

For the past six years nearly every issue of the newsletter has featured a pioneer family who crossed the plains to reach the far frontier. On several occasions we have been privileged to present diaries giving day-to-day accounts of the dangers of that tedious and treacherous trip. But not until the current issue have we reproduced a sketch of the Oregon Trail, which appears so harmless as it wanders across the five states. History reminds us that the entire journey was fraught with peril, but the worst part was at the end when the travelers reached the Columbia River in Oregon. For Jesse A. Applegate's vivid account of the passage down this menacing river, see page 10.

#### COVER

When Jacksonville fell upon hard times, many buildings were closed and locked; among them was St Joseph's little Catholic Church on Fourth Street. The congregation attended church in Medford, and for almost twenty years St. Joseph's stood empty, the bell silent, and the churchyard abandoned. The picture on the cover, of some historic interest, was taken in the 1940s during its period of neglect. It is gratifying today to see it in excellent condition with well-tended lawns behind its white picket fence.

#### FOR THE RECORD

Mrs. Jeanette Gore Person of Nevada City, California, advises us that the people in the pictures on page 19 of the December issue are incorrectly identified. She writes: "The top picture should have listed Edith Gore as the first on the left, then Jeanette Gore, Margaret Johnson and Elizabeth Gore. In the middle picture Margaret Johnson is at the left, then Edith, Jeanette and Elizabeth." We are sorry for the error; but this will set the record straight.

LIVING HISTORY INTERPRETERS ARE NEEDED

Applications and complete job descriptions for paid seasonal work with this summer's Living History Program are available at the Jacksonville Museum and the Chappell-Swedenburg House. *Application deadline is March 31*.

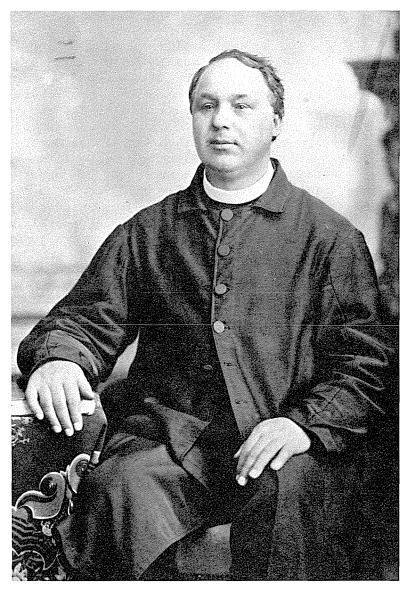
Those wishing to volunteer should contact Dawna Curler or Marge Herman, 899-1847.

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Father Francis Xavier Blanchet

# Father Blanchet Establishes the Ghurch Gharles Sweet

6 oday much of Jacksonville's early history is revealed in the buildings that are still to be seen on a walking tour of the town. No exception is St. Joseph's Catholic Church at the southeast corner of Fourth and D Streets. This classic-revival style structure, with its Gothic pointed-arch windows and door, was southern Oregon's first--and presently the oldest-standing Catholic parish church. Most frequently associated with this parish is the name of an illustrious French-Canadian family: Blanchet.

In Canada this family was established in Quebec when Pierre Blanchet, a native of Picardy, France, married Marie Founier on February 1, 1650. Marie was a descendant of an early Canadian colonist, pharmacist Louis Herbert, who came to America with Samuel Champlain, founder of Quebec. Among Pierre and Marie's offspring were many prominent citizens in the New World, including several who entered the priesthood. One such priest was their grandson, Francois Norbert When the French-Canadian fur Blanchet. traders of the Hudson Bay Company settled in the Oregon country, they wrote to the Quebec Archdiocese and expressed a need for a priest to care for their spiritual wants. Finally, in 1838, the Archbishop of Quebec commissioned two priests to establish missions in Oregon. They were 43-year old Francois Norbert Blanchet and 29-year old Modeste Demers, who had been ordained to the priesthood the year before and would be Blanchet's

assistant.

The two curates, in their black gowns, journeyed across Canada with a Hudson Bay Company caravan and, in the autumn of 1838, arrived at Fort Vancouver. Here they were greeted by Chief Factor James Douglas, who was in charge of the trading post while Dr. John McLoughlin was in Europe. During the ensuing years the two priests established missions throughout northern Oregon and southern Washington. In 1845 Abbe Blanchet was ordered back to Montreal, where he was consecrated as the Bishop of the Oregon Country by Pope Pius IX. During this same period, Father Demers became Bishop of Vancouver Island and Archbishop Blanchet's brother, Magloire, was made Bishop of Walla Walla. The Archbishop arrived back in Portland in 1847.

ollowing the discovery of gold in southern Oregon and the influx of miners and settlers, Archbishop Blanchet ordered Catholic missions to be established in this area. Priests from California and northern Oregon began visiting the mining camps and the little settlement of Jacksonville (then called Table Rock City) to administer the sacraments to the Catholic inhabitants. The year 1856 saw Father James Croke dispatched to Jacksonville by the Archbishop to evangelize southern Oregon. By then the placer and gold deposits were almost depleted, and the cleric found slim pickings among the miners. Father Croke toured the mining camps as far south as Yreka and eventually was able to collect \$856 from the goldseekers. This wasn't enough to build a chapel in Jacksonville, but in 1858 the church fathers authorized merchant John Anderson to solicit funds for this purpose. Another townsman, James Cluggage, donated four choice lots to Father Croke, who then drew up specifications for construction of St. Joseph's Church and had a contractor start the structure.

SOURCE MATERIAL

F.X.Blanchet, Ten Years on the Pacific Coast, (Edited by Edward J. Kowrach in 1892)
Sisters of the Holy Name, Gleanings of Fifty Years, pp. 110-112, 123-128.
M. Leona Nichols, The Mantle of Elias
SOHS biographical files
Reverend Wm. McLeod, Souvenir 1858-1958

The building was completed that fall, and in November, 1858, Archbishop Blanchet came down from Portland to dedicate the church. Soon thereafter, Father Croke went to California where he later became Vicar General of the San Francisco Archdiocese. The Reverend John Fierens was the first resident pastor of St. Joseph's Church and served from 1861 to 1863.\* When Archbishop Blanchet was back in Quebec during 1856, he had made a glowing appeal for recruits to do missionary work in Oregon. One who heard the appeal and decided to answer the call was his young nephew, Francis Xavier Blanchet, then studying for the priesthood.

Francis Xavier was the son of the Archbishop's brother, Hubert, and his wife Julie. He was born July 22, 1835. After schooling in Quebec, he attended the Grand Seminaire in Montreal where he was ordained on April 12, 1863. Two months later he was on his way to Oregon. Traveling from Quebec to New York City, Father Blanchet boarded the steamer America with a large party of missionaries and nuns bound for the Isthmus of Nicaragua. Crossing the isthmus, they obtained passage on the Moses Taylor, which carried them to San Francisco. Before heading north, Father Blanchet visited and admired such landmarks as St. Mary's Cathedral and the church of St. Francis of Assisi, then called upon kinsfolk and friends in San Jose. On the last leg of their journey, the Oregon-bound missionaries embarked on the steamer Brother Jonathan. The ship made a brief stop at Victoria, Vancouver Island, allowing Father Blanchet to be welcomed by Bishop Demers. The Canadians ended the voyage when they disembarked at Portland. Here Father Blanchet was greeted by his uncle, the archbishop. A few days later the young priest went across the Columbia River to visit his Uncle Magloire in Vancouver.

n the 23rd of November, 1863, Father Blanchet arrived in Jacksonville to take charge of the Southern Mission of Oregon, encompassing a vast territory 200 miles long and 150 miles wide.

<sup>\*</sup>Father Fierens later became Vicar General to Archbishop Blanchet, built the Catholic cathedral in Portland, and started the diocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Sentinel*.



At this time the population of Jacksonville was a little more than 1000, with six or seven thousand more people living in the county. Father Blanchet was pleased to discover the modest little church dedicated to St. Joseph. He found that, although many of the miners had departed, the town was growing, with a citizenry of permanent residents and a number of established businesses. Cornelius Beekman had just opened his new bank building, and in the same block on California Street there were about a dozen stores and shops. There were two breweries in town and several saloons. Jacksonville boasted two newspapers, the Sentinel and the Oregon Intelligencer (published by Col. T'Vault). The only other church in town was the Methodist which, though built by this denomination, was a community church shared for many years with other denominations.

The pastor also found that his extensive, and largely unsettled, diocese required a great deal of traveling and that

St. Joseph's Church

he must cover over a thousand miles annually if he was to visit his scattered flock at least twice a year. He traveled either on muleback or by carriage or stagecoach, often under trying conditions. That first winter in Jacksonville he received a letter from a man living 75 miles north of town. The man was dying of consumption and was asking for a Catholic priest. Hiring a carriage and driver, Father Blanchet set out in the open wagon with the rain pouring down, and by the end of the day he was thoroughly soaked. Ten miles from their destination, they came to a rain-swollen stream, with the water over the bridge. While the driver retraced their route about fifteen miles to get mules with which to cross the stream, the curate spent the night covered with a wet blanket. As the night grew colder, the blanket froze before the driver returned with the mules. The next morning the crossing was made successfully and they reached the dying man in time for



The interior of St Joseph's.

Father Blanchet to administer the sacraments and baptize him. A few days after returning home, Blanchet learned that the new convert had died.

On another occasion, Father Blanchet wrote of having made a 264-mile round trip to minister to sick persons who were dying. In 1864 at the settlement of Patrick, 70 miles southwest of Jacksonville near the California border, some twenty settlers had built a chapel. Father Blanchet visited these settlers several times a year. As the years went by he established other missions throughout southern Oregon and eventually had 16 missions located in communities from Corvallis on the north to Crescent City on the south and from Coos Bay (Empire) on the west to Lakeview on the east. For many years none of the missions except Jacksonville had resident pastors and were served by Father Blanchet or his

occasional assistant.

Shortly after assuming the pastorate in Jacksonville, Father Blanchet blessed the bell for St. Joseph's Church. This 25-inch diameter, 297 pound steel bell had been cast in Sheffield, England, and had reached Jacksonville by way of the Cape Horn route. Another item of interest, still to be found in the little church, is the retable at the back of the altar. This was carved out of native applewood by a resident of Applegate. At the side of this altar stands a tall, old-time Pascal candlestick.

