
THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Catherine and Margaret Kubli

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY



This quartet called themselves "The Four Girls from Jacksonville." When the picture was taken--late in the 1890's--they were in their early teens and, in typical teen-age fashion, dressed alike, did their hair alike, shared their romantic fancies and giggled madly at older boys. The first is Helen Mar Colvig who married Dr. Rowe Gale and had two children, a daughter Rowen and a son Winsor. After Dr. Rowe's death, she married Floyd Cook. As Helen Colvig Cook she wrote feature articles for the Portland *Oregonian*. The second is Lucinda Reames, a daughter of T.G. Reames, the Jacksonville banker. She also married twice: first, in 1903, to Ira Anderson, and in 1923 to Harry Hubbard of Medford. The third girl, Marie Nickell, was the first daughter born to Jacksonville editor, Chas. Nickell, and his first wife, Ella Prim Nickell. Marie married Louis Ulrich and lived in Medford. The last of the quartet was Laura Reames who married Mr. Clark and moved to Portland.



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How Chester Barden Escaped the Noose

The case of Chester Barden involved many of southern Oregon's citizens who have been featured or mentioned in other stories of the society newsletter. Judge P.P. Prim served as Circuit Court judge in the case, H.K. Hanna, E.B. Watson and J.R. Neil were on the scene also, and several familiar names appear on the Grand Jury and the regular jury who served at the trial. Even Peter Britt was included along with four prominent physicians. The case, which took one year to complete, has long since been forgotten, but it was front page news in 1875.

THE first hint of dirty work at the crossroads was revealed in the Jacksonville *Democratic Times* on March 10, 1875. A short item, appearing on page three, announced that Daniel McMahon, who had lived up on Reese Creek for some time, seemed to have disappeared. McMahon, an Irishman who possessed a keen sense of humor and displayed a casual good nature, was well-liked by his neighbors. He was an industrious little fellow, a bachelor, who tended to his own business -- raising sheep -- and shied away from social doings.

Learning that his sheep -- all 1100 of them -- were gone, the folks nearby got suspicious and started asking questions. The young man who operated Bybee's Ferry remembered that about a month earlier -- the nineteenth of February, to be exact -- Chester Barden, a fellow from Canyonville or somewhere up in Umpqua country had made arrangements with him and had crossed the sheep on Sunday, the 21st. This fellow had made no secret of the fact that he had bought all of the little Irishman's herd, and he had a young drifter, Dilwirth Carey, with him to help him drive them up north where he lived. Both Barden and Carey had stayed overnight at the ferry and had left for McMahon's cabin early in the morning of the 20th. On Sunday, the 21st, the two of them, driving the sheep, returned to the ferry and with the help of some working dogs got the livestock across the river. The ferryman remembered the crossing clearly, because transporting more

than a thousand sheep over Rogue River in February on a rickety ferry was not your everyday event.

Well, McMahon may have sold his sheep, but if he'd left the River, why hadn't he said good-bye to someone? It was mighty queer that he'd moved out of the valley without being observed by a single person.

When no satisfactory answers are forthcoming, the suspicion of foul play doesn't fade away easily. McMahon's disappearance soon became the chief topic of conversation in the valley. Something mighty rotten had transpired, and no citizen worth his salt would stand around with his thumbs in his belt and let a crook -- or a *murderer* -- get away scot free. Groups of men poked around here and there in the Sams Valley region, but dug up no evidence of homicide.

Pat J. Ryan, a hardware merchant in Jacksonville, had earlier sold McMahon some tinware and kitchen stuff, and the two Irishmen hit it off well and became friends. In fact McMahon still owed Ryan some money on his unpaid account. Pat Ryan decided this Barden business of *buying* the sheep had a distinctly fishy aroma, and since the authorities seemed to be doing nothing much, he swore out a warrant for the arrest of Chester Barden and Dilwirth Carey, charging them with the larceny of McMahon's sheep.

Deputy Sheriff T.B. Kent, armed with the warrant, accordingly left for Douglas

County and a few days after, arrested Barden at his residence on the South Umpqua and Carey on Elk Creek and brought them to Jacksonville. Kent made a statement for the *Oregon Sentinel*.*

EVIDENCE OF T.B. KENT BEFORE THE GRAND JURY**

I arrested Chester Barden in Douglas County, Oregon, on the 20th day of March, 1875, on South Umpqua, about five or six miles east of Canyonville. Sheriff Livingston and his deputy, Richard Thorne, of Douglas County, accompanied me. Dilwirth Carey was not with Barden; he was stopping at Elk Creek about twenty miles southeast of where I arrested Barden.

After we handcuffed Barden, he wanted to know why he was arrested. I read the warrant for the larceny of the sheep, but did not let him know at that time that I had a warrant also for him for the murder of Daniel McMahon.

In answer to the warrant for larceny, he laughed loudly. "I never stole those sheep," he said. "I paid him the money for them and I have the receipts to prove it. McMahon signed those receipts."

I asked him to show them to me.

"They're over the river at my house," he said.

"Well," I said, "those receipts would be very good evidence in explaining away the crime which you're charged with."

We searched him and then we all crossed the river to the house, and I sent Sheriff Livingston and his deputy after Dilwirth Carey.

I went into Barden's cabin and he showed me the receipts that he claimed he got from McMahon, one bearing the date of February 20, 1875, for the sum of \$2,810, and represented that it was written and signed in Jackson County, and the other bearing date of March 2nd, 1875, for the sum of \$500, representing that it was written and signed in Douglas County on Elk Creek.

When I read the receipts, I recognized the handwriting to be that of C.A. Ferguson, † who was at that time teach-

*At this time (1875) B.F. Dowell was publisher of the *Sentinel*. Kent's statement has been shortened and edited.

**Members of the Grand Jury were A.H. Boothby, J.M. Black, Haskell Amy, Eber Emery, Peter Simon and Michael Hanley.

† This recognition of the handwriting was a strange coincidence and we could wish for additional clarification but none is forthcoming.

ing in Barden's neighborhood. I asked him if he would let me have the receipts and he handed them over. The signatures were signed in this manner: *McMahon*.

Barden's wife, a sensible woman, didn't seem to borrow any trouble about her husband. When we took him away, she kept on with her housework and didn't do any screeching or clinging. When we got to Canyonville, he decided he wanted to see J.F. Gazley, his lawyer. He demanded to talk to Gazley in private, but I refused to leave and said he could have an interview only in my presence. Barden grumbled about this and said I was being too hard on him, but finally told Gazley his story and asked Gazley to represent him.

I led him over to the hotel and I engaged a room and the three of us, Barden, Gazley and I, went up and took off our hats and coats. Barden was still grouching about how daft I'd been to arrest him so I decided to let him know about the other warrant I had in my pocket.

"I went after you the way that I did," I said, "because I've got a warrant for your arrest for the murder of McMahon."

Now, that struck him like a thunderbolt. His eyes flashed with surprise and he began walking back and forth across the carpet, and mumbled a little but didn't say anything I could hear. After a few moments of muttering, he recovered a little from the shock and asked in a very excited manner, "Have you found the body?" He didn't wait for an answer but turned to Gazley and said, "You'd better send for Findley Watson to help out on this and make a strong defense for me."

All this time guilt was cropping out on his countenance very plain, and I decided it would be a good time to hit him with a question. "What was McMahon's Christian name?" I asked.

He turned to me. "*Mack* was his Christian name," he said. "His surname was *Mahon*."

This was a rough answer for Barden's case. He didn't know that McMahon's Christian name was Daniel until I told him, and that gave him another shock. But he was a man of uncommon cheek and he withstood the interrogation with a good deal of brass.

Sheriff Livingston and his deputy returned to Canyonville at about eight o'clock in the evening with Dilwirth Carey. Barden seemed to be very anxious to talk with Carey, but I forbade them from talking together except in my

