady look like a typewriter. But it's next to impossible to sketch all those tucks, ruffles and doodads, much less show how to put the dress on the model. Dress designers must have supplied architectural sketches of how to get in and out of those intricate creations so Virginia gets a shirt and waist and that's that! In Figure 8 she dons the skirt, a very fine silk taffety of over four yards, lined and interlined. "This is one of the biggest bargains ever known in the skirt line," a fine silk skirt for only \$4.98. Sears advertises that they are doing an immense business, the largest ever, in this line so there must have been a lot of women who didn't mind looking like typewriters.

The blouse (Figure 9) is your basic shirtwaist and sells for 50¢. It is simple in style so a decorative collar can be added for a more stunning look (Figure 10.) The collar surprisingly costs about four times more than the blouse, but, by golly, just look at those details. It is made of Habutal silk and you know how rare those

Habutal silk worms are. It has "Venice insertion in butter color." If she drops a biscuit, the butter stains won't show. It's reduced a dollar so perhaps it's too opulent for some. It is on sale for \$1.95.

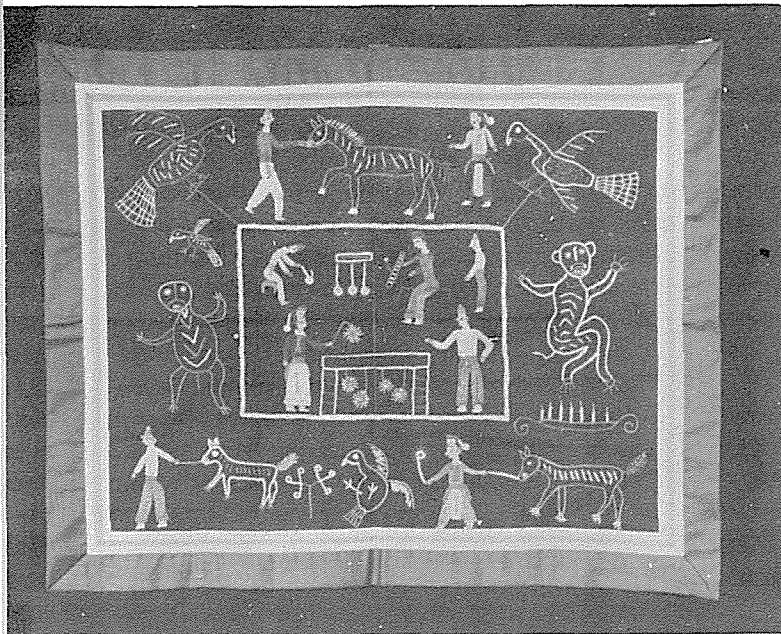
In the last sketch (Figure 11) Virginia has put on her new buttoned shoes, made from good plump India kid. At \$1 a pair they aren't warranted, but she's been a little lavish and can't afford kangaroo calf. Down, SPCA! She is wearing her new fitted woolen pelisse (coat, silly) which cost \$4.95 and her new hat, Sears' \$1.99 style leader. It has a wire frame, handsome silk roses and a life-like dove in full flight. "Such a bargain is rarely seen."

With her new purse (49¢) and her silk gloves (38¢) she is now an example of modesty and style. At a total expenditure of \$24.88, 12¢ less than her allowance, Virginia's toilette is complete, and she can afford a treat, a lemon phosphate, at the soda fountain.

Trilby Lisle Union Suit .....	.85
Extra Fine Imported Fast Black Cashmere Hose .....	.35
Fancy Elastic Ribbon Garters, <i>Hands Off!</i> stamped on the metal buckle.....	.59
Ladies' Drawers, 5 tucks, Valenciennes Lace.....	.35
Fine Muslin Chemise.....	.78
Dr. Warner's Abdominal Corset, Boned with Coraline.....	1.25
White Muslin Corset Cover, Plain, pearl buttons.....	.15
Lily Langtry, Scientific Bustle..	2.50
Ladies' Fine Lace Underskirt.....	1.85
Very Fine Taffeta Silk Skirt.....	4.98
Fast Colored Percale Waist.....	.50
Habutal Silk Showy Collar.....	1.95
Buttoned Kid Shoes.....	1.00
Woolen Pelisse.....	4.95
Hat, The Florence.....	1.99
Gloves, Silk, Set-in thumbs.....	.38
Ladies' Chatelaine Bag.....	.46

*Total Expenditure 24.88*

## Stitchery To Be Exhibited at U.S. Hotel



Stitchery, appliqued and embroidered by Hmong women who have recently immigrated to Oregon from Southeast Asia, will be on display at the U.S. Hotel Ballroom from Saturday, February 20, through Sunday, February 28, from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

This meticulous stitchery combines vibrant colors and native motifs that reflect the artists' original forest environments. The works have symbolic significance related to Hmong customs and beliefs—for example the ornate baby hats help keep the child's spirit within his head. Flower-like tassels are considered homes for happy spirits. Background information accompanies the exhibit.

The traveling exhibition is circulated by Visual Arts Resources of the University of Oregon Art Museum, with support from the National Endow-

ment for the Arts, Oregon Arts Commission, Friends of the Museum, the Oregon Committee for the Humanities and other contributors.