Father Blanchet soon saw the need for religious teaching in Jacksonville and early in 1865 wrote to the Mother Superior of the order of The Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in Portland asking for a convent school to be established in Jacksonville. In response to this appeal, Sister Mary Delores was appointed superior *pro tem* of the new school and Sisters M. Febronia and M. Zotigue were assigned to the convent. The Father, with financial support of both Catholic and Protestant citizens, acquired the property at the northeast corner of Fifth and D streets for the school, to be known as St. Mary's Academy. On August 11, 1865, Father Blanchet met the nuns in Portland and they set out for Jacksonville. The 360-mile journey took six days at that time.

he sisters on their arrival in town were hospitably welcomed by Mrs. Patrick Donegan, Madame Holt and Mrs. Horne, three devoted friends of Father Blanchet. These kind ladies had the humble convent ready for immediate occupancy. During the first scholastic year the register showed an entry of twelve resident students and thirty-three day-students. The work of the nuns soon was appreciated by the entire community, and the influence they exerted was acknowledged even by ministers of other sects. St. Mary's Academy became "the hearth on which was kindled the fire of charity and from which a genial glow radiated."

Archbishop Blanchet visited St. Joseph's Church in 1867 and complimented his nephew for the work he was doing throughout the Southern Oregon Diocese. Then, in December of the following year, the dreaded smallpox made its appearance in this part of the state. The epidemic wrought its greatest havoc in Jacksonville. Within six weeks there were 75 cases in town, and fear and fright overtook the populace. The plague broke out in the poorer section of the community, and at first the doctors thought it was chicken pox. By the time the mistake was discovered, the disease had spread throughout the town. Many residents abandoned the area, sometimes leaving stricken relatives in the care of others. A local newspaperman wrote "Terror seized the townsmen, and there were few who dared nurse the sick and bury the dead."

Outstanding exceptions to this were Father Blanchet and the four Sisters at the convent school who immediately proffered their services. In a letter dated January 7, 1869, to David Linn, President of the local Board of Health, the Sisters offered to help care for the stricken. At first the Board declined their offer, but as the smallpox cases increased, the aid of the sisterhood was gratefully accepted. At the time the nuns at St. Mary's were Sisters Mary Francis of Assisium, Mary Edward, Mary Francis Xavier, and Mary Genevieve. The first two became the fearless volunteers to nurse the victims, while the other two stayed at the convent and provided for the nurses by placing food and clothing in an outbuilding at the school. The school had been closed and the students sent to their homes. St. Joseph's Church remained opened to the public during the epidemic.

It was believed that smoke would kill the germs, and accordingly great fires of pitch pine were set ablaze in the streets. People gathered around these fires day and night. The smoke only added to the gloom and brought neither hope nor relief. For eight weeks the two nuns passed from one home of contagion to the next. In the silent watches of the night they were alone with the sick and dying. Whenever they appeared on the streets, people fled from them in terror. Father Blanchet helped the Sisters as much as he could and, when death sealed the fate of some hapless victim, he administered the sacraments and assisted in the burial.

The town could find only one man, an Italian immigrant, who would help bury the dead. For the nighttime burials two rows of bonfires lit the road up to the cemetery. At least forty citizens fell victim to the plague, including merchant John Love, his wife Sophie, and youngest daughter. Love's funeral was reportedly the largest ever held in Jacksonville. Another prominent victim was the aged Colonel M.W. T'Vault, who had converted to Catholicism just two months previous to the outbreak of the epidemic.

The smallpox finally ran its course and the weary Sisters returned to their convent. The Jacksonville press printed eulogies about the heroism of the nuns and Father Blanchet. One of the local papers that had not been particularly supportive of the Catholics now complimented them on their charity and added that it was a worthy religion which inspired such heroism and virtues. Soon thereafter the four Sisters were relieved of their duties in southern Oregon and set out for Portland crowned with the benediction of people whom they had so heroically served. Within two years Sister Mary Francis of Assisium died. She was thirty-nine.

few months following the smallpox scourge, scarlet fever struck Jacksonville, and members of both the John Orth and the J.F. Miller families succumbed to this disease. In July Father Blanchet traveled to Portland to obtain the services of four more Sisters. They arrived in August, and St. Mary's Academy was re-opened. In 1870 the church bought James Drum's house on California Street, and St. Mary's was moved there.\* Father Blanchet continued his ministry in southern Oregon, and, in 1872, again welcomed the Archbishop to his parish. Then, on April 3, 1873, while the priest was away from town, St. Joseph's was threatened by a fire that originated in the wood-frame U.S. Hotel building. The fire destroyed everything on the north side of California Street between Third and Fourth streets. A strong wind carried the flames north toward the church, but the wind suddenly died down and the building was saved.

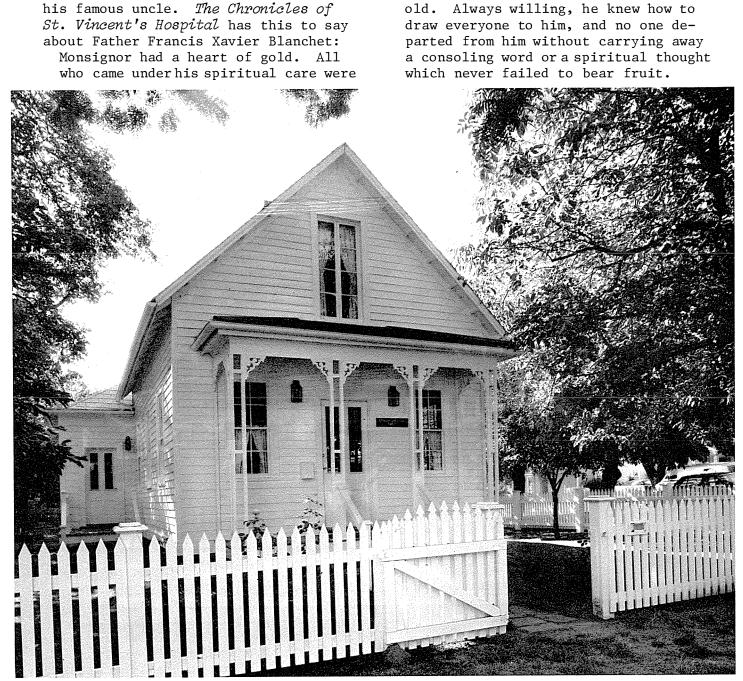
Three months after the great conflagration Father Blanchet departed for Quebec and Montreal. He had now toiled for ten arduous years in Jacksonville, and Archbishop Blanchet gave him several months' leave. He traveled by rail from Sacramento over Donner Summit and stopped for a few days of sightseeing in both Salt Lake City and Chicago. When Father Blanchet arrived in Montreal he observed that the city appeared to be twice as happy and prosperous as when he had left it in 1863. While back in Canada, he wrote his book, Ten Years on the Pacific Coast, which was published in Quebec. The French-speaking people of that province were his intended audience so he wrote the narrative in that language. He asked the indulgence of his readers "...because he had been speaking only

\*Beekman Square is now located at this site. The Academy was moved to Medford in 1908. English for ten years and his French was rusty."

Father Blanchet made the return trip to Oregon in eight days, a 3,300-mile journey that had taken his uncle almost seven months 35 years earlier. He was to resume his duties in Jacksonville for another fifteen years, taking an active interest in all the activities in town and even serving as a volunteer fireman. He maintained a loan library in his church. Although occasionally criticized in the press for his stand on Protestant secret societies, the popular priest had the respect of the majority of his fellow townsmen and was welcome in almost every home regardless of creed.

A private residence built in 1860 at the other end of the block from the little church was purchased by Father Blanchet in 1875 from Dr. Thompson. This became the Rectory and was the priest's home from then on. A non-Catholic townsman once told the story of playing baseball as a boy in the field bordering the Priest's house. When it got a little late of an evening, Father Blanchet would steal out the back door, slip into the nearby woods, and war-whoop like a Rogue River Indian. That spelled curfew for the children, and they would scamper home to their mothers for protection.

rchbishop Blanchet died in 1883 at St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland. His successor was Bishop Charles Seghers, who had been appointed coadjuster to the Archbishop in 1879. Archbiship Francois Norbert Blanchet was buried in the cemetery of the mission he had established at St. Paul, Oregon, in 1839. Father Francis Xavier Blanchet left his Jacksonville parish in 1888 when he was named pastor of the church in St. Paul. He remained there for seven years, after which he became pastor at St. Gervais mission for three years. In 1898 he was appointed Chaplain at Portland's St. Vincent's Hospital. Two years later Archbishop Seghers gave him the position of Vicar General, and in 1903 he was named a Roman Prelate in recognition of his priestly zeal and devoted service to the Church. While still serving as hospital chaplain, Monsignor Blanchet died on May 22, 1906. He had said Mass and gone about his usual occupations the day before.



The Rectory

In 1875 Reverend Francis X. Blanchet purchased the property and the house on North Fourth Street. The lot had first been the property of John Bingham and Arthur Langell who had bought it in 1859. John Bingham also owned Bingham's Knoll, now known as the schoolhouse hill, and Arthur Langell, with his father and brothers, bought 3000 acres in Klamath County which became known as the Langell Valley. The housewhich is now known as The Rectory was built around 1868.

The venerable priest was buried in the

St. Paul cemetery next to the grave of

After Father Blanchet bought the property, he lived there until he became Parish Priest at St.Paul, Oregon. After that the house changed owners several times, and in 1967 the property was bought and restored by St. Joseph's Rectory Acquisition Committee and turned over to the Southern Oregon Historical Society a year later. The interior has been refurbished under the supervision of Ruth Preston, decorator.

his children and he was their father.

He had a kind word for all, young or

Charles Sweet

The Charles Applegate house was constructed in 1852–1857, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is open to the public by special tour. Still owned by the Applegate family, it is one of only two houses in Oregon that have been under continuous family membership since construction.

esse A. Applegate's narrative, "Recollections of My Childhood," stands alone as a journal of the long, dangerous trip across the plains. Unlike most other diarists who dutifully covered the weather conditions, the distance made each day, the search for a stopping place which afforded water and pasture, and the ordeal of crossing dangerous rivers, Jesse A. presents his experiences in a more graphic and dramatic His account of the migration was manner. not composed of day-to-day entries, but was rather dredged from his boyhood memories at least two-thirds of a century after the events had happened.