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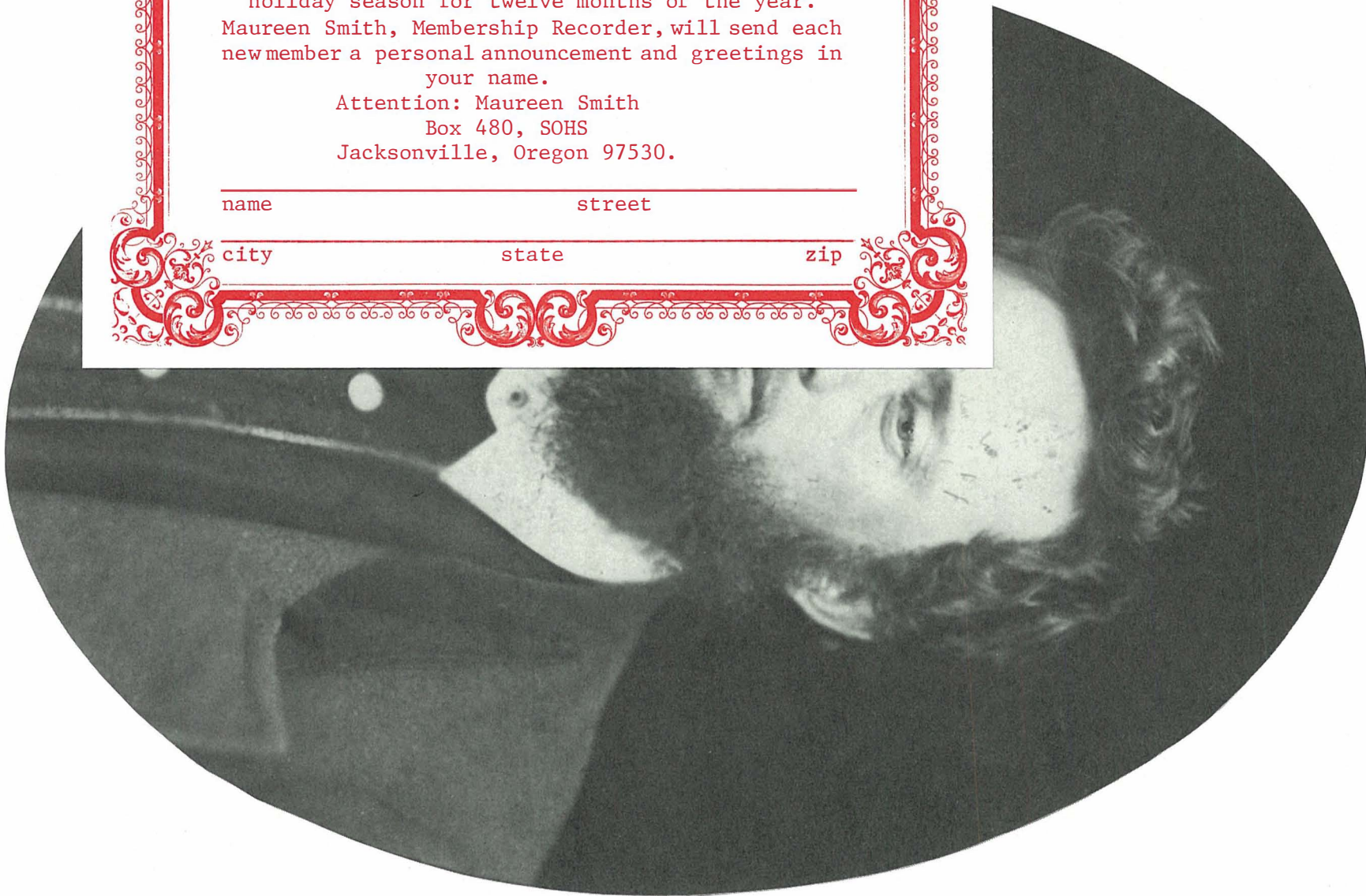
name

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Portrait of a Murderer
CHESTER BARDEN

presence or before the guard that was placed over them.

DILWIRTH CAREY was an ignorant boy who had got himself into serious trouble and didn't know what to do. So in the morning I made up my mind to work on him and get him to confess the whole thing and save his neck. I told him the difference between his statement about the purchase of the sheep and Barden's. Barden claimed that Carey was only a hired hand and had no interest in the sheep whatever, while Carey claimed to be an equal partner in the deal. When I showed him this contradiction and a number of differences on minor points, he burst into tears and exclaimed, "This is all a bad affair. I don't know what to do."

I asked him a number of questions concerning his pretended purchase of the sheep and I couldn't get anything definite out of him. He insisted he had furnished \$500 of the money they had bought the sheep with and seemed to avoid making definite answers to new questions, for fear he would contradict Barden.

By this time the whole neighborhood had been aroused by the arrest of Barden and Carey and everyone came into Canyonville to learn the particulars. Among them was this man C.A. Ferguson who had written the receipts. Upon making inquiry of him, I found he had written both receipts under direction of Barden.*

I learned a number of other facts tending to reveal their guilt. One was a letter that Barden wrote to Charles Griffith, representing it was from Daniel McMahon. In the envelope he sent Griffith the key to the lock of McMahon's door. I discovered the envelope had been addressed by a man by the name of Fairer, who was bookkeeper at Daniel Leven's store. Fairer told me that on March 5th he had furnished Barden with paper to write a letter to Charles Griffith of Jacksonville. The bookkeeper had especially noticed Barden because he had acted so peculiarly. He further stated that when Barden had finished his letter, he called for an envelope which he gave him. Barden went to the back door of the store and put

*Apparently he had assumed Barden couldn't write and had acted as an amanuensis.

something in the folded letter. Fairer could not tell what the item was but after Barden had sealed the letter, he asked Fairer to address it to Griffith in Jacksonville.

The letter, later procured from Griffith as evidence, is as follows:

Canyonville, Mar. 1st, 1875
(Note the deliberate error on the date)

Dear friend, I want you to go and take my things out of the cabben and take them to you house and take care of them for me.

Write to me in Albany.

Mack Mahon

It will be seen by examining the receipts and the letter to Griffith, that the receipts are signed "Mc" and the letter, "Mack." Surely Daniel McMahon would not forget how to spell his given name. It was pretty obvious there had been a killing.

That evening we took the stage for Jacksonville. I put handcuffs and ankle irons on Barden and Carey and kept a strict watch over them during the night. Barden made several attempts to whisper to Carey but I stopped him. He was very talkative and cheeky on the way to Jacksonville but Carey was the reverse; he was down-hearted and seemed to be in a deep study all the time. We arrived in Jacksonville in the afternoon of the 22nd of March and I put Barden into the County Jail and Carey into the city calaboose.

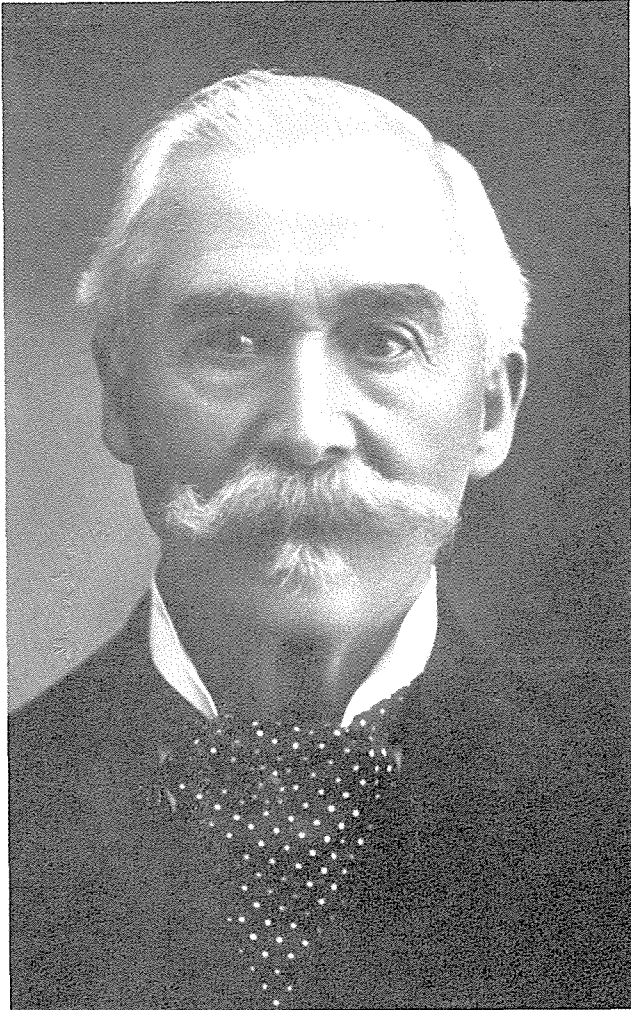
WE had not yet got clues as to the whereabouts of McMahon's body and as far as any of us knew at that time, the only assurance of finding the body was through a confession by Dilwirth Carey. It was only by keeping him away from Barden and not allowing any communication between them and promising him that if he would confess the whole thing and give us a full statement of the facts, he would not be prosecuted for the murder. "Tell us where the body is," I kept insisting.

At the same time several other persons interrogated him also and told him that when the body was found, nothing short of hanging would pay the penalty if he did not confess.

Carey at first claimed that if Barden had shot McMahon he (Carey) wasn't present at the shooting and didn't know where the body was concealed. All he knew was what Barden told him.

Finally I told Carey I was not satisfied with his story. I said I did not think he had told us as much about it as he knew. After a whole day of grilling, Carey had more than he could bear and he bursted into tears and with a trembling voice, exclaimed: "Well... well, Barden did kill McMahon."

So here we stopped him until the District Attorney (H.K. Hanna) came, and Hanna informed him that if he would make a clean-breast of the whole thing, that the promise heretofore made would be carried out and faithfully kept.



District Attorney H.K. Hanna

DILWIRTH CAREY'S CONFESSION

In October, last fall, I was in Douglas County and Barden hired me to come over here to Jackson County to help him drive a big band of sheep which he was going to buy up on Reese Creek. We crossed Bybee's ferry and went up to McMahon's sheep ranch and found him there herding his sheep. We stayed all night with him and he treated us kindly. Barden told him he wanted to

buy his sheep, but McMahon wouldn't sell, and said any deal was out of the question.

So next day we returned to the ferry. Barden was mad as hops at McMahon and kept calling him names. That night after we put our horses out, Barden said that next morning we'd go back and kill the damned little Irishman and take his sheep anyway.