Jime Matouch, Curator of Exhibits, announces that accompanying this exhibit will be textiles from the Jacksonville Museum collection, researched by Carolyn Stieber, weaver and graduate student in textiles at SOCS, interning at SOHS.



"Going on the bum was the most exciting and satisfactory time of my life," reports Greg Gualtieri, the SOHS Registrar of Collections. "I sleeping-bagged it on beaches, front and back porches and in parks all the way from Vancouver to San Luis Obispo." Having been told what to do and how to do it for twenty

years or more, he found living an unstructured life a welcome change. During this time he wrote seven books of poetry and acquired a foot-locker full of pink rejection slips.

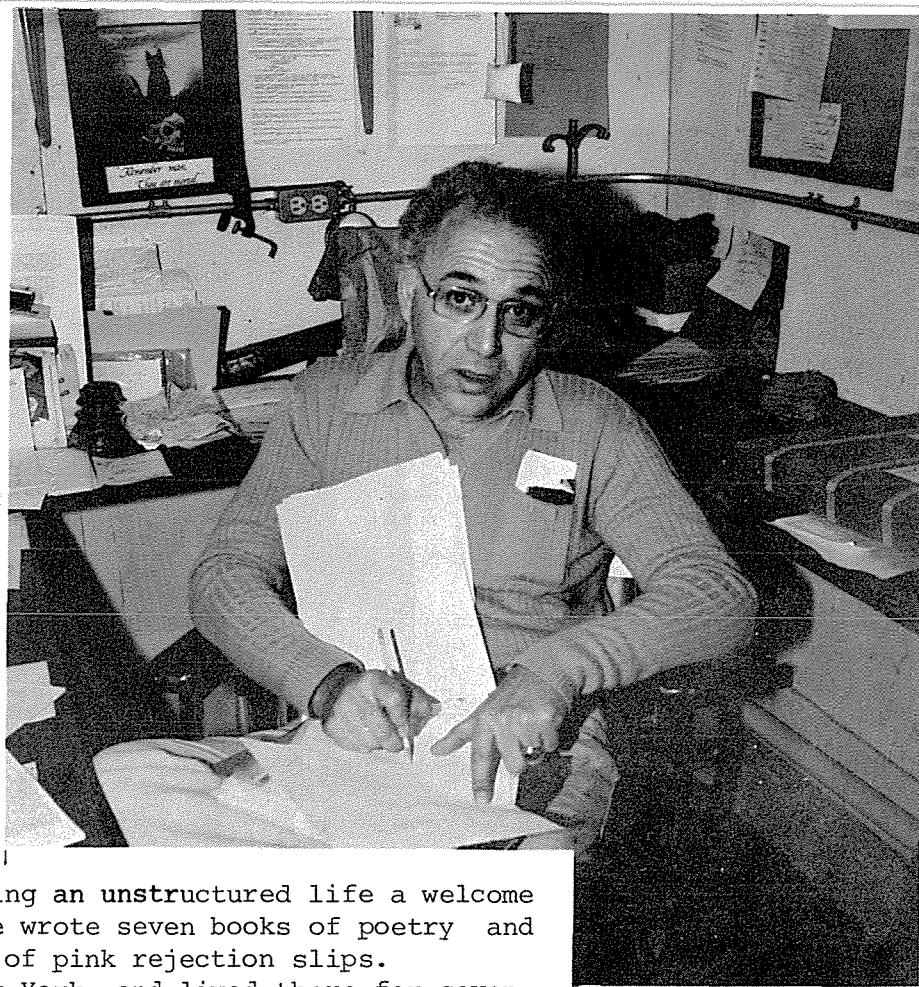
Greg was born in Rome, New York, and lived there for seven years until he moved to Utica to live with an aunt. When he was eighteen he entered the air force as a photographer and photo school instructor at Lowrey Field in Colorado. After this assignment which lasted four years he served in Korea as an aerial photographer, repair man and preparator.

Back home again in 1951 he got married and enrolled in the Centenary College of Louisiana where he majored in sociology and English literature. "My wife Sadie and I lived in Vets' Villa," he said. "It was reserved for married couples and the living quarters had holes in the ceiling, holes in the walls, and rattlesnakes under the floor." In 1956 he graduated with a BS degree.

With his diploma in hand he accepted a position in Absarokee, Montana, teaching English and Spanish. Absarokee is a town of two grocery stores, five saloons and six churches. "It was a little out of balance," he said, "but we stayed there for three years." The next move was to Weaverville, California, for a six year stint. Greg taught English and produced and directed plays both for the high school and for the community players. During these years he worked towards his Masters at Chico State and at the University in Austin, Texas.