Jesse A. was a son of Lindsay Applegate, one of the three brothers whose name has become so celebrated in southern Oregon history. Lindsay named this son after

# JESSE A. APPLEGATE'S

his beloved younger brother, and the boy's full name was Jesse Applegate Applegate. The initial A helps distinguish him from his Uncle Jesse who figures in so many historic events.

Jesse A. was born in the Osage Valley in Missouri in 1836. He was not yet seven when the three Applegate families joined the wagon train of 1843 and started the long trek to Oregon. His story is occasionally off-base geographically but his reporting of the river crossings, the meetings with the Indians, and other incidents on the trail are dramatically accurate. Forcefully presented is his retelling of the tragic drowning in the Columbia River of his brother Warren, his cousin Edward (Jesse's son) and a venerable friend of the family, Alexander McClellan.

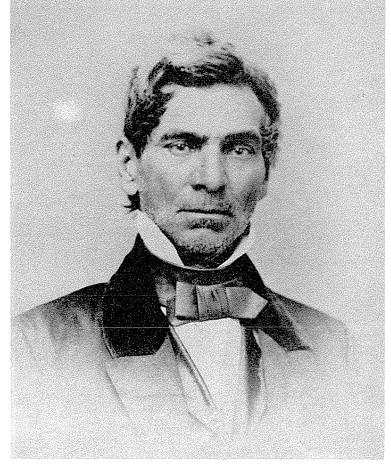


# MEMORIES OF CROSSING THE PLAINS

Many of his experiences on the trail make exciting reading, and his observations demonstrate his remarkable memory and his writing skill.

In Chapter I Jesse A. Recalls his early life on the Osage River, when the family lived in a house of hewn logs. His description shows it as a primitive home but one that was richly stocked with supplies and comforts. 🛯 n the autumn season we always gathered several bushels of walnuts, pecan and hickory nuts. There was a wild plum of this country which for sweetness was equal to the petite prune while its flavor was superior...Wild grapes of good quality were plentiful; a wild vineyard of the kind called Summer Grape grew along the brow of a hill ... But there was an herb growing in the

woods, the root of which became so firmly fixed in my memory, that should I live to the age attained by Moses of old, I would not forget it. It was known as "Injin Fizic." Its usefulness as a medicine was learned from the natives. A dose of this physic brewed from the root, for a boy, was a tin cup full; it was brought to the patient at bed time steaming hot and as black as coffee, no cream, sugar or salt, or anything else was put into the liquid, lest it might modify its perfect nastiness. When the boy saw the cup, and a whiff from the odors of the contents took his breath, he was seized with a fit of trembling more or less violent and cold sweat appeared on his forehead, but kind hands now supported him, and encouraging words somewhat restored him, as it was considered that he was now prepared for the worst. Whereupon he was seized by



Lindsay Applegate, Jesse A.'s father

the nose, and when, in gasping for breath, his mouth flew open, the physic was poured down his throat. The boy now, not being able to stand, was put to bed. I have thought that if Socrates, instead of the cup of hemlock, had had to take a dose of "Injin Fizic" he would have concluded to take the advice of his friends [to escape to Greece]...The probabilities are that the old philosopher would have skipped, not to save his life, but to avoid the dose.

On another page Jesse A. recalls the fun times of playing in the river.

y brothers, Elisha and Warren... and James, a cousin...were often about the river, fishing, wading, wallowing in the mud and sand, and trying to swim. And yet I think we were often advised and even commanded not to go in swimming, as there was danger of being drowned.

One early spring day the snow and ice were melting, and a rivulet which poured into the river near the house was full of roaring and foaming muddy water, of course about as cold as ice itself. But the sun was shining quite warm and we boys were having a jolly time, wading and floundering around in the angry waters. The excitement had thrown us off our guard, and we were taken with a sudden surprise...when we discovered mother standing on the bank among our clothes, with a long switch in her hand. .. [Every] boy, blue and numb as he was with cold, stuck his toes and fingers into the muddy bank and made a dash for his clothes. But I do not think we were much afraid of actual punishment, although fairly caught in an act of disobedience, for I have never known mother to cause a child to suffer pain, however alarming her threats might have been. If she had been stern enough to punish us, as she probably believed she would, surely this was her great opportunity, for we were naked and, being thoroughly wet, could not get into our shirts. My brother Elisha had thrust his head and hands into his shirt and though he made frantic efforts to get under cover, the garment stuck fast. Mother, probably considering him the most responsible party, thought she would make an example of him and actually gave him a swipe across the shoulders with the switch, which made him dance around and redouble his comical efforts to get his shirt on. But the ridiculous and pitiful spectacle had now overcome her resolution, and a smile was seen to start at the corners of her mouth, a harbinger of mercy our eyes. were not slow to detect. She finally assisted us in getting into our clothes, and then warned us that the next time we would be punished to the full extent of the law.

After presentation of several episodes that occurred during his early life on the river, he moves on to the trip across the plains.

ne afternoon, when the sun seemed to be about three hours high and we were traveling along at an ox-team gait over a level prairie, John East, a good, honest man, also from Missouri, who was walking and driving his team, was told that we were then crossing the Missouri line, whereupon he turned about facing the east, pulled off his slouched hat and waving it above his head, said, "Farewell to America."

Jesse A.'s memory does not cover many of the days of marching and camping. He does not remember places in the order in which the immigrants came to them and much of the trail has faded from his recollections, but some people and places were unforgettable.

I lexander McClellan came to our house in Missouri when I was quite an infant, too young to remember when he came. But I was told that when he came I was almost dead with a fever. The old man was familiar with the herbs and roots used by the Indians in sickness, and at once took charge of me and soon restored me to health. He was then between sixty and seventy years of age; had been a soldier, had been crossed in love and never married.

McClellan and young Jesse A. shared a bed on the trail, and Jesse remembers the old man's loving attention on a night when a storm broke.

low long I had slept I do not know, but sometime during the night I suddown into my face, my eyes were blinded with the glare of lightning, the wind was roaring like a furnace, and the crash of thunder was terrible and almost continuous. I could see nothing but what looked like sheets of fire, and hear nothing but the wind, the pouring rain, and the bellowing thunder. For a minute I was dazed and could not realize the situation, and before I had fairly recovered my senses, Uncle Mac picked me up and put me into the hind end of a covered wagon and I well remember scrambling around in there among pack saddles, etc. I remember no more of this night, but in the morning the little river had overflowed its bank and the encampment was flooded.

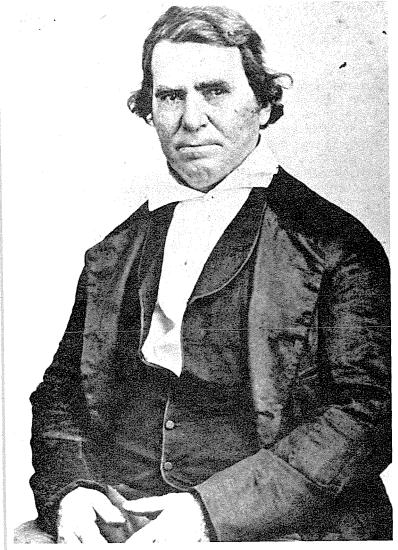
... It seems to me now that the next point of note on our route was Fort Bridger...I saw several very pretty squaws with cheeks painted red, wearing beaded moccasins and beautiful red leggings, fringed along the outer seams. Some of them had papooses almost white and very pretty. Some were wives of white men at the fort, and some belonged to the great war party I saw there mustering to fight the Blackfeet. As I remember this army of Sioux warriors, they were all mounted on nice horses, [warriors and their women] all painted about the face, and armed with bows and arrows encased in quivers slung at the back. Some had spears, some war clubs, but no guns, or if any, very few. This war party, as I see the picture now, looking back sixty years, marching or halting in close array, covered several acres of prairie. It was a gay and savage looking host, and sometimes when a squadron would break away from the main body and come toward us shouting the war whoop, urging their ponies at full speed, I thought it a grand display indeed, although I fancied I could feel the

hair rise on my head. Several of the Amazons of this war party visited our encampment. They were dressed and painted and armed like the men. Some of them were very fine of figure, had pretty faces, and eyes as soft and bright as the antelopes on those wild plains. They were all young women, and, as I thought, made love to our young men with their eyes like city damsels, but in the excitement of battle I suppose they became very furies and those lovely eyes flashed fire. Their small, shapely hands and small feet clad in beaded moccasins were admired even by our women, and I fear our men, bold as they were, were almost captured already by those lovely warriors.

fter traveling a long way, it seems to me, over a vast level country almost without timber, we saw broken country and hills far away in the direction we were traveling, and I heard it remarked that somewhere in the hilly country was the Sweetwater River. This was good news to me, for I fancied that when we got to that river, I would have all the sweet water I could drink. When we came to the river, which was a small shallow stream flowing gently over yellow sands, I ran down to the water's edge and, bending over, resting on my hands, I took a drink of the water, but was greatly disappointed, for the water was very common indeed, and not sweet. .. The color name of the next river that

comes to mind interested me somewhat too. I was anxious to see it. The name was Green River, but when we came to it the water was of a white crystal clearness, and not a dark green river, as I had expected to see it, running across the country like a broad green ribbon.

he Soda Springs seem to come next in the order of recollection. We probably 📕 remained at this camp a day or two. Some of the women [welcomed] the opportunity afforded by plenty of hot water here at the springs to wash a few things. While at this camp some of our party visited the river and found near the bank of the stream a spouting soda spring. Like all geysers, it threw up water convulsively. This spring would heave up about every three or four minutes... The mouth was nearly a foot across and nearly or quite round. There were puffs of steam issuing from the mouth. Also eight or ten feet from the mouth there was a hole in the ground four or five inches across, and whenever the spring went into convulsions and commenced throwing up water, gusts of hot steam and spray would issue from this hole with a noise like that



Charles Applegate (Uncle of Jesse A.)

from the escape pipe of a boiler. This hole evidently connected with the spring. The boys seemed to regard it as of more interest than the spring. Some tried to keep it from puffing by closing it with sods and with grass, but whenever the spasm came, the caulking would be thrown out. One young man had a wool hat which he placed over the hole, and held there with his hands and knees planted firmly on the brim. This, I suppose, was generally regarded as a "corker" but when the puff came, the hat crown stretched for a moment and then burst at the top. This spring was called the Steamboat Spring; it puffed like a steamboat.

