

# THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JULY 1987





Cornelius C. Beekman built the house for his family c. 1873 on the south side of California Street. The land was purchased from James Cluggage, the worthy gentleman who allegedly found the first nugget in Rich Gulch and consequently made a donation land claim of most of the territory which later became the city of Jacksonville.

Before moving into the house, which became the Beekman family home, the family lived in the Armstrong House across Sixth Street from the Presbyterian Church. In the photograph above C.C. is standing on the sidewalk and Julia Beekman is on the front steps.

Notice the barn behind the house and the primitive landscaping of the front yard.

The house has been altered little since it was first built. Porches at the rear have been enclosed and some out-buildings have been removed. The back yard has been considerably changed to alleviate a drainage problem.

Today the Beekman House is one of the Society's most distinguished properties. With its living history performances it has become an authentic touch of old Jacksonville.

The cover photograph shows Beekman standing beside his bank. The two men on either side are unidentified.

We are grateful to Charles Sweet, our dedicated volunteer, who painstakingly researched and wrote the long-overdue Beekman Story which appears in this issue.

#### THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Negative #269

## JACKSONVILLE'S PREMIER CITIZEN: CORNELIUS C. BEEKMAN

The name most closely associated with the historical town of Jacksonville in southern Oregon is that of Cornelius C. Beekman and his family. Many readers of the *Sentinel* have visited the Beekman house and bank, have talked with people playing the roles of the Beekmans during the summer "living history" program, and have

become acquainted with this prominent pioneer family. It is, therefore, only appropriate that some issues of the *Sentinel* should be devoted to recounting as best we can the lives of the Beekmans. This issue covers the story of Cornelius, and succeeding issues will be devoted to his wife, Julia, and their two children.

**C**ornelius C. Beekman\* was born on January 27, 1828. The place of his birth is not documented but the most likely location was New York City. He was a descendent of Maarten and Susannah Beekman, who emigrated

\* Records fail to show what Cornelius' middle name was. Possibly the "C" stood for "Compton", his mother's maiden name.

from Holland to New Amsterdam in 1638. Maarten had settled in New Jersey, and several generations of the family made that state their home. Cornelius' grandparents (Cornelius and Rebecca Beekman) were living in New Jersey when his father, Benjamin, was born in 1803. Benjamin was married in 1827 to Lydia Compton (b. March 30, 1806). Shortly after their marriage



*Julia Hoffman Beekman, #271*

they left New Jersey and moved to New York City, where Cornelius probably came into this world. In 1830 the parents and their infant sons, Cornelius and Abram, lived briefly in Eddytown (now Lakemount), New York. The following year the family settled permanently in Dundee, Yates County, New York. Dundee is a small town a few miles from Lakemount in the Finger Lakes region of the state.

Benjamin Beekman was a carpenter and building contractor throughout his life and at one period he had a successful furniture and undertaking business. Among other structures, Benjamin built the Dundee Baptist Church. He, incidentally, was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. The Beekmans raised five children. In addition to Cornelius there were Abram (1834-1908), John (1831-1905), Lydia (1834-1910), and Thomas DeWitt (1841-1925). Abram, as a young man, left Dundee and settled in the larger

city of Bath, slightly west of Dundee. Here he founded a sash and blind company which by 1908 had become Bath's main industry. For a few years his brother John was in partnership with him. Both Lydia and DeWitt resided in Dundee their entire lives. DeWitt went into his father's business and continued to run it after Benjamin's death in 1879. Their mother, Lydia, died in 1891.

Cornelius (later to be known as 'Beek' to many of his friends and associates -- and "Cornel" to his wife) along with his brothers and sister grew up in Dundee. We have no record of their schooling although we can assume from their positions later in life that all five children received a substantial education. The Dundee area had excellent public schools during the years that they would have been attending school. About the time that Cornelius reached high school age, the Starkey Seminary opened in nearby Eddytown. It is very possible that he attended this private Christian secondary school. When he was sixteen years old, he began to learn the carpenter's trade under his father's direction and he soon became a skilled workman. Among the Beekman papers is a notation that Cornelius once took a course offered by a Boston night school, but it is not known whether this was a correspondence course or whether he actually attended classes in Boston.

**B**eekman was employed as a clerk and salesman in a general merchandise store when word reached Dundee of the discovery of gold in California. He and three companions decided to go west and seek their fortunes. His mother was strongly opposed to his going so far from home and persuaded Benjamin not to help finance the trip. Cornelius was determined to go and obtained a loan from his employer. His note was secured by a life insurance policy upon which he had paid several years premiums in advance.\* In the spring of 1850, soon after his 22nd birthday, young Beekman set out for the journey. His three companions went as far as New York City with him, but then got cold feet and returned to their homes.

Cornelius was undaunted and booked steerage passage on a ship headed for Panama. In later years he was to write that it wasn't a very enjoyable experience traveling in the foul-smelling ship's hold, crowded with hundred's of steerage passengers, most of whom were seasick during the

\*Beekman repaid this loan within a few years. Many years later, when his former employer was in financial straits, he reciprocated with a loan.

ten days they were at sea. Upon landing at Aspinwall, Panama, Beekman crossed the isthmus and arrived safely in Panama City with his chest of carpenter's tools. Here he found several thousand men impatiently waiting for transportation to the gold fields. Learning that a British bark was in the harbor, he hired natives to row him out to the vessel. After a desperate appeal to the gruff and obdurate ship's captain, Cornelius was able to secure passage to San Francisco. On this leg of the journey he was fortunate enough to obtain cabin quarters, but the ship was becalmed on the way and seven weeks elapsed before it reached the Golden Gate.

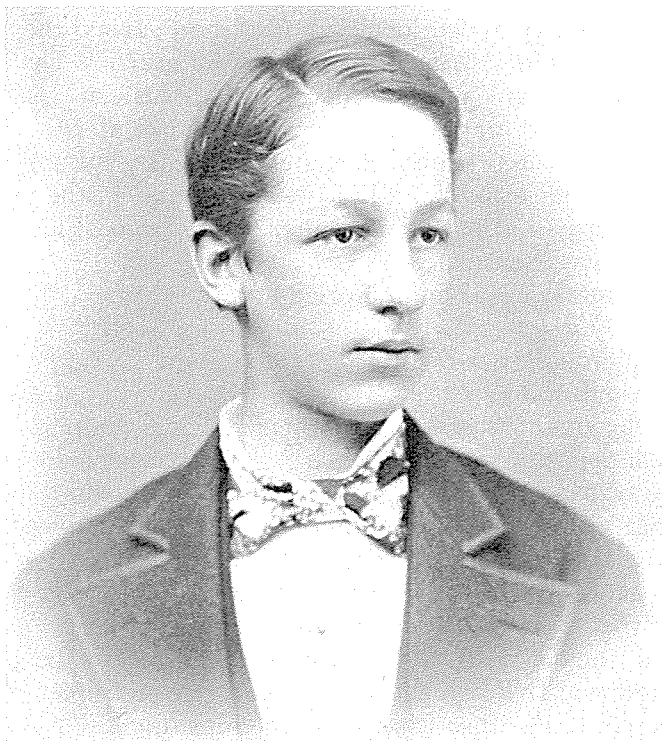
By the time he got ashore Beekman had barely enough money left for a day's board and lodging. Being a skilled workman and equipped with the necessary tools, he had no difficulty in finding employment immediately and went to work for an ounce of gold (\$18) per day. He soon secured a position as ship's carpenter on a boat plying the Sacramento River but, after several months service on the river boat, he resumed his work in San Francisco and at the same time became a silent partner in two restaurants, one of which was located on the present site of the Chronicle Building.

Cornelius still had the gold fever and early in 1852 headed for the northern gold fields, first mining at Sawyer's Bar on the North Fork of the Salmon River. Later he and a partner worked a claim on the Scott River which reportedly yielded

about \$8,000. He lost it all, however, when a wing dam (that he and a group of associates had constructed on the Klamath River) was swept away by high water following the early fall rains. While mining on the Scott River that year he served for one day as secretary of a meeting to try a Dr. A. Bardt, accused of stealing a miner's gold. The vigilante tribunal recovered the loot and ordered the culprit whipped.

The following year, after losing his modest fortune on the ill-fated wing-dam venture, Beekman went to the mining camp of Yreka and resumed his trade as a carpenter, building cabins for the miners. While in Yreka he acted as an attorney for three miners before the local court and, although opposed by an experienced attorney, won all three of his cases. Later that year he was hired by Cram, Rogers & Co., a subsidiary of the Adams Express (a competitor of Wells Fargo) operating out of Yreka. He was put to work carrying gold, mail, and other valuables between Yreka and Jacksonville where the precious metal had been found the year before. Beek lived in Jacksonville and traveled across the Siskiyou Mountains on mule or horseback. When his employer went broke in 1856, he bought (for \$100) the Cram, Rogers' stables and corral located near the southwest corner of 5th and C Streets in Jacksonville.