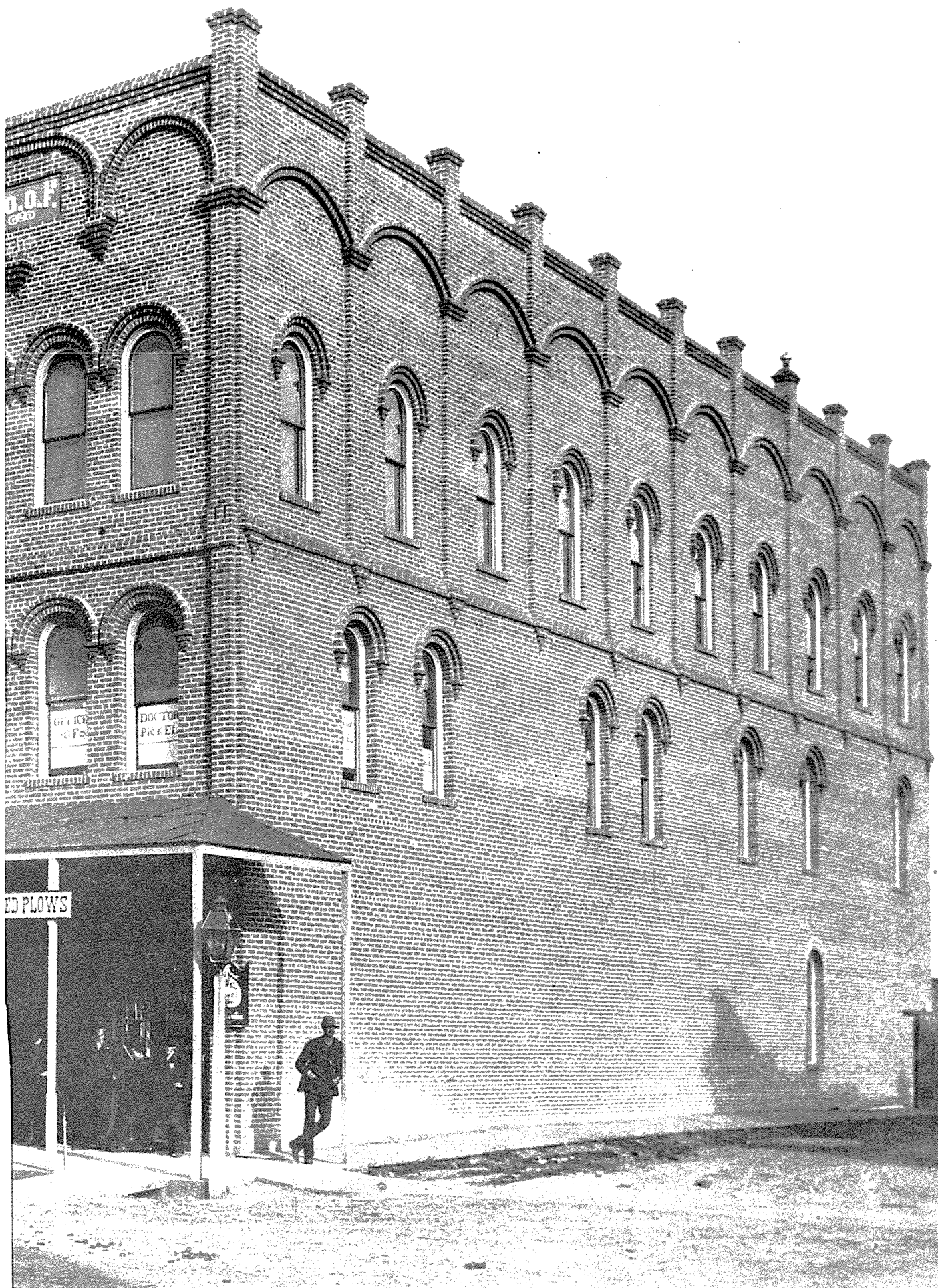
In 1974 Greg and Sadie separated. After thirteen years of teaching in Redding, Greg started out on his Nomad's life. Eventually the savings account dwindled to zilch and he had to seek odd jobs: painting houses, roofing, mowing lawns and other tasks. In 1978, as a CETA employee, he started work in the accessions office at the museum. Later, when Jody Ferg resigned in 1980, he assumed his present position.

In addition to being proud of his son Michael, he takes pride in two significant contributions at SOHS: (1) the installation of the Chenhall System of nomenclature in the subject file, and (2) getting the department settled into a routine system of operation. One day, he feels certain, he will be known for his poetic endeavors. He hopes recognition will come before he has "gone into outer-terrestrial space."













*Photograph courtesy of Nevada Taylor Clifford*

*"Bearing tattoo marks on the chin from her Indian captivity, Olive Oatman maintained a ladylike dignity in public after her rescue, but privately she grieved."* Richard Dillon

## THE CAPTIVITY OF OLIVE OATMAN

Journals kept by pioneers while crossing the plains reveal that the long trip was rarely made in complete harmony and good fellowship. The rigors of the trail, the uncertainty of tomorrow, the fear of hostile Indians and the exhaustion from the constant push to keep up with the others inevitably gave rise to short tempers and frequent flare ups. Such disagreements at a time when strict cooperation was imperative could result in tragedy.

So it was with Royce Oatman and his ill-starred family.

**R**eports indicate that Royce Oatman, from his boyhood, was adventurous, fascinated by change and quickly tired of day-to-day routine. He was educated in New York state and at the age of 21 moved to Illinois. Shortly afterwards he married Mary Ann Sperry, the cherished and well-educated daughter of a comfortably well-off family. For two years Royce and Mary Ann lived on a farm which they worked industriously to develop. When they had accumulated enough money they bought a small general merchandise store in the town of LaHarpe. The business proved to be a successful venture and the Oatmans soon had a comfortable home and substantial savings.