We were now approaching the Salmon Falls in Snake River, and heard the roar of the waters a long time before we saw them. The first sound that struck my ear seemed to jar the earth like distant thunder. As we approached we saw many Indians and long lines of something of a red color which I thought were clothes hung out to dry; but as we came nearer I learned that the lines were salmon which the Indians were drying in the sun. The company made a halt here, whether for noon or overnight, I don't remember. Many Indians visited our camp, bringing fish, both fresh and dried, which they exchanged for old clothes, and a number of them strutted around dressed in their newly acquired garments, seeming to enjoy their often absurd appearance as much as we did, for when we would laugh, they would laugh and jabber among themselves. They were almost naked, some of them quite so. When one would get a garment he would put it on at once. A naked Indian would put on a shirt and step around as though he thought himself in full dress; another would seem delighted with nothing but a vest; another big Indian with only a hat on would grin and seem as pleased as if he were "dressed to kill." This was grand sport for us children and the Indians did not seem to object to our fun at their expense. The fish which the Indians brought no doubt were very acceptable to the emigrants, as I do not remember having any before, except at Bear River, where the men caught an abundance of very large trout.

\* \* \*

In passing across [the Blue Mountains], we were overtaken by a snow storm which made the prospect very dismal. I remember wading through mud and snow and suffering from the cold and wet. But the camp on the Unatilla was a very pleasant place; this we soon reached after passing the mountains. The Umatilla was a small stream with sandy banks and bottom. About the stream were quaking asp and black haws.

...The fruit of the black haw was in demand, for we had not had any berries for a long time. They were black and near the size of a buckshot, with a single seed, very sweet and otherwise pleasant to the taste. It was a thorny tree and grew ten, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five feet high. The people ate large quantities of this fruit. It was told for a fact in camp that a woman died during the night we stayed there, from the effects of a gorge on black haws. I ate about all I could get my hands on, but experienced no bad results--they were ripe and mellow.

#### DOWN THE COLUMBIA TO THE WILLAMETTE

he train which arrived here at this time was a detachment of the company which came out to Oregon...It included the three Applegate families; families of three brothers, Charles, Lindsay and Jesse. I call to mind also the names of Alexander McClellan, Wm. Wilson, Wm. Doke, Robert Smith, Benjamin Williams, Mr. Clyman, John C. Baker, Elijah Millican, Thomas Naylor, Almoran Hill, Miles Cary and Daniel Holman.

Besides the oxen of the teams there was a small herd of stock cattle. Jesse Applegate

had probably thirty head and others had a few cows and calves. There were also a few horses. This train of wagons corraled for the last time about one-hundred years, so it appears to me, up the river from the fort and very near where the Walla Walla River flows into the Columbia.

A train of wagons with their once white, now torn, grease and dust stained covers, parked on the bank of the Columbia River, was a novel spectacle. Such had never been seen there before. The faithful oxen, now sore-necked, sore-footed, and jaded, which had marched week after week, and month after month, drawing those wagons with their loads from the Missouri River to the Columbia, had done their task, and were unhitched for the last time, and I hope [that] all recovered from their fatigue and lived to enjoy a long rest.

...During the time we remained at Walla Walla, probably two weeks, the men were busy sawing lumber and building small boats. They called them skiffs, and one of average size would carry a family of eight or ten persons...To carry out the plan of descending the Columbia River to the Willamette country in those small boats, it was, of course, necessary to leave the wagons and cattle behind. The cattle and horses were branded with the Hudson Bay Company's brand, "H.B." and the property was understood to be under the protection of the company.

I well remember our start down the river and how I enjoyed riding in the boat, the movement of which was like a grapevine swing. Shoving out from the Walla Walla canoe landing about the first of November, our little fleet of boats began the voyage down the great "River of the West." Whirlpools, looking like deep basins in the river, the lapping, splashing, and rolling of the waves, crested with foam sometimes when the wind was strong, alarmed me for a day or two on the start. But I soon recovered from this childish fear, and as I learned that the motion of the boat became more lively and gyratory, rocking from side to side, leaping from wave to wave, or sliding down into a trough and then mounting with perfect ease to the crest of a wave, dashing the spray into our faces when we were in rough water, the sound of the rapids and the sight of foam and white caps ahead occasioned only pleasant anticipation.

... Now of nights we encamped on the bank of the river... Although we had now been several days on our voyage down the river, I had not heard anyone complain of hardships or express fear of hardships or dangers to be encountered, and for my part I came to feel as safe on the water as on the land.

... We had an Indian pilot, probably selected by McKinley at Fort Walla Walla. [As we approached a bend in the river] I could hear the sound of rapids, and presently the boat began to rise and fall and rock from side to side. When we began to make the turn I could see breakers ahead extending in broken lines across the river, and the boat began to sweep along at a rapid rate. The pilot squatted low in the bow. An old red handkerchief was tied around his head and his long black hair hung down his back. There were now breakers on the right and on the left, and occasionally foam-crested waves swept across our bows. The motion of the boat had never been so excitingly delightful before. .. I began to think this was no ordinary rapid, but felt reassured when I noticed that the older people sat quietly in their places and betrayed no sign of fear. Rocked on the heaving bosom of the great river and lulled by the medley of sounds, the two babies had fallen asleep in their mother's arms. Our boat was now about twenty yards from the right-hand shore; when looking across the river I saw a smaller boat about opposite to us near the south bank. The persons in this boat were Alexander McClellan, William Parker, William Doke and three boys: Elisha Apple-



Jesse Applegate Uncle Jesse was camera shy and no pictures of him can be found. This sketch was made by George Applegate



Elizabeth Miller Applegate, Jesse's mother

gate, aged about eleven, and Warren and Edward Applegate, each about nine years old. This boat now near the south shore, it would seem, should have followed our boat as the pilot was with us, and this was a dangerous part of the river. But there was little time to consider mistakes or to be troubled about what might be the consequences, for presently there was a wail of anguish, a shriek, and a scene of confusion in our boat that no language can describe. The boat we were watching disappeared and we saw the men and boys struggling in the water. Father and Uncle Jesse, seeing their. children drowning, were seized with frenzy, and dropping their oars, sprang up from their seats and were about to leap from the boat to make a desperate attempt to swim to them, when mother and Aunt Cynthia, in voices that were distinctly heard above the roar of the rushing waters, by commands and entreaties brought them to a realization of our own perilous situation, and the madness of an attempt to reach the other side of the river by swimming. This was sixty-seven years ago, and yet the words of that frantic appeal by the women, which saved our boat and two families from speedy and certain destruction, are fresh in my memory. They were, "Men, don't quit the oars. If you do we will all be lost." The men returned to the oars just in time to avoid, by great exertion, a rock against which the current dashed with such fury that the foam and froth upon its apex was as white as milk. I sat on the right-hand side of the boat and the rock was so near that I thought if we had not passed so quickly I might have put my hand upon it.

Having escaped the present danger, the next thought, no doubt, was to effect a landing at the earliest possible moment, but the shore was rockbound, rising several feet perpendicularly and presenting a serried line of ragged points against which the rapid current fretted and frothed, and the waves, rearing their foam-flecked heads aloft, rushed to destruction like martial squadrons upon an invincible foe.

...Lower down the river, however, there was a break in the line of the shore and here the boat was landed, the women and children going ashore...Just as our boat touched the shore, father grabbed his gun from its place in the boat to shoot our Indian pilot, but he had disappeared, a fact which under the excitement of landing the boat, I presume, he had not noticed. In fact, it seemed that no one noted his disappearance, or knew what had become of him; we never knew. A suspicion seems to have been aroused only a few minutes before our boat landed that our pilot meant treachery, intending to lead us into the rapids with the expectation that the whole party would be destroyed. If there was any evidence to justify this suspicion I never heard what it was, and can only attribute it to the delirium of excessive grief and the natural inclination to blame someone for the great calamity.

...William Doak could not swim and had taken hold of a feather bedtick which carried him safely to the foot of the rapids... Indians passed by him in their canoes, and though he called for help, they did not offer any assistance. He was picked up by one of our boats as he was about to enter the second rapids.

... After going ashore the little party of women and children--the men remaining with the boat--climbed up the river bank...to a narrow plateau running parallel to the river. From this place we had a good view of the river, but could not see anything of the foundered boat or of those who had been in it. An Indian footpath ran along this plateau and we followed it down the river, very slowly, all the time searching the river with our eager eyes. Now and then one would stop and point to the river and say: "I see someone's head there," and then we would all bunch up and look for the object pointed at. But it was only the top of a rock occasionally exposed by the ebbing waters. Several times we were deluded this

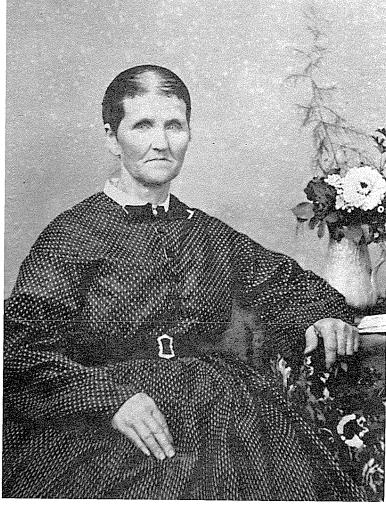
way. Mother and Aunt Cynthia were weeping. While we were yet walking along the riverbank, someone came and told us that Parker, Doke and brother Elisha were safe, but that McClellan and the two boys, Warren and Edward, could not be found. Then we understood that Elishahad saved himself by swimming. No doubt the fact that mother had always objected to the boys going swimming now flashed across her mind, and as the fact appeared that he had learned to swim by disobeying her orders, and had thereby saved his life, she felt a momentary pang of remorse, poor stricken soul; for she had said, "I will never object to the boys going swimming any more."

... [Those] who escaped said that as their boat was being swept along down the rapids it was caught by one of those currents which, whirling in its course like a cyclone in the air, increased in velocity as the radius of the circle diminishes, until, with a roaring noise, it seems to sink, forming an open funnel-shaped vacuum in the water to the bottom of the river, often called a whirlpool. After being spun around for a few seconds, the boat was swallowed up in the roaring vortex. The boat came up presently and all the crew except Warren Applegate, succeeded in getting into it, but very soon after it was caught by another whirlpool and swallowed up again, to be seen no more. The last time the boat went down, end foremost, the boy Elisha, as it descended, climbed to the upper end and leaped as far as he could, to avoid being taken down with the boat.

