

3/84

# THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# Director's Corner

Here he is!

Nick Clark, SOHS's first Development Director, arrived in Jacksonville on February 21, having driven 2,600 miles through one of the year's worst snow storms. He comes from Green Bay, Wisconsin, where for the last four years he has been the Director and Development Officer with Heritage Hill State Park. This park is actually a 55 acre complex where 19 historical buildings have been relocated and restored.

Mr. Clark will supervise all fund raising activities and will act as our public relations officer. He will also work with Maureen Smith, Membership Secretary, in determining ways to enlarge our membership list. With an extensive background in the development of promotional publications, he will be able to contribute some much needed professional experience to our program.

His new office is in the Armstrong House at the corner of South Sixth and California Streets--just across the road from the Presbyterian Church. Since he will have to wait for some time for the installation of his telephone line, callers may leave messages for him at our switch board number -- 899-1847.

Members of the Society will receive a letter from Nick after he has put his new office in order and has determined his initial course of action. In the meantime, send him any suggestions you may have about his new department. He will welcome all ideas from our members.

Bill Burk



Nick Clark

## ANNOUNCEMENT

ELIZABETH VICKERMAN, director of the Jacksonville Museum performers, announces the production of an exciting new play written by Ilene Hull of the Museum staff. The original work is a drama entitled "The Stand-off at Thistle Criik"; the scene of the action is southern Oregon.

The program will be presented at the U.S. Hotel ballroom at 7:30 P.M. on April 21. Members of the Society and the public are cordially invited.



The little girl in the cover photograph is Maud Prim. Her parents were Charles Prim and Effie Bybee Prim. Circuit Judge Paine Page Prim was her grandfather. It is a Britt photograph.



### THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# FIVE GENERATIONS OF THE GORE FAMILY

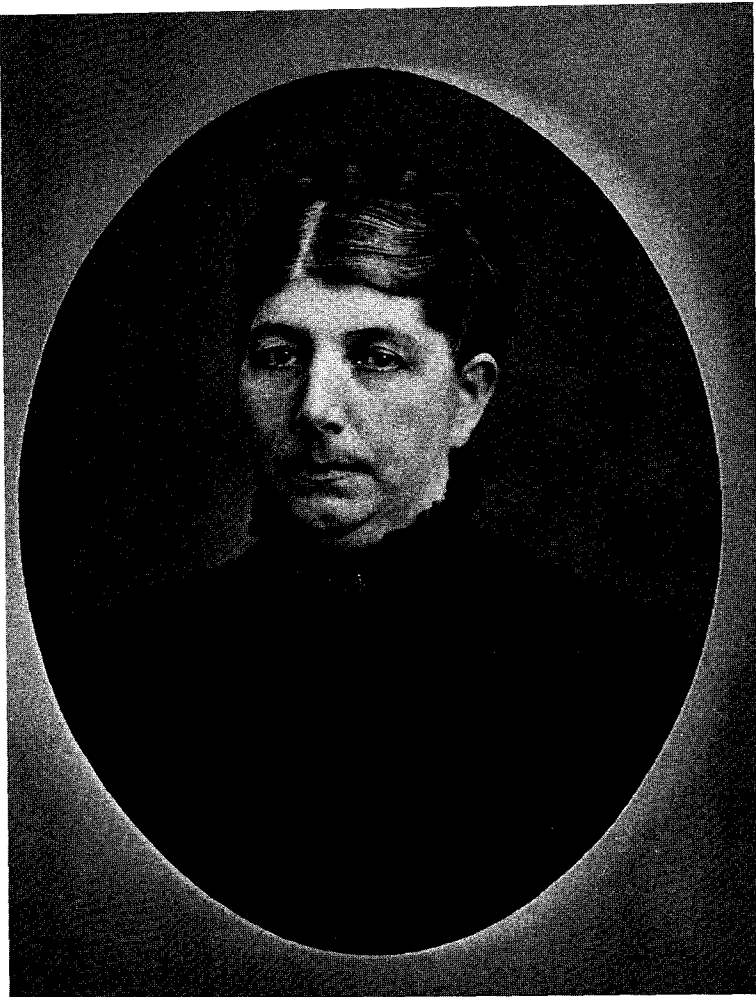
JAY GORE'S DAUGHTER, ELINOR GORE BUCHANAN, WHO HAS DONE EXTENSIVE RESEARCH OF HER FAMILY, MADE MANY, MANY TAPE RECORDINGS OF CONVERSATIONS WITH JAY AND OTHERS. THE PORTRAIT, DRAWN IN THIS STORY, OF WILLIAM GORE IS LARGELY DEVELOPED FROM STATEMENTS MADE BY JAY GORE. IN ALL FAIRNESS, WILLIAM SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN EQUAL TIME TO DEFEND HIMSELF, BUT HIS ONLY AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY PRESENTS ONLY HIS VIRTUES AND TENDS TO DEIFY HIM. THE TRUTH, OF COURSE, ABOUT WILLIAM GORE IS SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN.

## 3. JAY GORE

**W**hen Jay Gore was born on April 27, 1894, he appeared to have unlimited advantages. Here was a beautiful, sturdy baby, secure in the adoration of his parents, the promise of future wealth and prestige, and the gift of exceptional artistic capabilities. Along with these endowments, he was the

offspring of two great family lines. He couldn't escape success.

**B**elow the surface of the pretty picture there was a far different situation. His mother, Sophenia, was a dotting parent only as long as Jay stayed tidy and doll-like in his



*Aunt Sally*

embroidered dresses and emulated the insipid cherubs in the ladies' magazines. When he grew fretful or no longer smelled of violet sachet, he was handed over to his step-grandma, Aunt Sally, who loved him in any state or condition. His father, William Gore, busy with the management of the farm and just beginning to take an active role in Medford's community affairs, was indifferent to the child. Precocious and affectionate, Jay soon learned that his Aunt Sally and his Grandfather Gore were his staunch supporters and the only ones who really loved him.

**H**is early years were not altogether unpleasant; farm life has its compensations. It is a wholesome place and activities can be exciting and challenging on a ranch--especially the Ish\* ranch of 5,000 acres which extended from the Jacksonville

\* The Ish name, Pennsylvania Dutch, was originally spelled Isch. It was customary for slaves to take the names of their owners and when all the slaves became Isch, Jacob Isch changed his name to Ish -- a little bit of early southern snobbery.

highway through what is now White City and included the present site of the Medford Air Port. At times there were as many as 36 horses in the pastures, and often there were 60 hired hands living at the ranch. There might be as many as 18,000 head of cattle to be branded, rounded up and taken to market\*\* and there were no end of chores to be done. A boy on such a large farm would find little time for mischief.

Jay soon discovered that his father's temper was unpredictable and dangerous, and when William was in a rage, it was wise to be invisible or behind Aunt Sally's voluminous skirts. But sometimes, if he had inadvertently brought on his father's wrath, even she couldn't save him from a cruel beating with the leather harness strap which left marks on his body and his psyche as well. Sophenia, still besotted by her passion for her handsome husband, offered no protection and, in fact, often displayed her own ominous irascibility.

In September, 1897, Mary, Jay's sister, was born. A little girl was more to Sophenia's liking; Mary would be dainty and clever, she'd play with exquisite dolls and she wouldn't get her elegant outfits mussed and soiled as did the scruffy Jay. Adorned with ribbons and laces and tucked under baby pink satin coverlets, Mary was soon put on display for friends and neighbors as William and Sophenia did their proud parents act.

But Mary's arrival made no dent in the deep affection that Aunt Sally had for her step-grandson. Jay had become her purpose and her zest for living. She indulged his slightest whim and planned his future. When he revealed a fascination for guns and shooting, she gave him a double-barreled 16 gauge shotgun--not exactly an approved gift for a small boy even then--and taught him how to shoot it. Perhaps her generosity and favor sprang from her awareness that William

\*\* For storing beef to be used by the household the Ish farm had two large ice chests and a refrigeration system which had been acquired from a morgue. This heavy, bulky equipment was brought in on a spur, temporarily constructed from the Jacksonville railroad line just for this purpose. Jay remembered how Aunt Sally, in selecting beef for dinner, would put on a shawl, enter the morgue compartment, select some large choice cuts and using her canes, point out her selections to the kitchen helper who would cut them off and deliver them to the Chinese cook.

Gore had little affection for his son as well as from her desire to protect the boy from the brutal whippings which William often administered in white anger.

Grandfather Emerson Gore, like Aunt Sally, also found Jay an exceptionally engaging child. He seems to have sensed Jay's need for loving attention and he was openly critical of William's disciplinary methods. A frequent visitor at the Ish ranch, he often invited Jay to stay with him at the Gore home. Much to the youngster's rapt fascination, Emerson Gore was an adroit amateur magician. Somewhere along the years from his early childhood in Ohio to his ultimate settling down with his large family in Phoenix, Oregon, he had made a hobby of magic acts and sleight of hand and had mastered many intricate and astonishing tricks. His repertoire included a full series of illusions and he was able to give a complete evening's entertainment for friends. Jay, from the age of three, was entirely enraptured with the tricks. He begged his grandfather to teach him to do them, and Emerson, pleased by the youngster's interest, methodically explained and taught each step of his maneuvers. Jay was an apt pupil and with dedicated practice became proficient in duplicating his grandfather's entire program.

William Gore saw magic as an amusing pastime and was not averse to the boy's appearing before guests for their entertainment. Thoroughly scrubbed and dressed in his best, Jay was surely an appealing little boy as, in deep concentration, he expertly manipulated Grandfather Gore's bag of tricks.

Sophenia and William couldn't help but be proud of his poise and his grace, and the magic was just about the only thing Jay managed to do that William did not dub a failure. Aunt Sally, of course, was proud and delighted with anything Jay did.

Virtually obsessed with magic and magicians, he pursued every opportunity to discover new illusions. He impatiently waited for touring circuses and carnivals to play Medford, and was the first in line to watch as the tents were set up and the gayway was formed. He haunted the magicians' concessions and studied any unfamiliar routines.