I told him that would never do because we'd be sure to be caught. He said, "Why, we could put that little man out of the way, drive off all the sheep and never be detected in the world."

"I don't want any part of killing," I told him.

Barden insisted on it and said he would do the actual job. "You come along," he said, "and after I've killed McMahon, you can help hide the body." If I'd do this and assist him in driving the sheep to Douglas County on Elk Creek, he'd give me \$500, he said.

Well, Barden talked so smooth and kept saying how easy we could get away with it and never be found out, that he gulled me into it. I agreed and we were set to carry out the plan the next day.

But during that night it stormed and the foothills were covered with snow. Barden was afraid to try the plan because the snow was too deep on the Trail Creek mountains for the sheep to cross. He decided to put it off until spring so we went back to Douglas County.

All during the winter whenever I saw Barden he talked about putting the damned little Irishman out of the way and getting a nice band of sheep at the same time. "You're going to get \$500 all your own," he told me, "and that's considerable money for a young man." He said things like this all the time to keep me nerved up for the action.

So, in February, when the weather was fair, Barden decided it was time to carry out the plan and we left for Reese Creek, fully prepared to do what he said and drive the sheep away.

That night, the 20th, we reached McMahon's cabin. He invited us in and didn't suspect anything. He gave us supper and made a bed for us.

Barden said he'd like to take a little walk and look over the lay of the land and that we -- McMahon and I -- should come with him. Well, it was a chilly evening, but McMahon consented and all three of us went out on foot.

Barden decoyed him over into a gulch, about a mile and a half from the cabin. We were walking, single file, along a sheep trail; McMahon was ahead, Barden came next and I brought up the rear. Just as McMahon went to step across a fallen tree branch, Barden pulled out his six-shooter and shot him in the back of the head.

McMahon fell backward and had no more than struck the ground when Barden shot him in the head again. I just stood there. Somehow I didn't really think it would happen, but it did.

Barden looked around and spotted a hole that had been washed out by high water under the foot of a tree about forty feet away. You couldn't have made a place with a pick and shovel that would have been better in shape and size than this hole; it was an exact fit. We carried McMahon over there and put him in that hole, and Barden said, "This is the last we'll see of the Irishman." We covered the body with a layer of fine brush and then piled in leaves, rocks and driftwood. When we were finished, he was completely concealed from view, and no one would ever suspect he was down there. Then we gathered leaves and scattered them around, covering up all signs of blood at the spot.

After that we started back to the cabin. About half way there Barden began to sing in a loud and cheerful voice. The singing didn't make me feel any better and pretty soon he said, "You can quit hanging down your underlip. This isn't the first son of a bitch I had to put out of the way."

When we got back to the cabin we saddled up our horses and rode out and gathered up the sheep and corralled them in the pen that McMahon had built for them. Then we put our horses out and went into the cabin and cooked supper, fed Barden's dogs, and went to bed.

In the morning we had breakfast and made a little grub stake. Barden said it was a shame to let the food go to waste, and he decided he could use McMahon's blankets, so we packed them and drove the sheep out of the pen and headed for Douglas County.

CONTINUATION OF T.B.KENT'S EVIDENCE

After Dilworth Carey acknowledged that he was present when Barden had done the shooting, the sheriff sent for T. G.

Reames who was well acquainted with that part of the country. With his help we got an accurate diagram of the place where the body was concealed. That same night, the 21st, Dr. J.A. Callendar and I (Kent) accompanied by a number of persons living in that neighborhood rode out and hitched up our horses within thirty feet of the body.

Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the night being very dark, we were unable to do anything towards finding the body until morning. So we built a campfire and rested easy. As soon as it was light enough we started in search and in a few minutes we found the object of our quest just as Carey had described it to me.

Several of the men in the party identified the body of Daniel McMahon and Dr. Callendar, Dr. Mathias, and the Coroner, H.T. Inlow, testified after they had examined him that the wounds in the head were sufficient to produce death instantly.

The body was put in a box, taken to Jacksonville and placed in the Town Hall where those desiring to see it could do so. Partly chewed by some animal, with half the head shot away, it was a ghastly sight, but a large crowd, including several ladies, came to look at it. The following day it was placed in a neat casket, and poor Daniel McMahon was given a decent burial. Squire Hoffman said a few appropriate words over the mound.

The Court authorized Pat Ryan, as administrator, to sell the man's personal property, and Joseph McMahon, a brother from some seaport or other, showed up to claim the sheep. All that remained of the little Irishman was scattered hither and yon, but his murderer was still very much in evidence.

DESCRIPTION OF BARDEN (SENTINEL)

HESTER B. BARDEN was between 35 and 40 years of age and was a native of Tennessee, and at last accounts, his mother, one sister and a brother were still living. He was a man of about 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, weighed about 200 pounds and undoubtedly possessed almost unequalled muscular powers; was fair skinned and had a kind of milky blue eyes; his hair and whiskers were black and a little inclined to be curly; was pretty smart and a very nice talker;

in other words he is one of those slick-tongued fellows, and undoubtedly was a great lover of mutton. From the best information we can get of his character prior to the murder of Daniel McMahon, he was a bushwhacker in Tennessee during the war, and when he left Tennessee he came to Nevada; judging from his own remarks his crimes commenced here, although he never directly confessed to a particular crime.

From Nevada he came to Oregon and located near Canyonville in Douglas County, and lived there up to the time of his arrest for the above crime. He had been shot four times and three of those entered in front about his waist, two of them in the left side and passing through the back part of his hips, and the other in his right side and lodged in the body; and the fourth shot was with a shotgun in the upper part, but on the left side of his chest. Judging from the appearance of the scars, he was shot with goose shot.

Prior to that time he was a man that commanded good credit in the stores at Canyonville and was considered a hustler and accumulated property very fast, more especially sheep, and would take a game of poker occasionally with the boys; also he had been accused of taking his neighbors' sheep a number of different times but the people in that vicinity did not think much of little troubles of that kind among sheep men for the reason that it is a very common thing for that class of persons. The first band of sheep that Barden got, he purchased from two Irishmen that lived up south Umpqua near Elk Creek. Barden gave his note to the boys for their sheep. Shortly after that Barden reported that they had both gone to California and they have never been heard of since, and now the general supposition is by all who were acquainted with the circumstances that Barden paid those Irish boys for the sheep in the same way that he paid Daniel McMahon.

There have been several other persons of means that fell in company with Chester Barden and very mysteriously left the country, and the last seen of them was in Barden's company; for instance that wheat merchant, Mr. Packard, from the Willamette, was last

seen with him in the vicinity of Canyonville, and as usual with Barden's supposed victims, he has never been heard of since.

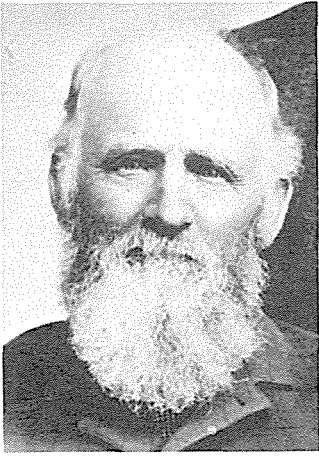
Barden was unquestionably a success as a criminal up to the time of his murdering Daniel McMahon on the 20th day of February, 1875. This was his last crime and the only surprising thing about his last murder was that he would take an ignorant and half-witted boy into confidence with him in crime.

THE TRIAL OF BARDEN FOR INSANITY

When he was committed to the county jail, Chester Barden was undoubtedly a keen, shrewd fellow, ready to stand trial and appear before a jury. But owing to the amount of criminal business on the docket at the time, Judge Prim called a special term of the court for the first Monday in May. When Barden was informed that there would be a delay of several months, he began his erratic behavior. He seemed to make a studied attempt to escape his trial, either by death or by commission to the insane asylum. At first he became very religious, chanting sacred hymns with great fortitude, and loudly crying out at intervals, "Bright angels! Bright angels!" He spoke in an irrational manner and refused to eat. From then on he feigned insanity -- or actually became insane -- and as a result was not arraigned at the special term in May nor in the regular term in June.*

His steadily deteriorating condition caused a great deal of concern among his keepers and the good citizens of the town. They didn't want to be cheated of the pleasure of seeing him dangle from a rope and get what was coming to him. In May the assistant jailer, Charles Harris, while searching through Barden's clothes, found some arsenic wrapped in a paper in a coat pocket. How Barden had procured it was a mystery since no one had been with him since his confinement except his attorney, J.F. Gazley, who certainly did not furnish it. An examination of the coat, which Barden had been using as a pillow, revealed a slit in the collar, and conjecture had it that he had entered the jail with the

*In April, Peter Britt took his picture. No doubt Britt intended to show it to curious contemporaries but today, as the portrait of a murderer, it still attracts interest.



arsenic concealed there. Everyone had a pet theory of the purpose of the poison:

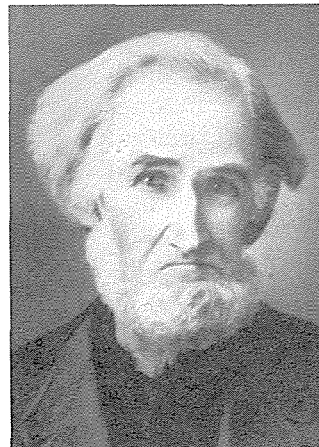
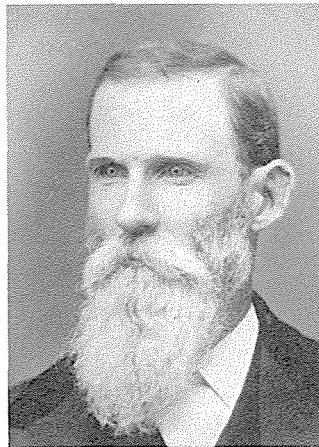
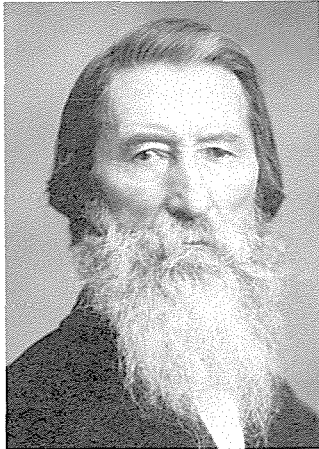
1) he was taking limited amounts daily which accounted for the sorry state of his health; 2) the only witness against him was Dilwirth Carey, and Barden planned to put him out of the way; 3) if his case proved hopeless, he would take his own life.

Confiscation of the powder did not, as some had prophesied, cause Barden's physical condition to improve. He weakened visibly at a steady rate and by the end of the year his condition was alarming.

Judge P.P. Prim announced that the Oregon statute (in 1875) was silent on the subject of insanity and few cases were to be found on the subject.* Prim decided that he might determine the preliminary question himself or that he might call a jury to decide. After some contemplation he ordered a jury to answer two questions: *first*: Is the defendant at this time insane? *second*: Has he at this time sufficient intelligence to understand the nature of the proceedings against him and to make a rational defense to the indictment?

*We thought the judgment, *acquittal by reason of insanity*, had been accepted by the courts since antiquity. Could the newspaper be misquoting Judge Prim?

Circuit Court Jurors:
(top) Hugh F. Barron
(2nd) Peter Britt
(3rd) W.J. Plymale
(4th) C.C. McClelland



The trial began on December 3 in the Circuit Court. E.B. Watson appeared as special District Attorney; J.R. Neil appeared for the state. Barden was represented by J.F. Gazely.

The defendant was carried into Court on a mattress by four men. The *Democratic Times* declared he presented a pitiful spectacle. Through starvation and otherwise he had reduced himself from the hearty man of 200 pounds when he entered the jail to a cringing skeleton weighing less than 60 pounds. He lay on his pallet shaking and going through various contortions of the face and body which the physicians pronounced feigned.

When he was called upon to plead to the indictment, he babbled away in great unconcern and did not appear to be aware he was being spoken to. His counsel interposed for him and said, "The defendant is insane and is not possessed of sufficient intelligence to understand the proceedings against him or to make a rational defense to the indictment."

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EVIDENCE

The jailer and the deputy sheriff gave their testimonies and told how the defendant had come gradually to his present state. They were followed by four prominent physicians of Jacksonville, each of whom presented his conclusions.

TESTIMONY OF J.A. CALLENDAR, M.D.

Dr. Callendar testified that he was the regular medical attendant at the jail and had been in charge of Barden since his admission. When the prisoner was arrested he was perfectly healthy to all appearances. At the end of two weeks he complained consistently of violent pain in his head but Dr. Callendar found nothing abnormal in either his pulse or his temperature. After the alleged pain had continued for some time, the doctor did not remember the exact duration, Barden fell into a comatose condition and remained to all appearances insensible for several days. He then passed from this state to a sort of muttering delirium, accompanied by violent twitching of the muscles and double *strabismus* (crossed-eyes). These symptoms continued without any abatement until the time of his trial for insanity.

Dr. Callendar testified that he was always under the impression that the

prisoner was feigning insanity and he tried various means to expose him but without effect. Once he held a lighted candle under Barden's nose, close enough to singe it, but Barden showed no sign except that the veins in his neck and forehead swelled and turned a violent red. The doctor then chloroformed him but could discover nothing except that when coming out from under the anesthetic he showed no twitching of the muscles until fully recovered. (It's a wonder the good doctor, in trying to trick the prisoner into revealing his sanity, didn't kill him.)

On Thanksgiving Day Dr. Callendar secreted himself in Barden's cell to see if he could discover anything while Barden thought he was unobserved. (Now, this is dedication: to pursue an unwavering course of duty while everyone else is enjoying a turkey dinner.) Dr. Callendar invited his colleague, Dr. Aiken, to join him in the trickery and they hid behind a curtain in the front room of the jail. Batting his eyes and twitching spasmodically, Barden was ushered in and seated at a table where an appetizing dinner was put before him.

He continued his jerking and fidgeting until he heard the jailer lock the door and the jail yard gate. He then raised himself on his elbows, and -- as his observers later testified -- looked out the window with "as keen and cunning an expression on his face as any man could wear."

After deciding he was unobserved, he ate a hearty meal and afterwards lay back, picking his teeth and smacking his lips with every sign of enjoyment. During this time he showed no signs of muscular agitation or strabismus. In fact his face wore the expression of a perfectly rational man.

After watching him for some time, Dr. Callendar suddenly drew aside the curtain that screened the doctors from Barden's view. Barden's eyes dilated to about twice their size and his face and neck flushed to a bright scarlet. In an instant he resumed his twitching, his eyes were as much crossed as ever, and he began his delirious muttering again.

Dr. Callendar told him it was no use to continue the farce, as he and Dr. Aiken had been watching him for some time. This statement had no effect. Barden continued his spasms and grimacing from then on until the end of the comedy.

Dr. Callendar concluded, "Chester Barden is a perfectly sane man, but his mind

has been completely weakened by his reduced physical condition. This of course must happen to any one who has eaten almost nothing and has subjected his body to abusive treatment for such a long time."

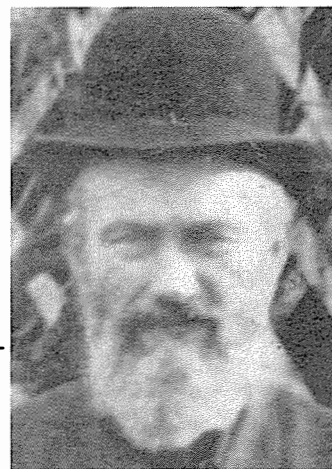
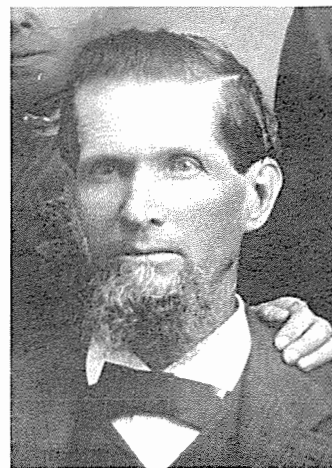
TESTIMONY OF G.H. AIKEN, M.D.

Much of Dr. Aiken's story duplicates that of Dr. Callendar, and his conclusion is the same, but there are several interesting changes in his testimony.

Am by profession a physician and surgeon. Was requested by the court to examine Chester Barden on the question of insanity on the 9th and 10th of November 1875. Visited the prisoner on several occasions. First visit determined little more than to excite suspicion that he was feigning insanity.

When I first entered his cell, I found him muttering incoherently, rolling his eyes about, simulating, to a degree, strabismus or squinting and waving his arms spasmodically... The peculiar rotary motion of the arms [I am sure] was subject only to the exercise of the will... I requested the keepers to make arrangements that I might observe the actions of the prisoner without his knowledge of my presence.

Stationed myself in front part of the jail and Barden was placed on the bed at the opposite side of the room and the keeper retired



The Jurors Continued:
5. Merritt Bellinger
6. Al Sturgis
Judge P.P. Prim
(not pictured)
Rial Benedict
Welborn Beeson
W.T. Leever
Robert Bannister
James Kilgore
Daniel Cronemiller





G.H. Aiken, M.D.

[The prisoner] continued the movements of the arms and the incoherent babbling but his eyes were in a normal condition and his expression was that of a sane man.

In the morning he was placed on the floor between two windows and before a comfortable fire. The keeper brought in a plate of soup and some water and left him. Immediately after he found himself alone, he raised himself up, looked out the windows and took a glance at the surroundings. He then drew the plate of soup to his side and ate with movements as steadily and naturally as any sane man and with seeming satisfaction.

Having eat part of the soup, he sat before the fire, warmed and rubbed his feet and legs. Next he took small hand-fuls of straw from the bed and lighting the same, trimmed his beard by singeing it. This at times necessitated lively work to extinguish the flames. He then returned to his food, took a little more soup and filled the plate with water and stirred the same with a spoon; then drank a little water and lay down. I had a good opportunity to note the expression of the face and eyes which con-

trasted not the least with that of a maniac nor the careless indifference of the imbecile, but his movements and deportment were that of a keen, shrewd and designing man.

During all this time he did not utter a sound, there were no muscular twitchings nor strabismus, but as soon as the jailer commenced to unlock the door he at once returned to his old tricks in good earnest.

[Dr. Aiken's version of the time when he and Dr. Callendar surreptitiously observed the prisoner together is virtually the same as Dr. Callendar's testimony. Dr. Aiken, however, added that when Barden again began his muttering and twitching, a sharp slap from Dr. Callendar brought him up straight and temporarily checked his movements.] Dr. Aiken continues:

Defendant is much emaciated and constitution is very much broken down, but believe that he is conscious of all that is transpiring here today. With present physical prostration the faculties of the mind and mental powers would necessarily be impaired to a certain extent.

To the question: "Is this man in your opinion in his present condition able to make a rational defense?" I must say I believe he is a sane man in possession of every faculty of the mind and able to control those movements which would seem involuntary.

Under cross examination, Dr. Aiken admitted this was the first case of simulated insanity he had examined and testified he had been unable to count Barden's pulse because he was continually flailing his arms about. He found his temperature to be about a hundred. Yes, he was aware that constipation was present and agreed that "Obstinate constipation is usually a prominent feature in cases of insanity," but added, "All cases of obstinate constipation are not necessarily insane," a medical statement that will bring peace of mind to many stubborn cases among our readers.

The actions and movements of the prisoner, Dr. Aiken decided, were not consistent with any phase of insanity. "The man presents some of the symptoms peculiar to mania," he said, "some to dementia and others to imbecility. The offensive odor present in this case," Dr. Aiken concluded, "is in consequence

of filthy habits, obstinate constipation and exhalations from the body and lungs and prison life." (Apparently no one thought Barden a scholarship candidate for charm school.)

EVIDENCE OF S. DANFORTH, M.D.

I have not seen any symptoms of insanity in the prisoner here arraigned although I have watched him with a view to ascertain his state of mind. The symptoms which he has always presented are those of an imposter; the motions he kept up when I saw him were the result of deliberation or determination, the muscles which were brought into operation are those of volition; that is, entirely under the control of the will; his present emaciated condition is the result of deliberate starvation. He is fully sane and capable of making a rational defense; his mind is no doubt considerably weakened by his protracted abstinence from food.

(A fourth doctor, Dr. Mackey, offered evidence which repeated the findings of the others.)

The four doctors who testified certainly summed up the situation to everyone's enlightenment. It would be a pretty chuckleheaded juror who failed to see his duty. But Judge Prim's charge to the twelve good men and true comes as an anticlimax. The distinguished judge was only in his fifty-second year, but he rambled interminably as if he felt he must simplify the evidence given by the doctors and explain the various facets of madness to a possibly inept jury. He made certain the members thoroughly understood their assignment and he dwelt on all angles, scientific, criminal and medical. He concluded:

The test of insanity, when set up to prevent a trial, is whether the prisoner is mentally competent to make a rational defense to the indictment; that is, whether he is capable of understanding the nature and object of the proceedings going on against him; whether he rightly comprehends his own condition in reference to such proceedings, and can conduct his defenses in a rational manner. If so, for the purpose of being tried, he is to be deemed sane.

In arriving at a conclusion on this

question it must be born in mind that every man is presumed to be sane and responsible for his acts until the presumption is overcome by the evidence; and that the affirmation of this issue is with the defendant. Therefore, if the evidence fails to satisfy the jury that the prisoner is insane, they should find him sane.

Members of the jury may as well have remained in their chairs. There was little discussion and less disagreement. They filed out to the jury room, sat down, voted and filed back into the courtroom. The verdict surprised no one:

We the jury find the defendant sane, but in no condition to make a proper defense to the indictment pending against him.

James Kilgore
Foreman

Chas. Nickell, editor of the *Times*, wrote: "He has perhaps gone too far with his desperate game. It seems probable that he will never *die with his boots on!*" Editor Nickell was prophetic. A week after the jury found Barden unable to stand trial, he died.

An article in the *Times* revealed that later in the evening of December 10, "Jailer Leslie left him alive, and although Barden said he desired nothing, still he acted as if he wanted to tell him something; but he divulged nothing of importance.

"Dr. Callendar and Hon. W.J. Plymale were also in his cell the day before he died, but failed to learn anything, although he seemed solicitous for them to listen to him.

"*Chester P. Barden has cheated the gallows.*"

In the meantime, when it became known to Dilwirth Carey that Barden was dead, he became eager for his trial. The Court being on the point of adjourning, he was hastily arraigned and pleaded guilty to the charge of the larceny of eleven hundred sheep.

Before sentence was passed the District Attorney asked of the Court that he be merciful in his sentence. Carey had become a witness for the State and had given

information which permitted the authorities to solve the murder of Daniel McMahon. The District Attorney told the court: "In his story, the young man gave details of the killing and described the ground where the body was concealed so minutely that the officers and others were enabled to find it readily. Had the finding of the body been delayed but a little longer, it would have been past identification and a prosecution against Barden would have been futile."

In the same issue of the *Times* which reported Barden's death, a brief announcement appeared about young Dilworth Carey's hasty trial which took less than an hour's time:

Saturday, December 11th
State vs. Dilworth Carey; indictment for larceny. The Defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to ten years imprisonment in the Penitentiary and to pay costs. Court then adjourned without delay.

The Sentinel printed Barden's exit music:

THE FINAL ACT THE DEATH OF BARDEN

Chester Barden died on Saturday, the 11th of December, 1875, in the jail of this county. His attempts to reduce himself by starvation and his confinement produced hemorrhage of the lungs in just a week after the jury found him sane. He died in the old stone jail with no one to even wet his parched lips or offer a prayer for the soul of the poor wretch; died forsaken by wife and kindred; died under a malediction of everyone to whom his crimes were known, with the gallows staring him in the face day and night,

with no earthly hope and no hope of a hereafter, suffering ten thousand times more than his poor victim, the spirit that prison wall cannot hold or restrain has gone, none knoweth whither.

Thus ends the vilest murderer and thief that ever disgraced civilization.

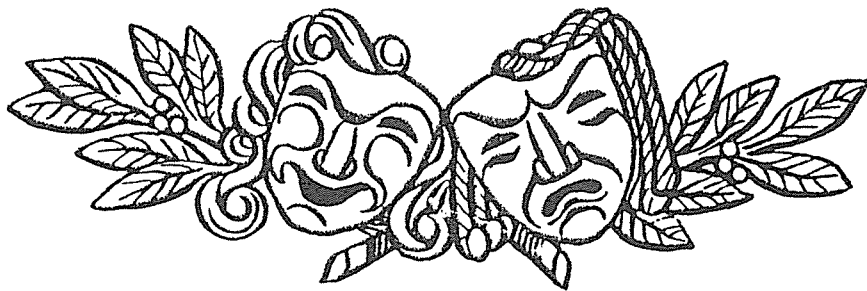
The Times, not to be outdone, put in its variation on the theme:

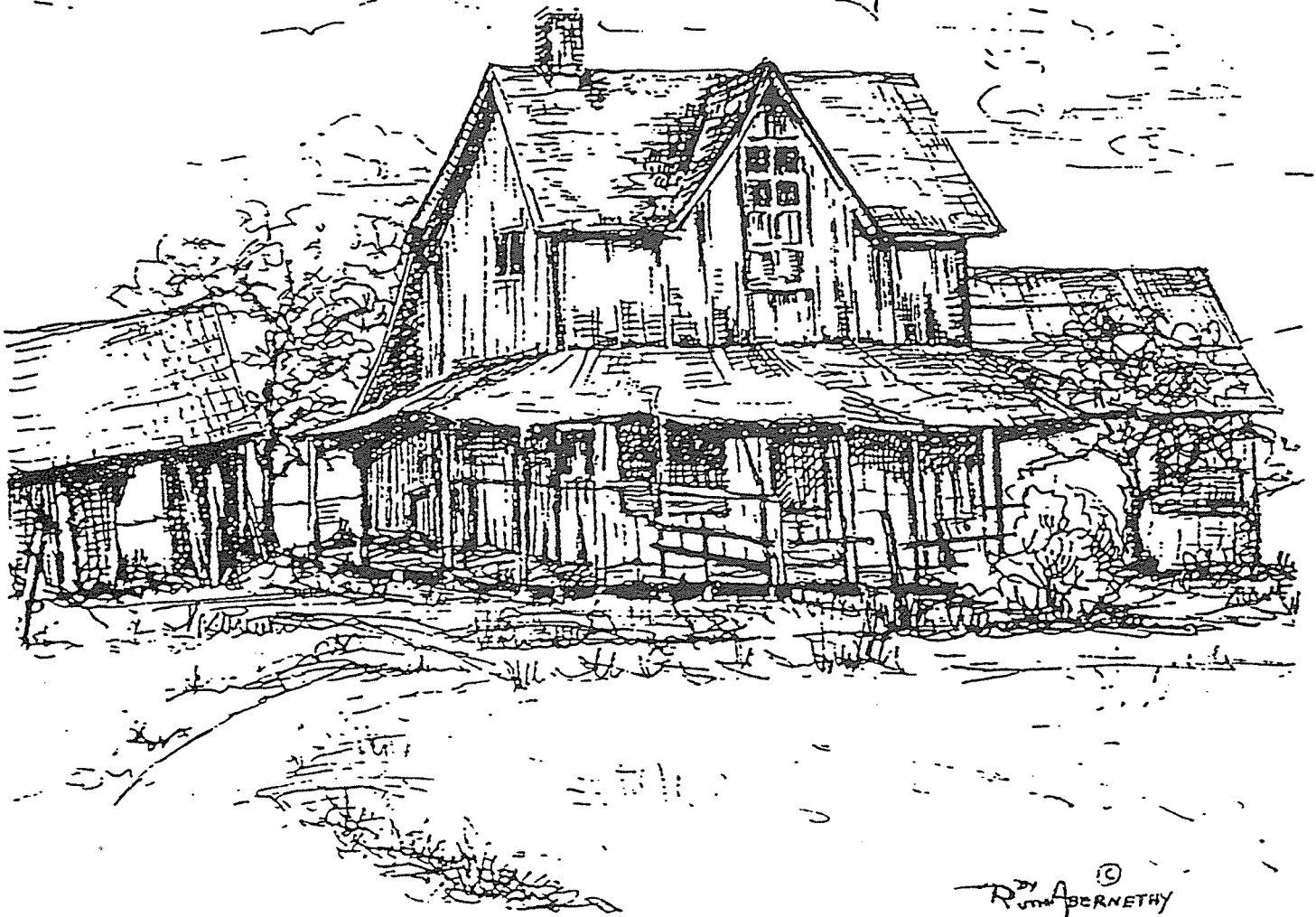
Chester Barden has cheated the gallows; but in doing so he has suffered a death a thousand times worse. Alone in his cell, with no one near to give him even so much as a drink of water, his spirit fled to its Maker, unhonored and unsung. His case has been taken to a tribunal from which there is no appeal.