..When Elisha rose to the surface, he discovered that he had one foot thrust into a pocket of his coat and while extracting it, sank and rolled in the water until he was almost exhausted; but as soon as his feet were free he struck out boldly...avoiding the force of the waves which came meeting him by diving under them.

William Parker, soon after escaping from the whirlpool, took hold of a feather bedtick floating near him, and being a strong swimmer, guided it towards the head of the island. It chanced that Elisha overtook Parker when near the shore, and taking hold of the tick they both together succeeded in reaching the island, from which they, with great difficulty, being very weak, followed the narrow causeway of rock to the mainland.

The boy Warren was never seen nor heard of after the boat went down the first time. The old man McClellan was seen the last time trying to reach the head of the island where Parker and young Applegate were. He had placed the boy Edward on a couple of oars, and carrying him this way, was trying to reach shore, but being hampered with



Mrs. Jesse (Cynthia) Applegate

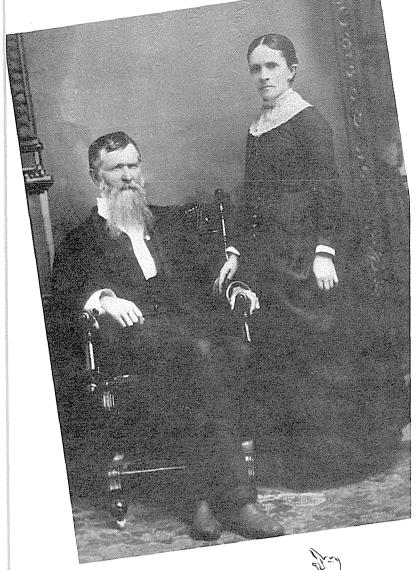
a heavy coat and boots, falling a little short of the point he attempted to reach, the old man and boy disappeared under projecting cliffs and were seen no more. The brave old soldier could have saved himself by abandoning the boy, but this he would not do. Of the three persons drowned no body could be found, and the search had to be given up. The boat was never seen after it went down into the roaring throat of the second whirlpool.

Stunned by the tragedy, the survivors had to get back into the boats and continue down the river, passing the treacherous rapids called "The Dalles," and other perilous whirlpools, when the men stayed in the skiffs and the women and children struggled along the bank.

Finally, having navitaged the Columbia from Fort Walla Walla to an open and safe waterway to the sea, Jesse A. wrote that, although they were never in danger of starving, they were always hungry. They learned to eat the food the Indians ate, only refusing caterpillars and tainted fish eggs. He wrote, "An emigrant not hungry was thought to be ill."

At last they reached Vancouver where

Dr. McLaughlin of the Hudson Bay Company welcomed them. Moving on, they eventually launched their boats on the Willamette and gradually came to Champoeg where their journey ended. There were three log cabins which had been abandoned by



General Elisha Applegate and his wife, Maria Isabel Jennings, pose for a portrait. The picture was taken in Ashland ca 1888. (right) Oliver Applegate was Jesse A.'s brother. He was born in Oregon in 1845. After the Modoc War Captain Oliver Applegate joined a Chautauqua Lecture Tour. He appeared with a group of Indians who demonstrated sharp shooting with firearms and bows and arrows.

Jesse A.'s brothers and sisters were Elisha, Warren, Theresa Rose, Ivan Decatur, Lucian Bonaparte, Oliver Cromwell, Annie and Francis McClellan.

Raymond Lewis

Methodist missionaries, and the Applegate family moved into them in November 1843, and there they passed their first winter in Oregon.

Jesse A. closes Chapter I of his story: :

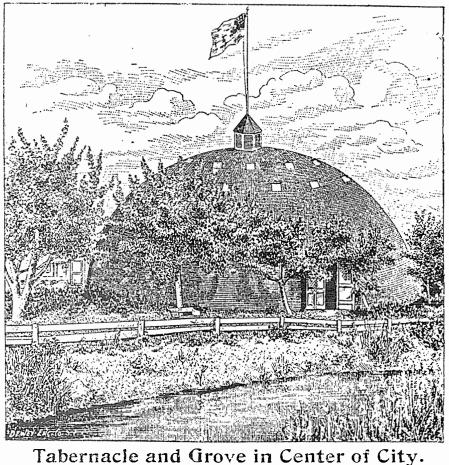
Previous to this we had been in the rain most of the time for twenty days. Oh! how we could have enjoyed our hospitable shelter if we could have looked around the family circle and beheld the bright faces that had accompanied us on our toilsome journey almost to the end.

Alas! they were not there!

Before printing these excerpts from the first chapter of Recollections of My Boyhood, by Jesse A. Applegate, we consulted Shannon Applegate, a member of the family. She graciously gave her endorsement to the project.

Her book, now with the New York publisher, William Morrow, presents the Applegate story in great detail and is slated to appear in 1988.





THE WAY IT WAS

he Chautauqua circuit brought entertainment and food for the soul to cities fortunate enough to have a dedicated Chautauqua board of culture seekers who selected the programs and collected the money to pay the artists.

The few years before and after 1900 made up the golden age for inspirational orators. Chautauqua subscribers weren't looking solely for amusement; they wanted to be so spiritually uplifted that they wafted out of the auditorium on a bright cloud of idealism. And who is to say that occasionally they didn't do just that? Local speakers, such as Judge P.P. Prim, Professor J.W. Merritt or Judge Colvig, were certainly able to deliver emotional messages with fervor and passion when the occasion -- such as the Fourth of July or a funeral -- called for it. But for a stirring speech on patriotism or temperance or the war in Cuba, one wanted a speaker with a bunch of elocutionary tricks and a ringing resonance, a personality whose name had become familiar on the lecture circuit.

Members of the Chautauqua board were aware that the annual assembly of ten or twelve days, afternoons and evenings, might have some limitations. Some listeners would reach a saturation point if they were constantly bombarded by persuasive speakers demanding god-like behavior from them. The sheep must be led gently to the fold. Programs were therefore interspersed with humorous lectures, readings and thrilling musical presentations.

Of course every locality of any size boasted many people who could knock-off a humorous or tragic reading in a twinkling. No one who has had the privilege of hearing Lulu Saulsberry recite the immortal "Why are you so stiff and cold, little cat?" could ever forget it. Mrs. Saulsberry could be ready in a moment. The only preparation she required was to run home and put on a lace collar to spark up her basic black. And there were always folk around who could recite, with gestures, The Cremation of Sam McGee or the Rubaiyat, although Omar Khayyam was a bit racy for delicate ears. But, like the orators, the semifamous humorists, who appeared at the local assembly but once in a lifetime, were considerably more exciting and glamorous than any home product.

The annual program always featured a couple of Grand Concerts, given by the Chautauqua chorus. To be reasonable, one couldn't expect a full complement of singers to travel from distant parts --and who could afford to buy them round trip tickets, much less pay them a handsome salary? The chorus therefore was composed of local singers. The association imported a Professor of Music from a university and a soloist from San Francisco or some other cultural seaport. The professor arrived on the scene with a supply of music for full chorus and some of the selections had nice solo cadenzas for the star singer or an instrumental accompaniment for a player who could also be rounded up locally. The featured singer who also brought his -- or her -- own music was expected to sing a solo or two at the beginning of the lecture programs. The imported choral director had the responsibility of selecting his singers at an audition and then, in rehearsals, of charming them into giving a performance above and beyond their usual abilities. A chorus was expected to emit some fireworks, especially in their finales. At the performance the director made little speeches, giving clever backgrounds for the unfamiliar numbers and receiving gasps of pleasure when he announced a commonly known selection.

outhern Oregon's Chautauqua Association was organized in 1892 at the Methodist campground in Central Point under the leadership of Rev. J.S. Smith. The first assembly was scheduled for July 1893, but as the time drew near, it was found it would not be possible to secure a large enough attendance at Central Point to justify putting on such an elaborate program. A new location had to be found at once. Mr. Roper of Ashland who owned the grounds where the Chautauqua would eventually by held, was contacted and he agreed to sell his property if he could get the money in sixty days. A meeting of the association was called in Central Point and the members agreed to accept Mr. Roper's offer, and voted a bond issue of \$2,500 to purchase the land and put up a building.

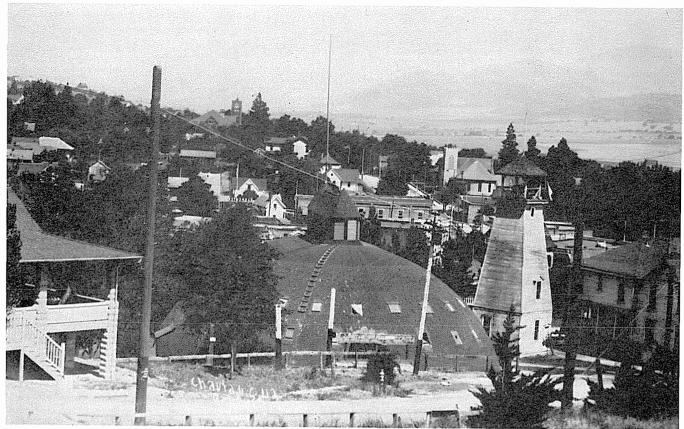
In 1893 the Ashland Tidings reported:

The Association of Southern Oregon's Chatauqua has eight or ten acres of grove and orchard land along the cool banks of Ashland Creek and almost in the heart of town. Plans for a novel building in the shape of a semi-sphere, permanent, unique, and admirably adapted for the purpose, were prepared and in  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days from the time the lumber for the structure was delivered upon the ground, a large force of amateur carpenters, under the direction of Architect W.J. Schmidt, had the building enclosed, seated and lighted by electricity. It was ready for the first Chautauqua Assembly ever held in this part of the Pacific coast.

The all-frame "bee-hive" was shingled from base to cupola, 80 feet in diameter, 40 feet high, no posts or pillars in the center, dirt floor, and canvas window openings. It seated 1000 or more.