**T**hus was born the Beekman Express, providing service to Yreka and Crescent City, California, as well as to the



Benjamin, #266



Carrie, #267

mining camps in between these towns. During the initial years Cornelius probably was doing most of the express riding himself, although in 1857 he reportedly had a rider named Dan Canby carrying some of the shipments. Beekman owned several horses, including a fine Spanish horse for which he is supposed to have paid \$1,000, a princely sum in those days. He probably rode these horses between Jacksonville and the foot of the Siskiyou where he switched to mules at Hugh Barron's Mountain House. In the early years Cornelius traveled across the mountains mostly at night to avoid Indian ambush. The sure footed mules were much preferred for navigating the dark trails over the rugged summit. He continued to use these animals until reliable stage service over the Siskiyou became available in the late 1850s.

Beekman's express business soon evolved into a banking business because he was storing, shipping and eventually buying the miners' gold. He probably did not think of himself as a "banker" at first and years later was quoted as saying that "...almost without any intention of doing so I was operating a private bank." His first bank building and express office in Jacksonville was a small wood-frame structure shared with a druggist on the southeast corner of Third and California streets. Sometime prior to 1858 he expanded his business to Crescent City, where Richard Duggan maintained an office for him and looked after his interests. By now Beek was starting to give up his express riding and began contracting with others to carry his shipments.

In 1859 he made the first of many trips back to Dundee to see his family and, on the return voyage in August, wrote to his parents about the journey. This time he traveled first-class on the ship *Moses Taylor*, which carried about 750 passengers (200 more than the steamer could comfortably carry). It was stormy and most of the passengers were seasick. Cornelius shared a stateroom with a man he called "Mulph" (who apparently was known to have a drinking problem but seems to have stayed off the bottle during the ten-day journey to Panama). They crossed the isthmus on the Panama Railroad and boarded the ship *Golden Age* for the last leg of the trip. Beekman's cabinmate was now an army lieutenant whose company he enjoyed, but he wasn't too thrilled when the purser's office assigned him to a dining-table seat between two married matrons instead of a couple of the pretty young ladies on board.

It appears that Cornelius now had other things on his mind besides shipping the miner's gold and

he began to give some thought to acquiring a wife. In rough and tumble Jacksonville there weren't too many eligible (and suitable) young ladies around, but one did catch the banker's eye. In 1853, the same year that Beekman went to work for Cram, Rogers Company, the William Hoffman family had arrived in Jacksonville after traveling over the Oregon and Applegate trails. This family soon became prominent in the community and was quite popular in view of the fact that it included six eligible daughters. Cornelius made the acquaintance of the second oldest girl, Julia, and on January 29, 1861, they were wed. She was then 21 and he was 33.

**T**he couple set up housekeeping in a little, white "salt-box" house that had been built three years earlier on the northwest corner of Sixth and California Streets. This classic Revival style building, now known as the Minerva Armstrong House, presently serves as the SOHS offices and is where the *Table Rock Sentinel* is put together every month. All three of the Beekman children were born in this house, the first being their son, Benjamin (Ben), born in 1863. That also was the year that Cornelius erected the building to house his express and banking business for the next fifty-two years.

The Beekman Bank Building is located across the intersection from the earlier express office where Third Street crosses California Street. Cornelius, with his experience as a carpenter, probably did much of the work on the building. He built the bank vault of an extremely hard sandstone quarried locally, and it soon earned the reputation of "strong box of the community." The Beekman Bank was the first bank in southern Oregon and may have been the second in all of Oregon. It has been said that, in the early mining days of Jacksonville, all of the gold found in the district passed over the counter of this bank. Pure gold was then worth \$20.67 an ounce, but Beekman's usual buying price for "dust" was \$16.50 per ounce. It was estimated that four million dollars worth of the metal made its way through the bank.

Beekman considered that his bank was primarily a depository for the miner's gold until it could be transported to the San Francisco Mint, and that whatever was deposited was, in effect, stored in a safe-deposit box. For this service the Beekman Bank charged one percent of the value of the "gold dust" per month for safe-keeping, and the usual charge for shipping the gold to the mint was five percent of the value. Cornelius' nephew, Fletcher Linn, described his uncle's

method of handling deposits in those early years:

**H**is bank was of course a unique institution...When a person came in to make a deposit..., he'd merely hand him a little bag with a name tag attached to it, and request the depositor to sign his name and address on the top; then put his money or gold-dust into it, and tie up the bag. There was no bookkeeping, no checks issued or to be bothered with...Had there been a 'run' on the bank, every depositor would have received his own little bag...with no loss to anybody.

The same year that Beekman constructed his bank building also saw the end of his own express business when Wells Fargo & Company appointed him as their agent for Jacksonville. Wells Fargo had begun operating over the California and Oregon Stage Lines and now was providing service between the two states. It wasn't very long before Cornelius took on another enterprise and began selling books, school supplies, and stationery in the bank.

The Beekmans first daughter, Caroline



*Little Lydia, #272*

(Carrie), was born in 1865, and two years later a second daughter, Lydia, arrived. Lydia lived only six years and when she died (on October 22, 1873) of complications from measles, her parents were grief stricken because the little girl had always been so bright and happy.

1873 was the year that fire destroyed the north side of California Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Although the side of the Beekman Bank Building was scorched, the blaze did not jump Third Street. It was about this same time (the exact date is unclear) that Cornelius built the two-story, Gothic Revival style house on California Street four blocks south of the bank and on the opposite side of the street. (The family occupied the house until Julia Beekman died in 1931 and remained in the family until Carrie's death in 1959. The house is now managed and operated by the Historical Society and, during the summer months, the Beekman house and bank are used in the Society's living-history program.)

By the time that Ben and Carrie were ready for school, the Jacksonville schoolhouse was located on Bigham's Knoll. It was a wooden structure that burned in 1871 and was replaced by another wood building. Cornelius was then serving on the school board. He was quite active in the Masons and played a major role in building the Masonic Hall in 1875 on the former site of the Eldorado Saloon which had been destroyed by fire the year before. Several events in the lives of the Beekman family took place in 1880. Ben graduated from high school and enrolled in the University of Oregon. When President Rutherford B. Hayes and General Wm. T. Sherman visited Jacksonville and stayed at the U.S. Hotel across the street from the Beekman Bank, Cornelius gave the welcoming speech. That same year Beek became chairman of a committee to raise funds for building the Presbyterian Church on the corner of Sixth and California Streets. He contributed heavily to this undertaking and even went to San Francisco to purchase the thousand-pound bell that still hangs in the belfry.\*

**O**peration of the bank was Beekman's major business activity through the 1860s, but he soon branched out into other fields. He not only bought the gold that others had mined but also invested in some mining enterprises, none

\* The following year the church was constructed by David Linn at a cost of \$6,000. Before then the congregation had been holding services in schoolhouses, private homes, or the Methodist church. (Over the years, Beekman would contribute to Presbyterian churches in Medford and his home town of Dundee as well as the Episcopal church in Medford.)



*C.C. Beekman, Ben, Carrie, and Julia. Neg. #10374*

of which was very profitable according to the records. During the 1870s he acquired a half interest in a gold and silver mine on Jackson Creek a few miles out of town (he sold his interest in this mine to Wm. Opp in 1900). In 1875 he built a steam stamp mill on the Applegate River. Three years later Cornelius went into partnership with his first bank cashier, U.S. Hayden, to develop a hydraulic mining operation. In 1893 he

hired J.A. Huffer to construct a stamp mill on Jackson Creek. This mill may have been built at the site of his mine. After it was put in operation it produced some gold, but the project was abandoned within a few years.

Beekman did much better financially on his real-estate ventures. In fact, most of his wealth resulted from this activity. Over the years he acquired a great deal of land, including large

tracts of inexpensive brushland where Medford would be located when the railroad came through in 1884. Many of his properties were obtained through the purchase of county warrants. Cornelius learned the value of these warrants when his Wells Fargo associate and friend, Henry Wadsworth, pointed out that the county was committed to exchange land to redeem the warrants if tax money was not forthcoming from the land holder. Wadsworth was the Wells Fargo official whom Beekman dealt with on financial matters. The two had first met when Wadsworth was the Wells Fargo agent in Yreka during the 1850s.

Cashier Hayden's death in 1879 resulted in Cornelius having to devote most of his time to the bank business until he could replace Hayden. Interestingly, Hayden was buried in the Beekman family plot at the Jacksonville Cemetery. Beek still sold stationery and school supplies at the bank and continued to do so until it closed. He also had business connections with several insurance companies. Between 1889 and 1900 Beekman operated the bank in partnership with his neighbor, Thomas G. Reames. \* Each partner put up \$12,500 for his half of the capital. The partnership was a friendly, profitable one. Until Reames' death in 1900 their enterprise was known as the Beekman & Reames Banking House. The bank acquired its last cashier, Henry G. Dox, about 1903. In 1905 Beekman turned his Wells Fargo agentship over to the cashier. Besides working at the bank, Dox served as City Recorder and Justice of the Peace. In this latter capacity he had authority to perform marriages, and there is some evidence that at least one or two weddings took place in the bank.

**A**lthough Cornelius served as secretary for a vigilante committee one day in 1852, it wasn't until eight years later that he again accepted public office by becoming the street commissioner for the newly-incorporated town of Jacksonville. That same year, because of his opposition to slavery, he switched from the Democratic Party to the Republican. In 1869 he was elected to the local school board for the first time, served on the board twenty years, was chairman several times, and donated land and money for school buildings. He also was selected as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in St. Louis, but there is no evidence that he attended. The records are also incomplete as to the number of years that Beekman served on

\* The story of the Reames family appeared in the September 1984 *Sentinel*.

the town council, but we do know that he was the Jacksonville mayor in 1874-75.

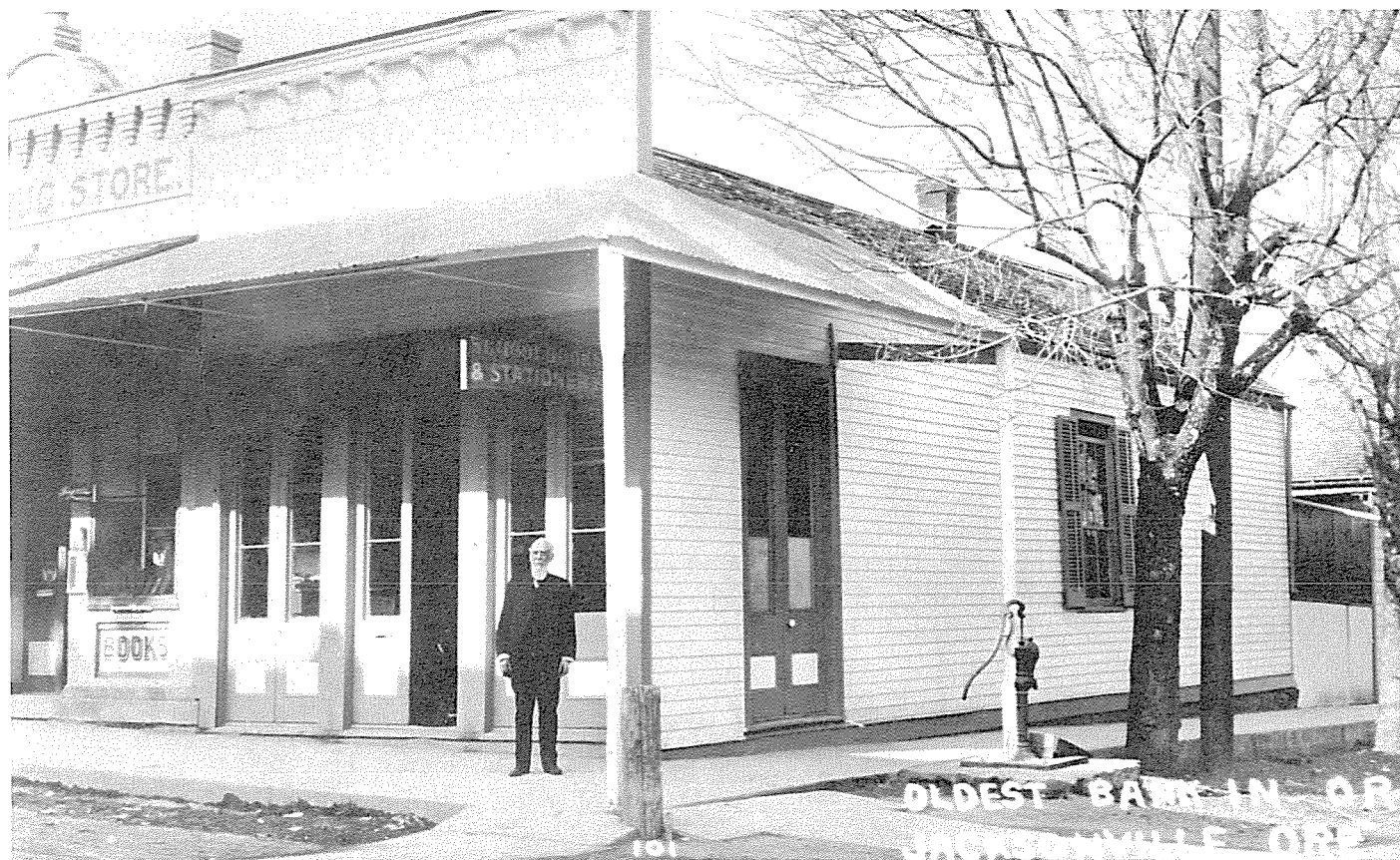
In the eyes of most Jacksonville citizens, Cornelius Beekman's life was regarded as a model of probity. However, one recorded incident would suggest that he may have had a strong liking for the product of the town's flourishing breweries. Pinto Colvig tells a story of the time that he and another youngster were collecting empty beer bottles for extra spending money. When they peered over Beek's high board fence, they discovered a bonanza: piles and piles of empty bottles. Hightailing downtown the youngsters found the banker and the Presbyterian minister, Robert Ennis, engaged in conversation (Pinto opined that they were probably discussing the evils of drink). When the boys shouted, "Hey, Mister Beekman, kin we have all those empty beer bottles in your backyard?" the embarrassed banker brushed them off, and the boys beat it. The next day Cornelius told Judge William Colvig, Pinto's father, about the incident, and Pinto had to apologize. The apology was accepted pleasantly but with the admonition: "Very good, young man. But in the future remember to hold thy tongue and to respect the cloth." Pinto wrote that it took him a long time to figure that one out.\*

When it came to partisan politics, Cornelius showed very little inclination of aspiring to office. Nevertheless, in 1878, some of his friends entered his name as a Republican candidate for governor. He was not a willing candidate and, a week before the Republican convention was held in Salem, he had the following statement published in the Jacksonville *Oregon Sentinel*:

"Learning that my name is being mentioned throughout the State in connection with the Governorship I desire to say that I am not a candidate for that or any other position. I am not a politician in any acceptance (sic) of the term, have never occupied official place except in a limited local sphere, and prefer the position of a private citizen to any in the gift of the people of Oregon..."

The Republican Party in Oregon was badly split in 1878, and on the first ballot for gubernatorial choice, the 176 votes were scattered among four principal candidates. The un-nominated C.C. Beekman received two of the votes. By the fourth ballot someone officially nominated Cornelius, and on the eighth ballot he

\* There is no documentation for proving that Colvig's story actually took place. But surely no one would begrudge Cornelius Beekman one little vice.



*C.C. Beekman standing before his bank. #697*

received 99 votes to get the convention's endorsement. Beekman immediately wired his acceptance to Salem, but in the ensuing weeks he engaged in almost no serious campaigning. However, the Jacksonville citizenry and Beek's family were thrilled with the turn of events. The story goes that Julia and Carrie began planning new wardrobes for Salem society.

During the election campaign there were a few cheap attacks on the Republican candidate (Beekman was described as a "Jew," a "Methodist," and a miserly banker who exploited the poor), but the only major issue that the opposition raised was the matter of possible land fraud in connection with so-called "swamplands." Cornelius had acquired 3,000 acres of these lands in Klamath County, and the Democrats tried to make this an issue. The accusation backfired, however, when it was learned that the Democratic candidate, W.W. Thayer, had applied for 100,000 acres of swampland.

The election results were not known for two weeks, and for a time it appeared as though Beekman was the winner. When the final tally was taken, however, his opponent won by fewer than 70 votes. From what we know of Beek's character, he never aspired to statewide political office, and he probably was relieved that he lost the 1878 election. He was approached again four

years later, and in 1894 his son Benjamin (who was then a successful Portland attorney) urged him to consider running for governor. In both instances his answer was that he would accept the candidacy if drafted but that he would rather not.

Beekman's reluctance to run for political office did not apply to participation in other civic and social activities. In 1887 he had been appointed Regent at the University of Oregon, a post that he held for 15 years (along with Henry Failing he was a donor of the fund for the Beekman and Failing Prizes at the University). By 1906 Cornelius was president of the Jackson County Land Association. Three years later Governor F.W. Benson appointed him to the National Peace Conference held in Chicago. Later that same year he went to Georgia as a representative for the Masons. He was quite active in this fraternal order most of his life and served at one time as treasurer of his lodge. Beek was a member of the Southern Oregon Pioneer Society and was elected as president of the Society in 1914.

**N**ot until 1907 were banks in Oregon subject to examination and regulation by the state. Up until then the banking methods and practices of institutions like Beekman's contrasted sharply with present-day banking operations. The

Oregon Regulation Act of 1907 required a strict segregation of bank assets, liabilities and capital from other assets and liabilities of the owner. Even though Cornelius had a reputation for fiscal integrity and his bank had always been financially sound, he now had to revise his banking practices in order to remain in business. The Beekman Bank not only had weathered every national financial crisis over almost 60 years of operation but also had apparently made loans to other banks in times of crisis. Cornelius was held in such esteem that in the 1890s he was considered for the presidency of the Commercial National Bank of Portland (later to become the U.S. National Bank).

After the 1907 law was enacted the state bank examiner who scrutinized the Beekman Bank operations was S.G. Sargent. He started immediately to count the cash without reviewing the daily balance sheet. When the cash count reached \$90,000, Sargent began to wonder how large a bank he was examining. Then, upon consulting the daily balance sheet, he discovered that deposits amounted to only \$70,000. He asked Beekman for an explanation and was told, "Why I never lend the bank's money." The excess funds in the vault were either Beek's own resources or the bank's cash reserve. From then on until the bank closed, the State Banking Department showed on its annual reports the notation for the Beekman Bank: "Loans and Discounts -- None."

By 1912 Cornelius had decided to close his banking operations and he filed the following notice:

#### NOTICE OF RETIREMENT FROM BUSINESS

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, sole owner and proprietor of the "Beekman Banking House" of Jacksonville, Oregon, on account of advancing years, contemplates retiring from active banking business in the near future. All those having monies on deposit in said bank or who have entrusted valuable documents or papers in its keeping are therefore requested to call and receive the same at their convenience.

In this connection I desire to thank the many patrons of the bank for long continued trust and confidence and patronage extended to it during the course of more than 50 years of its existence.

**W**hen Cornelius died, many depositors had not elected to withdraw their funds in spite of repeated requests. In order to complete the bank's liquidation, S.G. Sargent (then State Superintendent of Banks) ordered that funds of these reluctant depositors be transferred

to a Medford bank and that they be so notified. Death came to Jacksonville's most famous citizen on Washington's birthday, 1915. His funeral was attended by many friends, and a special funeral train brought people from Medford for his services at the Presbyterian Church. Shortly before his death, Beekman had met with the Rev. Weston Shields, pastor of the church, and told him, "I will soon be 87 years old. We old pioneers are dropping off one by one. There are not many of us left. We have been satisfied with this life and now we are anxious about what is beyond. I have no complaint to make, for God has been good to me and mine."

Cornelius Beekman's claim to fame extended beyond the confines of the Rogue River Valley. In 1950 the *Portland Oregonian* got out a centennial edition and listed Beekman as one of the state's 100 outstanding leaders during the past 100 years.

The last surviving member of the Beekman family was daughter Carrie. When she died in 1959, her parents' 1873 house was left to the University of Oregon and the 1863 bank building was left to the Oregon Historical Society. Ultimately the two properties were acquired by Jackson County, and the Southern Oregon Historical Society took over their management and operation. Today the Society's living-history program introduces the Beekman family to summer visitors from all over the world. As the visitors step into the bank they get the impression they are back in the days of pack trains, stage coaches, and miners with pouches of "dust." They will find the bank just as Cornelius Beekman and Henry Dox left it. Here are the massive gold scales that can weigh with equal accuracy 200 ounces of gold or twelve cents worth. Here can be found unsold books and school supplies, and here is the old wooden bench upon which passengers for the overland stage used to sit. Hanging on the wall are the Wells Fargo posters and notices of an era long gone. And behind the scarred bank counter will be seen people playing the roles of the Banker Beekman and Cashier Dox.

*Charles Sweet*

#### SOURCE MATERIAL:

1. Training Manual for Living-History Program, prepared by SOHS Curator of Interpretations, Dawna Curler.
2. Richard H. Engeman, *Cornelius C. Beekman*, Seminar paper prepared for History 407.
3. Beekman papers in collections of the Oregon Historical Society and the University of Oregon.
4. Orin K. Burrell, *Gold in the Woodpile*.
5. Fletcher Linn, "Reminiscences" (SOHS Ms).
6. Vance DeBar (Pinto) Colvig, "Clowns is people" (SOHS Ms).
7. History of the Columbia River Valley, Vol.II, pp. 343-47.

*Note...*

Louis Henry Pankey was a member of a widely known family of the Sams Valley, Central Point area. There are not so many clan members today, but it was once said that if you walked up to a stranger in southern Oregon and said, "Good morning, Mr. Pankey," nine times out of ten you'd have the right name. Mr. Pankey's autobiography came to us through the courtesy of Mrs. Bill Askwith of Medford. Her mother was Mrs. Guy Tex (Della Pankey Tex) and Louis Henry Pankey, who wrote the manuscript, gave it to her. The autobiography needs no explanation. Parts of it have been cut to fit our limited space.

# Autobiography

## Louis Henry Pankey

I know very little about my ancestors except what I have heard my father and mother and grandmother tell me. My grandfather, on my father's side, was what they called a Faith doctor. He would make no charge for his service and people would come from miles around for treatment. Sometimes he would find an extra sheep, calf or pig in his field.

My father Obediah and his identical twin brother Jobediah were born in Kenytown, Illinois, March 1, 1844. I don't know how many there were in the family but these are the ones I have heard him speak of: James, Hamten, George, Obediah, Jobediah, Thomas, Louisa, Betsie and Polly.

Father said when he was in school one of the boys had pie for lunch and another one said, "We can't have pie at our house for when we have flour we ain't got no frat, and when we have frat we ain't got no flour."

He said in summer the younger kids all wore only what he called toe shirts, a garment that hung from the shoulders to the toes. And at meal time they had a big bowl of cornmeal mush on the floor, and each had a spoon, and that was the way the people lived in those days.

To the best of my knowledge, it was in the summer of 1878, that many of the people in the neighborhood got the Oregon fever and sold out to the Dutch. Father used that for a by-word from that time on. I don't know how many, but there were several families pooled together to charter a whole railroad train for Redding, California. They called it an emigrant train. The end of the railroad was at Redding at that time.

Father's brother Jim and his son Louis met them there with two four-horse teams and brought them the rest of the way into Sams Valley. I have heard Father say dozens of times that he wouldn't go back to Illinois to live for the best ranch in the state; sometimes it would be half the state, and other times for the whole state, according to the kind of mood he happened to be in at the time.

I believe my mother was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her name was Candace Cowand, and when she married Father he had two children, a boy and a girl. His first wife passed away and the girl died shortly after, but the boy was my half brother Charles who lived until a few years ago.

My name is Louis Henry Pankey. I was born September 10, 1879, somewhere in Sams Valley. I



*Legend on back of the photograph: Taken at Obadiah Pankey Family Reunion held at Grieve Resort in Prospect -- 1955. Left to right: Minnie Crance, Della Tex, Lewis Pankey, Willis Pankey, Ethel Temer, Fay Kain. Mary Grieve in front. Picture taken by Margaret Grieve. #11124*

never did know just where. About all I can recall about the house is that it faced the east and that there was a well in the yard. I can't remember any fence near the house. There are few things that happened in the house that still stick in my mind.

I can remember when we all went to a tent show and I sat on my Father's lap and saw two ponies on a teeter-totter. I can remember a lady, a Miss Michel, came to our house walking on crutches, and I can remember the time the peddler came to our house with all kinds of trinkets, such as knives, forks, spoons, egg beaters and the like and mother held me up so I could see in the wagon.

I can remember when my sister Rosie got something in her eye and mother told her to wash her face and maybe it would come out. So she washed her face and when she picked up the towel, she said, "It came out for I heard it fall on the floor."

That is all I can remember about the place for I was only four years old. I believe it was in 1883 that we moved to a place just below Moon Sulphur Spring (it is called Holcum Spring now).

There is a fresh water spring just a short way from there and we had the water piped down to the house through a clay pipe made by Mr. Hanna - way up the Rogue River. I have a piece of it now. The water came in near the corner of the kitchen and then into a coil oil can and then through the corner of the kitchen. That was the best water system in the country.

At this time there were nine in the family. Grandma, Father, who was one of the Pankey twins - they were called Obe and Jobe (Obe was my father), then Mother, (her maiden name was Candace Cowand), then Charley (a half brother), Eva, Rosie, Louis (yours truly), Mary and Minnie, the baby born December, 1884.

Father took this place with the understanding that he was to clear the brush off for the use of it for four years. It was partly covered with wild plum and poison oak and the like. He raised mostly potatoes and watermelons. He would let us kids have all the small melons we wanted but we did not bother the larger ones. Every now and then he would take a load of melons over the mountain to Fort Klamath and sell them to the soldiers. Sometimes he would take mother along

and we youngsters would have to stay home with Grandma. I don't know how long they would be gone but it seemed like a long time to me.

Father planted a small patch of peas just above the house and when the rabbits began to work on them, he set some traps along the rows for them. One day when I was all alone except for Grandma, I went out to sample the peas. Well, the first thing I knew, a steel trap had me by the heel (bare footed of course) and when I sat down, another got me by the coat tail. I let out a few yells and Grandma came and tried to get me out. The ground was soft so she picked up a piece of broken plate and put the trap on it and stepped on the spring and the plate broke and that sure did hurt. Then she said, "I guess you'll just have to stay here." I sure did set up a howl. She managed to get me loose and I lost my taste for green peas right there.

There is a weed that grows almost everywhere (I had some in my yard last year). It is a tall slender weed with long narrow leaves and we called it pig weed. Grandma made a kind of tea out of it for medicine of some kind. Well, I got a bright idea to gather a lot of it and dry it and put it away for the winter. As I was working away gathering pig weed (bare footed) something struck me on the heel. I thought I had stepped against a sharp stick. Then a very sharp pain ran up my leg and I ran to the house screaming at the top of my voice. That is about all I can remember about it except for my brother Charley pushing me up to the dinner table in a chair. Mother said that Dr. Stanley said it was a snake bite. I didn't see any snake but will always think it was a rattle snake or it wouldn't have hurt so badly or my feet wouldn't have been so sore.

We most always had venison for when it would get low Father would take his old muzzle loader and go out and bag a deer and bring it in. One day he traded a cow for a 45-60 britch loading gun and went out to try his luck. He wasn't gone long till we heard him shoot five or six times just above Sulphur Spring. When he came back to the house he was very much put out. He had been shooting at a big black bear and missed it everytime. Then he put up a target and took a few shots at it and found that it shot several inches high. And you can bet he had it tuned up the next time he took it out.

In the fall of 1885, I was six years old and it was time for me to start school. I can well recall my first day in school. The first word in my book was ax so I studied that all day. I repeated it all the way home. It was about a mile and a half walk. I jumped in the front door and yelled, "Ax,

Ax!" The teacher's name was John Potter. He was a kind of gruff old man. He used to lift me out of the seat by the ear until my brother Charley told him to cut it out.

Uncle Jim Pankey came across the plains with an ox team in 1854 and settled in Sams Valley. He gave the land for the school house and the cemetery. There is an arch over the gate which reads Pankey Cemetery.

The old school house was torn down some years ago. It was a small one-room building. There was a water bucket over in the corner that had a long handled dipper or gourd in it and everyone drank out of it.

Once in a while on Sunday, we would all climb into the wagon and go over to Antioch (a mile or so north of Upper Table Rock) for church. Each family would take a basket lunch and at noon they would spread it all out on the ground (on table cloths) and everyone would have a big feed. Then they would have church again in the afternoon. The Preacher's name was Mr. Todd.

Someone gave Father a little pup. It grew up to be a good sized dog. We called him Trust. His back was almost as high as my shoulders - at least when I think of him now it seems he should be that high. "Some dog", Charley used to tease him. If someone would point a stick at him, he would grab it and chew it to pieces. If you would point your finger at him, he would chew that too.

I remember one day I helped Grandma build an ash hopper out in the yard. We used little fir poles for the frame and clab boards, split out of sugar pine for the sides. It was about four by six feet, V shaped with a trough at the bottom. We filled it with ashes and then poured in a lot of water and put the bucket under the trough and waited for it to soak and then the lye would come out in the bucket. Then she would take a big kettle and fill it with meat scraps and deer tallow and pour in the lye and boil it until it turned to soft soap.

When they butchered hogs, they always cooked the heads for head cheese and I thought the ear was the very best part of the hog (I still do) so later when we had chicken for dinner, the first thing I called for was the ear. It was a long time before I heard the last of that.

One time we all went to Gold Hill to trade (Max Jacobie had a store there). I was so excited because they told me I would get to see a train. Well, the folks were in the store and I kept watch up the track. Pretty soon a man came along with one of those little three wheeled pump cars and I ran in the store and yelled, "Here comes the train." That was the first thing I ever saw run on

a railroad track.

I have a picture of the first train that ever came to Ashland from the North. It is dated April 18, 1884. I can remember seeing a lot of Chinamen building the railroad across the river from the Gold Hill Sams Valley road and we could hear them blasting.

My Father did a lot of prospecting for gold and finally found a small quartz ledge on the hillside about two miles west of Central Point so we moved to a house just south of the Central Point Cemetery.

This was sometime in the summer of 1887. I started to school in the old one-room school house where the present one is. The teacher was John Hall - a gruff old codger. He used to throw his heavy cane across the room at the kids if they got out of line. One time he had a spelling class lined up and he made a chalk line on the floor and made them toe the line. He was giving the words when a girl moved her foot off the line and he took a swing at her and hit a boy on the side of the head. It just about scared me to death. You can bet I was a pretty good little boy after that.

I will try and name the pupils the best I can. They were:

Charles Pankey	Tom Pankey
Eva Pankey	Mary Pankey
Louis Pankey	Bertha Pankey
Rosie Pankey	John Penegar
Julie Fielder	Hattie Penegar
Rosie Fielder	Fred Fine
Willie Young	Mary MaGruder
Wallis Wrisley	Lettie MaGruder
Mary Wrisley	Ned MaGruder
Stella Wrisley	Ike MaGruder
Harry (Spider) Merriman	Ray (Yeck) MaGruder
Wilma Hopwood	Minnie Obenchain
Jim Hopwood	George Obenchain
Olney Hopwood	Vinton Beall
Minnie Cox	Tom Beall
Frank Cox	Lee Beall
Mary Dawsen	Tisen Beall
Bertha Dawsen	Lula Beall
Jessie Rieves	Frank Seabers
Ira Rieves	Joe Mann
George Ford	John Mann
Pearl Lynes	Preston Mann
Lilley Lynes	Susie Mann
Adda MaGruder	Martha Pankey
Jennie MaGruder	Ida Pankey
Ivan MaGruder	Molly Pankey
Laura Amey	Effie Pankey
Albert Amey	Jessie Neff
Lillie Temple	Will Downing
Harry Temple	Will Owens
Pearly Temple	Glenn Owens
Ben Hays	Tom Leaver
Hattie Hays	Carl Leaver
Amos Fries	Nellie Leaver

Etta Fries  
Katie Fries  
Archie Fries

Lucinda Leaver  
Lizzie Leaver

One night the Nichols family came to our house. They were all excited and crying. I finally got waked up enough to learn they had lost a boy. They had been camped up on the Siskiyou working on the railroad. A bunch of the boys went out and ate a lot of choke berries and this one took sick and died suddenly. They took him and started out and reached our house in the middle of the night. It took me some time to determine which one was dead. I finally decided it was Artie. I think he was about ten years old.

At that time there was brush and timber out east of us near where the Airport is now. The coyotes would howl every night and when the train would whistle, they would answer it.

In the spring of 1888, we moved to a house at the cross roads - one mile east of Central Point. It was much nearer to the mine and they were working on the Fairground at that time. Father worked at the mine and on the Fairground fence. The fence was made of one by twelve inch boards, eight feet long on end.

Here is where I first met Grandma Silvers. We had an old horse that I used to ride. I had to climb up his front leg to get on him. The Silvers had a restaurant and she gave me fifty cents to ride to town for groceries. That was the first money I ever earned. She was a young bride of eighteen, and she had a sister, Ellen Renlet, and two brothers with her. They came from Ashland.

One day Will and Glen Owens came to the house. They had guns and they saw a bobcat between there and town so they wanted to borrow our dog. Mother told them to take him but he wouldn't go. Mother told me to go and the dog would follow me. I couldn't find my hat but I went anyway. We had not gone far until Old Trust had the wild cat up a tree and they shot it down.

There was an old abandoned grist mill on the old Hougland place close to the covered bridge. It had been a three story building but the second and third floor had been removed and used to store hay. Near the top the wood-peckers had stuffed the cracks full of acorns. A bunch of us kids were there after them and one of the kids fell clear through to the bottom, on his nose. I see him now and then. He lives up on the old Siskiyou Road. His name is George Meyers.

About the old gold mine -- Father and his twin brother Jobe (as his partner) worked it together. It was just a small ledge of quartz about six inches wide. It was rich in spots. They called them

pockets. Soon they learned that the land belonged to a Mr. Wright who lived below the old Stage Road. They settled by allowing him two fifths and the Pankey brothers three fifths. The brothers would do the mining and Mr. Wright would do the quartz grinding. They built an arrestor on the Wright place. It was a round tub-like affair about twelve feet across with big flat rocks for the bottom and then they burried a thick short post in the center of the tub like a stump with an iron pin in the top. Then they got a pole about ten feet long with a hole through the big end. They put this over the pin and let the small end stick out over the tub. Then they fastened three or four big rocks to the pole and hitched a horse too the small end and he would go around and around. After putting in a lot of quartz, water and quick silver, they would grind, the quartz would be as fine as flour and it would wash away with the water, and the gold and the quick silver would settle in the cracks.

Late in 1889 we moved into a house about a quarter mile east of the school and this was the hardest winter we had. It was quite mild up until the first of January and then it turned loose and snowed for two or three days until the snow lay two feet deep all over the valley. In a few days there came a hard rain and melted the snow. Then everything was flooded.

A neighbor of ours, a Mr. Constant, an old timer, died and they wanted to bury him in Jacksonville but they could not get there for the high water. They sealed him in a big zinc box for about six weeks until the water went down. Most of the bridges in the country were washed out. I saw the approach to the covered bridge on Bear Creek go out. The railroad was blocked by landslides, both north and south, for a long time. The stores ran out of everything except flour. There were several mills in the country grinding flour at that time.

I can remember seeing three mills in Ashland, one in Phoenix and two at Central Point, one at Gold Hill, one at Eagle Point and one in Medford. There are only two left now, one in Ashland and one in Eagle Point. These mills did not do business at the same time but most of them were in 1890.

My brother Charley and cousin Allen Strickland went to Cow Creek to help clear the big land slide on the track. They had to sleep in a bunk car and they got their clothes and blankets full of bugs and when they got home they had to boil their clothes and bedding to kill the bugs.

I went to school barefooted and part of the time there was snow in spots. I also had the

Lagrip - they call it flu now.

The Snowy Butte Orchard was planted the year before and they planted corn between the rows. The corn was not much so they piled it all in piles and burned it and there was a lot of corn lying around on the ground. Mr. Olwell gave me permission to pick it up so I would pick it up and take it home and Mother would make hominy out of it. My Aunt Polly Strickland, our nearest neighbor, offered me fifty cents if I would get her a bushel of corn. I had to make two or three trips but I made it.

Father bought a load of wood and it was supposed to be delivered. The man got within a hundred yards of the house and got mired down in the ground. He threw it off in a pond of water and left it there and I had to carry it home and chop it up. Then Mother had to dry it out in the oven. It was cord wood - four feet long and six to eight inches thick.

My sister Ethel was born in April of that year, 1890. Della was born three years before.

A Mr. Wilder Freel who owned the house wanted to move his family in so we moved half a mile north into an old house that some people thought was haunted. They told of seeing all kinds of strange things but we never did see or hear anything to get excited about.

On May 10, 1891, Mary was nine years old so she gave a birthday party and invited several little girls about her age. While they were playing out in the yard Mother went out to gather in the clothes and when she came around the house with her arms full of white clothes, they all ran and screamed like a lot of wild Indians. Of course, they had heard the house was haunted.

The additions to the school were:

Alpha Freel	Mary Pankey	James Eddington
Dell Freel	Berthy Pankey	Bentie Eddington
Willie Hood	Anna Pankey	Johnnie Eddington
David Hood	Lottie Pankey	Mary Eddington
Clara Bare	Minnie Pankey	Tom Yocum
Maud Sims	Bob Galaway	Clyde Yocum
Daisy Applegate	Mira Galaway	Jack Shaffer
Susie Applegate	Bob Neuman	Henry Shaffer
Clyde Applegate	Lillie Neuman	Mary Shaffer
Jessie Applegate	Ada Dixen	Ralph Tice
George Fuller		

In March 1893 Fay was born.

I drove derrick for the Cox Ranch through haying and picked blackberries for the Maureys during vacation. I got fifty cents a day.

Sometime before this, Allen Strickland traded a team of horses to Uncle Jobe for his share of the mine and then he and Father sold their parts to Mr. Wright and they all came to our house to settle the deal. Mr. Wright counted out one

hundred and five dollars each in gold coins. That was the most gold coin I ever saw at one time.

The next year I did a little better picking berries. They paid three and a half cents per gallon -- five cups per gallon. I could make seventy-five cents a day at this.

One day Pearl (Peet) Lynes, Archie Fries' No 1, and I were playing near the Fries' home when we decided to make a steam engine. We dug a trench in the ground and put a coal oil can with a little valve in the top over the trench, filled it about half full of water and built a fire under it. I was to be the engineer and Peet was the fireman. He had old time buckle shoes on, open at the top and when our engine got pretty well warmed up, he stepped both feet into the trench to fire up and just as I reached over to turn off some steam, something blew up and filled his shoes with hot water. We pulled his shoes off as quick as we could and the skin came off with them. We managed to get him up to the house and Mrs. Fries (Archie No. 2's grandmother) put something on them that made them feel better. He was laid up for a good long time and could not to the fair that year.

I believe that 1894 was the year that Grandma received back pay on her pension and she bought an acre of ground just north of town and Charley, with the help of Father and me, built a house on it.. It was a large two story ten room house shaped like a capital H. We had a big house- warming and of course we moved in right away.

My next teacher was J.C. Barnard. The new pupils were:

George Pankey	Vernon MaGruder
Dillen Pankey	Mildren Elliot
Louis Van Fleet	Perry Elliot
Blanche Van Fleet	Carl Rosenberg
Roberta Rippy	Myrtle Lynis
Clark Rippy	George Ingram
Jonis Olsen	Irea Baker
Mary Olsen	Julia Olsen

Father and Charley built a fish trap near the Camp White Disposal (present location). They caught a lot of salmon at the first but later they began to go around the fence and by the time the main run came later in July, they were all going around. Only a salmon knows how to do that. I guess people are just not smart enough.

They were not allowed (by law) to put their fence more than one third the way across the stream so of course they put it on the deeper side which happened to be the south side at this point. I spent most of my time at their camp this summer. I would go straight across lots and walked of course. When they cleaned the salmon,

they always threw the offalls in the river. The trout would gather in below and that made them easy to catch. I would put two hooks on and catch a trout almost every time I dropped my line in and sometimes I would catch two. I would put them on strings of twenty-five each and take them to town and sell them for twenty-five cents a string.

I learned how to row a boat that summer. One day I took the boat up the river about a quarter of a mile to a big eddy, pulled it up on a gravel bar and started fishing. It had been raining and the river was raising fast. The trout were biting good and the first thing I knew the boat was about twenty-five feet from shore and drifting away fast. I pulled off my clothes and swam to it. By the time I caught it, it was a hundred or more feet from shore. I never did tell the folks about this.

At this time there were a great many moss agates all over the desert and while we were in camp at the fish trap, we hunted agates. We picked up about a peck of them and Charley made a machine to grind and polish them. He took the works of an old washing machine for the gears and them made a wheel of lead. It was like a dinner plate and lay flat and turned with a crank. We used emory sand on the the lead to cut the rock. We polished a lot of them but I don't know whatever became of them.

It was about this time that the first phonograph came out. It was the old kind with tubes to put in your ears. There were eight of them, one for the operator, and seven to rent. The records were about the shape and size of an oyster can and the cost was five cents to hear each record.

A man brought one to the fair and he sure did a great business. He would play it all day and half the night. A big crowd would gather around and when someone would drop a tube, there were several around ready to grab it. It was powered by an electric battry and the man had to keep turning a little thumb-screw to regulate the speed.

One day, Roy Nichols and I went up on the side hill to find the milk cows. We were both bare footed and were walking along a deer trail. I was in the lead when suddenly he passed me like a flash. He had stepped on a rattle snake stretched out across the path. I guess I must have stepped over it. It got away from us. I have killed hundreds of them since then and I can't remember more than that one ever got away from me.

Roy and I started out one day and waded down the irrigation ditch and followed it down to the Nealon Ranch. The Nealon boys were all excited



*Pankeys: Obadiah, Candace, Jobadiah #11126*

about their father. He had just been elected County Commissioner. He had a lot of cigars left and the boys were quite free with them so they gave us some. I wouldn't smoke mine but Roy lit and puffed like the big man he thought he was. It did not seem to take effect until we got about half way home and then he got so sick I thought he was going to die and I guess he thought so too.

A bunch of us kids would go swimming in Bear Creek and Rogue River sometimes. I remember one time I swam across the river with all my clothes on and when I tried to reach the bottom, I could not. I came close to not making it. It seemed a long time before I could get my head above the water. You can bet I never tried that again.

1896 - It was about this time I saw men digging holes for the first telephone line through the valley. The first telephone in Central Point was in Dr. Hinkle's Drug Store.

Ike Williams kept a livery stable about a block and a half down the street from there. Once in a while a traveling salesman (drummer) would call for him from Gold Hill to come after him with a team of horses. When Dr. Hinkle got the call, he would stand out on the sidewalk and shout "Ike

Williams" until someone would hear him and transfer the information to him. Then Ike would trudge down the street to the telephone. He was a little short man and they used to say he had to pull his boots off to get his hands in his pockets.

At this time, a group of mountain climbers from Portland (calling themselves the Mazamas) named the mountain Mt. Mazama and they measured the water. It was 1998 ft. deep. The equipment is still there on exhibit. The gun club from Medford was there and they would shoot into the lake from the rim. It would take seven seconds for a forty-four rifle ball to hit the water. You could see the bullet hit although a row boat looked like a peanut shell from the top. There were several Indians camped along the rim and at night the Mazamas had a big bonfire and a program. The fish-warden (state) told about searching for fish food in the lake and they found several kinds. Soon after that, they planted fish in the lake.

The next day we went to the huckleberry patch. We camped at Union Creek and walked about five miles along a trail to the Huckleberry mountain. We took two horses to pack the berries out and the women canned them on the camp fire.

One morning we started up the trail and Roll Conley's dog started to follow. He told him to go home so he went back home to Sams Valley and when we got back home the dog was there.

On May 4, 1897, Willis was born. Father and I took the job of clearing the brush and trees off a piece of ground on Bear Creek Bottom. This was for the use of the ground for a garden for four years. We also got the wood. I made a little wagon using baby buggy wheels. Sometimes Pearl Lynes and I would put our grub box blankets in the wagon and go to the river and camp for several days. As long as we caught enough fish to eat, we were happy. We made several trips that way.

I was always collecting different animals for pets; mice, rats, squirrels, rabbits, a coon, a kangaroo rat, a flying squirrel, an owl and two crows. I did not have them all at one time.

I took my wagon and went to a pine grove about a mile from town to cut some little pine poles to make a pen for my crows. A friend of mine, Charley Wright, went along. Just as we got to the grove, it started to rain so we sat down side by side with our backs against a small tree to wait until the shower was over but it rained harder. Then we ran to a larger tree about a hundred feet away. We were only there a minute or two when there came a loud crash. Charley stuck his head

around the tree and shouted, "What was that?" and I said, "Lightning has struck close by someplace," and then we ran back to the wagon and found pieces of bark scattered all around the wagon and a streak on the tree we had just left. The lightning had struck near the top and down into the ground between the spots we had just left. I tell you we were a couple of scared kids. We hit for home fast.

1898 - My brother Charley took a claim at the foot of Table Rock. They called it Beaver Dam Claim. He hired me to help clear and fence it. He gave me a horse, cart and harness for two months work. We made a lot of cottonwood rails. We got a big patch of onions and carrots planted in March when there came a very high water and washed it all away. We pulled the rails out of the drifts and then put it all back and plowed and planted it again.

When it was bad weather, I would chop stove wood just for pastime until I had a good sized pile. Then Charley proposed that I take his team and wagon and take some wood to town and sell it. I started out early one morning with two tier of willow and cottonwood. I stood on the street all day trying to sell my wood for one dollar a tier. Finally a man came along and offered one dollar and seventy-five cents for the load. I sold it and took the money and bought me a pair of shoes, three pairs of socks, three packs of garden seeds and still had some change left.

One day Art Clemens and I were playing along Bear Creek when we saw a fish hawk flying low carrying two suckers in his claws. We ran after it and yelled and threw rocks until it dropped its fish. Then we took them to town and sold them for a nickel. We bought raw peanuts and divided them and I planted my half and kept the seeds and planted it from year to year for several years.

At the beginning of the Spanish American War someone organized a Company of volunteers and set up a camp at the old fair grounds just south of the end of Oakdale Street in Medford. I used to stand and watch them drill and wish I could be in it but I knew I couldn't because I weighed only ninety-eight pounds at that time although I was eighteen years old.

1899 - In the summer of this year the Second Oregon Volunteers came home from the Phillipine Islands. Father and I drove to Ashland with the horse and cart. That was the first time I ever saw Ashland. At that time, there was a path across lots from the Hotel Oregon to the Depot and some Chinese houses near the railroad at the end of Second Street.

Some organization in Ashland gave the Volunteers their lunch. I don't know how many train loads there were, but there were several and as fast as one train would pull out, another would come in and every now and then you could see a soldier carrying a monkey on his shoulder.

This was the year Archie was born and that completed the family. At this time, there was Charley (a half brother), Eva, Rosie, Louis, Mary, Minnie, Della, Ethel, Fay, Willis and Archie - making eleven.

1900 - One day Father and I were coming home from a fishing trip when we met a man and he asked us if we had heard the latest news. We told him no and then he said that McKinley had been shot.

Charley and Allen Strickland fished with a drift net that summer and they hired me to drive the fish wagon for them. They gave me \$1.25 per day and board. My job was to drive their team and take their catch to Central Point everyday except Saturday and ship them to Portland. Sometimes I would haul their boat up the river about three miles and they would drift down stream with the net at night. They always used a gill net at night. Moonlight was no good for the fish would see the net and go down stream on the double quick. I caught lots of trout and sold them for 1¢ each. The season for gill nets closed July 15th so Father and I went on our own with hook and line. Our old cart broke down, so we bought a four wheeled rig with a small bed to it and that was much better for us.

1902 - I knit a set net about eighty feet long. We would tie one end to a tree and string the net out across a deep still pool and pick up a good many salmon that way. Our camp was about a mile above the (Bybee) Mudock Bridge and not far from the foot of Upper Table Rock Mountain. We bought a small boat and did fairly well fishing. We sold salmon for seven cents a pound by the piece or six cents a pound for the whole fish, and ten cents a pound for steel heads.

In the fall, we made a trip to the coast. We borrowed a horse and wagon and we had one horse of our own, so we took the whole family. We also took my cousin Dillen (Dewey) Pankey. His mother was dead and he stayed with us a great deal of the time. He seemed like one of the family. When we reached Patridge Creek, we expected to find Mr. Patridge, but there was no one around. The place was locked up and looked deserted. When we got to the Tollgate, we learned the old man had been murdered the winter before. Two young fellows had come along and beat him to death. They stayed overnight at

Gasquet. I cannot remember what happened to them, but I believe they were hanged.

The toll at the bridge was two dollars for a team or one fifty for a horse and rig. We camped at Crescent City four or five days and fished. Dewey caught an eight lb. Capazone off the wharf, and Father said (he pulled it straight up to land it) if he had fallen off the wharf he would have fallen into the thing's mouth. I believe it was the best fish I ever ate. We then went on to Smith River and on home.

In 1903, Father and I stayed at a fish trap for the Olwell brothers. They made it of seine twine (like fish net) and they built it too early in the year as the salmon learned to go around it before the main run came. We did not catch a fish in it while we were there, but they went around it by the hundreds. So they took their trap out and called it a bad job.

Whenever I wanted to cross the river - if I couldn't find a place shallow enough to wade - I would find a dry cottonwood limb and tie my clothes to it and swim across pushing it ahead of me.

We lost our boat in high water so Father, Charley and I built a bigger and better one and we bought Strickland's nets and fished with nets. We had two horses and took turns about peddling the fish. I always drove my old mare (I called her Snip) and when I went to Medford, I would park my wagon on Central and Main and unhitch her and tie up the tugs and turn her loose and she would go down the block to the livery stable and walk in, and they would take care of her, and sometimes when we would be in the suburbs, she would let me know she wanted a drink. I would borrow a hose, turn the water down low and put the end of the hose in her mouth and she would drink her fill.

Sometimes I would take a load of fish to Ashland and stay all night. There used to be a little old French lady in Jacksonville who always wanted to trade me wine for fish. She sold it for fifteen cents a bottle (fifth) but I sold my fish for seven cents a pound.

1904 - That fall Charley sold out and moved to the mouth of the Rogue River at Gold Beach. He wrote me from Gold Beach to come down there. He said he had the promise of a job fishing for the Burns Company who was trying to start in the fish packing business. I decided to walk down the river. I got on the train about the middle of June and got off at Leland and followed a creek down to the river (I think it was Grave Creek) and then I followed the river on the north side. There was no trail except deer trails and part of the time I

had to climb over ridges and down the other side and now and then, I would have to take my shoes off and wade across a creek. I carried my clothes in a grip on a pole across my shoulders.

The first night I came to a house where a man and wife lived. They had been prospecting all winter and they intended to move out the next day and they were about out of everything to eat. They shared what they had with me and let me sleep on the floor on a horse blanket.

The next day it was up and down hill and on rough river bottom. I saw a rattlesnake every little while. I killed five that day. Along in the afternoon near an old deserted house, I found shod horse tracks so I followed them. I knew they would lead me to where somebody lived so I traced them up the mountain a mile or so and came to a house and there was a man with a saddle and a pack horse. He had been down the river to get a plow so I told him where I was headed and he said for me to follow him over to his place and eat supper with him and he would put me on the mail trail and it would be six miles all down hill to Mule Creek.

It was very interesting looking over his place. He had two cougar hides nailed on his barn. He said one of them killed his calf and jumped over the corral fence with it. He showed me the fence. It was higher than my head. He said that when the cougar carried the calf along, its feet would touch the ground sometimes and he tracked it from that. When he came up to it, it was lying down eating on the calf. He was within four feet of it and he shot it with a twenty-two. The other one took down a deer from where he had hung it up and he tracked it down and killed it with a pistol.

I made that six miles in about an hour. It was a half way station and forty miles to a wagon road in any direction. It was a two story house made out of white cedar and all split out. I slept upstairs and when I walked on the floor, it would ring like the inside of a barrel. They had a small store so I bought some crackers and canned meat for my lunch. The trail was high on the hillside part time and sometimes low, even under water. I went around the outside of the big horse-shoe bend near Agness. Then I came across a white man and an Indian in a little old shack. I asked them if I could camp with them, and they told me to go down the trail until I came to a mailbox and then go down the hill to the river and halloo across and someone would come after me with a boat.

*Mr. Pankey's autobiography will be concluded in the next issue of the newsletter.*

## Executive Director Selected

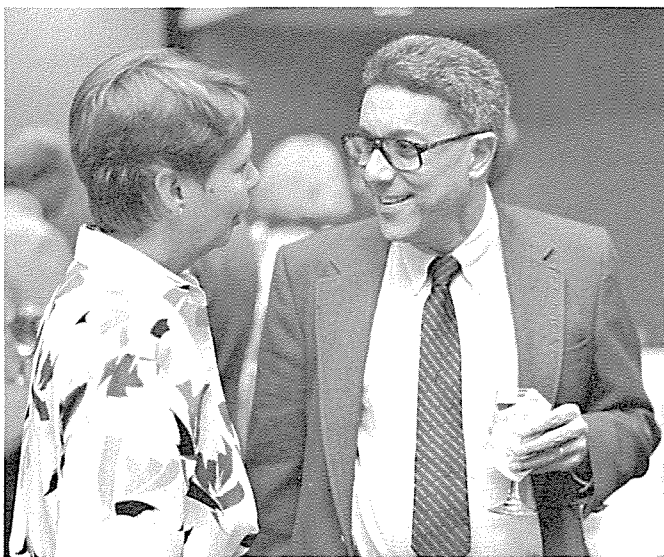
At a special board meeting held June 9, the Society Board of Trustees selected Samuel J. Wegner from the final three candidates to be the new Executive Director of the Society. Sam has been Acting Director since August 1986 following Director Nick Clark's resignation to take a position in the midwest. "We are pleased to have Sam as our permanent executive director and look forward to a long and successful career" stated Don McLaughlin, board president.

In June of 1985 Sam joined the Society as Director of Operations. He previously had been Assistant Supervisor, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Historic Preservation, Brookfield, Missouri. In this position he supervised a field staff of 22 administrative and support personnel within 13 historic sites. From 1976 to 1978 he was Curator of Education for the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison. Prior to that Sam was Curator of the Mansion Museum at the Oglebay Institute in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Sam received a BA degree in history in 1973 from the University of Arizona and a MA degree in history with a specialty in museum studies from the University of Idaho in 1975.

Sam is married to Linda Wegner who is a private voice and piano teacher and a voice instructor at Southern Oregon State College. They have two children, Ethan and Elena.

## Annual Membership Meeting



Professor Roger Abrahams, keynote speaker for the Society's annual meeting is shown talking with Society Historian, Marjorie Edens.

Thursday evening, June 18 found 118 Society members at the Red Lion Inn for the annual membership meeting/dinner. Keynote speaker for the event was Professor Roger Abrahams from the University of Pennsylvania who spoke on "From Turkeyfoot to Applegate: in Search of the Perfect Community." Entertainment for the evening was provided by The Harmaniacs.

Don McLaughlin, board president, introduced Sam Wegner as the Society's new Executive Director. Current board members were also introduced and the newly elected board members were announced. Joining the Board of Trustees at the July board meeting will be Mary Foster, Dan Hull and Dr. Carl Shaff.

The main item of business during the meeting was the passage of the Restated Articles of Incorporation which brought the Articles into conformity with the recently passed Society bylaws.

## J. C. Penney Building Update

The Society's Board of Trustees voted to offer the J. C. Penney Company \$225,000 for the vacant Penney building in downtown Medford with the balance of \$275,000 to be donated by the J. C. Penney Company.

The J. C. Penney Company returned with a response that indicated it would look with favor upon another proposal; specifically, that the historical society pay \$275,000 with the balance of \$225,000 to be donated by the J. C. Penney Company, contingent upon a professional appraisal of the building to verify if it is truly worth the \$500,000 purchase price.

At press time this offer was still being considered by the J. C. Penney Company and we will keep members apprised of the matter in a coming issue of *The Sentinel*.

## Hannah Pot Discovered

Following our article in the May issue of *The Table Rock Sentinel* regarding the Hannah Pot exhibit planned for the summer of 1988, several people have called in from the area asking for assistance in identifying pots they possess. Jim Robinson and Nancy Ingram from Clayfolk have checked these pots and unfortunately none has been a Hannah pot. However, a Hannah pot was found in the Beekman storage room of the C. C. Beekman home. So keep looking! And contact Jim Robinson, 535-4281 or Nancy Ingram, 535-1416 or Jime Matoush, 899-1847 if you think you have a Hannah pot -- or know someone who might.



*Sam Wegner, Executive Director, presents a check for \$20,000 to Eagle Point Historical Society President Betty Bedingfield while Eagle Point Mayor Laree Linder looks on.*

### **Antelope Creek Covered Bridge**

With the assistance of a \$20,000 grant from the Southern Oregon Historical Society the community of Eagle Point and other parties are moving forward on the relocation of the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge to Little Butte Creek in downtown Eagle Point.

At press time it was anticipated that the move would take place August 8 or 9 with the dedication planned for early September.

On June 26 Sam Wegner, the Society's new Executive Director, presented the \$20,000 check to Betty Bedingfield, President of the Eagle Point Historical Society and Laree Linder, Mayor of Eagle Point.

### **Books from the Gift Shop**

With the Society planning a major exhibit on railroading in southern Oregon to open in the upstairs of the Jacksonville Museum in November and with the exhibit at Chappell-Swedenburg titled "Ashland's Railroad Centennial" to open August 11, the book *Tunnel 13* by Art Chipman (hard cover, \$5.95) would make a nice gift for anyone interested in railroading.

*Ancient Modocs of California and Oregon* by Carrol Howe (soft cover, \$9.95) was recently reprinted and is again available through the Gift Shop.

Stephen Dow Beckham's book *Land of the Umpqua: A History of Douglas County, Oregon*

(soft cover, \$24.95) is also for sale. And remember, you as a Society member receive a 15% discount on purchases in the Gift Shop.

### **Ashland & Jacksonville Walking Tours Successful**

The walking tours provided by the Society's volunteers and staff are proving to be very popular with tourists and local residents alike. The Jacksonville tours began June 4 and as of this date 93 people have taken the tours. In Ashland, 32 people participated in the tours of Ashland's historic district. Participating in the Ashland tours will increase with the addition of Ashland's historic railroad district as a guided tour. There is a \$1.00/person charge, ages 14 and over. However Society members may take the tours free of charge upon presentation of their membership card.

### **New Jackson County Brochure Available**

Society staff members Marjorie Edens and Natalie Brown, working with Darnell Designs, have compiled a new brochure titled "Historic Jackson County". This brochure was underwritten with funds received from a grant from the Oregon Economic Development Department.

The brochure lists twenty-three different sites within Jackson County. Each listing has a separate fact sheet giving more detailed information. The fact sheets are available upon request. So the next time you're visiting, stop in the museum and pick up a brochure and the fact sheets you are interested in.

## Old-Fashioned Lawn Festival

Delicious strawberry sundaes and delightful music by Foxfire added up to a "great time was had by all" at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum on June 21. Over 300 visitors cooled off with the sundaes and many visited the museum to view a new exhibit titled "Piety, Progressiveness and Peace" which covers the history of many Ashland women's organizations.

## July Board Meeting

The Board of Trustees will meet Tuesday, July 28 at 7:30 P.M. in the Jackson County Health Department Conference Room, 1313 Maple Grove Drive, Medford. The main item of business will be the election of board officers for the 1987-88 year. The meetings are open to the public and anyone is invited to attend.

## Special Events

- August 11      Opening of "Ashland's Railroad Centennial" Exhibit at Chappell-Swendenburg.  
1-5 P.M., Tues.-Sat.
- August 15      Children's Workshop on Textile Weaving. To be held on the grounds of the Woodville

Museum, First & Oak Streets, Rogue River. 10 A.M. - 2 P.M.

- August 15      Reception for "Ashland's Railroad Centennial" to be held at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 2-4 P.M.
- August 15/16      Open House at The Willows. 1-5 P.M. Tours of the historic Hanley Farm Home: adults, \$1.00, children, 50¢. Visitors transported to the farm by shuttle bus from the Britt parking lot, Oregon & "D" Streets, Jacksonville.
- August 15-30      The Wonderful World of Southern Oregon. Watercolor exhibit by the Artist's Workshop. U. S. Hotel Ballroom, Jacksonville.  
11 A.M.-4:30 P.M.
- August 29      Children's Workshop.  
10 A.M.-2 P.M. Children's Museum, Jacksonville.

## From Our Readers

To the Exhibit Committee Members:

I wish to express my appreciation for the nursing history exhibit which was on display at the V.A. Domiciliary during the month of May in recognition of National Nurses Day, May 6.

The display was well researched, authentic, and meaningful for both nursing staff and veteran patients. On May 6, Channel 5 television covered National Nurses Day events at the Domiciliary and the display was shown on the 11 p.m. news.

Jime Matoush and Nancy Larson, who researched, gathered material and set up the display, were knowledgeable, courteous, and exacting about details. Please express my appreciation to both these dedicated ladies for a memorable event at the Domiciliary. I hope to be able to arrange a similar exhibit in the future.

Bonnie Alander, RN,  
Clinical Supervisor



The Vaughn Family

My great grandparents, William Overton Vaughn and Elizabeth Hope Vaughn, came to Oregon from Missouri. A son Jack was born at Fort Klamath in 1864. William Overton and

Elizabeth and son Nicholas are buried at Trail and other members of that family are buried in other towns in Oregon. My cousin and I have the family tree and quite a bit of history of the family. We would like to get in touch with any of the family remaining in that area. Is there any hope that you will include a column with information of this type in your *Table Rock Sentinel*?



Mabel Foster  
HER I, Bx 7045  
IGO, CA 96047

Do any of our readers have facts about this family? If so, Mrs. Foster would greatly appreciate hearing from you.



To the Museum Staff:

I've never been in another museum where items were as clean and well-marked, where the display cases so well suited the items displayed and where the items displayed were so well chosen to fit a particular case/display.

You have a fine museum.  
An anonymous admirer.



### FARM DAY AT THE WILLOWS, SUNDAY, JULY 19

Approximately 450 people attended this event.

*Photographs by Jean K. Hagen*



### DOCENTS TOUR AREA MUSEUMS

Docents from the Swedenburg and the Jacksonville Museum along with the museum staff were treated to a tour of our area's museums last month. Marge Herman and Nan Hannon planned the tour which began in the Applegate with the Gin Lin Trail and included the Crater Rock Museum, Eagle Point Store and Mill, Woodville Museum, Gold Gulch and the Fort Lane Marker. The trip was organized to help Museum staff and Docents learn about other historical sites and facilities in Jackson County.

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## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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