Thus endeth the career of an individual whose life has doubtless been a dark one, the history of which would perhaps make one's blood run cold. But it will never come to the knowledge of mortal man for Barden has carried it to the grave with him.

...In his death, the county is rid of a continual expense and the sheriff of an eyesore. Can anyone bid him rest in peace?

Chester Barden, in his last few moments may have found some satisfaction in making good his boast, "They'll never hang me." He surely thought that by feigning insanity, he could escape his trial and be committed to the safety of an asylum, but the pretense got out of hand. Only a man with the physical structure of a Titan could have withstood the torment he put himself through, and the noose, unthinkable as it is, would have been a far less torturous way to escape the death cell.





The Woods House & Family

by

Barbara A. Hegne

The Woods House, still standing on the Crater Lake Highway, has been the subject of many landscapes. Photographers and artists have memorialized it, and romanticists have fancied the stories it could tell. Ms. Hegne, a descendant of the Woods family, lets us in on a few secrets. The pen and ink sketch above is by Ruth Abernethy, who has graciously permitted us to reproduce it for this issue.

If the Woods House could speak it might reveal the secrets held quiet within its embrace of decaying and splintering boards. The 115 year old farmhouse sits alone now, just at the edge of the Crater Lake Highway, not much

more than a mile north of Eagle Point. The wooden framework seems to hypnotize the passers by, and few travelers who speed along the highway for the first time fail to wonder about the deserted and lonely dwelling place. To many the Woods House has become a personal concern and they

* Barbara Hegne has many literary credits. She is the author of several books and pamphlets, has written a column and miscellaneous articles on health and fitness, and has published nutrition and exercise plans for various age groups. She has acted as nutritional consultant and has taught exercise

and dance classes at Truckee Meadows Community College and the University of Nevada at Reno. She is even an expert on belly dancing. We are pleased to present her story on the Woods House in this issue of the newsletter.



wonder what destiny has for it. Will it stand strong for another century or will it fall under the unrelenting laws of nature? What about the old days when the house was alive and filled with the excitement and the moods of the people who lived there?

If the house were able to relate its past, undoubtedly it would begin with Marvin Sylvester Wood, its builder. He was born in 1836 in New York and during the Civil War was a corporal in Company F, Michigan Infantry. In battle he was shot in the jaw and the bullet passed all the way through his shoulder. Critically wounded, he lay three days and nights before he was discovered, cared for and brought back to life. At the close of the war he and his brother migrated west by way of Cape Horn and settled in the Oregon Territory. Marvin filed a homestead claim in 1869 for some land just out of Eagle Point, and he and his brother built a small cabin on it.

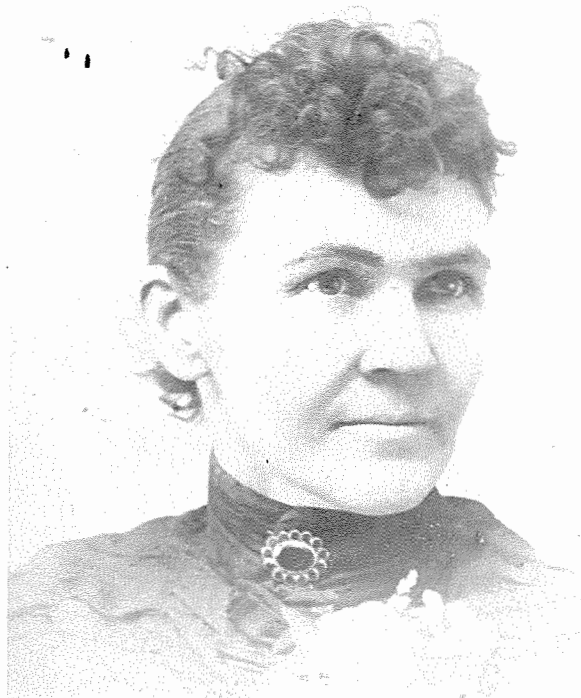
That year two tragedies occurred: his brother died and the little cabin burned down. With determination and perseverance Marvin began to build another house, one that was bigger, better and stronger. He constructed it with the best hardwood cut from trees above the Prospect area, and he made it roomy and included an upstairs and a wrap-around porch on the

lower floor, perfect for sitting in the cool of the evening. Just inside the front door the steps inclined steeply to the bedrooms above. From the top windows the view expanded across the valley floor as far as the eye could see over acres and acres of chest-high wild grasses. Marvin's sister, Lucelia, moved in with him for awhile, but a man nearly forty years old needed tender companionship more than he needed a cook and a floor sweeper.

Marvin met, courted and married Susan Carolina Griffith in 1879 -- and he probably got more than he bargained for. Susan was a spicy twenty year old beauty born in Jacksonville to a pioneer family. Her mother, Mary Amanda, was born in North Carolina in 1828 and her family began a slow migration west in 1831. After ten years in Tennessee and another ten in Missouri, they walked all the way to the Oregon Territory, arriving in 1853. On the way west Mary Amanda wore a hand-woven shawl she had made to cover her shoulders against the chilly evening breezes. This beautiful shawl eventually became a precious heirloom of the Woods family.

Susan Griffith Wood was an independent sort of woman who could best be described as being both charming and shrewd. She emphasized her petite, high-bosomed

figure by showing off her womanly curves in fashionable dresses. She possessed a natural instinct for mid-wifery and was called upon to help young ladies in distress, who were caught in a family way unexpectedly. She was confident and industrious and in 1891 she filed an ownership of separate property for married women in the Jackson County courthouse. She listed all her own stock and their brands and stated that she had acquired her individual property and stock by her own exertion, and that it was separate and apart from her husband's holdings. Susan could ride a horse, shoot a gun and run the farm in full command. She loved to entertain and outside the house hung the sign, "Travelers' Home," a sort of early bed and breakfast greeting to the tired and weary wayfarer. Susan and Marvin brought tears and laughter to the old home place with the birth of three children, Mayme, Ora and Walter. The girls grew up to be quite beautiful and like their mother were petite, attractive and vivacious. Walter was a boy who held to himself but even in his youth he tended toward being a bit of an eccentric character. He thought nothing of pulling a pigtail or putting a water snake down a neighbor girl's back, but although he was a little odd, he never did any real harm.



Susan Griffith Wood



Marvin Wood and Susan Griffith, 1876

The home fires in the Woods house burned brightly for many years and all the usual events of school days, growing up and farm life took place there. Then in 1900 Marvin divorced Susan and moved to Eagle Point and Mayme and Ora moved out of the valley to greener pastures. Susan became master of the house and Walter, her helper. She continued her occupation as mid-wife, and Marvin became a healer of sorts in his own right. All the children of Eagle Point would go to Marvin and let him spit on their warts and soon the warts would disappear. Joyce Bailey wrote that she had warts all over both hands and after two months of contemplating and suffering, she finally got enough nerve to ask Marvin to spit on them. He did and the warts went away. Neva Clifford of Eagle Point told how she begged Marvin to spit on her warts and while she was rubbing the magic saliva through her hands, she asked him what he thought about when he did his cure and his reply was brief and to the point: "Nothing. I don't think nothing at all." Marvin moved to Eagle Point but when he became ill he came home, to his real home, the Woods house, and there he died quietly in 1924.

Susan remarried to a man named John Hart, but she died a widow in the old



Mayme and Ora Wood

homeplace where she had lived for fifty years. That was in 1929 and her last actions show she remained in control of her faculties to the end. She got up, built a fire, dressed, fixed her hair, made up her bed and lay down on it and died.

Walter was the real character of the Woods House. He wasn't mean or ornery or even bad looking but he didn't believe in getting too close to a razor; consequently, he grew a beard that covered most of his face and hung way down below his chin. The mustache under his nose completely covered his top lip. Walter's beard was his most noticeable feature, especially when it got caught in the middle of an eating, spitting and chewing session and turned dingy brown. When Walter went to town, the young ladies would scurry to the other side of the street and try to avoid him because he pointedly said sarcastic remarks which only another fellow could appreciate. Even his hat band made a statement of dry humor as it attracted the eyes of the beholder with the message "It's sure hell to be poor." But Walter wasn't poor at all, and in his prime he ran a successful ranch, having over 300 head of white face cattle along with horses, goats and chickens, and at harvest time he cut and hauled acres of wheat to market. Walter married Charlotta Conover (Lottie) and settled down. She was a quiet, pleasant Rogue Valley girl whom he had known all his life. They had two sons, Harold and Earl, but Harold died in infancy. Through the following years Walter kept the ranch

going at its full capacity and now and then sold an occasional piece of land left from his parents' estate.

He was known to take a sip of moonshine now and then, but after Lottie divorced him in 1925, his urge for a few short snorts broadened considerably. In those years of renegade bootleggers, moonshine stills were all over the Rogue Valley from Elk Creek down through Trail, Shady Cove and all around the hills of Eagle Point. But who would suspect Walter of setting up and operating a still right there on the Woods property? The sheriff's officer of Jackson County did, of course, and in October, 1926, he armed himself with a search warrant which suggested Walter was hiding "certain intoxicating whiskey-liquor on his property." A deputy's job in those days was difficult because anyone who was working a still usually had a guard on watch too, and by the time an officer had arrived to make his search, the place was clean. Anyone traveling the dusty roads in any direction could be seen for miles from



Walter Wood

the old Wood's homestead. Whether Walter was operating a still or had hidden whiskey is not known because no liquor was found and all charges were dropped. Walter no sooner got out of that scrape with the law when he was in hot water again. A charge was filed against him on December 24, 1926, that he was operating a vehicle while he was under the influence of intoxicating liquor. And he was not only charged with being inebriated, he was also accused of running into two automobiles on the Crater Lake Highway. Of course, he denied the whole thing, stated he didn't think he had done anything wrong and pleaded not guilty.

Walter was on a losing streak; he lost nearly everything except the farm and house, and then, by another quirk of fate, he almost lost that too, twice. For some reason Walter quit paying his bills. Although to outsiders all seemed well on the old Woods place, Walter wasn't putting a share of his profits into bills and upkeep. In 1931 Walter's sister Ora wrote him from Portland that his lawyer had contacted her because the assessments and taxes on the old homeplace had not been paid, nor had Mr. Perl of the funeral home received payment for their mother's burial expenses. Legal action was threatened and the farm was about to go on the auction block. Somehow, with his two sisters hot on his heels, Walter



Lottie Conover Wood



Old Whiskers

managed to pull himself up by his bootstraps, straighten up, pay the bills and save the house. He lived quietly for another sixteen years before he had to face the second catastrophe. In 1947 he was informed that State Highway 62 was going through his property and right through his house and it was going to be condemned. Walter was in a rage. No amount of money would make it right to destroy the house his father had built 77 years before. After much controversy the state agreed not to condemn the house but to move it instead. They couldn't move it back because there was too much of a dropoff so they nailed it up, removed the porch and chimney and moved it to a spot chosen by Walter on the other side of the proposed highway. He made the state dig him a well right beside the house and soon he again set up house-keeping.

Although it's told that Walter was kind of an old codger, he had a soft heart and would help a friend in distress if he had a mind to. He met a young lady who was homeless and seemed to be without friends or a means of support and he offered her a place to stay. Her stay lasted for years.

His son Earl had moved to California and Walter must have been lonely, alone in that big old house out in the country. In his later years people called him "Old Whiskers," "Santa Claus" and "The Hermit" because he kept to himself. He certainly looked and played the part. On good days he would sit on the old wrap-around porch and watch the cars go by or he would shuffle along the edge of the highway to Eagle Point for sit-and-spit gab session with the local boys. Walter was saddened when his grandmother's shawl which he had so long treasured came up missing. It was found later, wrapped around some leaky water pipes in the house, stained, rotted and ruined. A relative had thought it was just an old blanket and had used it to

stop the drip.

"Old Whiskers" died September 9, 1974, and his housekeeper became the new owner of the Woods property as Walter had passed it on to her. She kept the place for ten years then sold it to a California Real Estate agency in 1983.

The heat of the summer sun and the freezing rain of over a hundred seasons have taken a toll on the old homestead. The house is no longer strong, the aged wood is loose and splitting and the braces are ready to fall. The boards creak and in winter the howling wind whips through the open windows. The curious may enter at will. Take your pictures and paint your landscapes without delay because soon, very soon, it will all come tumbling down.

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

*Recently SOHS has added and replaced staff members.
In this issue we present two of them.*



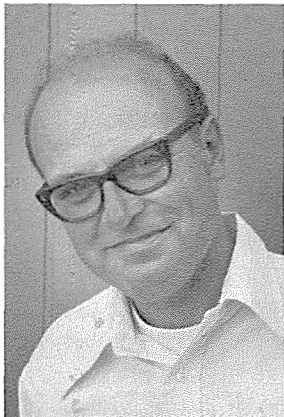
CYNTHIA WICKLUND, half time secretary to the Director of Operations and half-time oral history transcriber, first reported for duty at the Armstrong House on the first of August this year. She comes originally from Batavia, Illinois, where she attended the elementary school, graduated from high school, met Tom Wicklund, who lived three houses away, and married him. She acquired her proficiency on the typewriter keys and her technical virtuosity with Gregg Shorthand at the Moser Secretarial School in Chicago.

In 1966 the Wicklunds first came to Oregon where Tom attended graduate school, polishing his expertise in anatomy and physiology. After a couple of years at Corvallis they went east and Tom taught at a community college in Maryland for two years. Following that they moved to Chicago where Tom put in a two year stint teaching at Loyola University.

After their two years in Corvallis, they were hooked on the West and in 1978 they again migrated to Oregon, ending up in Medford, where Tom became a pharmaceutical salesman for Lederle Labs; Cynthia became a Brownie leader. In 1971 a daughter, Jennifer, was born. She attends Mid High.

The Wicklunds share many interests--which is always an asset to any merger. They are enthusiastic about birding and both belong to the Audobon Society. Cynthia edits the Audobon newsletter, and they have constructed a pond on their property to lure any wandering fowl. Unfortunately the pond has sprung a leak and at present they haven't even a visiting duck to entertain. The family are cross-country skiing *aficionados* and they have a cabin at Fish Lake.

Having been elected Most Likeable Student in her high school, there's certainly no apparent reason why she should not become Miss Congeniality at SOHS.



WALTER TILLEY, the new staff member of the custodian-housekeeping department, is a native son. Although he was born in Medford, he has spent most of his life in Jacksonville because that's where he wants to be. A stay in Pasadena where he graduated from high school, convinced him that if the Rogue River Valley isn't the Garden of Eden, it's a very reasonable facsimile. Having worked in maintenance for the Rogue Valley Packing Corporation for 23 years, he joins the SOHS staff with full qualifications.

Walter is a collector, but he doesn't pick up just any old thing. He has an enviable stamp collection and a very large accumulation of Indian artifacts. When he was a boy his grandfather gave him a bunch of Indian tools and tribal objects, and this gift became the spur which led to his present sizable collection.

He has not limited the relics to the Oregon area but has included west coast Indian gadgets from southern Alaska, British Columbia and Nevada down to the southern part of the country. He has turned his home into a museum in his spare time.

He is an amiable gent.

Photographs by Doug Smith.

This review has been reprinted by permission of Station KSOR which included it in the *KSOR GUIDE*, October, 1985. The book, *Southern Oregon: Short Trips Into History*, by Marjorie O'Harra may be purchased at the Museum Sales Shop. It sells for \$11.95 but with your membership discount is \$10.15 -- if you pick it up at the Sales Shop. We will mail it for a \$1 postage and handling fee.



Southern Oregon: Short Trips Into History

by Marjorie O'Harra
Southern Oregon Historical Society
Reviewed by Barbara Ryberg

The family car and a picnic basket are all that one needs to complete any of the short trips narrated in *Southern Oregon: Short Trips Into History* by Marjorie O'Harra. Inside this beautifully laid out volume are stories, legends, and pictures of homes from pioneer days, as well as pictures of the pioneers who built them. Each trip has a map to give a general idea of location; when necessary more detailed maps are suggested. There are even pages for notes, a thoughtful touch for a history buff.