The first officers were: President W.J. Smith; vice-president, W.I. Vawter; secretary, Mrs. D.L. Minkler; treasurer, Fred Hansen. In 1894 G.F. Billings was elected president; he held this position for 22 years. In 1916 C.W. Root became president; J.S.Smith, vice-president; and G.G. Eubanks, treasurer. The following were directors: E.D. Briggs, H.L.Whited, G.W. Trefren, E.E. Bagley and W.A. Patrick.

r. Robert Corliss of Medford recently brought to our attention a scrapbook which contains several pages of newspaper stories about the Ashland Chautauqua. Programs offered at the Fourth Assembly (1886), the Fifth Assembly (1887), the Sixth Assembly (1898) and the Seventh Assembly (1899) are pre-



This is an early picture of Chautauqua. The building was extensively remodeled twice during the years it was in use. Eventually the dome was condemned and pulled down, leaving only the concrete wall, which became the foundation for the Shakespearean Theater.

#### sented in complete detail.

In 1893 culture was just about everybody's bag. Who could object? There would be no scantily-clad, buxom cuties scampering across the stage to a ragtime beat, no naughty soubrette or baggy-pants comedian whose jokes brought a blush of shame to maid and matron alike. On the contrary. The whole family could go.

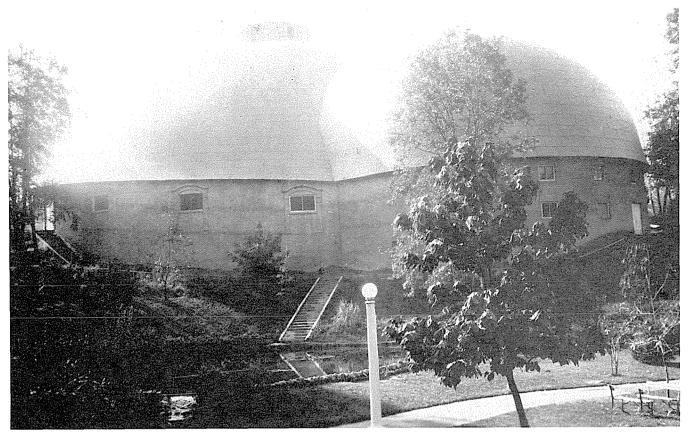
Those attending came from near and far, but transportation was an immediate problem. If you lived as far away as Jacksonville or Gold Hill, hitching up the buggy for a daily round trip was unthinkable. Mercy, you wouldn't make it home until dawn and then, after doing the chores, you'd be too tired to go back to Ashland for a second lesson in culture. The Chautauqua Association possessed all those idle acres, from the auditorium down to the creek, and what could be more sensible than offering them for campgrounds to those potential subscribers from out of town? During the season, Chautauqua Grove became a little tent city with campers from as far away as Klamath Falls. The camp was so successful even people from Ashland closed their houses and set up tents in

in the grove just for the sociability and recreation of camping out. As many as 100 tents were set up there at the same time.

An auxilliary, the Ladies' Chautauqua Park Club was organized, with Mrs. C.B. Watson as president. The purpose of the auxiliary was to improve and beautify the park grounds. The working members paid dues of 50 cents yearly. These dues enabled the ladies to keep a gardener for seven months of the year at a salary of \$50 per month. The city of Ashland gave the water and the Siskiyou Power and Light Company gave the electricity.

In 1905 the building was enlarged by cutting it in two, moving half of it uphill, and inserting a section which doubled the capacity. The concrete structures were reinforced also.

From the beginning Chautauqua was a success. The directors brought names like Booker T. Washington, Billy Sunday, Mme. Schumann-Heinke, Sousa's Band and the New York Marine Band. Besides these special events, the days were taken up with YMCA classes, cooking classes, Bible study, courses in painting, shorthand and bookkeeping.



The picture above shows the back of the Chautauqua after remodeling. The building was far more substantial than the first construction with its unsupported dome and its dirt floor.

est the memories of these thrilling programs fade away with the departure of the early Chautauqua goers, we offer a composite program from the ones described in the Corliss album. The first evening of the season did not open, as one might expect, with a big production number from the chorus; they were still in rehearsal for that perfect performance. Nor did there seem to be a speech of welcome from the Ashland mayor or any other city elder; such a dignitary may have been on the platform and may have given a little speech but, if so, the fact did not appear in the printed program. On the other hand the program planners may have decided against any pep talks. Since the ticket holders had been eagerly awaiting the season for a year, they didn't need to be psyched-up. The speaker wouldn't let them down. Although he might not please everyone, he was certain to be impressive; the Chautauqua Association saw to that.

or the opening lecture let us begin the evening with a star performer, Joaquin Miller. Here is a "name" speaker, the "Poet of the Sierra," and if the people hadn't read his stuff, they surely should have, and, since good old Joaquin was a member of a pioneer Eugene family and practically a native, it probably was best to let on that *Columbus* was your favorite poem, even if that was the only poem you'd ever read. The



advance publicity called him "California's Greatest Genius" and announced he would speak on "Lessons Not Found in Books." The advance poster declared: "Mr. Miller's residence at home and in Europe has made him thousands of friends. Most people have read his books and have heard about him. Now is the time to hear him."

Joaquin Miller, having been a newspaper editor, an orchardist, a lawyer and a judge as well as a poet, could speak from many different viewpoints. He presented his talk in a homespun manner and offered some liberal points. But he was well aware of what the chautauqua audiences expected so he avoided dwelling on some of his more radical ideas. He inspired and uplifted the believers and jarred the skeptics. All in all, everyone agreed that this assembly had started off with a resounding smash. The *Tidings* reporter was certain that Joaquin Miller had given many valuable lessons to his audience which they might do well to use in afterlife.

or the program of the second day, we can do no better than schedule Miss Jessie Ackerman of Chicago, the Honorary Vice President of the World's WCTU. How's that for an impressive title?

Before Miss Ackerman's entrance, Mr. John Ross of Ashland performed on his Scotch bagpipes. After his number he did a lively Highland Fling in his kilts. That's a neat trick to dance with that bulky instrument, but Mr. Ross had "an abundance of medals to testify to his skills." He set the stage for the dignified Miss Ackerman.



Her advance notice announced:

The name of Miss Jessie Ackerman is usually linked with that of Miss Frances E. Willard, the two being the ablest lady advocates of the temperance and the WCTU causes. Miss Ackerman will lecture twice for us, once on temperance, the other, an illustrated lecture on travel. Miss Ackerman's friends will be delighted to know that she has consented to be at our assembly.

Miss Jessie lived up to expectations. The *Tidings* reported:

Miss Ackerman delivered a magnificent temperance address. Her theme was temperance as related to mission work and it is said to have been the finest temperance address ever given in Ashland. In her second lecture, at a later time, Miss Ackerman's subject was "My Trip of 800 Miles through Iceland on Horseback." Mercy, wearing those solid steel corsets, she got on a horse? [The speech] was a masterpiece of word painting, bringing out in a vivid manner the topography of that ice-bound land, the educational advancements, simple manners and traits of the people. Miss Ackerman sustained here the high reputation she holds as a bright and able woman.

During the course of her speeches Miss Jessie referred a couple of times to the unfortunate trend adopted by the ladies of lowering the neckline and revealing their cleavage. This madness, which could only bring out men's baser natures, should of course be eschewed by modest young women. If the Ashland Chautauqua goers went on record for being anti-bosom, their resolution was not included in the *Tidings'* files.

am P. Jones, the speaker for the second evening program, needed no introduction. According to the newspaper:

The management has been endeavoring for several years to secure the presence of Rev. Sam Jones, and has at last succeeded. Aside from his reputation as an evangelist, Mr. Jones is held by all who know to be the most popular and successful orator on the American lecture platform today. He draws and interests the largest crowds, and is

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an instant and unfailing success...His quality is purely his own, and is a mingling of wit, humor and wisdom, with a peculiar southern pathos that is simply irresistible. His power of sarcasm and invective is unequaled by any other living orator...Tuesday will be Sam Jones Day at the Assembly. He will speak both afternoon and evening. Owing to the great expense of bringing so distinguished a lecturer to the coast, a special rate of admission will be charged.

We have selected some pithy passages from Sam Jones' lecture, "The Battle of Life and How to Win It."

... If a man can't understand me, why God has made a place for idiots, and he'll go in with the gang. There are theories of baptism. Well, I know a man who was sprinkled when a babe, and he's in the penitentiary. I know another man who grew up, was converted, and was soused clear under -- well, they hung him. I never ask a man his creed, but whether he is a good husband, a good citizen, whether he pays his debts, and lives right. If he says, "Yes," I give him my hand. If he says, "No," I answer, "Fix for my foot."

To one I extend the right hand of Christian fellowship; to the other the right hand of Christian footship.

The trouble with this country is the men are playing out. We have 70,000,000 ladies and gentlemen, but few men and women. Every woman here thinks she has a man for a husband, but he's nothing more than a pair of old breeches waddling around.

The two pillars of womanly character are modesty and purity. Let the devil once put his foot on a woman and she never gets up. Nowadays the girls are cutting off from the top for balls, and off from the bottom for bicycles, and I confess I am getting uneasy about the rest.

Life, vim, push, energy! if you want to get there. Don't sit there until the seat of your pants looks like the map of the United States. A man or a chicken without sand in his gizzard is worth nothing. I don't mean courage to fight. You men who carry pistols in your hip pockets will have them go off some day and blow out your brains. Mothers, if you had enough patience you would be the best mothers in the world. ..I like to see a man kind to his family, but then to see such a man with a fussy old thing for a wife that can sit in the parlor and lick a skillet in the kitchen. And kindness, to know what it means you must go to the mother's heart where you will find kindness and love; that gives sentiment to men, and the man who is nearest akin to mother has the pure milk of human kindness that gets there and stays there.



Reverend Sam Jones

Now it is no more the business of the nation to educate kids than it is to feed them or spank them... If a man can't educate his own children, the best thing they can do is to get up and hang their daddy before breakfast. I'm not like the man who said: "I wasn't afraid of the skunk, but if I fit it, I couldn't go home to my family." Burn down every free schoolhouse and kill every teacher in the land, and it's a fact that every boy and girl who wants an education will get it...Why, now, we have free schools, free books, and free soup, and Bryan and free silver, and the next thing we'll be doing will be to have free boarding places and clotheshouses. Why, before long some lazy, old devil will say to his children: "The government will have to take care of you kids. About all I can do for you is to let you call me daddy."