Aunt Sally, realizing he would only be happy with professional training, investigated the field of magic. She discovered that there was a training school in Victoria, British Columbia, and that L.B. McLaine, the owner and director, was considered one of the best teachers on the west coast--in fact, he has been called "one of the three greats." Arrangements were made for Jay to attend, and when the Oak Grove grade school was dismissed for summer vacation, Aunt Sally took him to British Columbia and enrolled him in McLaine's boarding school for a three months' term. The course was serious and thorough, methodically and academically presented. The pupils acquired extensive repertoires, skills in pantomime, humorous patter and theatrical techniques and learned to make their own tools and stage props.

Jay was only seven years old when he registered in the school at Victoria, but from the very first McLaine gave him special training and individual attention. As the small boy, so deeply intent and serious, skillfully performed several of the acts he had learned from Grandfather Gore, McLaine saw at once that he possessed extraordinary charm and style and soon began planning a bright future for him. Jay attended classes at the British Columbia school for several summers--possibly as many as ten--and he and McLaine became steadfast friends, maintaining a warm relationship for many years.

Under his tutelage, Jay developed into a complete professional. His programs included unique acts which he had invented as well as the best from the repertoires of others. He worked with a dummy in a ventroloquist routine and he kept a menagerie of animals and birds--even some snakes--for disappearances. As he eloquently recited. "Let me live in a house by the side of the road," he produced, in steps, a landscape made of colored velvet cut into geometric figures. His acts had great appeal to audiences of the time. His stage equipment was elegant and flashy and his performances had speed, taste and polish. His stage name was "Moraine," a title which he had invented. "It was simply Moraine, not *Professor* Moraine," he said. "Whenever some fellow learned to do a couple of tricks, he suddenly became

'Professor.' I wanted to be different so I was just plain Moraine." His public appearances were always enthusiastically received and he earned a reputation of some stature among professionals.

In spite of Jay's pronounced success, William and Sophenia seem never to have considered a career for him as a magician. This was particularly strange in consideration of the fact that The Great Harry Houdini and Madame Houdini who had become friends of the family, were often guests at the Gore ranch.\* Houdini certainly had prestige a'plenty and association with him was an honor. Yet other magicians were of the theater, and theater people were, well, you know, not too fastidious, and certainly not at the top of the social ladder, no matter how successful they might have been in their profession. If this attitude appears provincial, why, no one has made the assertion that Presbyterian Medford was *not* provincial. Along with the Bible Belt, southern Oregon was one of the last holdouts for the I'd-rather-see-my-daughter-dead-than-on-the-stage schools. Such a vocation was not for the son of William Gore. If the possibility that he might become a music hall performer ever arose, it was instantly dismissed and Jay, thoroughly indoctrinated that William's word was law and not to be questioned, would certainly not have pushed the point. Sleight of hand was to be a profitable social hobby and nothing more. End of debate.

In 1910 Jay was dealt a double tragedy: during that year both Aunt Sally and his grandfather, Emerson Gore, died. Jay was fourteen, at a difficult age, and he suddenly found himself without an anchor and with no one to give him direction. He was fortunate to have had for so long the affectionate guidance and the spiritual examples of the two people who loved him so deeply. Their lessons stayed with him for the rest of his life although he later floundered from time to time as he searched for a purpose.

After a year or two in attendance at the Washington Elementary School

\* Houdini was the master of spectacular escapes. He had not concentrated on sleight of hand and during his visits to southern Oregon, Jay became the entertainer.



*Sophenia Ish Gore*

he entered Medford High School in 1910 and was a popular and successful student. When asked to perform at school functions he always accepted and seldom duplicated his material.\*\* At the same time he appeared in civic benefits and public entertainments. Liberta Gore, his cousin, whom he sometimes excorted to parties as his date for the evening, remembers him as a handsome, personable young man with exceptionally courteous manners. She said the other girls envied her and she was always proud and happy to go with him.

In 1915 Jay entered the University of Oregon at Eugene. He was twenty-two, a year or two older than most college freshmen so he must have spent at least a year working on the ranch after his graduation from high school. At college he joined Sigma Chi and almost at once found himself in great demand for college and community programs. He was paid \$15 for a performance. L.B. McLaine insisted the fee should be \$25, but Jay was modest in his demands and, at that time, there was no shortage of money in William Gore's

\*\* For several years after Aunt Sally's death, Jay continued to attend summer sessions at the Victoria school. McLaine made special appeals to William Gore to permit his son to attend and William, apparently not especially concerned one way or the other, gave his consent. "He'd hand me \$100 for my summer's expenses," Jay said, "and send me on my way."



accounts. Jay helped defray a great many of his college expenses.

Back at home Mary had entered high school. Although she had been favored and given far gentler treatment than Jay, she had trouble making friends. Mrs. Lorena Leach, who attended high school with her, said, "Everyone tried to be friendly with Mary, but she was stand-offish, as if she felt she was better than her classmates." She was plagued with a heavy crush on her history teacher, Professor Pratt, "and," said Mrs. Leach, "he appeared to be more than interested in her, but her parents thought a history teacher wasn't important enough to keep company with so prominent a young lady as Mary Gore." Mary also stood apart from other girls because of her fussy apparel. In the early 1920s when young ladies were beginning to throw off the traditions of long skirts and fripperies for a more boyish, tailored look, Mary was be-rib-boned, ruffled and flounced from the top of her frizzled hair to her shoes. Jay was a product of too little attention; Mary, a sad example of too much.

**B**y 1917 America was deluged with war propaganda. There was a feeling of urgency everywhere. In the cities noisy paraders marched down Main Street exhorting the youth to heed the call to arms; people flocked to the public squares to join in Victory Bond drives, and military bands continually blared out "Over There." Patriotism soared as never before. When Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks cried out, "Buy bonds," America bought bonds, and the eager young men surged to the recruiting stations. University was no place for a red blooded young fellow. To do his share in making the world safe for democracy, Jay enlisted in the army in June, 1917. He was 23. Like the others he must have thought the Kaiser would soon be stepped on and the whole experience would prove to be a great lark, with the boys coming home in no time to resume their lives where they had left them. But his military experience was to prove to be a great tragedy for Jay; he was never again the same.

After his basic training, he entered the Ambulance Corps, No. 361, attached to the 91st Division. Although he had

acquired expert mechanical skills repairing heavy equipment and machines on the ranch, after a stint as an ambulance mechanic, he was transferred to the Officers' Training Corps, Machine Gunnery Division, at Camp Lewis, Washington. Here army VIPs learned of his talent for magic and, in the evenings, when he was not in training, he was asked to give shows for army personnel. L.B. McLaine, who had himself spent years in the army, knew that Jay would be expected to perform, and he helped him select a program of some of his best tricks and packed his equipment so it could be easily transported from place to place. Jay performed from a "side stand," a box-like structure about eight feet square, which was used for various purposes at every army camp. At Fort Lewis the officers, enthusiastic about his ability, provided a cover for the side stand. It was made of heavy green velvet and trimmed with gold braid and tassels, and the officers gave it to him in appreciation. He was much in demand; many times he had a waiting list of eight to ten camps and, as the Army paid him extra for his work, he managed to acquire an impressive savings account.

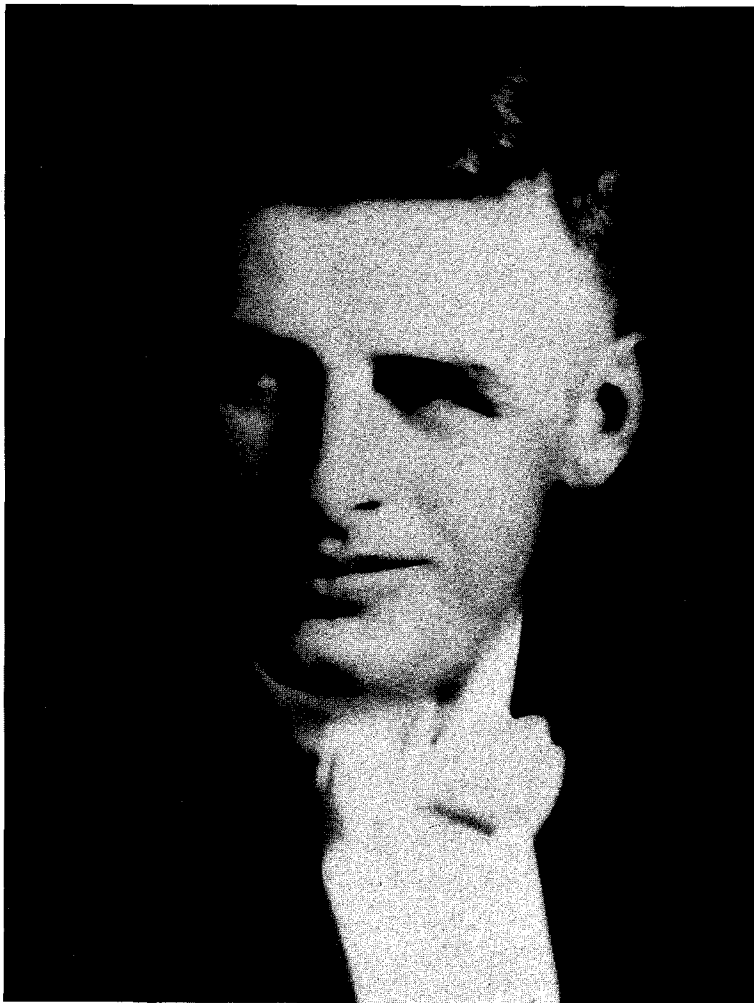
Eventually he was sent to Camp Haverstock, Georgia, to the Central Machine Gun Officers' Training School. Shortly after his enlistment he began having health problems which he had not experienced before. His stomach troubled him, and he was frequently sent to the base hospital for nervous indigestion and related problems. He seems to have become accident prone and received several injuries which continued to vex him. He had a serious siege with mumps which left him in a weakened condition, and at gunnery drill he suffered a serious and painful injury to his spine which made strenuous activity a torture to him. When he was able to move, he was transferred to Camp Logan, Texas, and at that base, during artillery practice, the appallingly accidental firing of guns near his head critically injured his eardrums, causing an eighty per cent loss of his hearing, a disastrous condition which remained with him for the rest of his life.