What these short trips offer the curious is a view of the Rogue Valley and northern California which is rich in sentiment, excitement, and mystery. In Marjorie O'Harra's own words, history ought to be a "fun story." To illustrate her conviction, some of the narratives suggest a deeper story, a novel lurking underneath, perhaps.

Maryum's Rose is one such story. Maryum came to Oregon from Missouri in 1851. Wagon travel did not allow for

transport of any but essential goods, but she managed to include a cutting from her favorite rose. It blooms in the little Logtown Cemetery every May, keeping alive the sentiment behind her gesture.

There's nothing sentimental, however, about how Grizzly Peak received its name. The danger and excitement of Henry H. Chapman's encounter with a grizzly in the summer of 1885 is a classic. "First she caught me by my right thigh, tearing the flesh. I struggled . . . she caught me by the shoulder, ripped it apart. Then she went for my throat. Those big white teeth sunk into my neck and tore out the veins, but somehow they missed the big one." Chapman takes it in pioneer stride, concluding, ". . . never did go bear hunting again, just too damn dangerous."

Mystery supplants danger in the legends which surround Mt. Shasta. Nothing traps the imagination like a good mystery, and the body of poems, books, and "spooky stories" which surround this national treasure prove it.

Poet Joaquin Miller described Mt. Shasta as, "Lonely as God and white as the winter moon," capturing the essence of its power, spirit and distance. Whether it is true that inside the mountain Yak-tayvians are ringing chimes, or the Lenurians are teasing recreation seekers doesn't matter nearly as much as being able to speculate about the possibility that these strange things might be taking place. It is that very possibility that drives the imagination, which might be called history's underpinning. Because isn't it in the imagination that the past and future cross, and isn't it in the imagination that history lives?

It's fun to think about the nature of history, and it's even more fun to be able to participate in some of the experiences and places that helped shape where we live. Remember to take the book along, and who knows, that larger story might even take form.

Barbara Ryberg is a freelance writer based in Ashland.



Photo by Doug Smith

NEWSLETTER PRESENTS SAM WEGNER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



OHS's new Director of Operations, Sam Wegner, joined the administrative staff in June. His educational majors and his previous positions have made him well qualified for this assignment. In 1973 he received his B.A. in history at the University of Arizona at Tucson and in 1975 was awarded his M.A. from the University of Idaho.

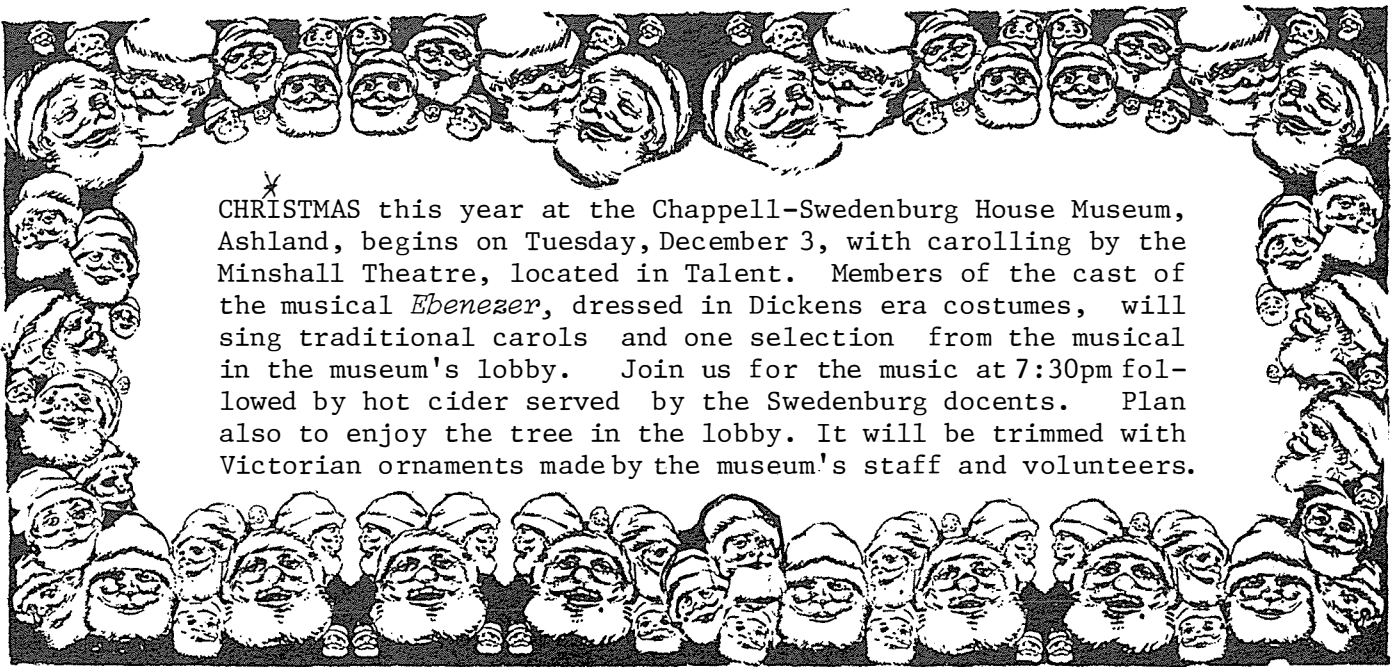
From 1976 to 1978 he became the Curator of Education at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison. In this position he was responsible for educational programs for the Main Museum, working in association with the schools. He was in charge of the docent program, guided tours, audio visual slides, films, trunk programs and crafts. He spent two and a half years in this position.

In 1978, moving to Brookfield, Missouri, he became assistant regional supervisor at the Missouri Division of Parks and Historic Preservation. He worked in the regional headquarters and supervised twelve historical sites in northern Missouri. He was in

charge of programs covering history, archeology, historical preservation, interpretation, exhibits, collections registrations and museum design development. He prepared plans, initiated programs, and gave the stamp of approval to all accepted programs.

At the Southern Oregon Historical Society he is responsible for day-to-day operations. He is concerned with the promotion of SOHS's goals for public education and the appreciation for all our cultural resources, including buildings, documents and historical heritage. "We are looking at taking care of our resources," he says. "Our concern is building a collection which gives an interpretation to our country's history."

He met his wife Linda in his senior year of high school at Twin Falls, Idaho. They were married in 1972. She is a very musical young lady and has an enchanting soprano voice. Their children are Ethan, 9, and Elena, 5. Ethan attends Jefferson Elementary School. "Being away from the West for ten years is long enough," Sam says. "We're delighted to be back."



CHRISTMAS this year at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland, begins on Tuesday, December 3, with carolling by the Minshall Theatre, located in Talent. Members of the cast of the musical *Ebenezer*, dressed in Dickens era costumes, will sing traditional carols and one selection from the musical in the museum's lobby. Join us for the music at 7:30pm followed by hot cider served by the Swedenburg docents. Plan also to enjoy the tree in the lobby. It will be trimmed with Victorian ornaments made by the museum's staff and volunteers.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Houses, two museums and a church will be decorated for Christmas during the Second Annual "Spirit Of Christmas Past" festival held in Jacksonville. The dates are Friday, Saturday and Sunday, November 29, 30 and December 1, and Saturday and Sunday, December 7 and 8, 1985. Tickets are \$2.50 for adults and children will be free when accompanied by an adult. Hours for the tour are from 1:00PM until 5:00PM on each of the five days.

Area residents, clubs, organizations and florists pool their efforts to bring back memories of this special holiday. Included on this year's tour will be the C. C. Beekman Home, decorated by the Jacksonville Garden Club; the home of Doug and Kathy Brown (the Helms House) which will be decorated by the family; the McCully House Inn, decorated by the Applegate Valley Garden Club; the Catholic Rectory trimmed by Sid's Florist; the Jacksonville Museum decorated by the Medford Garden Club and Flower's by Susie; the Children's Museum, decorated by area children and the First Presbyterian Church decorated by church members.

The festival was begun in 1985 to provide an opportunity for visitors to see historic houses and buildings decorated for Christmas and to revive some of the holiday traditions of the past. Participating organizations divide the



Kay Powell and Brenda Herp were among those that assisted with the festival in 1985.

Photo by Doug Smith

proceeds for use on community projects.

We hope that you will be among the visitors for the 1986 Spirit Of Christmas Past! For more information, call 899-1847 or watch our area papers for further announcements.



The cover photograph is a portrait of Margaret and Catherine Kubli, daughters of Cap Kubli and Mollie Miller Kubli. Margaret, who was once Queen of the Portland Rose Parade, became Mrs. Bob Robinson. Their children were Norman and Jane. The younger sister, Catherine Kubli Gordon, had no children.



Photograph by Natalie Brown-Geiger

GOLD DIGGERS ANTIQUE SHOW

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wall were among shoppers at the Gold Digger's Antique Show Preview Party. More than 2,100 attended the three day event which netted about \$1,500 for various projects. The Gold Diggers wish to thank all those who helped make the show a success. Next year's event will take place October 3,4,5, 1986. Mark your calendars now!



Photograph by Doug Smith

Staff members gathered on October 11, to pay a fond farewell to Ruth Goldschmidt who is retiring after five years of service. Good Luck Ruth!!!

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