It is a sad phase of American life today that the pure, genuine spirit of independent manhood is dying out. In

the church world there are no men-but preachers, D.D.'s, duddle-dickers, devil drivers, doodle diggers, dog doctors. I never had any college confer any D.D. on me, and if one did, I'd sue it for damages. The fellows that need it can have it. The deacons and elders are not men, and I must say I'm sorry for a preacher trying to get along with the gang he's got. It reminds me of the team a man wanted to haul logs for me with -- a mule, a billy-goat, a bumble-bee and a skunk. There's not a preacher living that hasn't the same gang in his church -a kicker, a butter, a stinger and a stinker. I'm sorry for preachers; they're the best men in the world. But Protestantism went backward the last year, and you preachers had better look out, or the devil will get you and your whole gang. We've got to get a move on us. We can't trust in God all the time without helping ourselves.

I believe in God and man, and you muddle-headed, agnostical, skeptical gassassickal fool, you'll be fryin' in hell befo' long.

I will give you three don'ts: don't loaf, don't go in bad company, and don't drink whisky or gamble. A three do's: look after your integrity and die before you tell a lie; honor the God of your father and mother; and third, honor your precious mother. I never saw a boy who honored his mother who didn't make a grand man, and I never saw a boy who didn't that didn't go straight to the dogs. Boys, a noble, good wife is the best gift to a man, and a noble mother is the best gift to a little boy or girl. He is the noblest man who honors his mother most heartily, who loves his wife most tenderly, and shields his daughter most carefully.

Certainly Sam Jones exhorted the hell out of most of his audience, but you can't win 'em all. The *Fossil Journal* soon attacked the lecturer:

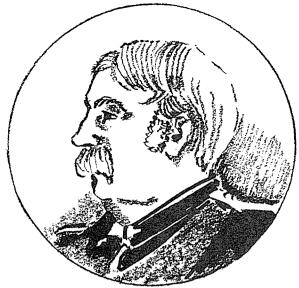
SAM JONES AN INSULT TO INTELLIGENCE Sam Jones, the so-called great evangelist, lectured at Ashland last week, and if the daily papers reported him correctly, he is a wishy-washy preacher at best. His "lectures" consist of silly platitudes and old chestnutty yarns in which

Jones generally figures as the hero; and some of his assertions showed him to be on the ragged edge of lunacy. For instance, what other condition of mind than lunacy could inspire the statement made by Sam that beauty was dangerous in a woman, and that if he had an exquisitely beautiful daughter he would pray God that she might have the smallpox. Rotten indeed must be the mind and empty the pate of the nincompoop who cannot conceive of a beautiful woman as being good and pure and true, and it is a pity indeed that the Chautauqua societies of Oregon, supposed to be promoters of moral as well as intellectual culture, should have been the instrument of bringing this creature, devoid of both, so prominently before the people of this state.

n Wednesday afternoon and evening the speaker was preceeded by Miss May Dearborn from Portland. She graciously sang a couple of solos before the lecturer was presented: "Lo, Hear the Gentle Lark" and "When I'm Big I'll Be a Soldier" for the afternoon program, and, for the evening's lecture, rendered with great spirit, "The Star Spangled Banner," accompanied by a trumpet quartet and drums. Her rousing patriotic song prepared the way for the speaker, General William R. Shafter, "The Hero of Santiago."

As Miss Dearborn and the instrumentalists withdrew amid applause, General Shafter suddenly appeared at the entrance. Standing at sharp attention, he was a most impressive military figure, dressed in his uniform with his gold braid aglow. Removing his military cap and holding it beneath his elbow, he marched down the center aisle, escorted to the platform by the local post of the Grand Army of the Republic. As he walked to the center stage, the audience stood and welcomed him with the Chautauqua salute -- whatever that was -- and followed the salute with three rousing cheers. Professor W.H. Boyer, the Director of Music, hopped onto the stage and led the audience in singing "America," performed with a vigor never before equaled by the people of the Ashland Assembly." What speaker wouldn't be delighted with such a spectacular introduction?

The General was up to the occasion. He



General William R. Shafter

used no notes and began with the modest declaration that the 17,000 men who took part in the campaign deserved more public notice than he. Humility is a gratifying characteristic in a great man, and he captivated the audience at once. He said, with restrained emotion, to his escort of veterans, "I want to thank you, dear old friends of 34 to 38 years ago, that you do me the honor to come to this meeting. May the Grand Army be represented here for many years to come."

His lecture covered the history of Cuba from 1740 to the Charge of San Juan Hill. He detailed the bloody battles and spoke emotionally of our brave soldiers who fought and died on the battlefields until the end of the war when "cathedral bells rang out as we marched into the public square and hoisted the stars and stripes over the city where for 400 years the Spanish flag had floated, a curse to the land."

The applause at the end of the lecture was subdued. The General commanded admiration as a military man who had played such a significant part in our victory and had remained an unpretentious person. The young people had been attentive and didn't fidget, and the folks getting on in years had dozed only occasionally. As the audience filed out, those who had attended felt they had been present in the making of history. The General was one of the Great Ones, and southern Oregon was honored by his presence. Many considered him to have been the high point of the assembly.

By Wednesday the Chautauqua Chorus, under the inspired leadership of Professor

W.H. Boyer of Portland was ready for its debut. The *Tidings* announced the "singers were most excellently trained and the director was well satisfied with the renditions." The reporter got a little nit-picky to show he knew good music when he heard it, and he added: "The tenor lacked voices and the bass might have endured an addition, but the music was fine nevertheless...The Chautauqua chorus maintained its reputation and added to its glory as a purely classical musical organization." The following constituted the chorus: SOPRANO: Soloist, May Dearborn, Misses May Tiffany, Genevieve Tiffany, Jean Ross, Isabel Ross, Sara Anderson, Belle Anderson, Elsie Patterson, Lulu Briggs, Grace Beach, Maud Berry, Minnie Rockfellow, Hattie Silsby, Jennie Churchman, Mesdames E.V. Mills, C.A. Hitchcock, M. McIntosh, Ella Rice, G.L. Webb, H.Clayton, J.L. Downing, C.I. Evans, H.H. Gillette. CONTRALTO: Misses Esther Silsby, Fanny Fox, Nellie Ewan, Frances McWilliams, Lilly Watson, Amy Caldwell, Carrie Jacks, Lulu Smith, Louise Ganiere, Pearl Webb, Jessie Rose, Susie Homes, Leora Hughes, Sada Lottridge, Mrs. L. Kershaw. TENOR: Messrs G.A. Gregory, C.F. Shepherd, E.D. Briggs, E.E. Washburn, Mrs. L.B. Bolton, George S. Nickerson. BASS: Messrs Elmer Patrick, Leon Patrick, O.A. Thornton, F.R. Neil, H.B. Carter, G.W. Trefen, A.F. Eddy, Joe Wertz, N.P. Dodge.

ACCOMPANISTS: Misses Mary Silsby and Aileen Webber.

he soprano soloist, Carolyne Roper Von Benzon, was imported from San Francisco, and she added a touch of magic. Miss May Dearborn was another welcome addition. These ladies may have had no better voices than the local sopranos, but they knew how to project their voices and possessed a professional flair.

The program opened with the Vikings Chorus by the entire group. The selection probably offered the men an opportunity to go bravura in a frenzy, and it was no doubt a spectacular number as an opener for the concert. It was followed by Angels'Serenade rendered by Professor W.H. Boyer, with Mr. M.O. Warner obligato-ing on his viloncello.

May Dearborn and Professor Boyer took the stage for the third number, a duet from *La Traviata*. The critic declared it was "rendered well-sounding if not well-understood." The singers must be commended for singing in Italian, and perhaps it was best that the audience didn't understand the lyrics, what with Armand and Camille getting carried away in a fit of *passion du jour*.

The next number was performed by the guest artist, Miss Carolyne Roper. Her soprano voice was well suited to *The* 

Bird in the Wood, and she trilled and cascaded prettily enough to please any coloratura fan. This song led into the quartet from *Rigoletto* which was a show stopper. Misses Carolyne Roper and Esther Silsby and Professor W.H. Boyer and N.P. Dodge did their best to outsing each other, which was what the composer seems to have intended. The audience knew they were getting culture with a capital K.



The Chautauqua Chorus then arose for *The Merry Miller* by Reginald DeKoven and *Hail Judea*, *Happy Land* by Handel. As you can see, this is getting pretty longhair for southern Oregon. Members of the chorus had to keep one eye on the octavo and one eye on Dr. Boyer, but few people in the audience really knew what was going on so if the singers breathed in the wrong places occasionally and hit an incidental clinker or two no one fussed over it.

After the chorus had finished and sat down again, Miss Dearborn and Dr. Boyer whipped out another duet, this time from Faust. There seemed to be no end of classics, but at this point the program



called for a bagpipe solo by Mr. John Ross. This came none too soon; the audience was up to their ankles in culture. Mr. Ross followed his selection with a little jig which gave a lighter touch to the evening.

The bagpipe bit was followed by Son of the Desert by N.P. Dodge, Spring by Carolyne Roper, The Kiss Waltz by the Ashland Girls Quartet and When You Are Near, Love by Miss Esther Silsby. After these lighter numbers, the chorus stood again for The Lost Chord. Unfold, Ye Portals was a biggie and challenged the chorus to be on the defensive. They probably won the encounter. At the end of the program the singers should have been exhausted and so should the audience. But after a good night's sleep everyone was ready for the Thursday show.

iss Ida Benfey of New York City was the headliner. She was billed as "a reader of rare ability, with a matchless voice and graceful, realistic action." At eight o'clock she made her appearance. She was enough to leave one breathless. Her gown was of luminous satin, with a full train and a beaded bodice. She wore ostrich feathers of the same color in her hair. The *Tidings* reported:

The dress reformers had a great inning after Miss Ackerman and Mr. Jones got through reviling corsets and ridiculing decollette dresses. It was the prevailing sentiment that women should keep their clothes on. The idol of the season, the gifted reader and elocutionist, Miss Ida Benfey, in all the glory of an evening dress, disclosing the delicate beauty of the feminine frame, accompanied by a long trained skirt, appeared upon the platform. The association is said to be liberal and generally gives us both sides of the question. You heard Ackerman and Jones and you saw Benfey. Take your choice.