But during the depression of 1842 the store failed and they lost everything. Royce moved his family--by then there were five children--to the Cumberland Valley in Pennsylvania, intending to make a fresh start, but in a short time he found the area unsuitable to his tastes and they moved to Chicago and again, in 1846, to Fulton where he staked a claim upon the prairie.

With a great expenditure of energy and enthusiasm he soon had a comfortable home and a productive farm. During the second year he unfortunately received an injury while digging a well for a neighbor and he seemed unable to recover fully. He continued his labors on the farm but felt certain that, owing to his extreme sensitiveness to cold and damp, he could regain his health only in a warmer climate.

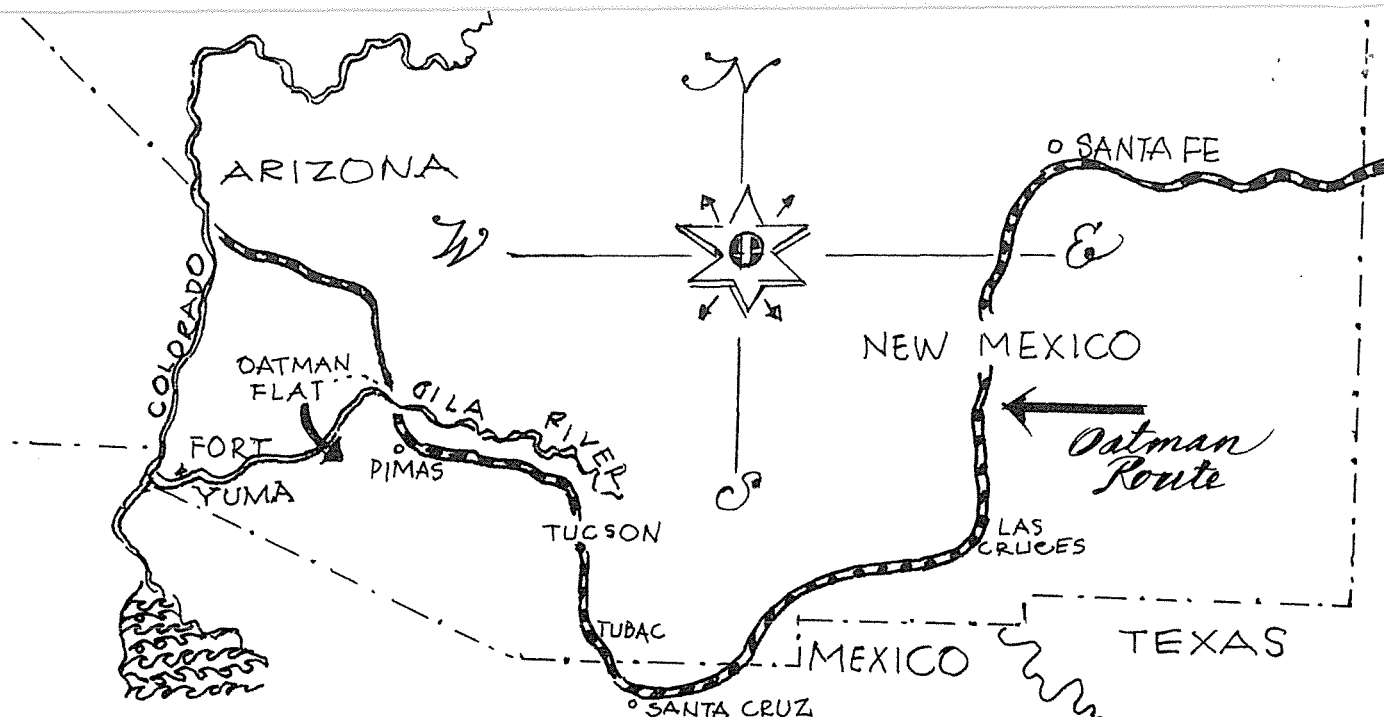
**I**n the summer of 1849 an endeavor was made to organize a party to emigrate to the New Mexican Territory. Many people in Illinois were excited about this new country. They were told it had a mild, bland climate and that it offered untold opportunities. Richard Dillon, an author who has researched the Oatman family tragedy in great depth, asserts that Royce Oatman was a convert to the Brewsterites, a splinter sect that had broken away from the Mormon church. The leader of this group, James Brewster, called upon his disciples to follow him to a Promised Land where they would create a settlement at the mouth of the Gila River. If Royce Oatman did indeed belong to this sect, the fact was scrupulously omitted from earlier reports of the story.

In any event after careful consideration Royce submitted his name as one who, with his family, was eager to join the party. As soon as he was accepted he sold all his possessions for \$1500 and purchased a complete outfit for the undertaking: a wagon, three yokes of oxen, milk cows, riding horses and enough provisions for eighteen months of arduous travel.

In the spring of 1850 they set out for Independence, the place agreed upon as the starting point. The company consisted of about eighty people, including Royce and Mary Ann and their seven children. After some delay in Independence, on August 10 they started their long overland journey.

The first week of travel revealed that the members of the train were far from congenial; there were constant bickering and sharp differences in religious opinions. A part of the group threatened to turn back but they were prevailed upon to continue. By the time the train reached the junction of the north and south roads at the Santa Fe pass, however, the quarrels had become so bitter that the company divided. The smaller party consisting of twenty people with eight wagons took the southern route. Royce Oatman and his family were with this group. Mr. Dillon contends that Royce, by this time, had become a victim of gold fever and, having lost interest in the Promised Land, now meant to continue on to the gold fields of California.

**T**he little train slowly crawled along the route, through Santa Cruz and Tabac into Tuscon. There they stopped for a month. The Mexicans received them kindly and plead with them to remain. American settlers were welcomed because of their reputations as powerful Indian fighters and,



at that time, the Apaches were a constant threat to all settlers. Part of the wagon train, which was already too small for safety, decided to stay. The Oatmans and two other families continued on the journey--a decision which was certainly not a wise one. Two of their horses had been stolen by Indians, their cattle and oxen were in poor condition and there was little opportunity for them to have recovered their strength in Tucson. The Apaches had destroyed all the crops, and foot supplies were almost non-existent. To Royce and the other two men it seemed advisable to move on, over the desert, to the Pima villages.

Traveling slowly over this desolate area, they were often without water and were constantly menaced by Apaches. In the mountains they were held back by early snow. At one lay-over aggressive Indians intimidated them into giving up much of their food supply and ran off twenty head of stock so that the travelers were forced to leave some of the wagons and baggage behind. Royce rationed his company to one and a half biscuits a day. Occasionally someone would kill a coyote or a hawk which the women stewed into a soup. In a sorry condition they at last reached the villages of the Pimas.

They stayed in the village for almost a month and then the Oatmans started on alone. The motives for this mindless move have never been explained. It is



*A Pima Village*

thought that the constant looting by the Apaches in the settlement had left the Mexicans without food and to stay meant to starve. In addition, a traveling scientist, Dr. Le Conte, and his Mexican guide who were traveling from Fort Yuma arrived at the village and reported that they had twice passed through the country between the Pima colony and Yuma and had seen no signs of Indians.



There is the suspicion also that Royce's gold fever was the most persuasive point.

For several days the Oatmans plodded along the Gila River. Their cattle, now reduced to one yoke of oxen and two yokes of cows were exhausted. The roads were bad because of recent rains and at hills they had to unload the two wagons and carry their goods to the top. The oxen often required assistance to pull even the empty wagons.

On the seventh day Dr. Le Conte and his guide overtook them. He saw immediately that they were in a desperate condition and promised to send help to them when he reached Fort Yuma which was about 130 miles ahead. The promise of assistance encouraged the fatigued travelers a little and they continued on their torturous journey.

When Dr. Le Conte and his companion were thirty miles ahead of the Oatmans, the two men were waylaid by a small band of Yuma Indians. They stood their guard and eventually the Yumas departed, but only after stealing their horses. Le Conte sent his guide ahead for help, but after remembering the Oatmans' alarming plight and his promise to them, he decided to go on alone on foot also. Writing a note about his misfortune at the hands of the Apaches, he placed it conspicuously on a tree beside the trail and set out for the fort. The Oatmans never reached this point.

At about this same time the weary family came to a crossing in the Gila River. Unable to reach the other side they stopped on a little sand island in the middle of the stream and spent the night there. Royce was greatly depressed with a strong premonition of disaster. He sank down by the wagon and said to Mary Ann, "Mother, mother, in the name of God, I know that something dreadful is about to happen."

After a restless and sleepless night they crossed over to the other bank and began the day's trek. The road was full of hills and rises and they seemed to inch along. They soon came to a hill so steep that it required both the oxen and the cows to pull one wagon at a time. The first wagon was drawn about a mile along the trail and the family gathered back at the second wagon for a piece of bread and some bean soup before continuing the journey. The great dread and depression still clung to Royce and he was unable to move with any speed or decision.

Suddenly Lorenzo, the oldest son, a boy of 14, saw a group of Indians--nineteen in all--approaching them. He spoke to his father who at that moment became almost overcome by abject fear, the result of his persistent and deep feeling of doom. The Indians--Yavapai Apaches--wore only breach cloths, but each of them carried a bow and arrows and a war club. Royce managed to motion them to sit down and spoke to them in Spanish. They asked for a peace pipe and he prepared one, taking a whiff before he passed it to them. They then asked for something to eat. Royce told them that he had scarcely anything and that if he gave them food he would be robbing his children.

By this time the Indians were well aware that they would meet no serious resistance and loudly increased their demands. Royce gave them some bread which they immediately devoured, demanding more as they did so. Royce refused then and the Apaches gathered to one side, conversing in their own language. The family hurriedly began packing their baggage into the wagon. Royce and Lorenzo handed up the goods, and Mary Ann, in the wagon, stacked the boxes. Olive and Lucy, her older sister, were beside the wagon. Mary Ann, a girl of seven, held the halter of the foremost yoke of oxen. The rest of the children were on the other side of the road.

All at once, with wild yells, the Indians attacked. The defenseless family was clubbed down like rabbits. Royce was beaten to the ground, his skull crushed by repeated blows. Lorenzo was struck on the back of the head and

tumbled over to the road, dazed and helpless. Mrs. Oatman leaped down from the wagon to protect her youngest child, and the Apaches at that instant pounded out her life and the life of the little boy. At the very first of the attack, the oldest daughter Lucy was beaten until she was unrecognizable. All of the family but Olive and her sister Mary Ann lay on the ground. The two girls had been shoved to the side of the road at the outset of the massacre, apparently a previously decided intention of the Indians.

Then the plunder began. The Apaches tore the cover from the wagon, broke open the boxes, went through the clothing of the dead and threw unwanted items onto the ground. When they came to Lorenzo, he moaned and showed some sign of life so two of them seized him by the feet, dragged him to the edge of the bluff and hurled him over the slope where he fell to a ledge twenty feet below, battered and unconscious but still alive.

**W**hen he next became conscious the noonday sun was shining on his face. He was in agonizing pain and unable to open his eyes. His scalp was torn and stiffened with dried blood. His clothing was in rags. As his mind cleared, he wiped away the clotted blood from his eyelids and looked about him. He saw a path of blood leading up the slope and realized where he was and what had happened. Faint and dizzy, he pulled himself up the slope to the road-bed and saw the tragic scene before him. His only thought was to get away and he crawled along the road back to the muddy river where he drank and lay exhausted and semi-conscious until nightfall. With the aid of a stick he walked all through the night and the next morning. Near noon he came to a water hole and fell asleep for a few hours before struggling on. In the mid-afternoon his strength failed and he again fell into a faint.

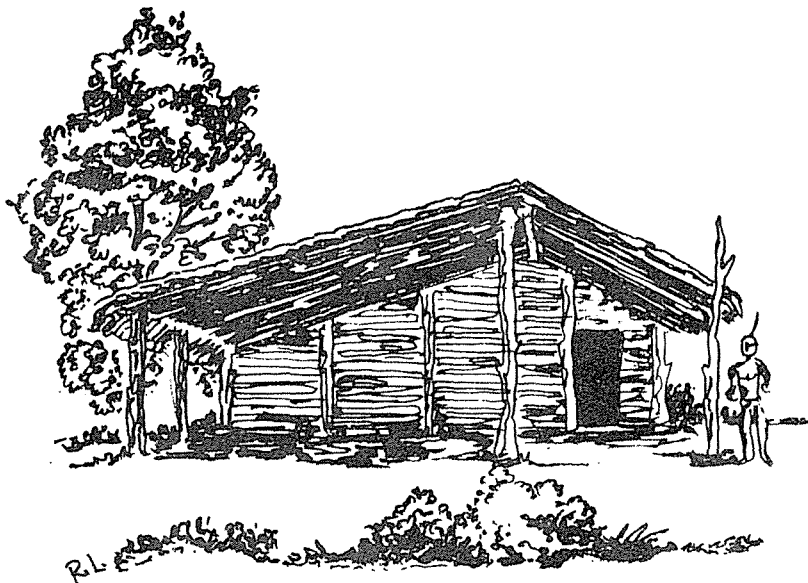
Near evening, when he again regained his senses, he found he was surrounded by coyotes, snarling and growling. He rose to his feet with a loud yell and struck out at them with his stick. They fell back a little and he once more started on his way. For hours the coyotes dragged his footsteps but by midnight they gave up the chase and vanished into the shadows of the trees. About noon the next day he came upon two Pima Indians who drew their bows. Lorenzo raised his hand and spoke and the two rode up to him. One of these men was an Indian whom the Oatmans had known in the village and both of them quickly dismounted and offered their help to the boy. They gave him a piece of bread and spread a blanket under a tree for him to rest upon as they rode on to the scene of the tragedy. They assured him they would return and help him get back to their village.

He slept until dark, but upon awakening became fearful that the two Pimas might be treacherous. He struggled to his feet and trudged on through the rest of the night until the middle of the morning when he crawled under a bush to rest. When he awoke he looked down across the valley and saw, at a great distance away, objects moving on the road. Fearing they were Indians he watched them move slowly towards him. As they rose to the top of a little hill he saw that the approaching objects were covered wagons. With the realization that he was safe he fainted again. When he recovered, members of the two families whom the Oatmans had left behind in the village were coming towards him. At last he was among friends.

Upon hearing his story, the men turned their wagons back to the Pima villages where they remained until reinforcements arrived. The two white men with a number of friendly Pima Indians went to the scene of the murder--now known as Oatman Flat--and covered the bodies with stones. They found only six bodies, mutilated by coyotes. It was apparent that Olive and her younger sister Mary Ann had been taken as prisoners. Lorenzo eventually was taken to Fort Yuma

where he was cared for by the post surgeon until he regained his health.

Olive and Mary Ann, stripped of part of their clothing and their shoes, were herded over sharp rocks and cactus through the night. When they faltered or stumbled they were beaten. Mary Ann was not strong enough to walk for hours without a rest, and when she became so exhausted that she no longer responded to their whips, one of the braves picked her up and carried her like a sack of wheat. At last, when the Indians themselves grew tired, they stopped. The girls were offered food but could not eat. The next morning the Oatman cattle were brought up, slaughtered and cut into pieces. The Apaches, irritated by the delay caused by the girls' inability to walk on lacerated feet, tied pieces of leather and rawhide around the wounds and again prodded them into the brutal trek.



*A Mohave Hut*

Thus they continued for over two-hundred miles of cruel marching until they reached the Yavapai village. Olive and Mary Ann, terrified and exhausted, were placed on a pile of brush around which the Indians, about 300 in number, performed a savage dance. During this dancing they struck the girls, threw dirt and sticks at them and spit in their faces. Eventually, at nightfall, tired of their sport, they led the captives to a thatched hut and allowed them to sleep.

The next day they were put to work gathering berries, carrying water and greasewood and performing

the most difficult and menial tasks. They were slaves from then on and the Apache women were cruel and sadistic mistresses. They invented unnecessary tasks and beat the helpless prisoners unmercifully. The Indian children were their masters also and the slightest complaint from one of them brought on additional beating. They were allowed little food and even in feasting times they were thrown only scraps. They would have starved had they not appropriated roots and berries that they were ordered to gather for the tribe.

Both Olive and Mary Ann learned to understand and speak the Yavapai language. They were told that they would be slaves forever and would never return to their people. When their ragged dresses no longer held together, the girls, like the Indian women, wore skirts of closely woven bark.

In 1851 a party of Mohaves--five men and a chief's daughter--came to the village on a trading expedition. Seeing the Oatman sisters, they began bargaining for them. They offered two horses, two blankets and several pounds of beads. After haggling for some time, the greedy Yavapais accepted the offer and gave the girls to the Mohaves.

Once again Olive and Mary Ann were compelled to walk on a forced march. They traveled for ten or eleven days--about 300 miles--to the Mohave village on the Colorado River, somewhere in the area of what is now Needles.



At this village the situation changed somewhat. The Mohaves were less savage and not so intent on torture. The girls lived in the hut of the Chief, Espanesay, and, although they worked almost as hard as they had before, they were given more to eat and were beaten less. The Chief gave them each blankets, a garden plot and some wheat, corn, melon and vegetable seeds. Olive and Mary Ann were both tattooed with the tribal sign, five vertical lines from the lower lip to the bottom of the chin.

The drought of 1853 brought tragedy. The annual winter overflow of the Colorado failed and the Mohaves' crops dried up. Famine followed. Mary Ann along with many Indians died of starvation. She had always been a slight child and was never very strong. Olive, who occasionally was given a gruel of ground seed corn by the Chief's wife, survived the ordeal.

**D**uring the five years of Olive's captivity Lorenzo clung to the hope that his sisters were alive. When the first efforts to find them failed, everyone concluded that further search would be futile. There were few whites known to have survived capture by the Apaches. For some time the Yuma Indians, after a surprise attack, occupied Fort Yuma and there was no force of men to continue the search. Lorenzo had gone to San Francisco with Dr. Hewitt and for three years he remained there trying to devise a plan of rescue. Journeys into the northern and southern wildernesses were unsuccessful. Although he received sympathy, he was unable to get financial assistance.

In 1855 a carpenter in the Pima village, known to the Indians as "Carpintero," took an interest in the case and began questioning emigrants and Indians for news of the girls. In 1856 an Apache named Francisco came to him and asked: "Carpintero, why is this you say so much about two Americanos among the Indians?"

Carpintero told him that the whites well knew of the existence of the girls and would surely make war upon the Indians unless they gave up their captives. Reading to Francisco from the *Los Angeles Star*, he translated an appeal made by Lorenzo. At the conclusion of the article he shrewdly continued, giving the appearance of reading, with the statement that a vast army was being prepared to annihilate the Mohaves and all tribes who aided them in hiding the captives. Francisco was concerned and impressed. "You give me four blankets and some beads," he said, "and I will bring them in just twenty days." The goods were granted to him and he departed.

When he arrived in the Mohave village his news caused a great turmoil and agitation. Olive was spirited away into another part of the valley. Francisco pressed for her release but the Mohaves refused to surrender her and ordered him to leave. This he did but was accompanied by several chiefs, and, across the river from the village, he continued his pleading. Eventually the chiefs, swayed by his threats, asked him to return to the village and said they would do all they could to convince the council. A second meeting was called and Olive, her skin stained dark, was permitted to attend although the Mohaves forbade her to speak. They told Francisco that she was an Indian from a distant tribe. Defying their commands, Olive spoke and told him who she was. Francisco leaped to his feet in fury. He told them emphatically that the whites knew she was there and they would destroy the Mohaves and the Yumas if she were not released. He added that the Yumas had fought the Americanos for many months and they found they were more powerful than all the Indian tribes. He insisted the Mohaves were not only endangering their own lives but also the lives of the Yumas by their treachery. The Indians were sufficiently cowed. After another night of deliberation they decided to release her. There were few preparations to make. Francisco and Olive were given a little food and they set out accompanied by the Indians who had come with Francisco and the

daughter of the Chief who was sent to the fort to bring back a horse, an additional gift promised to the Mohaves by Francisco. On the twentieth day, as promised, they arrived back at the fort.

Olive, dressed only in her bark skirt, threw herself on the ground to cover her nakedness. She remained there in the dirt until clothing, given by the officers' wives, was brought to her. She could remember only a few words of English and was completely overcome with emotion. The men cheered, cannons were set off and even the Yumas visiting the fort whooped shrilly. With her torturous captivity at an end, it must have been almost more than Olive could bear. When she was told that Lorenzo whom she had thought was dead was still alive and that he had not ceased in his efforts to find her, she was almost overwhelmed with gratitude. Her last sight of him had

been when the Indians had hurled him over the bluff. That he had escaped death was almost unbelievable to the emotionally shattered Olive. Ten days later, summoned by the commanding officer, Lorenzo arrived at the fort. After five years of despair and uncertainty, at last, surrounded by friends, they were reunited.

#### P O S T S C R I P T

In June 1856 Lorenzo and Olive were taken to the home of their cousin, Harvey Oatman, in the Rogue River Valley. Olive stayed with Stephen P. and Abigail Taylor (*Table Rock Sentinel*, Vol. 2, No. 1) in Phoenix. Abigail's daughter retaught her to read and write and Abigail taught her to sew. Mrs. Elva Wheeler, a granddaughter of the Taylors, wrote in her memoirs that Olive sometimes paced the floor for hours, weeping. "They could hear her all night. Just pacing the floor. Well, the Indians matrons ... said that her tattoo meant that she belonged to some Indian. But she never told and they thought it just possible that she had left an Indian child behind, but she never told." An article in *Arizona Highways* emphatically denies this allegation.

In 1857 both Lorenzo and Olive enrolled in the University of the Pacific at Santa Clara. The Reverend R. B. Stratton, a close friend, wrote a graphic account of Olive's ordeal. The volume had a wide sale and was printed in several editions. Lorenzo returned to Illinois where he married and had a family. After attending university in Albany, New York, Olive went on a lecture tour and spoke of her experiences in order to raise funds for churches and to publicize Stratton's book.

In 1865, after she retired from making public appearances, she married John Brant Fairchild in Rochester, New York. They eventually moved to Sherman, Texas, where Olive died in 1903 at the age of sixty-five. For years she had been a faithful member of the Episcopal Presbyterian church and was greatly loved and deeply respected by all who knew her.



LORENZO OATMAN

*The distortion on his head is apparently a permanent result of his cruel clubbing at the hands of the Yavapai Indians.*

## Centerfold and Cover Photographs

The two large brick buildings in the centerfold photograph were located at the corner of Main and Central Streets in Medford. The structure at the right, the Oddfellows building, was built on the site of the present Mini Park. The building on the left is the Angle and Plymale Opera House. A small theater on the second floor provided an auditorium for traveling players. In the book, *Trouping in the Oregon Country*, the author writes: "The tiny Angle Opera House, lighted by gas, with a stage described by oldtimers as 'the size of a row boat,' drew avid patrons. Even lurid melodramas with such titles as *The Devil* could fill its hard seats." This theater eventually gave way to the Wilson Opera House built around 1888 which in turn was replaced early in the century by the Page Theater.

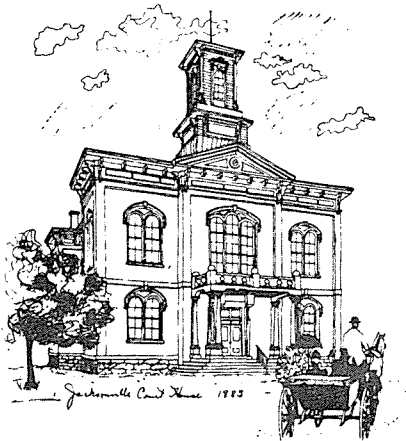
Compared with the ornate and elaborate valentines produced in an earlier and more sentimental age, the one on the cover is almost stark in its simplicity. It was selected because the artist has presented his idea of how an aeroplane should be designed. It has curved bird-like wings and a long fish-like tail, both logical and functional features. The valentine is lined with tissue-thin red celluloid. No, not plastic. Celluloid. The SOHS photographer, Doug Smith, in arranging this still life picture, has gone above and beyond the call of duty.

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### THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM ■ CHILDREN'S MUSEUM ■ BEEKMAN HOUSE ■ BEEKMAN BANK  
ARMSTRONG HOUSE ■ CATHOLIC RECTORY ■ ROGUE RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY STATION  
U.S. HOTEL ■ RESEARCH LIBRARY ■ MUSEUM SHOP

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## Museum Performers Receive Grant

Elizabeth Vickerman, Project Director of the Jacksonville Museum Performers, recently received official notification that the group has been awarded a grant from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities, a division of the National Endowment. The award will be used to defray operational expenses for the development and production of the presentation, "The Influence of Pioneer Women in Jackson County," original adaptations of local historic incidents. To highlight these dramatizations Dr. Edwin H. Bingham, a member of the history department at the University of Oregon and Project Consultant for this grant, will narrate the program and relate the influences and impact of these women upon the community.