As a crowning caprice of fate, in December, 1918, he was stricken with acute appendicitis. His emergency operation could scarcely have been proclaimed an unqualified success. The incision became

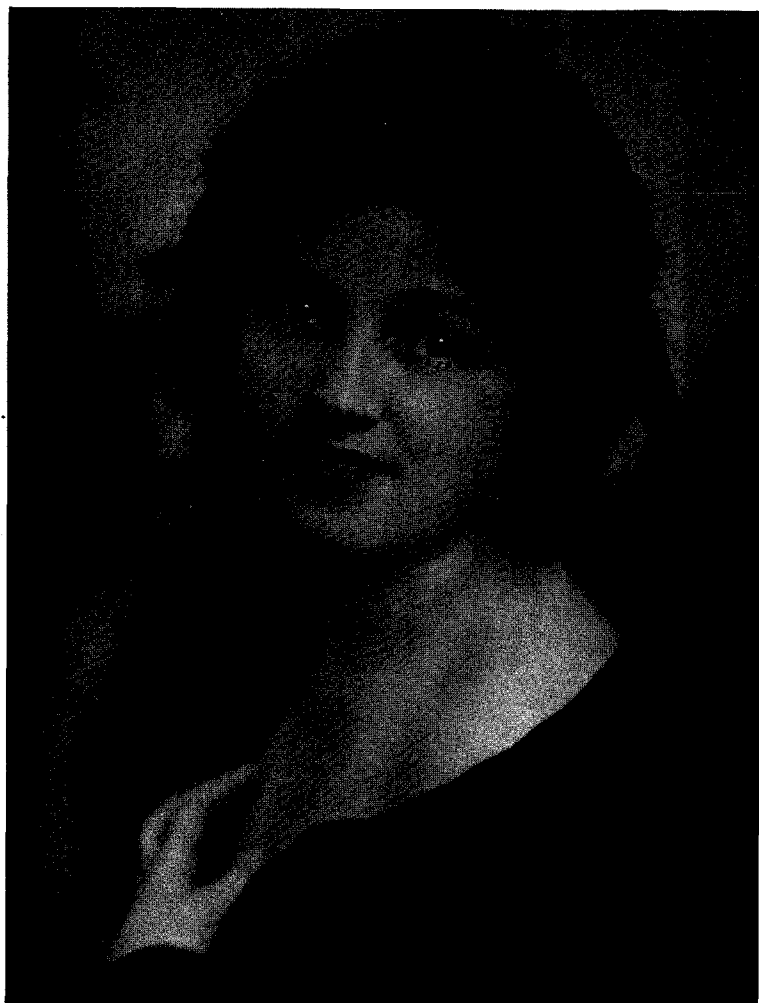
abscessed and failed to heal, and in 1918 there was little medication available to fight infection. As his condition became weaker, he developed pneumonia and his physicians feared for his life. At last however his operation scar healed--badly--and the army doctors, realizing that he had had it as far as active soldiering was concerned, gave him an honorable discharge. He was rated as a Second Lieutenant, Infantry, and mustered out. "My father,"

he said, "came to Texas to get me and took me home more dead than alive."

During his months of convalescence, when he was able, he worked on his magic. Years earlier he had made a shop in William Gore's garage and now he began tooling many of his tricks and working on new ones. As he grew stronger he accepted more and more engagements and by 1920 he was once again involved in giving magic shows around southern Oregon and northern California.



*Jay Gore*



*Gertrude Moore*

## GERTRUDE

**I**n 1921 the Andrews Opera Company, on annual tour, appeared in Medford in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*. Jay was in the audience. Always fascinated by theater folk and well aware of the significance of compliments to an artist, he went backstage to chat with the cast. Among the performers was Dorothy Dial, the petite singer who appeared as one of the three little maids from school. Dressed in her becoming

costume and headdress, delightfully charming by nature and displaying the gloss of a professional player, she at once won him over completely. He sought out Ed Andrews, the maestro in charge, and asked that he hire Jay as a "fill-in" magician between the acts. Andrews, a master showman, realized an entr'acte speciality would add a bit of dash to the evening's performance and agreed to try him out. Jay remained with the company throughout



the entire tour, and at the end of the season, he and Dorothy Dial were deeply in love.

The name, Dorothy Dial, was a stage name. Although Jay always called her Dorothy, she was born Gertrude Moore in LaGrande, Oregon, and had lived there, a member of a large family, until she was eighteen. At that time, her father, who had worked for the railroad almost thirty years, was suddenly laid off. In 1912 there was no unemployment compensation and the overlords of the railroad offered no benevolent retirement benefits to those who were summarily discharged after three decades of service. The loss of his job and the termination of his salary at an age when he could find no other position, left the father unable to keep his sizable family together. Gertrude (Dorothy), then eighteen, and her older brothers left home to be on their own. Having studied piano, Gertrude played for the silent movie houses and worked as an aide in the LaGrande school system.

After a few years she gravitated to Seattle where she continued in the same types of jobs, but where the pay was better. Eventually her mother, Maude, tired of the struggle to survive on nothing and the futility of trying to cope with a bitter, defeated husband, left him, and with her younger children, also moved to Seattle where she found a position as manager of a Chinese boarding house near the University of Washington. Gertrude, no longer obliged to help her family financially, was able to enter the university where she majored in education and music. Her studies included formal lessons in singing.

She had managed to complete two years of college when she decided to audition for Ed Andrews of the Andrews Opera Company. Andrews, acting impresario, was organizing a troop of players to go on tour, presenting the more familiar Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Gertrude was chosen out of almost 300 applicants and began her professional career. She had been with the company for two years when the Page Theater management booked the troop for a showing of the *Mikado*. Dorothy Dial appeared as Yum Yum and in that role first attracted young Jay Gore.

A clipping from the *Tribune* announced:

#### J. GORE MARRIES SEATTLE GIRL

##### AT ROSE CITY SUNDAY

On November 11, 1922, in the presence of friends and relatives, Jay I. Gore, a well-known and popular young man of this city, and Miss Dorothy Dial of Seattle were married.

The wedding came as a surprise to the many friends of the groom, who had told no one of his matrimonial plans except his relatives.

Miss Dial has resided in Seattle for a number of years, is a talented musician and vocalist and an attractive young lady of marked talents.

The newlyweds will make their home in a new bungalow recently erected on the Gore ranch, west of this city.

How nice. A new little cottage just for Jay and Gertrude and right next door to the parents of the groom. What could have been more agreeable? Almost anything. They would have been better off in a puppet in the Sahara. Instead of having discovered a latent love for their son, William and Sophenia wanted him to be near them so he could be useful to them. The little house was built and presented to the newlyweds not for affection but for exploitation.

Jay became superintendent of the ranch. He would, of course, eventually inherit half of it, and his apprenticeship as an overseer was long overdue. In addition William Gore had become widely involved in community affairs, politics and speculation. He no longer had time to do more on the ranch than issue commands.

Through the years William and Jay Gore's relationship had fallen into a pattern. Jay tried earnestly to do as his father wanted, but William was seldom satisfied with the results. They both had pre-concluded that Jay's endeavors would end in failure, but they invariably fought violently over the outcome. William continued to make new demands for perfection and Jay continued to fall short of the realization. At the same time William repeatedly dinged away at the contention that Jay was *doomed* to fail and could never make it on his own away from the ranch and his parents' supervision. Jay himself was convinced of this judgment.

For the first few years of Jay's marriage the situation developed into an uneasy truce. Gertrude occasionally went next door to help Sophenia and Mary tend the kitchen garden or to assist with other household chores. Jay and William cooled it--on the surface at least--and the arrangement appeared to a casual visitor to be a pleasant, warm

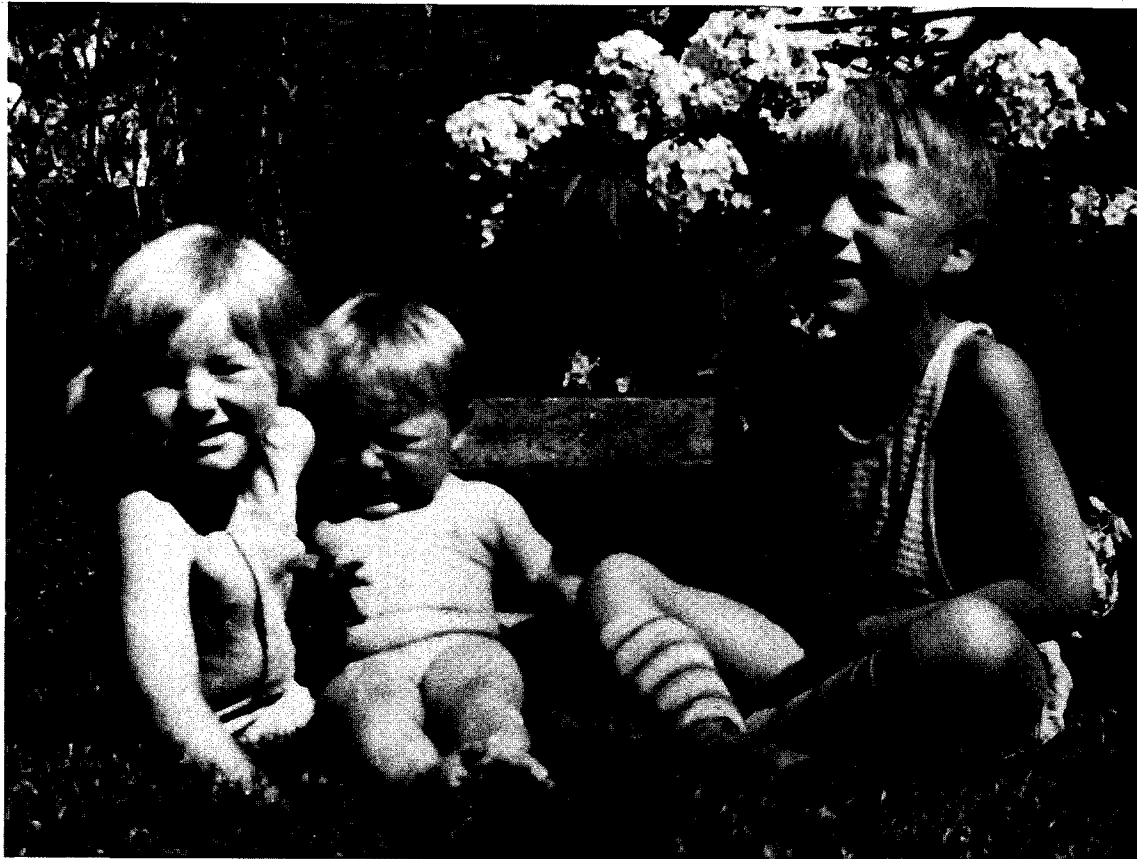
family relationship.

After their move to southern Oregon, Jay and Gertrude, both apparently missing the excitement of the theater, had arranged a program, a full evening's entertainment, which included magic and vocal and instrumental selections. From his early boyhood Jay had displayed outstanding aptitude in playing several instruments --he was particularly adept on the French horn--and their presentation was varied and professional. They were in great demand by community organizations and they pleased nearly everyone--except William and Sophenia. It was all well and good for a fellow to demonstrate his hobby in public, but Gertrude's appearance *on the stage* was not exactly what you would expect of your daughter-in-law. A one-night amateur performance for a worthy charity was one thing, but frequent appearances for money--from friends and neighbors--was quite another. It revealed a theatrical cheapness and boldness unbecoming to a lady. This was the first tangible wedge of dis-sension among the members of the Gore

family.

In 1924 Jay and Gertrude had their first child, a boy, William Jay. The proud father decided at once to make him a magician and could hardly wait for him to get old enough so he could begin his basic instruction. When William Jay was two, a sister, Elinor, was born. She was named for Mrs. Ella Hanley Bush, a neighbor, who had become fond of Gertrude.

By 1924 the marriage had lost its luster. There were discordant influences chipping away, both internally and externally. The ceaseless bickering began again between Jay and William, and Jay was in an ill humor much of the time. Gertrude was not able to deal with his irritability. They quarrelled habitually about his acceptance of his parents' tyranny in dictating what he should do and when he should do it. Sophenia, like many--all?--women, possessed a flair for making catty little barbs about other women, and when she delivered a sarcastically biting remark about Gertrude, Jay let it stand and offered no contradictions. Sophenia's continued belittling couldn't help but influence Jay's attitude.



*Elinor, Jimmy Maurice and William Jay*

Several friends of the family failed to include Gertrude in social invitations because she had been an actress and her background was suspect. Ella Hanley Bush, whose sympathies were with Gertrude, often urged her to leave the ranch. When Gertrude implored Jay to make the break, he wouldn't consider a move because he couldn't overcome his fear that he would be unable to survive away from home.

Few marriages could withstand such perpetual undermining, and the love between Jay and Gertrude crumbled under the attacks. Their fighting became constant and violent, and Jay sought comfort in bootleg whiskey which compounded the disastrous situation. At times he became physically brutal and in a drunken state struck her, leaving ugly bruises and indelible resentment.

In July, 1928, a third child, Jimmy, was born. The arrival of an unwanted baby, conceived in angry passion, could do nothing to halt the dissolution of the marriage.

William and Sophenia abruptly changed their tactics. They began wooing Jay with expensive gifts and entreated him to come back home so they could once again be a complete family. Sophenia held small dinner parties and invited girls whom Jay had dated before his marriage. Gertrude did not attend these social evenings; she stayed at home with her children. Melba Williams, an attractive young lady who taught in Medford and whom Jay had first met at the university was invariably among the guests. When asked, years later, if he had actually been unfaithful to Gertrude during this period, he said, "Oh, brother!"

Why Jay didn't question the motives behind the sudden change in his parents' attitude is a puzzle. Perhaps he had longed for their approval so desperately that he clung to a pretense of it. Patterns established in childhood go deep. He had been conditioned that William's and Sophenia's wishes were commands and he may have gone along with the charade without actually thinking of reasons and consequences. But go along with it he did and moved back to his old room leaving Gertrude and the children to look after themselves.

At last Gertrude accepted the truth that the love affair had played out. If Jay hadn't been so subservient, but he

was; if he hadn't been such a spineless puppet, but he was; if they had never come to the ranch, but they had. She bundled up her children, left the cottage and moved in with Mrs. Bush.

In January, 1930, she sued Jay for \$150 per month maintenance and William and Sophenia for \$50,000, alienation of Jay's affections.

On January 21 Jay acceded to the plea because "the couple could no longer abide together." Gertrude was granted custody of the children with the provision Jay might visit them. The *Tribune* reported: "Jay Gore is willing to provide support up to \$75 per month and further sets forth that his earning capacity is \$30 per week and he has no other resources.

"In the alienation action, subpoenas were served last night by Sheriff Ralph Jennings upon the elder Gores demanding they present in court [affidavits of their financial standing], their wills, receipts for recent gifts to Jay and any photographs or letters received by them from Miss Melba Williams."

The headlines in the *Tribune* for March 11 announced: "Mrs. Gore Given \$100 per Month As Maintenance." Since the decision was based on Jay's financial ability to pay, the judge must have decided that one who lived on the most successful farm in the county, could easily get by each month on a twenty dollar bill. There is little wonder that Jay soon began collecting distillation equipment in order to enter into a little private enterprise of his own on a remote section of the ranch.

On March 30 headlines declared:

MRS. GORE SUIT  
FOR LOST LOVE  
OPENS MONDAY

Mrs. Gertrude M. Gore, in her suit, alleges that the parents of her husband, by gifts and other means, caused him to turn from her, and further alleges that the parents encouraged an affair with Melba Williams...who is also named in the action.

...The defense will be represented by Attorney A.E. Reames and George M. Roberts, and the plaintiff by Attorney O.M. Wilkins of Ashland.

Among the witnesses scheduled to be called are three University of Oregon coeds, and the plaintiff is also expected to introduce as evidence, hotel registers and letters.

A special venire for the trial has been drawn as follows:

Miles Cantrall, Ruch  
W.E. Pierson, Ashland  
Elizabeth Burger, Central Point  
Floyd F. Whittle, Ashland  
Harold D. Grey, Medford

R.E. Koozer, Medford  
Jas. H. Cook, Ashland  
Jesse Neil, Ashland  
Henry A. Meyer, Lake Creek  
J. Frank Hendricks, Ashland  
Minnie Bell Bellinger, Medford  
E.R. Santo, Medford  
J.J. Steiger, Medford

Gertrude's probing into William Gore's financial standing, her search for witnesses to Jay's infidelity, and her collection of statements from hotel keepers all of which made up her most effective evidence were ruled out by Judge H.N. Norton as "foreign to the matter at issue." The story appeared in the April 1 *Tribune*:

MARITAL WOES  
TOLD ON STAND  
BY MRS. GORE

...Under direct quotation, Mrs. Gore recited protestations against the alleged invasion of Melba Williams, former local music teacher, into her home life.

..The plaintiff told of asserted beatings administered to her by her mate. She declared they were frequent.

She testified Jay Gore said, in these violent scenes, "Honey, I hate to do this, but Mama and Papa say it is the only way to get rid of you, and you've got to go." Then she said she would be felled with blows, and kicked as she lay upon the floor.

KIND AT TIMES

She also testified that at times her husband was kind and gentle, and testified, by inference, that after visits with her parents he was abusive and "struck and beat and kicked and pounded me."

For the most part the younger Mrs. Gore sat facing the jury, speaking in a low, calm voice, but several times her voice rose, and she nearly shouted. On another occasion she wept for a moment.

She testified that Melba Williams was the favored guest at the birthday party for Jay Gore held Saturday, April 27, last, and that the attitude of the elder Gores towards herself was cold.

"Mr. W.H. Gore grunted at me, and curled his lip, when I entered, and Mrs. W.H. Gore approved his attitude," the witness declared.

The witness testified that she objected to her husband, to the attentions she averred he was paying Melba Williams, but received scant consolation. She said the charms and talents of Miss Williams were praised and her own belittled.

At the birthday party Miss Williams sat on the edge of the bed where Jay Gore was convalescing, which "hurt" the witness. She testified the elder Mrs. Gore invited Miss Williams "to come when you feel like it, as Jay likes to have you come and so do I, you sing so lovely."

ATTEND CONVENTION

She testified that when her husband went to the American Legion convention at Salem last August, when she asked to go along, Jay Gore said: "You can't go. Mama says I need the rest and you don't."

Mrs. Gore alleged her husband met Melba Williams upon this trip and when accused, admitted it, with the words: "It's none of your business and I have an alibi for every move I made." She alleges that her husband often told her, "I have another sweetie now."

...At the session yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Ella Hanley Bush was the chief witness. She told of her conversations with the elder Mrs. Gore, and visits to Jay when he was taking the "rest cure," and that she saw Melba Williams in the home of the elder Gores. She said Mrs. Gertrude M. Gore came to her home after the "break" in a hysterical state, and that she had signed notes for the prosecution of the present case.

April 3, *Medford Mail Tribune*

Granting of an involuntary non-suit in the alienation of affections suit of Mrs. Gertrude M. Gore against her husband's parents, W.H. Gore and Sophenia Ish Gore, brought to a close nearly three days of testimony and legal skirmishing... The court in granting the involuntary non-suit, declared there was an insufficiency of evidence upon which to base a damage suit, and that *no malice had been shown upon the part of the two defendants.*

A dozen or so depositions and copies of hotel registers were offered by the plaintiff, but their introduction as evidence was denied by rulings of the court. The plaintiff's attorney held inability to place this line of evidence in the records defeated his case.

The trial attracted wide attention throughout the county.

Gertrude's attacks on the Gore family served to unify them as nothing else had done. William, Sophenia Mary and Jay stood shoulder to shoulder through the litigation, defending their proud name against the common enemy. But when the clouds of the conflict had cleared away, and Gertrude, in defeat, had left southern Oregon never to return, the spirit of unity soon disintegrated and the quartet slid back into the familiar rut of dissention and anger.

Now, however, Jay had an additional bag of injuries to resent. With Gertrude and the children no longer around he realized he missed them keenly and belatedly awoke to the fact that he really cared for Gertrude with a profound, abiding love. The realization that he had destroyed his own happiness hit him with sudden shock, and self-blame and -loathing almost overwhelmed him.\* To ease the constant ache of guilt, he charged Sophenia and William with conning him into betraying his beloved Gertrude. Even Mary was included in his censure; she had done nothing to prevent the tragedy, and Ella Hanley Bush had instigated the final break.

\* Even in tape recording sessions as late as 1983, he couldn't talk of Gertrude without tears. "I don't see how she could have stood it," he said between sobs. "She had to take the dirtiest treatment of anyone I know. My God, what a brave heart."

When his daughter Elinor said, "I believe you must have really loved Mother," Jay, in a new burst of weeping, cried out, "I love her still!"

As he had often done with his other failures, he began drinking heavily. William Gore, too, had developed an affinity for the bottle and there were times when both of them were noisy and belligerent. Poor Sophenia. One lush underfoot makes life hell; putting up with two quarrelsome drunks is punishment past bearing. She probably resigned herself to the lame comfort that insobriety in one's men, was, like the pain of childbirth, woman's burden. Despite the periodic bouts of drinking, neither William nor Jay Gore was an alcoholic. They drank more in defiance of each other than in any long range dependence upon alcohol. It was readily available--Jay was bootlegging--and in times of crisis it was the prescribed panacea. During this time William Gore conducted business affairs with his usual charm and skill, and Jay took part in community activities. He presented a magic act as one-third of an annual lodge benefit program, continued to appear in public and became first French horn player in the Medford City Band.

But the relationship between Jay and his father continued to worsen. Ugly battles became more frequent and often took place before the hired hands. Jay and William clashed over the slightest decisions and when they weren't engaged in shouting matches, they coldly ignored each other. After a confrontation, when Jay had had too much to drink, he would sometimes bring out his guns and caress them. "I felt like killing him," he said later. "Once I put a gun on him, but I couldn't do it."

His fascination with fire arms grew into a mania. Daily practice at marksmanship with his Colt revolvers made him a dead shot. "I never missed," he said. "My draw was just a blur." He believed he had to keep on the alert against his unknown enemies who were "out to get him," and he was convinced that "someone had put a bounty" on him. He fantasized shooting his enemies "right out of their saddles." Perhaps the presence of Klan members who met secretly at the ranch at William's invitation, was responsible for this paranoia. The K.K.K. was sworn to get all bootleggers and Jay made no secret of his bootlegging activities. Perhaps his awareness of his own violent

thoughts led him to attribute the same capabilities to others. No matter what the cause, the mental alienation threatened a family tragedy.

On one occasion, after supper, when William and Jay were almost blind drunk, both brought out their pistols and placed them on the table between them, among the clutter and dirty dishes which the kitchen help, frightened by the display of rage, had not removed. With each pair of guns pointing malevolently across the table, and with neither man uttering a word, Jay and William Gore stared in hatred at each other as they drank steadily through the half-light of evening into the night. Their fury and resentment were deadlocked in time until, exhausted and insensible, they staggered to their beds. Jay said later, "If one of us had said just one wrong word, it would have been pow-pow, the end!"

In the face of steadily approaching disaster, Sophenia and Mary were terrorized. They realized that for their safety and sanity Jay must go. At last William was persuaded of the futility of continuing the unresolvable stalemate and he ordered Jay to leave the ranch.

Seething with anger, Jay prepared to go, but, at the same time, he was beset by abject fears. *Where* would he go? How could he exist without William and Sophenia? Would he starve? In what gutter would he end? A small boy in such a predicament might present a poignant figure, but Jay was 36 years old, a father of three children and a skilled magician, mechanic and rancher.

Bewildered and utterly demoralized he resolved never again to see William, Sophenia and Mary. The rift would be permanent. He would see to that.

## EVERYL

As a boy when Jay played French horn in local orchestras, he had often sat next to Paul Paulsereud, who also played French horn. The two musicians, with many mutual interests, became great friends and when Paul Paulsereud married, his bride Everyl also became a friend to Jay. Over the years Jay and the Paulsereuds lost track of each other, but sometime in 1931, Jay again met Everyl at a social gathering.



*Everyl*

Paul Paulsereud, working in the lumber business, had been killed in an accident at the yard, and Everyl, his widow, lived in Ashland. Having mutual friends and many of the same interests, Everyl and Jay had resumed their earlier friendship. Now Jay, leaving the ranch forever, decided Everyl was his only refuge and went to her for comfort and help. Three years older than he, she was a warm hearted and resourceful lady, and she took him in.

Early in the 1930s Jay and Everyl left Ashland and went to Portland. The move was made not long after the stock market crash and the depression was well underway. Jay felt there was nothing for him in southern Oregon, although a friend, George Barnum, a Medford mechanic, said he would have offered Jay the management of his shop had he

known he was looking for employment. In Portland Everyl, a capable business woman who realized one must make his own opportunities, was soon at work in real estate. She had earlier made profitable investments and she supported Jay.

He was involved in a not-very-successful venture of his own. He became agent and demonstrator for a gimmick he had invented--a metal bar that produced health-giving Atma-Rays. Although Jay thought it was efficacious and eased aches and pains, it never presented a serious threat to medical science. He later remodeled it into an air-purifying machine and renamed it Cosma-Ray, but in a depression the man in the street can make do with a little pollution if the production of pure air takes money. Jay said, "I worked every street in Portland," but he sold few of the gadgets.

Everyl soon realized Jay's interests and his future lay in magic. She also realized he was indecisive, felt insecure, and was afraid to venture into anything new. Methodically considering the potential of the various facets of magic and the magic industry, she told him what to do, and he then went about doing it. Had Gertrude done more telling and less waiting for him to act, their union would have been more successful.

Everyl could not perform in concert with him as Gertrude had done and they worked together to revise his show format into a solo performance. He joined the Association of Magicians and secured bookings at clubs and lodges and, at the same time, continued working on new ideas and innovative magic acts. Everyl handled all finances and continued with her own real estate activities. In 1933 on a short trip to Tacoma, they were married.

Everyl and Jay remained in Portland for six years. Once they made a brief return to Medford. Jay had revealed to Everyl that his father had given him a tract of land when he married Gertrude, and Everyl, investigating court records, discovered the property had not been transferred back to the estate. Acting as Jay's attorney, she took the case to the Medford courts and, after she had succeeded in acquiring a title, they sold the land for \$10,000. During a later stopover she again combed



through court records but found no possibilities for additional claims.

During the years in Portland Everyl became involved in a religious cult known as I Am, the St. Germaine Foundation. It was a Christian sect and she found inspiration or comfort or serenity in the tenets of the organization and accepted its philosophy with no reservations. Becoming a staunch friend of the founders, Mama and Papa Ballard, she devoted much of her time and energy to the promotion of the society and endorsed all its principles.

When World War II threatened, Jay and Everyl moved to Los Angeles. Jay's background as a machinist in the first world war and his expertise with tools enabled him to take a position with the Alcoa Company, where he was in charge of the production of dies and bearings for airplane construction. This position lasted for the duration of the war. As a side line and to add a little variety to life, for a time he became a bookie for the tracks, and occasionally brought home a tidy little windfall to add to capital. He also, in his free time, acquired and furnished a shop. Everyl was happy to move to California. She held licenses for each state and could transfer her real estate business with little difficulty, and, significantly, the I Am cult had also moved from Portland to Los Angeles.

Los Angeles has never been labeled The City Meticulous; some pretty far-out cults have flourished there. But in the 1940s the municipal fathers decided the I Am hierarchy had failed to fill some regulation or other and ruled that the St. Germaine Foundation was not worthy of the City of Angels. Once again the founders went forth to look for the promised land. They found it in Santa Fe, and the band of the devout soon followed. Everyl was in the first wave.

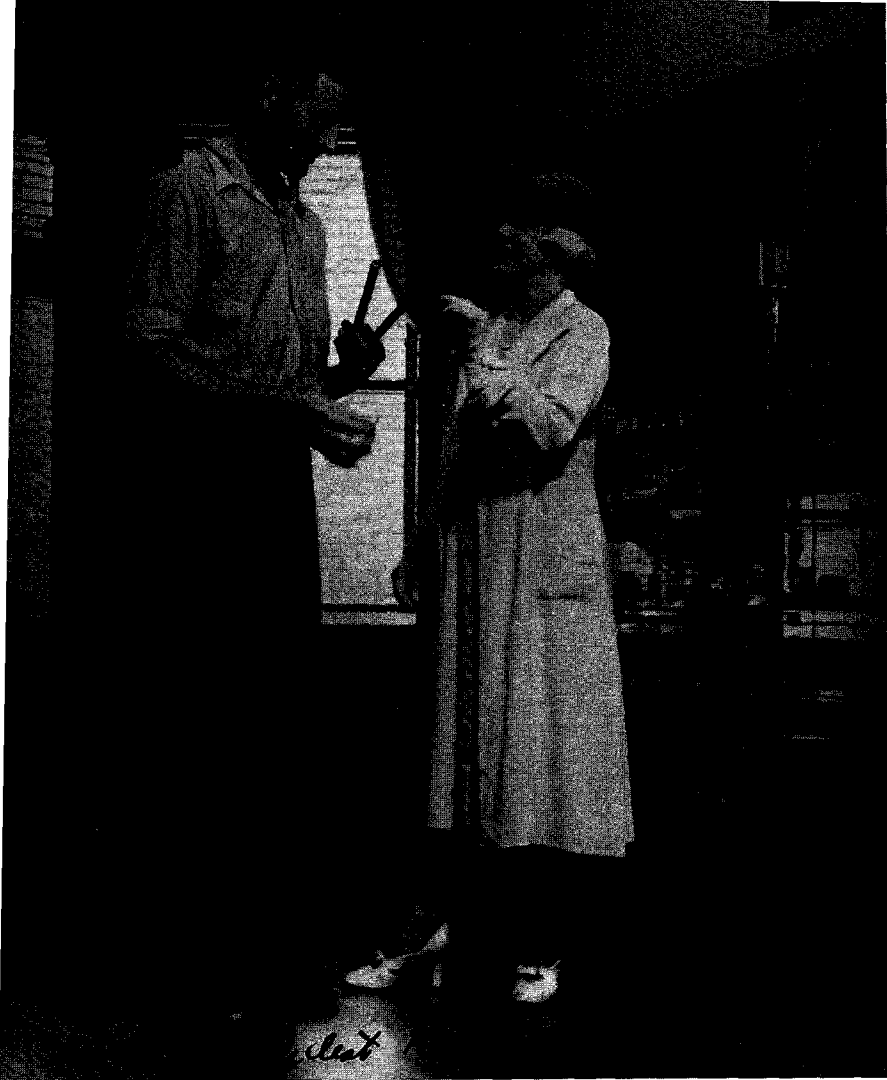
Jay could not pack his equipment and move to a new location so easily as Everyl with her shoe-box undertaking. Although he had little interest in religion, he did not object to her association with it, and he did not oppose the move to Santa Fe. Even at 60, he still depended on her direction. His inability to make decisions had become a permanent part of his charac-

ter, but the loss of his rebellious spirit probably made him a more pleasant companion. At the time he was acting as technical adviser for the Metro-Goldyn-Mayer studio which was making a film based on the life of Houdini. Everyl went ahead, found a house and began searching for a suitable location for Jay's foundry.

In 1946 William Gore died at the age of 86. At the time of his death he and Sophenia had been married 56 years and had become honored pioneers of southern Oregon. His obituary listed his contributions to the state and they were not few. Particularly impressive were his accomplishments while he was a member of the legislature. He had been, without question, a dedicated citizen and a great asset to Jackson County. Sophenia was overwhelmed with grief. For the rest of her life she was disconsolate. There is no record that Jay was told of his father's death or that



*What's-his-name and Jay*



he considered attending the services. Although he now admitted that he had betrayed himself, he still held William responsible for his weaknesses.

After the move to Santa Fe, life became more stable for them both. Although Jay's hearing problem and poor eyesight prevented him from making public appearances, he was able to operate his shop with professional skill and dexterity. He had always been ingenious as well as reliable in his tooling and always produced the best. He had acquired a large inventory of equipment, including the largest iron lathe in Santa Fe, and almost no trick was too intricate or spectacular for him to create.

When Sophenia Ish Gore died in 1949, Jay and Everyl returned to Medford for a short stay. Jay and Mary saw each other for the first time in almost twenty years, but there was no warmth in their greeting. Any affection they had felt for each other as children

This picture of Bess Houdini and Jay was taken during the filming of the MGM movie. Houdini, who had been interested in spiritualism, had made the arrangement that, after he had died, he would return at a scheduled time. His failure to appear would indicate that spiritualism was a fraud. Madame Houdini asked Jay to help with the arrangements for Houdini's reappearance, and, although he was a non-believer, he gave her the support she requested. Houdini was a non-show. He either found something better to do or, in the Elysian Fields, he forgot about his appointment.

had long since been smothered in resentment. There were still some Ish-Gore treasures stored here and there, and Everyl hinted that Mary might share them, but Mary had no thought of giving anything of sentimental or monetary value to Jay. Her bitterness does not seem unreasonable. Twenty years earlier he had left in a whirlwind of hatred and violence, he had not written or called William, Sophenia or Mary or even acknowledged their existence in all that time, and, for all he appeared to care, they could have been long dead. By his indifference he had forfeited any claim on mementos or keepsakes from those he still professed to hate. When he and Everyl left, they took with them a floral still life which had been painted by Sophenia, a few pieces of china and porcelain, and some odds and ends of furniture which had been given to him when he was a boy.

In 1957 the St. Germaine Foundation produced the first of its pageants, which became an annual project and went on for almost two decades. It was staged at the foot of Mount Shasta, in a setting of natural beauty and solemnity. The production presented the life of Christ from the annunciation to the ascension. The Biblical episodes and miracles were revealed in a series of dramatic tableaux, and the cast was numbered in the hundreds. Everyl was in charge of the costuming and Jay was hired to create the supernatural effects. Preparations took months and Jay and Everyl spent half of each year at Mount Shasta, the other half at Santa Fe.

Many of the effects were breathtaking; the descent of a group of angels was particularly outstanding. The illusion of flying to earth was devised by the

use of flat cars on a track which had been installed behind trees and bushes. The graceful gliding movement began high on a hill in the background and brought the richly costumed players down to the stage front. The Last Supper appeared in a sudden flash through the use of a mechanically rotating platform. But by far the most thrilling spectacle was the ascension, the closing scene of the pageant. By using a specially constructed elevator mechanism attached to a giant evergreen tree, but hidden behind its branches, the Christ figure was able to rise into the heavens and vanish into a cloud. In this scene, Jay had surpassed all his other magic phenomena. One who witnessed the scene will never forget it and it was a fitting climax to a lifetime of magic.

In the 1970s, after twenty years of faithful service to the I Am church, Everyl left the society. Upon the death of Mama and Papa Ballard, new leaders assumed command and Everyl soon decided they were more interested in financial gain than in promoting Christian principles. She thought she had overheard them discussing the possibility of evicting her from her home and using it for a school. Jay decided they had stolen some of his furniture and, having lost none of his wild defensive apprehension, sometimes lay on the floor at the front door with his loaded guns beside him to protect Everyl and guard his property. The alliance with the cult had been productive and had given both Jay and Everyl opportunities to demonstrate their talents, but it ended on a note of suspicion and fear.

Mary's death in 1968 shattered any hope that she and Jay might one day resolve their alienation. They were both resolute in their anger, but they had been children together and in spite of their antagonism must have cherished some pleasant memories of their childhood. Jay said, "They didn't sock it to Mary the way they did to me," but as a girl Mary had experienced painful problems of adjustment and as an adult had known difficult and unhappy times.

Sophenia and William could never ac-

cept any of her beaux as quite good enough and when she was 26, in a desperate try for happiness, she eloped. The marriage had little chance of succeeding and ended after a few discordant years. Mary had one child, a daughter, Mary Dudley. A second marriage also failed and Mary returned to William and Sophenia who continued to dictate her every move even while they became more dependent upon her.

From 1944 to 1946 she worked at the First National Bank in Medford. During that brief time she made new friendships and enjoyed the satisfaction of financial independence and public service. Unfortunately, even forty years ago, computers became a threat and Mary's position came to an early end.

Almost twenty years after the death of Sophenia, Mary died at the age of 71. At her funeral, the pallbearers were men of substance and their presence showed that here was a lady of importance: (honorary) Dr. Charles W. Lemery, John P. Moffat, Robert C. Wright, Raymond Singler, Frank Van Dyke and Lyle Latendresse; (active) Edward C. Kelly, Dr. Warren Bishop, Dr. Eugene Hannawalt, Clifford Brumbelee, Donald D. Groseh and Perry Rayburn.

Her death marked the end of William Gore's world. True, Jay was still living and he had once been a satellite but in his rebellion he had gone too far astray and left the orbit. The eulogy sending Mary on her way was also a last farewell to William and Sophenia.

In 1976 Jay underwent surgery for cataract. The operation was unsuccessful and impaired his failing eyesight even further. He realized he could no longer work successfully at tooling and reluctantly sold his shop and his treasured equipment to a young magician, a long time admirer, who, like Jay, was an expert with tools and wood.

No longer able to see clearly, his hands unsteady and his health failing, he spent his days tending Everyl. She was 90 years old and had become mentally and physically unable to manage. Jay, with no knowledge of the operation of the kitchen, the laundry and the household, found himself unable to cope. He and Everyl were fast approaching a hopeless situation.

Fortunately, his daughter Elinor and her husband had been in touch with Jay and Everyl for several years. They had



*This picture of Jay Gore in his mobile home was taken by his daughter, Elinor Buchanan, during the tape recording session in 1983.*

exchanged gifts on holidays and occasionally visited each other. By chance she decided to make a short trip to Santa Fe to make sure they were well and happy. She was shocked when she discovered their desperate state and made immediate arrangements to move them to Los Angeles to be with her and her family. Without her loving concern, Jay may have had to face the same terrifying loneliness that Sophenia had endured at the end. Instead, during his last years he was a loved and respected member of his own family.

In April of 1981 Everyl's heart gave

out. She was 90. Jay lived two years longer and was able to record his memories. Shortly after the last taping session, in October, 1983, he too died.

Although he had been a friend and craftsman to the greatest performers of his time, had created many new illusions and almost unbelievable spectacles, and had added greatly to the professionalism of the world of magic, he felt he had failed to achieve his expectations.

"I made a fizzle of it," he said. "But I had a lot of help from expert fizzlers."

*Series to be continued*

## **MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE DONATES PICTURE FILE TO SOHS**

Recently Mr. Gilbert Bagley, publisher, authorized the donation of the *Tribune* photograph collection to the historical society. Pictures cover social and community events which took place in recent decades. The donation also includes negatives of earlier pictures. This generous gift will add immeasurably to the photograph archives of the society.

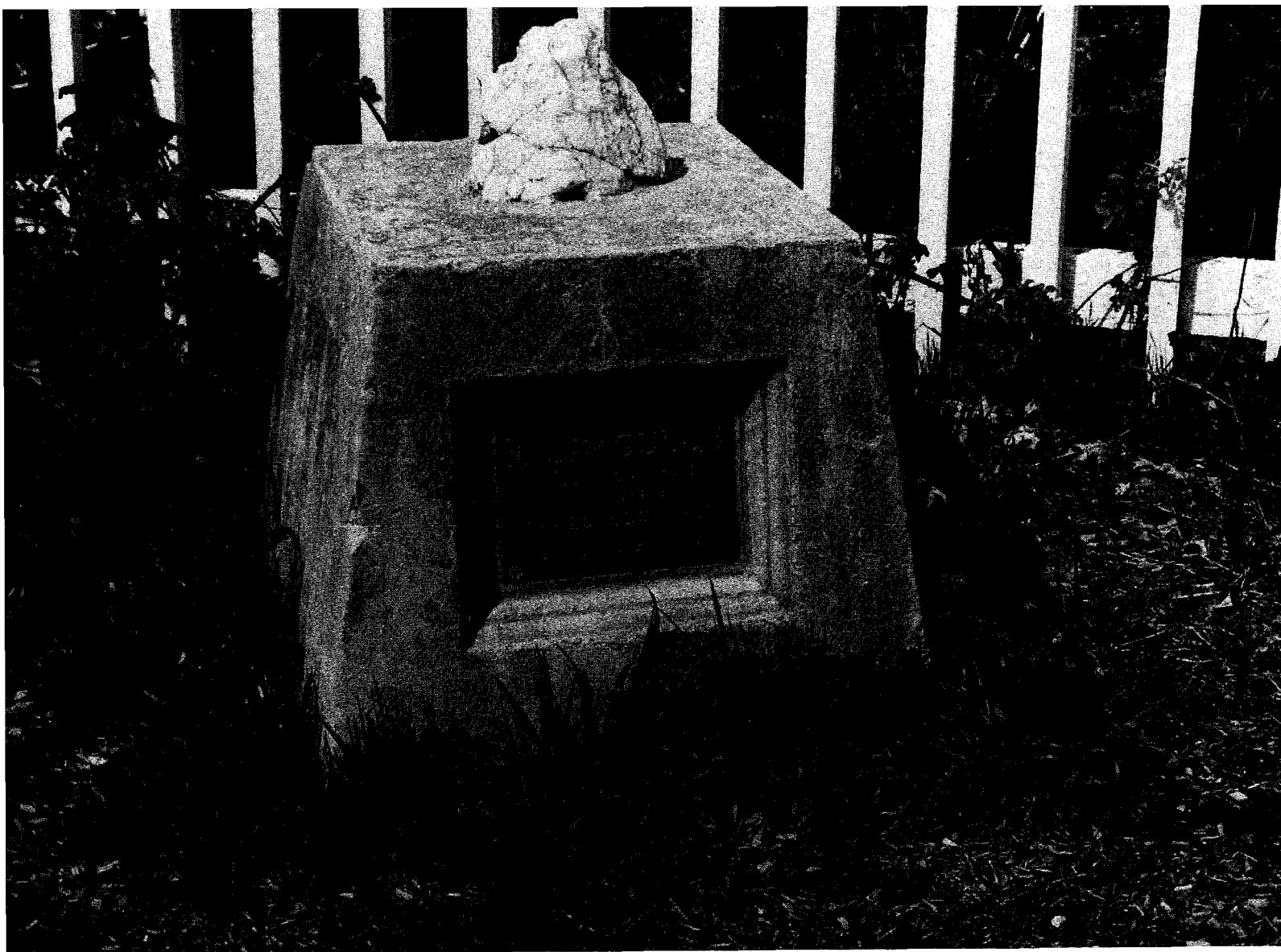
In the picture at the left Kathryn Harper, librarian, who made the coordinating arrangements for the donation, is pictured looking over a small part of the contribution with Bill Burk, director, and Marjorie Edens, historian.

At the same time the *Tribune* staff donated a cherished antique electric refrigerator--including the coil on top--to the society. It is in good condition and will be put to use by the staff.



Photograph by Doug Smith





## James Cluggage

**N**o biographical history of southern Oregon can be considered complete if it doesn't include James Cluggage; he is first on the required reading shelf. Yet so little is known of him and the few surviving facts are so contradictory that the historian soon becomes frustrated. It's unnerving to write a neat statement of fact which glides trippingly on the tongue, and then discover in the next document that the neat statement is an out-and-out fallacy. After a futile search for reliable facts, one is tempted to snap his pencil, throw it over his head and jettison the whole project.

Yet there may never have been a Jacksonville without James Cluggage. If he hadn't discovered gold at Rich Gulch, it may never have been discovered at all--hardly likely--and Jacksonville would

still be a primitive, smog-free wilderness where the coyote and the raccoon gambol--even more unlikely--around the gentle slopes and exit ramps of I-5.

Recently some additional information which may have been previously overlooked turned up in a badly worn copy of the *Oregon Sentinel*. The issue is dated February 5, 1879, and the editor was apparently inspired to make a brief biographical sketch of James Cluggage because he needed a filler on the editorial page or because he felt that at the close of the snappy 1870s, the decade that had ushered in the final word on progress and comfort, it would be proper for Jacksonville citizens to pay homage to THE original--the ONE AND ONLY--founding father who had been present at its very first stirrings and had watched it spring from a froggy pool

in Jackson Creek into the greatest little old city in the West--even if he did lose most of his checkers in the process.

**J**ames Cluggage was born near Columbus, Ohio, in 1818, give or take a year or two. He never married and at the time his biography appeared, he was a man of sixty and already as mad as a hatter.

As a child he moved to Terre Haute, Indiana, where he grew to manhood. If he had received a formal education and learned to write perhaps he'd have jotted down some vital statistics and an opinion or two so his future biographers would have something to say. His signature on his only document in the SOHS files, a deed, has obviously been forged. If he had to have someone else write his name, we can assume he hadn't concerned himself with non-essentials like reading and writing. But there was surely nothing lacking in his arithmetic skills. Illiterate he may have been, but he learned a trick or two about making money.

As a young man he worked in a general store, but his salary and enthusiasm didn't place him among the top ten money makers in Indiana for he soon gave up the mercantile business and moved to Missouri where he became a driver on a stage line owned by General O. Hinton. Now, General O. Hinton is identified as "the notorious western mail robber" and what an infamous highwayman was doing with his own private stage coach line is another mystery. It makes sense, however, that if a fellow knew all the tricks of ripping off the mail bags, he might, conversely, know some tricks about keeping them out of the grubby hands of other thugs. The remark might also have been made by a waggish editor as a dig at General O. Hinton for the stiff fees he placed on his services. In any case, General O. Hinton hired Mr. J. Cluggage to drive one of his coaches and haul the mail to "the far west"--the remote, god-forsaken areas of Iowa and South Dakota.

From this distance a stage coach driver looks good. He had to be virile, tough, lean and bold and an expert with the whip and the rifle. At the same time he could be gentle and obliging as

as he helped the winsome young school-ma'am into the coach and, as a little bonus, daringly caressed her elbow in the process. The passengers put their lives in his hands and their possessions in his trunk racks, and important men like Mr. Wells and Mr. Fargo and Mr. Beekman depended upon him to keep the banks open and the payrolls paid. Like the Marlboro man, he was a man to respect.

James Cluggage apparently found the profession to his liking because he continued as a driver until his thirty-first birthday when he decided to have done with this life of ease and push off across the plains for California.

It appears that he wasn't unduly turned on by the fascination of standing around, one hand on his rifle and rump-deep in icy water, as he painstakingly coaxed gold dust out of a panful of mud. He was one of the first surge of forty-niners but, despite the daily discoveries of fabulous veins and the rumors of sudden fortunes, he was able to resist the prospecting urge.

His expertise lay in the field of driving and he soon began packing supplies to the mines. It was a profitable business for one with a little capital. In the Willamette valley he bought apples, sugar, bacon, beans and flour and carted his stock directly to the miners who were willing to pay inflated prices. His route took him as far south as Yreka. Generally, for safety and sociability, he joined others who were in the same line of business.

After about three years his fortunes changed. Here's the story.

**I**n January, 1852, he set out with a load of supplies on his regular run. A friend, Jim Pool (given the name of John on the monument pictured on page 19) joined him and, together, they made their way south. In stormy weather they liked to stop overnight at a settler's cabin, and on this trip they stayed near the present site of Central Point at one of the only two houses then built in the Rogue River valley.

Their good-luck day began with a calamity. During the night some Indians stole two of their mules, and James Cluggage and James Pool, irate and on the war path, started off in pursuit of the mule rustlers. As pursuers they must have



made a laborious and thorough inch-by-inch hunt for tracks or else got off to a late start, because, so the biography goes, about noon they reached the present site of Jacksonville, which is no more than three miles from their starting point, following the flight of the proverbial crow.

This was in the middle of January, but frontiersmen weren't bugged by cold feet and frosty fingers and they decided to dismount at the creek for a rest-stop and a quick bite--a little picnic of cold beans and salt pork. Salty beans and bacon call for a slug of branchwater, and this is a good thing, because it led directly to fame and fortune for them both. One of them--take your pick--lay down on his belly and stuck his face in the creek. Slurping up the water--this was long before Jackson Creek deteriorated to its present icky state--he suddenly awoke to the fact that the creek bed just below his nose was full of gold, shining like a good deed in a dirty world.

**A**t this point in the story several versions appear. To be fair to all the other prevaricators, it's *de riguer, en passant*, to list them.

1. Two strangers, passing by, told James Cluggage and James Pool of the rich spot, and they went there directly and moved in on it.
2. There were four men in the party rather than two, and one of them and James Pool went for supplies and digging tools while the other two stayed at the spot and guarded it lest some casual prospecting pedestrian should re-discover it.
3. James Cluggage, James Pool, James Skinner and James Wilson made the discovery together and that line-up of names suggested to some early Jacksonville settlers that the town should really be called Jim Town. This one borders on the preposterous, but who knows?

No matter the variations in the reports of the discovery; James Cluggage and James Pool began scraping around and realized the find was even richer than they had at first thought. Forgetting all about the purloined mules, they went after their pack wagons, the contents of which they used for their

own needs, and began panning for nuggets.

Fate--or Destiny--or Kismet--or Whatever is a capricious and heartless trickster. Thousands upon thousands of miners, who forfeited their health and their wits in their vigilant and relentless search for gold, failed to realize much more than a few colors and ended up in the discards. Yet James Cluggage and James Pool, indifferent to the mania and immune to the fever, were given the coveted prize by stupidly stumbling onto a treasure-trove. Fair? Schmair!

With their discovery still a secret they began making an average of one-hundred ounces per day. A second source claims it was only eighty ounces per day, and the *Shasta Courier* of May 15, 1852, reported:

John Flynn has received a letter from Mr. James Cluggage on Rogue River [ye gods, he was literate after all] stating that he and his two [?] partners owned a claim out of which they had taken, on an average, seventy ounces per day for ten weeks. This is certainly one of the richest claims we have heard of...

The date of the letter, May 1852, reveals that at the time it was written James Cluggage had been mining the area for five months. One hundred ounces per day for five months! He could have bought Texas and had a bevy of voluptuous Nubian maidens fan him and feed him grapes. He and his partner(s) claimed 400 feet of Rich Gulch for their own, and by February, 1852, every other foot of the creekbed was staked out and claimed. By March the surrounding hills and gulches were filled with rapidly swelling population and the Takelmas, more discriminatory about their neighbors, had taken to the exclusive slopes of Table Rock.

**J**ames Cluggage, now a wealthy gentleman, was not one to let an obvious opportunity slip by. He made a Donation Land Claim for 160 acres which included most of the land now occupied by the city of Jacksonville. His biographer here gives us a teaser: "After a stubborn and expensive litigation [he] received a patent for it, being the first patent issued for land in Jackson County." Why the hang-up in donating the land to Mr. Cluggage? The Donation

Land Act had been passed by Congress in 1850, two years earlier, and it provided a free claim up to 320 acres for settlers who established farms in the Oregon Territory. Perhaps in 1852 Jacksonville was already enough of a town-like settlement to raise a question about the phrase, "for settlers who established farms." Perhaps someone at about the same time had entered his own claim to the land and there was a dispute over it. No matter. It was eventually--in 1855--given to James Cluggage.

When the patent was finally issued, however, a frantic and prosperous little town, at first called Table Rock City, had already appeared and a lot of settlers, who had built cabins and shacks, found themselves trespassing on Mr. Cluggage's land. He was very lenient with most of these squatters and gave away the titles for "a nominal consideration."

Jane McCully solved the dilemma in an ingenious manner. About the time James Cluggage made his claim, she gave birth to a little boy, and she honored James Cluggage with the title of Godfather. She named the child James Cluggage McCully, and the new Godfather benevolently gave the McCully family free title to the choice corner lot where they had built their cabin. No Godfather worth his salt could do less. Jane McCully became owner of the property without putting out a coin and the kid had to be called something anyway. James Cluggage McCully was just as euphonious as Millard Fillmore McCully and no less auspicious. No one has ever said Jane McCully was not a resourceful woman.

James Cluggage gave the block where the Methodist Church had been built to the elders, and his public image improved even more. There's good stuff in a man who is generous to the church even if he doesn't get around to attending Sunday services.

When the settlers began to make beaten paths where the streets would eventually be and after a bakery, a store or two and some saloons appeared, James Cluggage, proprietor of his very own town, may have pranced around the city, declaring to himself, "It's mine. Mine. All mine." In 1854 he decided to have a city plat established and a map drawn. George Sherman, a surveyor,

was commissioned for this task and in payment James Cluggage gave him a block of land: "Lots number one to eight of Block Number Four fronting 200 feet on B and C Streets and running back two-hundred feet on Fourth Street." Although there was probably nothing on the land then but manzanita bushes and grasshoppers, a block of land is a pretty generous gift any day of the week, and George Sherman proudly named it "Surveyor's Block" and labeled it thus in his neatly executed map. It was the square of land which now includes the Karewski House, the old Telephone Exchange building (the new Doll Museum), the Mobile Oil Gasoline Station and five or six other buildings.

During the battles with the Rogues, he proved to be no Indian fighter. He preferred peace and took no active part in the unequal struggle. This stand gives him merit points today, but in 1853 to 1855 it would hardly have endeared him to the majority who were bent on the policy of "Extermination!". His spirit of pacifism, with his wits, left him around 1860.

When the dissention between the north and south threatened a civil war, his sympathies were strongly with the north. He was a loyal admirer of Abraham Lincoln and developed a touchy temper and a hair-trigger readiness to fight if his opinions were challenged. And challenged they were: there were many, just as cocked and ready to do battle, who favored the rebels and despised Lincoln. In fact in Jacksonville the controversy was never settled. Venerated citizens gathered around the pot-bellied stove in the Basket Grocery and fought the Civil War right on through the 1930s.

As the national conflict grew more and more anguished and the county became embroiled in the political turmoil of the war, James Cluggage grew more belligerent. Previously pleasant and generous by nature, he became quarrelsome and vindictive. Many of his earlier admirers now went out of their way to avoid a meeting with him. His biographer wrote, "His firends think that the wild and bitter political excitement [has caused] his mental decay."

In 1864, still owning considerable property, he left Jacksonville and, in a state of unreasonable anger, went

to Marysville, Ohio. From that place reports filtered back. Bad news: the authorities had found him hopelessly insane and confined him to an institution. Good news: he was said to be in hearty physical health.

The diagnosis that he was sound physically cannot have been entirely correct. His mental decay must have sprung from some physical condition beyond the knowledge of doctors at the time. A notice in the *Oregon Sentinel*, May 22, 1886, states:

James Cluggage, one of the first settlers of Jacksonville, died at Marysville, Ohio, on the 8th of this month.

**H**e was 68 and, for that time, had lived to a respectable age. P.P. Prim, David Linn and C.C. Beekman wrote his eulogy for the records of the Southern Oregon Pioneer Association but they apparently knew little about him and their version of his early life is so garbled as to be useless to the biographer. One might think they were

writing about another person.

In their tribute they called him Frank but that's no wonder. With so many Jameses in town, a fellow who wanted to express any individuality at all would have to take an alias. The three members of the Cluggage Obituary Committee were obviously reluctant to put on permanent record the fact that he had become a churlish, bad tempered old coot so they took up their quota of space describing an early episode when the Indians threatened to attack the town. They did slip in the fact that James-Frank Cluggage, instead of bravely racing out and joining the front line of defenders, slipped into the shadows. Some tribute. The composition ends on the happy note that "Soon, very soon, we will all camp at the foot of the hill." They ignored completely the fact that he had gone bonkers.

The record keeper of Methodist church donors had no trouble with his final comments. After the name, James Cluggage, he wrote, "Gone crazy," and closed the book.

*Raymond Lewis*

## COURTHOUSE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



Despite cold and wet weather an appreciative audience showed up to help celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the courthouse. County Commissioner Peter Sage was the principal speaker, and Mayor Peggy Slater welcomed the audience. Spirited music was provided by the Ashland Silver Cornet Band. The cake, made in a replica of the courthouse, was served by the Jacksonville Boosters. The full day's program ended with a potluck supper and a country dance.

Photographs by Doug Smith



## MISCELLANY

Mr. David Johnson of Hornbrook, California, identified the driver of the Buick on the cover of our issue, Vol. IV No. I. He is Charley Jacobs, a baseball player--catcher--from Siskiyou County. The book, "The Land to Remember" by L. Roy Jones, gives some facts about Jacob's life. He played baseball for Medford, Colusa, Coos Bay and Ashland. Although he had chances to sign with Portland, Los Angeles and San Francisco, he turned down all big league offers on account of an unwillingness to keep in condition, choosing rather to "burn the candle."

"When Charley passed away during the influenza epidemic, his Buick was left to his parents." In the picture he has driven his cherished automobile into the creek to tighten the spokes. We are indebted to Mr. Johnson for his valuable help.



A SOHS member, Mrs. Chipman, brought to our attention the fact that William Gore (Vol. IV No. I) could not have taught school in Medford in 1879 because there was no Medford school in 1879. In fact there was no Medford. We think that William Gore's first teaching experience was probably in Phoenix although he did become a principal of the Medford school in 1886. Mrs. Chipman was the only one who noted our foolish error so she gets to pass the wastebasket for the whole week.

### THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

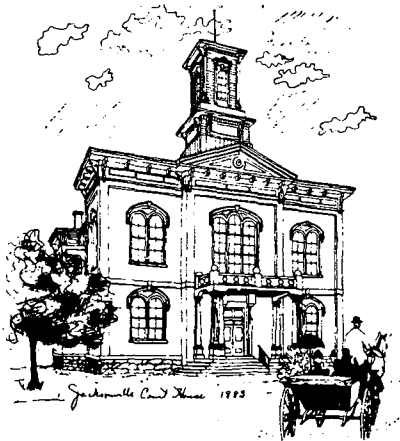
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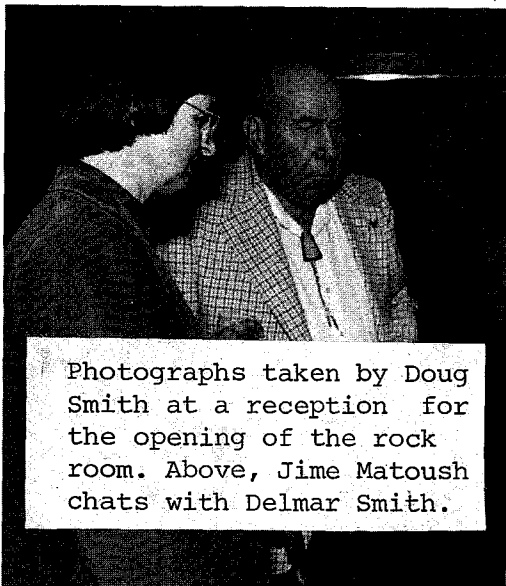
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Photographs taken by Doug Smith at a reception for the opening of the rock room. Above, Jime Matoush chats with Delmar Smith.