Although Miss Benfey had previously presented an afternoon concert "for the young people" that had been light and charming, she took her evening's performance seriously and went all-out into the classics. There was no Why-areyou-so-stiff-and-cold-little-cat cheap emotion for her. At the beginning of the program she attacked *Les Miserables* and left the assembly breathless with her histrionics. Jean Valjean, Cossette and Inspector Javert came alive right there on the Chautauqua stage. She even



Miss Ida Benfey

impersonated the lesser characters, showing great versatility. "She frequently moved her audience to tears and laughter," said the *Tidings. The San* Francisco Chronicle reporter wrote: "Miss Benfey adds to a strong magnetic personality superb dramatic power. When rendering the terrible scene dealing with the craving of the blood-thirsty French populace for the life of the nobility, the voice of the reader was cold and hard. The coarse shouts, cries and shrieks of the desperate men and half-crazed women were reproduced with perfect naturalness." After *Les Miserables* Miss Benfey rendered a light and amusing selection that was much appreciated.

he preceeding sample programs give a little taste of the material offered by the Chautauqua Association. Is it any wonder the season ticket holders looked forward to the assembly so eagerly? In the Corliss notebook one finds many speakers and entertainers listed. From only five complete programs, we have picked at random some of the performers. Note the variety of their subjects.

Dr. Carlos Martyn of Chicago: The Devil in Politics and Husbands and Wives.

Frank Lincoln, humorist: The Ludicrous Side of Life and Is Music a Failure?

Prof. A.L. Colton of Mt. Hamilton, California: Two illustrated astronomical lectures, one on the sun, the other on the moon.

Dr. E.R. Dille, Pacific Coast: Abraham Lincoln.

Hon. William Jennings Bryan of Lincoln, Nebraska: *Bimetallism* and *The Money Question*.

Rev. A.W. Lamar, Atlanta: A blending of wit, mimicry, pathos and good sense. Mr. Edward P. Gaston, Chicago: Cuba

and The Land of the Cliff Dwellers. Frank Beard, New York City: Chalk talks. Mrs. Wilberforce J. Whiteman: New York City, contralto: A music recital

Abigail Scott Duniway, the west coast: Eminent Women I Have Known.

fter the War, in 1918, the Chautauqua building was replaced with a new one. In spite of a \$15,000 building fund and a lot of volunteer help, the new building was completed only when the board borrowed \$6000 more. And this came at a time when Chautauqua, not only at Ashland but all over the country, was ebbing fast. Aside from the construction debt, there were other signs of decay. One of the causes for a lack of interest was the neglect of the morning and afternoon classes, particularly those that appealed to youth. Another difficulty was the struggle to get big names which would fill the large auditorium, and a main reason for disaster was the board's swing to Ellison-White Productions for the entire make-up of the programs with no consideration of

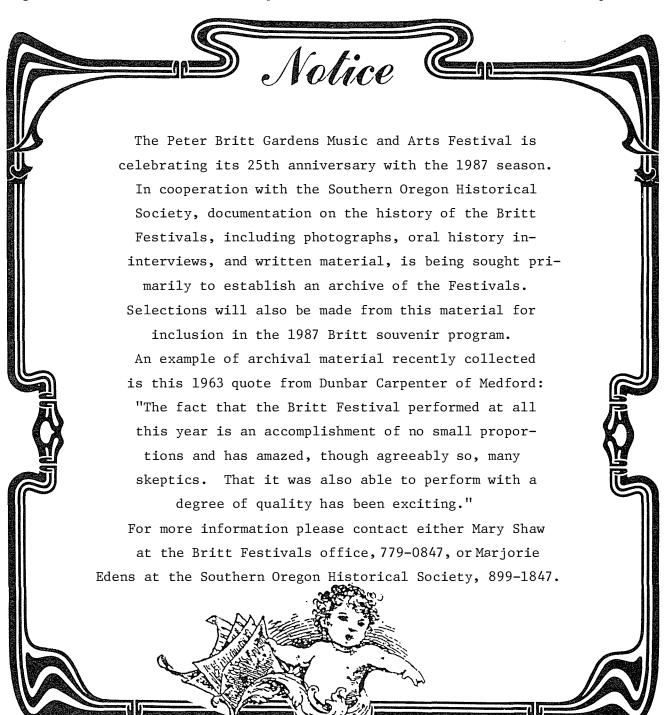
Ashland's own interests. Towards the last, Ellison White slipped considerably in acquiring talent. An alliance with the Lyceum Company proved to be no better.

And so Chautauqua in southern Oregon faded out. The late 20s marked the end. The mortgagee foreclosed and the city took the property over, much to the relief of the mortgagee who had no use for the "white elephant."

Homer Billings, whose father, G.F.Billings was identified with Chautauqua from 1893 to 1916, wrote:

Mainly I think Chautauqua failed because Ashland as a community was a bit blind to what was slipping away, and [the citizens] failed to produce a leader willing to meet the emergency. The people forgot that Chautauqua was not a building but an institution, and if the spirit that moved the institution slacked off, the institution would die.

Raymond Lewis





# SOHS AND SOSC/MARY PHIPPS CENTER HOST BROWN BAG LUNCHES AT NOON

Join a member of SOHS during the lunch hour at the Mary Phipps Center, 229 North Bartlett, Medford, for two upcoming lectures.

On February 18th, Natalie Brown, Coordinator of Photographic Services at SOHS, will present "Peter Britt: Rogue Valley's Renaissance Man." Artist, Photographer, Vintner, Horticulturist -- these are only a few of the words that describe Peter Britt. Natalie's presentation will be a slide lecture highlighting some of the talents of this amazing man.

Dawna Curler, Curator of Interpretation at SOHS, will present "Looking Back at the Recent Past" on Wednesday, February 25th. Dawna will show an early 16mm film taken between 1915 and the early 1930s which shows Medford and the Rogue Valley the way they once were. Dawna will narrate this montage of silent film clips including scenes of Grace Fiero, Charles Lindbergh, and panoramic views of the Valley during the orchard boom.

Bring your lunch and join us for an enjoyable and informative lunch hour.

# SOCIETY'S AUDIT COMPLETED

The accounting firm of Yergen and Meyer has completed the Society's audit for the year ending June 30, 1986. All financial records of the Society were found to be sound.

Members will receive a copy of the audit in an upcoming issue of *The Table Rock Sentinel*. Anyone wishing to review the audit now may do so by visiting the Administrative Offices, Sixth and California Streets, Jacksonville. Copies are available for reading or may be duplicated at a cost of \$1.00 to cover reproduction fees. The offices are open Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM.

### SOHS/KTVAL UPDATE

The photo murals used in KTVL-TV's "Share the spirit" history spots were

duplicated by SOHS Coordinator of Photographic Services, Natalie Brown. The programs, co-sponsored by the Southern Oregon Historical Society, have included segments on Grants Pass, Klamath Falls, Prospect and Cave Junction. February's programs include features on Central Point, Medford, Kerby and Weed. March's schedule is Jacksonville, Eagle Point, Yreka and Collier State Park, north of Klamath Falls. This series is scheduled to run through the middle of September.

# NEW STAFF MEMBER IN OUR RESEARCH LIBRARY

With the Newberg as the Societ Library is Karalee Society's of 1986, w

With the hiring of Karalee Newberg as Library Technician, the Society's Research Library is finally staffed.

Karalee has been on the Society's staff since August of 1986, working in the Preservation/Maintenance Department.

Karalee will be involved with the processing of periodicals and new acquisitions and assisting with the voluminous photo orders that go through the library each week.

We welcome Karalee to her new position and know she will be a fine addition to the library. We can all look forward to the processing of backlogged material now that the library has a full complement of staff.

### MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

Sharon Lumsden, Gift Shop Manager, recommends these books to history buffs: *The River of the West, Vol.II.* The adventures of Joe Meek.

Retail \$9.95 (members \$8.45)

Journal of a Mountain Man. by James Clyman: Retail \$9.94 (Members \$8.45) Sharon has recently acquired a supply of the book, Gold on Sterling Creek, by Haines and Smith. This book has long

Retail \$2.95 (Members \$2.50)

been unavailable.

Our 1987 calendar and a selection of Magna carta literature are also available.

As a member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, you are entitled to join the Oregon Historical Society as an affiliate member. This membership brings you the following: <| 10% discount on books purchased in the OHS bookshop</p> <| Free admission to The Oregon History Center, Research</pre> Library and Resource Center (all located at 1230 S.W. Park Avenue, Portland) <| Subscription to the Oregon Historical Quarterly plus six yearly newsletters An affiliate membership costs just \$10.00. If you are interested in joining, send the form below and your check for \$10.00 to Kathy Wood, Membership Secretary, Oregon Historical Society, Portland OR 97520 ちろ N OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY Affiliate Membership Form Name Address City State Zip Member of Southern Oregon Historical Society. Va

The Southern Oregon Historical Society has many membership categories available -- the most up and coming one being Junior Historian. Joining S.O.H.S. as a Junior Historian, you are entitled to:

- < | The Table Rock Sentinel, the Society's monthly newsletter
- A 15% discount on purchases in the Museum Gift Shop
- $<\mid$  Special invitations to exhibits, programs and workshops

 $<\mid$  The monthly bulletin from the Children's Museum

The Junior Historian membership is for ages 17 and under and costs \$6.00. Junior Historians become acquainted with the history of Oregon, particularly local history, and gain an understanding of past, current and future events.

If you have children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews who you think would be interested in this program, let them know about it -or better yet, send in the membership form in their names -- and we'll do the rest! We look forward to having them join us.

Contact Stacey Williams (899-1847, ext. 227) at the Southern Oregon Historical Society, P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon, 97530-0480 for further information.

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	Name	SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY Junior Historian Membership Form Age	<b>F</b>
	Address_ City	StateZip	
			F

The Jacksonville Museum Quilt Show, under the direction of Dora Scheidecker, was held at the U.S. Hotel from January 17 to January 25. Over 1000 people attended the display. The Quilters have the largest collection of quilt blocks on the West Coast -- 587 historic and contemporary patterns. The picture at the right shows spectators enjoying the show. Below: Jousting on the

Courthouse lawn during the Magna Carta Exhibit. *Photographs by Natalie Brown* 



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THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL