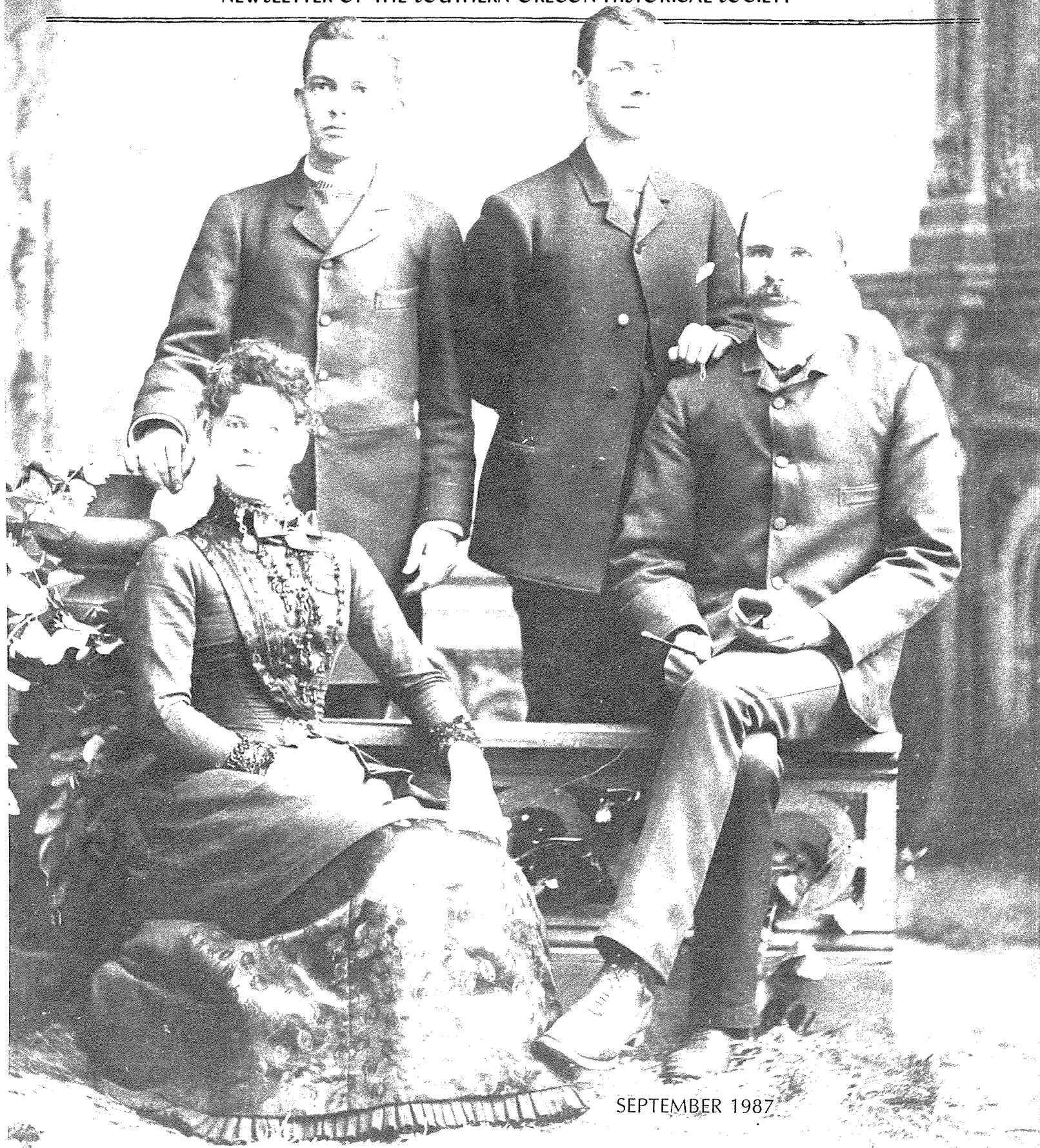
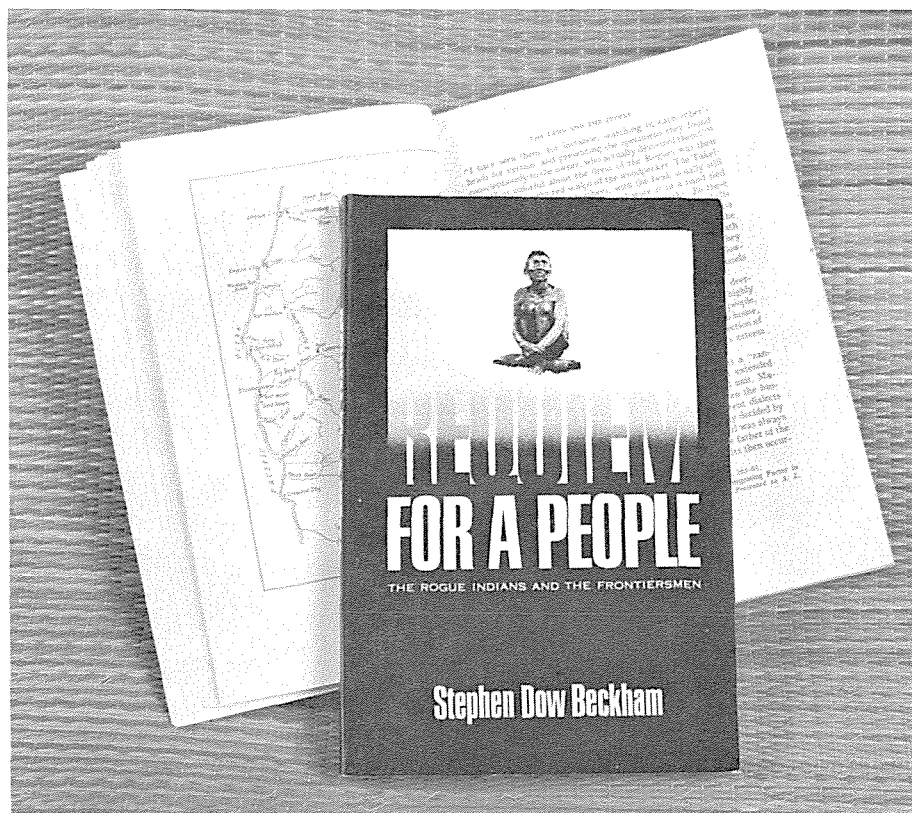

THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SEPTEMBER 1987



Stephen Dow Beckham's brilliant thesis, *Requiem for a People: the Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen*, is one of the most acclaimed reference sources in the museum library. Dr. Beckham's compassionate study of the Rogue River Indians, their background and culture, and their ultimate defeat in the Indian Wars presents a moving, factual story for the researcher. Dr. Beckham, a professor of history at Lewis and Clark College, will present three lectures in Ashland in October. He is featured in a short biography beginning on page 18 of this issue.

Cover

This September we feature a complete set of four Jacksonville teachers who, in 1888, dressed up in their best teachers' institute ensembles to pose for Peter Britt. We suspect the young lady was assigned the first four elementary grades and the gentleman behind her was in charge of the top four. We recognize the second man in the back row as Frank R. Neil, a son of Judge James R. Neil, and the seated gentleman as George H. Watt, principal. The last two men were probably high school teachers.

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

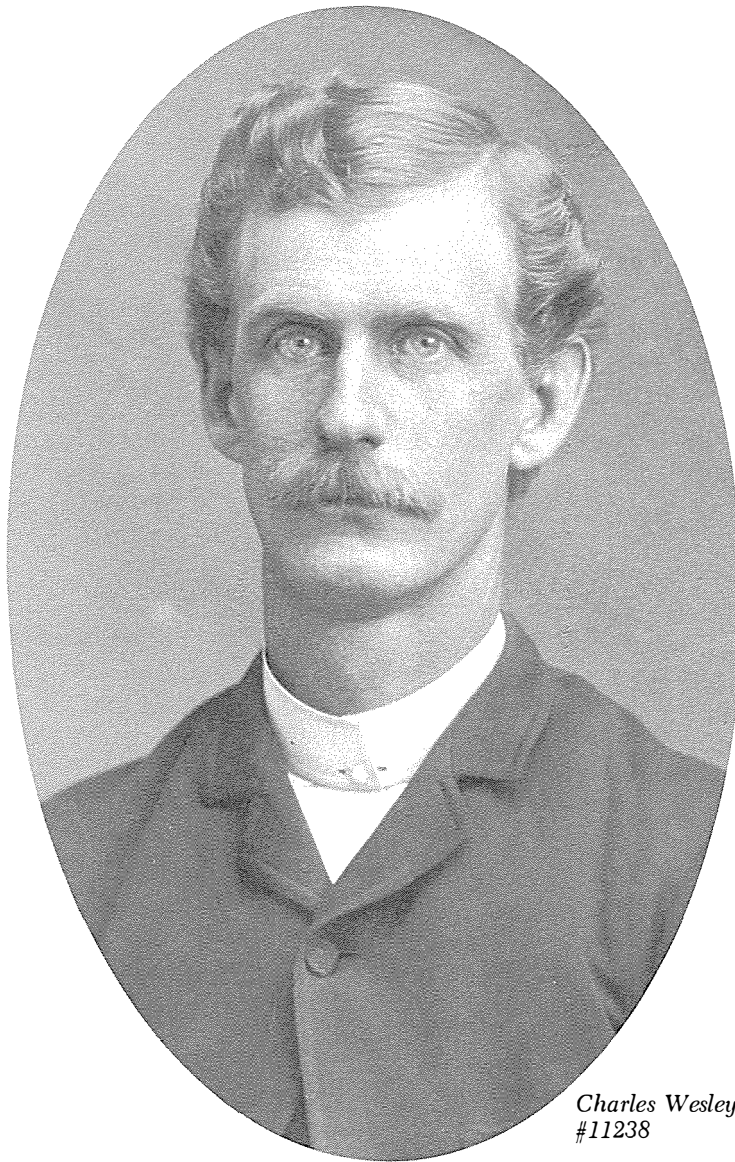
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*Charles Wesley Kahler
#11238*

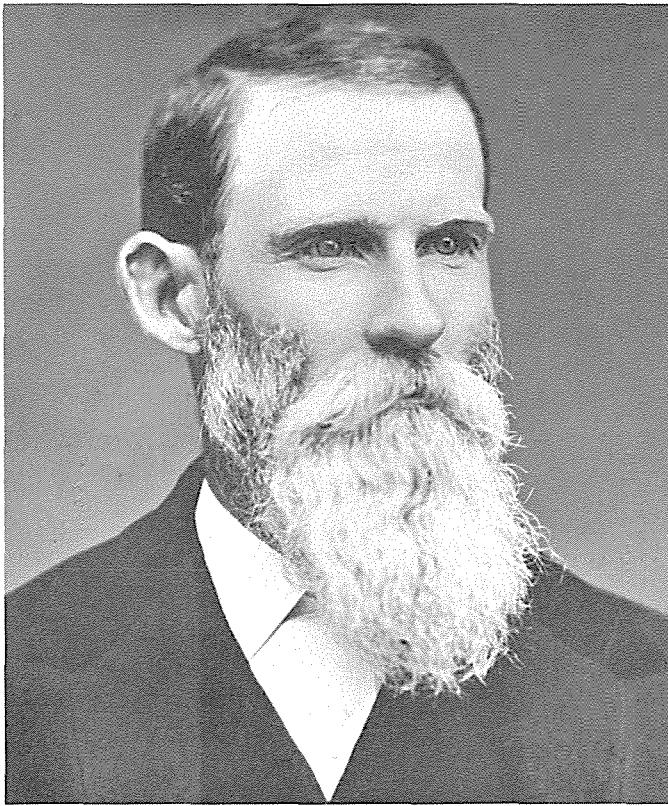
The Kahlers of Jacksonville

by Charles Sweet

It wasn't too unusual to see a hearse slowly leading a procession of mourners up the winding road to the ridge-top cemetery overlooking Jacksonville, Oregon. What may have been unique on this particular occasion was the fact that a six-horse team was pulling the hearse. Normally not more than two horses would be hired to make it up the hill. The year was 1904, and the deceased had been one of the Rogue Valley's most prestigious citizens, Charles Wesley Kahler, whose pioneer family loomed large in the history of Oregon. According to old-timers the family name was pronounced "Kay-ler."

Charles Wesley, known to his family and friends as Wesley or Wes, was the grandson of

Jacob Kahler who was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, in 1785. Jacob was a carpenter and wheelwright by trade but he also farmed. By the time he was 27 he had built and operated a grist mill, married Rachel Madary, and served in the War of 1812. Then, in 1817, the Kahlers made the four-week journey across the Alleghany mountains to settle in Morgan County, Ohio. Here Jacob erected the first house of any kind in that area, a double log cabin. Clearing away the dense forest, he started farming and built a sawmill on a stream known as McConnel's Run. The town of McConnelville later would spring up here. Jacob prospered and by 1826 had built a more substantial house in the town. In 1840 he



C.W. Kahler

Fletcher Linn, Jacksonville's historian, recalls: "He walked leisurely, very erect, and often with a cane, and bore all the marks of a complete gentleman, always cordial and gracious." #328

turned management of the farm over to his sons William and Andrew. Jacob met his death four years later when he fell from the loft in their barn and fractured his skull. His wife Rachel died in 1850.

Their son Andrew lived out his life in Ohio, but William was destined to become an Oregon pioneer. William Kahler had been born in Loudoun County on October 10, 1816. He was one year old when his parents moved to Ohio. On December 3, 1837, he married Georgiana Johnson. Six of their children were born in McConnelsville, Ohio. They were: Rebecca (born 1838), Charles Wesley (1841), George (1843), Andrew (1845), Rachel (1847), and Robert (1851). On the last day of March 1852, William loaded his wife and six children aboard a steamboat at McConnelsville and headed for St. Joseph, Missouri. Here he purchased wagons and ox teams for the journey westward to Oregon Territory. They departed St. Joseph on May 6 and arrived in the Rogue Valley on October 15. Their route had taken them over the Oregon Trail to Fort Hall, down the Humboldt River across Nevada, into California near Mount Shasta, thence north over the Siskiyou to Jacksonville where gold had just been discovered.

William engaged mostly in mining until the year 1855 when he took up a donation land claim near Fort Lane and the foot of Table Rock. Here he farmed for almost thirty years before moving back to Jacksonville. The last three of William and Georgiana's children, Thomas (1855), William Edward (1857) and Mary K. (1859)* were born on the farm. The Kahlers were devout Methodists. When William first arrived at the Jacksonville gold diggings in 1852, he had contributed liberally from his scanty means to the fund for building a church. The story goes that he sold his last yoke of oxen, valued at \$150, to help liquidate the congregation's indebtedness after the church building was erected. By the 1890s, following the Kahlers return to Jacksonville and after the Methodist Church had been in existence for over 35 years, the building was badly in need of repairs. William went to work with his own hands assisting in making those necessary repairs.

Both William and Georgiana, as well as most of their children, were active not only in the church but also in the Southern Oregon Pioneer Association. William attended his last annual reunion of the association in 1894. On March 28 of the following year he died at the age of 78. Georgiana had died five years earlier on December 17, 1890. Both lie buried in the Masonic section of the town cemetery along with six of their offspring.

The William Kahler's first born, Rebecca, married another southern Oregon pioneer, James McDonough, in 1855. McDonough was a farmer and a breeder of horses. Rebecca's brother Wesley owned one of these animals, a fine trotting horse named Selenium. Apparently McDonough and Wesley were in business together at one time, because the *Democratic Times* of January 23, 1880, reported that McDonough, Kahler & Co. had found two quartz nuggets of considerable size at their diggings near Fort Lane. The paper went on to say that "No winter passes by but what this company finds one or more of these fine nuggets, which are further indication that a quartz ledge of vast richness exists somewhere in the vicinity." (There seems to be no evidence that such a ledge was ever discovered.)

All of the Kahler boys became successful professional or business men. Charles Wesley was both an attorney and businessman, George was a doctor, Robert a druggist, Thomas a businessman, and William E. a merchant. The Southern Oregon Historical Society records fail to show Andrew's background or where he resided most of

*Mary Kahler lived only six years.



Members of the Kahler family pose for the photographer. The people are not identified, but Charles Wesley is on the far right. The lady, seated, is surely Georgiana, his wife. The others must remain unidentified. #1034

his life.* The biographical file on the eldest son, Wesley, is more revealing than that of any of the other Kahlers. Wes graduated from Willamette University, Salem, at the age of 24 and began studying law with Jacksonville attorney Orange Jacobs in 1865. Three years later he started practice with Attorney Edward B. Watson in a small office located across Fifth Street from the original wood-frame courthouse building.

The smallpox epidemic that swept through Jacksonville in 1868-9 claimed many victims. One of the most prominent was Col. William T'Vault, who was then serving as District Attorney for the First Judicial District of Oregon. Fledgling lawyer Wes Kahler was appointed to fill out T'Vault's unexpired term of office. In 1870 Wes was a candidate for county judge but was defeated in a

*In the 1880s Andrew was in business with William E. at Hardman, OR.

close election by T.H.B. Shipley. By now he was acquiring a reputation as one of the town's most widely respected lawyers. At the same time Wesley was branching out into other fields. He soon became a landholder of considerable acreage in Jackson County. About 1874 he purchased the piece of property on Third Street behind the Beekman Bank. At this time his law office was located on the second floor of the old courthouse building, but he soon moved into the vintage wooden structure located on his Third Street property. He, along with brothers Robert and George, acquired the old brick building on California Street next to Beekman's Bank. Robert operated a drugstore in this building for several years. Previously known as Sutton's Drug Store, it was now advertised as the City Drug Store, Kahler & Brothers, Proprietors. During the late 1870s Robert's advertisements in the *Democratic Times* read:

City Drug Store,

CALIFORNIA STREET,

Kahler & Bro., Proprietors.

WE KEEP CONSTANTLY ON HAND
the largest and most complete assortment of

DRUGS, MEDICINES AND CHEMICALS

to be found in Southern Oregon.
Also the latest and finest styles of

STATIONERY,

And a great variety of PERFUMES and
TOILET ARTICLES, including the best and
cheapest assortment of COMMON and PER-
FUMED SOAPS in this market.

Prescriptions carefully compounded.
ROBT. KAHLER, Druggist.

In March, 1880, Kahler Brothers announced that they were planning to replace the drugstore building with another brick structure. By July, Robert had transferred his stock to P.J. Ryan's building on South Third Street, and in November the druggist moved back into the new brick building. The *Democratic Times*, December 3, 1880, reported that the cost of construction was \$2,000. For insulation (or fire protection) the contractor had installed a layer of sod between the ceiling and roof. In the cellar can be found an old goldmine shaft, known as a "Chinese Well".

George Kahler was a physician and surgeon who had his office in Robert's drugstore. Dr. Kahler's advertisements in the *Democratic Times* during the early 1880s stated that his specialty was diseases of women and children. He also advertised, "Calls promptly attended to, day or night". By January 1883 George's notices in the *Times* show that his office was now located in a Phoenix, Oregon, drugstore. His last ad appeared in the May 29, 1885 issue of the newspaper. Robert was no longer operating the City Drug Store after 1883 because the advertisements in the *Times* starting on December 4, 1883 show that the proprietors were Merritt and Robinson. Dr. J.W. Robinson had his office in the drugstore.

One of Attorney Kahler's clients was Gin Lin, the successful Chinese gold-mining boss. Wesley Kahler and photographer Peter Britt were among the few who befriended the local Chinese. In 1878 Wes imported Orientals to work at his Palmer Creek hydraulic-mining operation located in the Applegate Valley (near the Gin Lin Trail and the McKee covered bridge). Following his brief stint as district attorney in 1869, he became Justice of the Peace. It was the only public office he ever held. Oregon Governor E.Z. Moody offered him the position of circuit judge in 1884, but he declined the offer. He continued to maintain an office, with his law library of upwards to 600 volumes, in the old wooden structure on North Third Street until 1886 when he decided to replace it with a brick building that still can be seen today. Wesley never married and he remained active until almost the end of the century, when he became afflicted with digestive troubles. Eighteen months after suffering a paralytic stroke he died in an Ashland hospital on August 5, 1904. He was only 63.

As noted in the opening paragraph, the funeral cortege of Charles Wesley Kahler was an impressive sight befitting a man who was held in high esteem by the community. Fletcher Linn



Robert Kahler
#327



The brick building known as Kahler's Law Office was erected in 1886 to replace one of Jacksonville's vintage wooden buildings which had served as offices for such notables as Paine Page Prim, one-time senator from Jackson County, and Joseph Gaston, editor of the Oregon Sentinel and later editor of the Morning Oregonian. C.W. (Wes) Kahler was a Jackson County attorney, admitted to the Bar in Salem in 1868. In 1880 he was a candidate for Circuit Judge. #5631

remembered him as "... a rather quiet and easy-going character, always very well and neatly dressed, usually in a black suit and wearing a coat of Prince Albert style." Linn also wrote that "... he never seemed to worry, whether business came or not. If patronage came to him, he'd give good, conscientious service; if it didn't come, it made little difference to him; he was courteous and happy just the same."

Wesley's will was executed on April 2, 1903. Left to his brother Thomas were three parcels of land totaling 8.40 acres, two farms (known as the Macgruder farms) totaling 313 acres, the Palmer Creek hydraulic mine and water ditches, certain premises known as the fairgrounds near Central Point (jointly owned with J.W. Merritt), the City Drug Store building, and the Law Office building. Left to Rebecca was his residence and the Redman's Building (on the southwest corner of Third and California Streets). His nephews, Harry and Floyd (Robert's sons) each received \$1,000, as did Rachel's six children. All of the rest

of the estate went to his brothers George, Andrew and William.

Rachel Kahler married Enos O'Flyng in 1869. They pioneered for 22 years in the John Day country of Grant and Wheeler counties in eastern Oregon. The O'Flyngs had six children. After returning to the Rogue Valley, Rachel died at age 48 in her brother Charles' Jacksonville house on November 23, 1895. Both she and Enos lie buried in the Kahler family plot. Rebecca and her husband, James McConough, are also buried in the same plot, as are George and Robert Kahler. Robert died while prospecting a placer mining claim. He and a companion, a minister who lived in Baker, Oregon, were camped near Sumpter, Baker County. Shortly after the minister had returned to Baker, Robert took ill and succumbed in their tent on June 12, 1901. A few days later his brother William found the body along with a note indicating that he had

been very ill and was expecting to die. The note gave directions about his business affairs and instructions regarding his burial. His wife, Marie, was in Tacoma at the time and came to Sumpter for the funeral. Later the remains were taken to the Jacksonville Cemetery. Robert and Marie Cardwell had been married in 1878 and had sons Harry and Floyd.

William and Georgiana's youngest son, William Edward Kahler, attended Ashland Academy and graduated from college at Corvallis in 1878. He settled in eastern Oregon and was engaged in the stock business for awhile. A few years later he went into the general merchandise business with his brother Andrew in the little town of Hardman, Morrow County, Oregon. In 1891 William Edward married Josephine Miles, a school teacher in Heppner, Morrow County. Their only child, Edward D., was born two years later. William's next move was to dispose of the business in Hardman and start a large grocery and crockery enterprise at The Dalles on the Columbia River. When a rich gold strike was made in the Sumpter mining district, he moved there and opened up a grocery store. He also was appointed postmaster at Sumpter. After the mining boom ended, the family settled in Portland, and William had real estate interests in that city. In 1908 he returned to the Rogue Valley and located in Central Point. He became intimately identified with that community, served as Secretary of the Commercial Club for years, and was credited with much of the publicity work done by that body. William Edward Kahler died August 5, 1921.

There are two residences still standing in Jacksonville that were associated with the Kahlers. Robert Kahler's house on the southeast corner of 6th and E Streets was built by the druggist in the 1880s and is now known as the Reuter House. About 1895 Charles Wesley Kahler built a house on the northeast corner of 6th and D Streets. Both houses were built on the property that Robert had acquired in 1879. Apparently Wesley's house was occupied by various members of the Kahler family until after the turn of the century. The original wood-frame dwelling was either rebuilt or drastically altered about 1910.

Visitors to the 24-acre hilltop Jacksonville Cemetery should have no difficulty finding the Kahler family plot in the Masonic section. Surrounded by oak, pine and madrone trees, the plot can be identified by a low, rusty iron fence. Dominating the headstones of William and Georgiana, Robert, George, Rachel, Rebecca, Mary, Enos O'Flynn and James McDonough, is



George and Sylvia Kahler. George, a physician and surgeon, was C.W.'s brother. He eventually opened his practice in Phoenix. #1229

the tall, granite shaft erected in the memory of Charles Wesley Kahler. A carved volume of Blackstone graces the top of the monument.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Southern Oregon Pioneer Association resolutions on deaths of members.

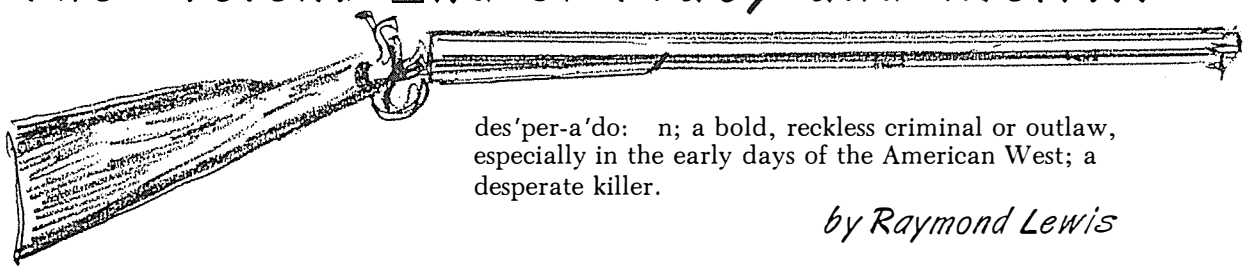
Historical Buildings Survey of Kahler houses, drugstore and law office.

Southern Oregon Historical Society biographical files.

Fletcher Linn's *Reminiscences*.



The Violent End of Tracy and Merrill



des'per-a'do: n; a bold, reckless criminal or outlaw, especially in the early days of the American West; a desperate killer.

by Raymond Lewis

The definition from the Random House Dictionary may be applied to hundreds of murderers, bushrangers and assassins who terrorized the West during the early years. Wherever there was a treasure of hidden gold, there was inevitably a marauder. These men frequently shot up the saloon, threatened the storekeeper and sometimes even endangered the ladies who ventured abroad on shopping forays. They ranged from loudmouth bullies who disappeared at the suggestion of real danger to savages who killed without a second thought.

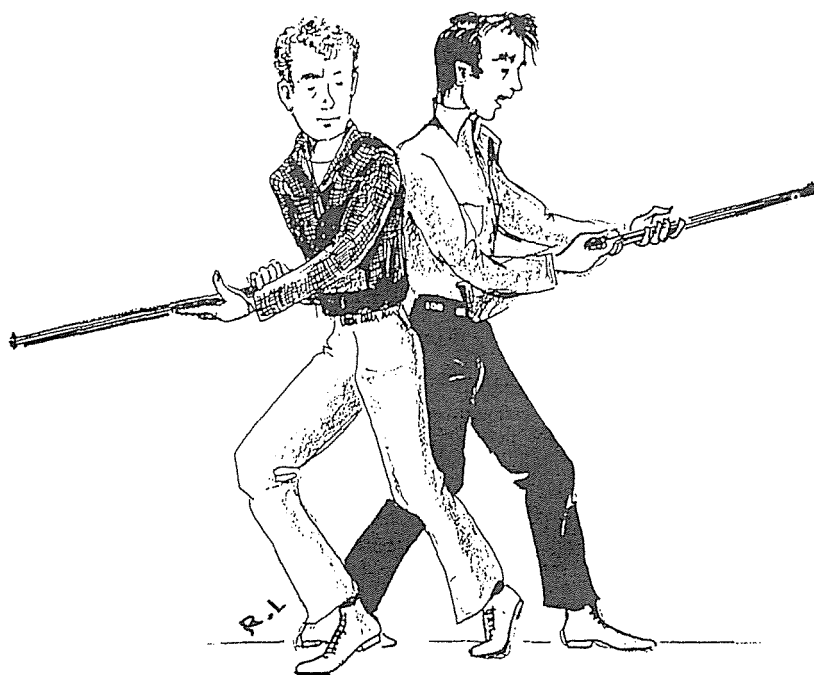
Just after the turn of the century, on June 12, 1902, two of these dangerous desperados, who had been given lengthy prison terms at the Salem penitentiary, escaped from their guards in a bold and bloody shoot-out and disappeared into the nearby woods. Someone had smuggled guns to them and they were fully armed and as menacing as a couple of angry rattlesnakes. The *Democratic Times* and the *Ashland Tidings* reported the story in bloody detail each day, and the citizens of Oregon, as well as all law-abiding folks in the entire West, went on the alert.

The fugitives were Harry Tracy and David Merrill. Tracy was 24 years old, stood five feet eight inches tall and weighed in at 160 pounds. His hair was light brown, cut short, and his eyes were described as "piercing" blue. Merrill was 28, a little taller, five feet ten inches, but he was very slender, weighing only 140 pounds. His complexion was medium, his hair brown and his eyes gray. Although above average in height, he moved gracefully and had a pleasant unassuming manner. He spoke softly and used little profanity, unlike Tracy who had a notorious foul mouth. Tracy was serving thirteen years; Merrill, twenty. Both sentences were for assault and highway robbery. There is no indication they had earlier been partners in crime; they probably became acquainted with each other during their stay in the Salem penitentiary.

Early in the morning of June 11, all the prisoners were marched into the mess hall for breakfast. After the meal was completed, according to the usual custom, they were ushered into the chapel for prayers and at seven o'clock they were paraded, in formation, to the foundry

yard. The guards walked up and down the line, counting noses, and the number was found to be correct; all were present and accounted for. The inmates prepared to go about their assigned tasks when suddenly Harry Tracy, brandishing a weapon which he had concealed in his prison suit, jumped out of line, shouting a tirade of obscenities.

According to the *Times* report, guard Frank Ferrell stepped toward him and commanded, "Give me that ---." But he got no further. Tracy shot him dead in his tracks. At the same time David Merrill flashed his weapon. He was standing by a life-prisoner, Frank Ingraham, who surprisingly grabbed for Merrill's gun. The two men struggled for a moment but Merrill quickly wrenched the weapon loose and shot Ingraham in the legs. Threatening to kill anyone else who interfered, he maneuvered his way across the yard until he stood back-to-back with Tracy. During



Merrill's struggle with Ingraham, the guards began running for the safety of the building. "The desperate criminals then fired their guns at the fleeing guards, keeping up a fusillade of shots," wrote the *Times* reporter. "They returned to the foundry yard and riddled with shots the northwest and southwest guard posts, killing guard R.T. Jones [who stood] on the north wall at a distance of 150 yards. They fired several shots at other guards, and one of the bullets pierced guard Ross' hat." The dispatches failed to report how the two men had acquired so much ammunition; it would appear that they had access

to a well-stocked arsenal. "Admidst a hail of bullets from the now fully aroused guards, the prisoners placed a ladder against the east wall and jumped to the ground outside."²

Guards B.T. Tiffany and Ross (who had the bullet hole in his hat) ran after the escaping men, scaled the ladder, and, as the fugitives had done, dropped to the ground outside the prison grounds. Running at top speed they came to a sharp corner and darted around it, only to find themselves facing Tracy and Merrill who were waiting for them in an angle of the wall. The outlaws had made a stand and crouched there with their guns drawn, aimed directly at their pursuers. "Drop those guns and put up your hands," demanded Tracy. As the startled guards complied, he continued, "Just march ahead of us with your hands on your head."³

Merrill picked up the two guns as the guards began walking toward the trees, followed by Tracy whose gun was pointed steadily at Tiffany. They had walked about a hundred yards when a guard from one of the posts opened fire but failed to hit his target. Merrill coolly shot Tiffany in the back and he fell, mortally wounded. Ross, at the sound of the shooting, threw himself to the ground. Tracy, thinking Ross had been shot, made no effort to pump bullets into him, but he and Merrill scrambled as fast as they could to the woods where they disappeared into the trees.

Running through the timber they eventually came into Salem where, undetected, they made their way into the town. Apparently one or both of the men had been in contact with an accomplice who was living there for on the next day the *Times* announced: "An ex-convict has been arrested upon suspicion of having furnished smuggled arms to the murderers."⁴ Aware that the city was far from the safest place to hide, and eager to make tracks out of town as fast as possible, they stole two horses from a stable in the center of town and soon left the capital far behind them.

The June 13 report continued: "Tracy and Merrill, the escaped convicts and murderers, were at Gervais [a town not far from Salem] last night and secured supper at a wood-chopper's camp at the point of their guns."

When they appeared at the camp they seemed tired and worn out. They were on foot, having disposed of their horses somewhere along their escape path. At gunpoint, Tracy ordered the cook to supply them with food and, when they were given a couple of well-filled plates, they ate hungrily. The other men at the camp sat around the mess table and watched them eat. The escapees appeared unconcerned and exchanged a

few jokes. They did, however, keep their rifles handy. "Just behave yourselves," said Merrill, "and no one will get hurt." The *Times* stated, "They are armed to the teeth and desperate, and neither will be taken alive." None of the woodcutters seemed willing to indulge in heroics and make a grandstand play to capture either of the men. Thoroughly satisfied, with a hot meal of camp stew and beans under their belts, the fugitives cheerfully offered their thanks and departed.

A short time later, as they walked along the road in the fading light of the warm June evening, they heard the clop-clop of a horse's hooves and men's voices. Ducking into the shrubbery beside the road, they waited in silence as two men in a buggy drove by. Racing through the underbrush which edged the road, they soon overtook the men and, at a given signal, jumped out into the road with their guns drawn. The two men, who were deputy sheriffs looking for the escaped prisoners, were ordered to hand over their firearms and get out of the buggy. As the deputies stepped down from the carriage, Tracy said, "We're a little tired from walking. I guess it'll be nice riding for awhile."⁵ Laughing raucously at the joke, the fugitives climbed up to the buggy seat and Merrill took the reins while Tracy, with his gun pointing menacingly, covered the two deputies left standing in the road.

At eleven o'clock a report from Aurora stated that the fleeing convicts had passed through that town in a buggy heading for Boon's Ferry. A group of citizens quickly organized themselves into a vigilante group and followed the escapees, but by that time Merrill and Tracy had made it to the ferry and had crossed the river. Aware that a posse was on their heels, they abandoned the horse and buggy and eluded their pursuers in the dark of night.

Bloodhounds were brought in from Walla Walla to track down the two men. The dogs were given their scent at the wood-chopper's camp, and traced them to the tall timber about two miles from Gervais. The woods were surrounded and the men in the posse converged towards the center. Some of them reported that they had caught a glance of the robbers on the edge of the timber, but by morning it was apparent that the posse had failed to find their quarry and were no nearer capturing them than they had been at the start.

The *Times* reporter wrote:

The fact that they are dead shots gives them ad-

ded safety, as few people are willing to take the chances, knowing that a poorly aimed shot will mean death at the hands of the robbers. It is evidently the intention of the men to make some point where they can secrete themselves on a train, or else get to the mountains where they hope to throw the pursuers off the track. It is not thought possible they can escape, as the whole country is aroused and their description is too well known. A large reward has been offered for both men.⁶

A last minute bulletin from Salem, printed in the same issue of the *Times*, revealed:

...the convicts have been cornered in a large wheat field which adjoins heavy timber. The timber and the field are surrounded by about 250 armed men. The wheat is tall enough for men to hide in. It is believed they cannot escape without being killed.

The *Times* was a little over-optimistic. The June 18th issue sported the headline, CONVICTS AGAIN CORNERED. In 1902 the *Democratic Times* was a weekly paper and frequently neglected to print all the events that had appeared between issues so the readers were not always thoroughly aware of all the facts. According to the latest accounts, Tracy and Merrill had again made an appearance. The militia and a corps of armed men "in full cry" were hot on their heels. The paper declared the fugitives were in Clarke County and were headed towards the mountains.

As soon as possible armed men were stationed on all roads in that area and members of the militia were given positions along the Lewis River with instructions to shoot first and ask questions later.

Once more the bloodhounds were called to the chase, but they refused to take the scent. Merrill and Tracy were both wearing stolen shoes which confused and frustrated the bloodhounds. The day before, the fugitives had held up a German farmer near Vancouver and forced him to cook their breakfast. After eating his food they took his clothing so they could change their outfits, and they left him helpless, bound and gagged. He managed to work himself loose and gave the alarm. Two men supposed to be convicts were fired upon afterwards by the hunters and the shots were returned.

William Morris, a member of the posse, appeared at the top of a hill, near a clearing in the woods, and another member of the hunting party, thinking he was one of the murderers, shot at him, wounding him in the shoulder. Perhaps

the order to shoot first and seek identification later might better have been amended a little. The *Times*' report was grim. "It is hoped his life can be saved without amputating his limb. He was fired upon by a deputy sheriff."

The headline of June 19 was less reassuring. A flat statement, **CONVICTS HAVE ESCAPED**, introduced the story. "Tracy and Merrill have effectually covered their trail," announced the paper.⁷

Certain that they were somewhere in the big timber near the mountains in Clackamas County, the authorities recalled the posses and the militia. "So far as those taking part in the chase are concerned, the manhunt is at an end," declared the Salem reporter, "but there is a Nemesis camping upon their trail, to hound them to death or else give up his own life in the effort."⁸

This avenger was Charles Ferrell, of Reno, a brother of one of the murdered guards. He swore he would even the score and bring the outlaws to justice. He was accompanied by two or three men as fully determined as he, and the little party struck out into the woods with the purpose of following the trail "as stealthily as the wily Indian on the warpath."

"If Ferrell meets the outlaws, somebody is going to get hurt," promised the newspaper.

The resolution displayed by Charles Ferrell and his party of bounty hunters was commendable, but their righteous wrath led nowhere. This was the only mention of the Nevada avengers in the newspaper. They probably found the robbers more wily than they had anticipated and after a few unsuccessful days of tracking, withdrew from the contest and went back to more profitable pursuits in Reno.

In the town of New Era two men, who answered the description of the outlaws, entered the general store. They bought tobacco, six pounds of bacon and a frying pan. Shortly afterwards a farmer saw two armed men going through his field toward the river. He thought it prudent not to challenge them and watched them as they disappeared into the woods.

"Since then," continued the report, "there has been no sign of them. They have disappeared as completely as though the earth had swallowed them."⁹ As long as they were forced to steal horses and find something to eat, they had left clues, but now, with a means of cooking their own meals, they could keep under cover until they reached the heart of the mountains where they could exist

as long as their ammunition lasted.

Merrill and Tracy appear to have had no intention of living out their lives in the depth of the forest. Several people claimed they had seen one or both of them, and it was rumored they were in Salem, in Portland, on the coast and in the mountains and fields. "They will try to make it to Portland where they have friends," said some.¹⁰ Others were of the opinion that their descriptions were so well known to everybody, that coming out of the mountains would be like putting their heads into the lion's mouth. "The desperadoes had no trouble outwitting the 200 men or more who had them cornered in the wheat fields last Wednesday," continued the *Times*. In spite of a double guard of militia men, they slipped through the lines and escaped, not, however, without some shooting although Merrill and Tracy had not returned a shot. "They do not intend to waste their ammunition," declared the paper.

On June 25 the latest dispatches announced the fugitives were still giving the officers a merry chase. They were in the Lewis River district, for the day before they had entered a farmer's house and robbed him of twenty dollars, five dozen eggs and some bacon, besides taking his new clothes and leaving theirs. "The murderers are emboldened by the successful tactics and are taking many chances. It is only a matter of time when they will be captured," reported the *Times*.

Sheriff Marsh of Vancouver and guard Carson of Walla Walla, who had the bloodhounds, were immediately notified and started for the trail. As usual the papers promised that the convicts would soon be back in the state prison. "They are known to be in a section less than three miles square, and if the ground keeps moist and the scent holds, they are sure to be captured," declared the *Times*. "The posse and the dogs are less than three hours behind."¹¹ True to form, Tracy and Merrill next surfaced many miles from the spot where the posse eventually emerged, empty-handed.

An item from Salem closely related to the case appeared elsewhere in the same issue of the paper. Under the headline, **GOVERNOR SIGNED PARDON**, the story revealed that Frank S. Ingraham, the life convict who, at the time of the escape, had grabbed for Merrill's gun, had actually done so to prevent Merrill from murdering a guard. "When Ingraham arises from his cot in the hospital, he will find himself a free man," wrote the Salem reporter. "His pardon was signed by Governor Geer yesterday." After the good news, the bad

news: "When he goes forth from the prison hospital, he will wear crutches and be minus one of his legs, which was amputated in order to save his life."¹² He had been an exemplary prisoner, had never given the guards any trouble, and it was unfortunate that he had to suffer so grievously for his good deed.

During the last days of June posse members on patrol and those fellows who still continued the search turned in many reports of having spied Tracy. Strangely enough, Merrill had not been seen in his company for several days. Had they decided to go their separate ways? Was Tracy's conduct too gross for even Merrill to tolerate?

Captain Clark, an officer on a launch running on Puget Sound, reached Seattle early in the morning of July 3. After trying to the dock, he informed the authorities that the desperado Tracy had boarded his launch downriver as a passenger. Just before disembarking at Meadow Point, nine miles north of Seattle, he told the captain who he was and informed him he had killed Merrill, his companion in crime, because "he had begun to show the white feather and wanted to surrender to the authorities."¹³

Police officials, excited by Captain Clark's story, began gathering a large posse and gave orders to officers to comb the city in another concentrated search. Although vigilantes swarmed through the streets of Seattle and every clue was run to the ground, Tracy again escaped. He next appeared at the Fisher farmhouse at Pontiac. There he changed his clothes, ate a good dinner and again cheerfully took to the road. His second stop was at the Johnson farmhouse near Renton. This time when he left, he took with him a young farm worker, John Anderson, whom he intended to use as a human shield.

The July 10 issue of the *Tidings*, seven days later, reported that young Anderson, bound and tied to a chair, had been found at Gerrell's place. He told police that he and Tracy had rowed from Port Madison to Seattle where Tracy was met by four friends. There Tracy tied him up and abandoned him.

In the next issue of the paper, July 14, 1902, rumors were rife that Tracy had been wounded and was painfully lame. There were also reports that Merrill had again joined him, but on July 17 the *Tidings* story, MERRILL'S REMAINS FOUND, contradicted the rumors:

Mrs. Mary Waggoner and her twelve year old

son made a ghastly find near Napavine, Washington, Monday, that may put nearly \$3000 in her possession. While they were engaged in picking berries they noticed an unusually disagreeable odor, and in searching around the location discovered the badly decomposed remains of a human being that may prove to be those of Frank Merrill, the outlaw convict who was killed by his pal, Harry Tracy...The body was close to the spot where Tracy said he had killed Merrill in a duel on the 28th day of June last...There is a reward offered by the State of Oregon of \$1500 for Merrill dead or alive and Mrs. Waggoner will take immediate action to claim the same...

The body was easily recognizable as that of Merrill. There was a bullet hole in the back and another in the left wrist. The body was dressed in dark blue trousers, a dark coat, a black hat, and heavy shoes. It had been dumped head first over the log and lay with the face concealed. Mrs. Waggoner's son notified the coroner of the find Tuesday morning and steps were at once taken to bring the body in...



TRACY'S STORY OF THE DEED

While in the vicinity of Castle Rock, Tracy learned that Merrill was responsible for his getting into the Oregon penitentiary. Merrill was a hindrance in the flight, anyway, he said. He was careless and left a trail like a log, so Tracy resolved to pick a quarrel with him. In this he succeeded and the two agreed to fight out their differences in an open spot. It was agreed that each one, standing back-to-back, should advance ten paces, turn and fire. Tracy, looking over his shoulder, saw Merrill start to fire at nine paces, so he wheeled around, fired, and Merrill dropped dead.

While eating breakfast in the shanty at South

Bay, Washington, before starting on his trip back to Seattle, Tracy told his story, admitting that his companion in crime fell beneath the rifle from a dastard shot in the back.

In the same issue of the paper there is a brief announcement that the body of David Merrill was taken to Salem and buried in the penitentiary yard a few rods from the place where, with Tracy, he had shot down three prison guards six weeks earlier. The body was neatly dressed in a black suit and enclosed in a sealed coffin. The burial was without ceremony.

As to the payment of the reward, Charles Nickell, the *Times* editor, made the comment: "Now that Merrill's body has been discovered, it looks as if the authorities are inclined to crawl out of paying the reward to Mrs. Waggoner and her son." It seems the reward was offered for the "capture and return" of the convicts, dead or alive, and Mrs. Waggoner had not "captured" Merrill. "To us," wrote the editor, "this evasion seems very cheap and radically wrong."¹⁴

At the end of July Tracy again emerged in Seattle. Warden James and Sheriff Cudihee headed toward the Sound and the paper again promised the hunt would lead to the ending of his sinful career. But by August 7, with three posses hot on his trail and a fourth being organized, Harry Tracy was still at large.

The *Tidings*¹⁵, presented a feature story¹⁶ about a photographer, Oscar P. Bowles, who "took it into his adventurous head to photograph and interview" the famous outlaw and thereby become famous. The story appears to have been written with the proverbial tongue-in-cheek, but it does suggest that the murderer was not without a sense of humor. The story:

With a camera that had a snap like the bite of a turtle, [Oscar P. Bowles] went out to find the fugitive. Yesterday he returned empty-handed.

Upon reaching the little town of Sequash he found the community in a high state of excitement. The mayor had been wounded by Tracy, and the twelve members of the city council had, by the great terror, been stood in a row and robbed of their valuables...Deputy sheriffs and government tug boats were out chasing Mr. Tracy. A chief of police found him and quickly returned home with only one ear.

Several men had been killed. A boat's crew had by Tracy been sworn into his service, and up and down the river he sailed, putting villages under [consternation.]

Oscar P. Bowles was not frightened.

During many, many years in Chicago he had fought for a place on the West Side street cars and was not to be intimidated by one man. So out into the wild bush he went with his camera.

About noontime of the first day he came to a house. At the gate he halloed and a weak voice within bade him enter. He did, and found a man, woman, five boys and a dog tied to the floor. They told him that Tracy had passed that way.

Further along he came to a crossroads, and there he found a wild hog hung by the hind legs to the branch of a tree, and into the animal's bristles was sticking a card bearing the name of Tracy. Evidently he was having a deal of sport... During the following night there was heavy firing in the forest. Panting deer came running for their lives and a grizzly bear was seen to rub his head in dismay.

The next morning, just after breakfast, Bowles heard a stick crack in the bushes, and peering through, he discovered Tracy standing in a small open space. With the tip of a lightning rod, wrenched from a church spire, he was leisurely picking his teeth. Bowles spread the legs of his machine and was squinting at his subject when the outlaw exclaimed: "Hold on. I give up. I can't fight the government with a Gatling gun."

"Throw down your arms!" The order was obeyed. Then a tingling idea danced tiptoe upon the photographer's mind. He would hold the robber, interview him and then take his picture.

"Why do you go about committing such depredations?" he was asked.

"Because I am a genius."

"How do you know you are a genius?"

"Because I am odd."

"...How long do you expect to remain a genius?"

"Until taken up by society."

It was now time to take the picture and run. The rubber bulb was pressed and the thing snapped. "Hah, won't shoot!" cried Tracy, gathering up his arms full of pistols. "Now you throw up your hands."

The photographer was compelled to obey, and when the robber discovered that he had been photographed he broke the plate over Bowles' head, tied him to a log and set him adrift down the river.

Two days later he was picked up by a squaw.

A less flamboyant convict could probably have escaped. He might have left the west coast and headed eastward, and, with a new identification, have lost himself in some city in the midwest. Tracy, however seemed to enjoy the game. He remained in the area around Portland and Seattle and made tantalizing appearances whenever those who hunted him relaxed their search. He lived off

the farmers in the remote regions, holding them up and helping himself to their food, their clothing and their money. To elude the bloodhounds he frequently changed shoes, waded in icy water for long stretches and at least once sprinkled cayenne pepper in his footsteps. Yet, clever as he was, as he continued his game of cat and mouse, his downfall was inevitable. It is ironic that he would come to his death by his own hand.

When C.A. Straub, a deputy sheriff, and his posse received word that the outlaw was staying at the Eddy ranch, a short distance from Creston, they set forth in a body to make another effort to capture the elusive killer. When they reached the ranch of Mrs. Anderson, a short distance south of the Eddy ranch, they put up their teams and went on foot the rest of the way.

As they came to the top of a ridge overlooking the barn and outbuildings, they saw Tracy come out of a shed apparently unarmed. He was dressed in blue overalls and a white shirt, and he wore a white bicycle cap perched on his head at a jaunty angle. A couple of members of the posse raised their guns and drew beads on him, but concluded it might be better to be sure of their man before firing.

Eddy, temporarily out of Tracy's view, was cutting hay behind a little elevation near the barn. A horse and wagon stood by. One of the men slipped behind the rise, went up to the farmer and asked him the identity of the man in the bicycle hat.

"That's Tracy," said the farmer.

The man returned to the posse who by this time was concealed behind the knoll. Eddy, his wagon full of hay, climbed up to the seat, whacked the horse across the rump with a switch, and drove slowly towards the barn. As he approached the barnyard he jumped down from the wagon, and Tracy walked over to help him unhitch the horse.

At that moment the group of men advanced into full view and leveled their guns at Tracy. "Throw up your hands," commanded Sheriff Straub.

"Who are those men?" said Tracy as he slipped behind Eddy. He then compelled the farmer to place the horse so that it shielded him from the guns of the advancing party, and ordered Eddy to lead the animal to the barn. Tracy assisted in hurrying the horse along.

As they neared the barn door, the outlaw made a dash for the inside and almost immediately emerged on the other side with his rifle and revolver in his hands. He opened rapid fire but

his shots all went wild as the members of the posse ran helter-skelter for cover. He then bolted from the barn and ran down a little draw in the hillside, pursued by a hail of lead. Dodging behind a projecting boulder, he fired several more shots, still without effect, although they hit closely enough to keep the posse huddled behind the barn and the outbuildings.

He made a sudden lunge for the edge of the wheat field and crawled out of sight. At every motion of the tall stalks of wheat, a volley was sent after him.

The newspaper story:

TRACY IS DEAD

When they were firing from the cover of the rock...they had to lift their heads above the cover, and every time this was done Tracy's rifle rang out and a bullet chipped the rock.

The party watched the field until daylight the next morning, and then began an investigation resulting in the finding of Tracy's body, dead by his own hands.

Tracy was hit by the posse twice. The first bullet struck his right leg halfway between the knee and ankle, breaking both bones. The second bullet took effect in the rear of the same leg, about midway between the hip and knee...Both wounds bled freely, but the desperate man, not willing to die until he had his revenge, tried with failing attempts to prevent his blood from flowing.

He used a short, narrow strap to pull together the vessels of his leg to prevent the blood from running to the wound...His handkerchief, which was saturated with his blood, was found near him. It is supposed he tried to push the cloth into the wound.

Seeking the protection of a large boulder, he dragged himself on his left side through the wheat for a distance of about seventy-five yards. There the rocks concealed him but gave him a position where he would have a full view of his attackers. His trail through the wheat was a mass of clotted blood.

The loss of blood so drained his strength that the act of dragging himself to the protection of the rocks required super-human effort. His deep hatred for his pursuers and his desire for revenge probably gave him the adrenalin necessary to reach the boulders. But he no longer had the vigor to fire at the enemy. Aware that his stamina was fast ebbing and that soon he would be unable to move, he mustered up the willpower to place the revolver to his head and with his last voluntary motion, pulled the trigger and blew his brains out.

For the entire night the posse kept watch on the silent wheat field. At dawn it was pretty

evident that Tracy was no longer in the battle. The members of the posse fanned out in a row. Moving single file into the field they soon found the lifeless body of the desperado huddled in the stones. "He presented a horrible sight. He was covered with blood from head to foot, and the unsightly wound over the right eye was ghastly."¹⁷

It is evident Harry Tracy had no concern for human life. His known victims were the three prison guards whom he shot on June 9: Ferrell, Jones and Tiffany. On June 28 he killed David Merrill, his partner, shooting him in the back and leaving his body in the forest. On July 3, near Seattle, in a fight with a posse, he shot and killed Charles Raymond, a Deputy Sheriff, E.E. Breese, a policeman, and mortally wounded Neil Rawley who died the following morning. Five years

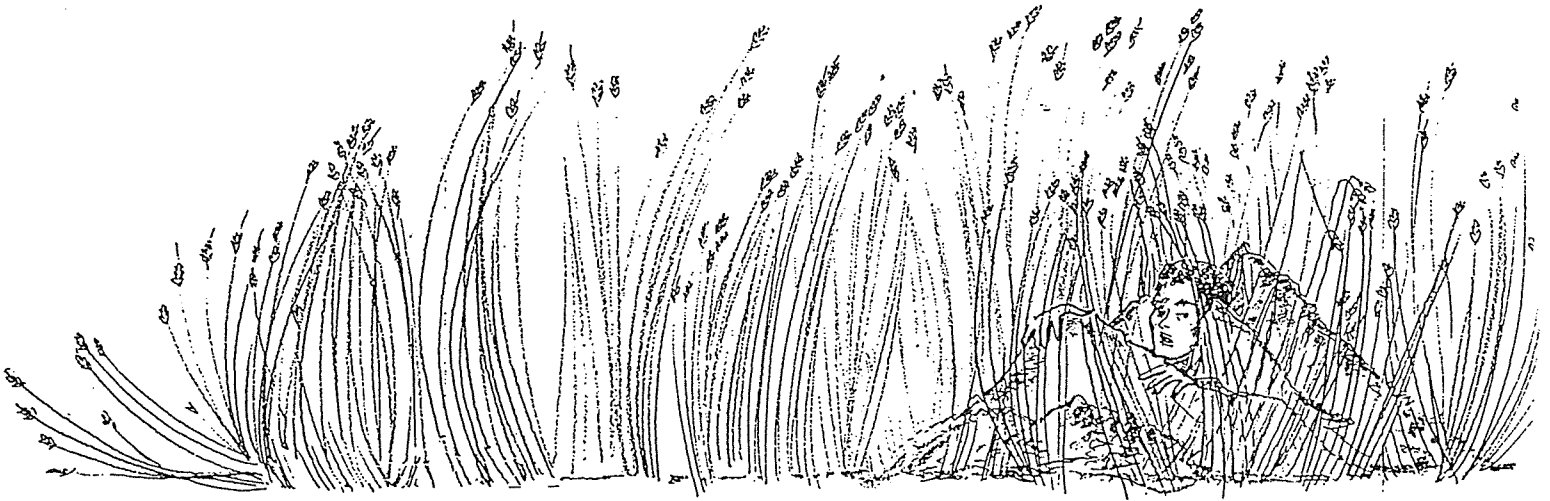
earlier, in 1897, he had murdered Valentine Hoge, a Colorado cattleman, and William Strong, a boy.

Perhaps his greatest display of daring was holding up six boatmen at South Bay and forcing them and their captain, at the point of his gun, to embark with him on Puget Sound and pilot him upstream for ten hours.

On September 4, 1902, the *Times* concluded the tragedy in a story headed:

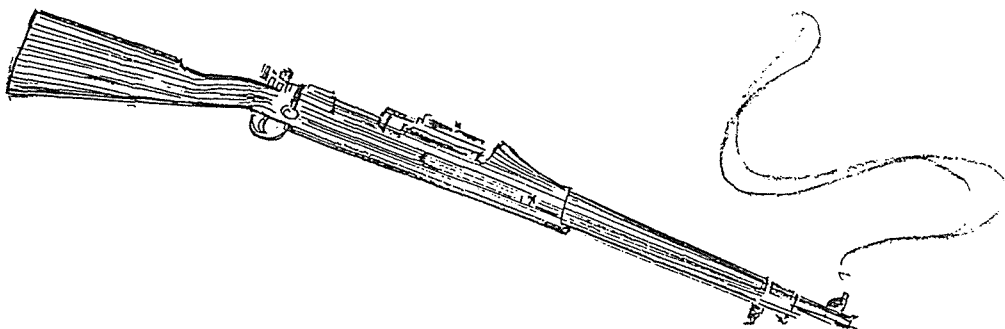
MRS. WAGGONER'S CLAIM DISALLOWED.

Salem - Secretary of State Dunbar yesterday disallowed the claim of Mrs. Waggoner of Chehalis, Washington, for \$1500 for returning to the officials of the Oregon State Penitentiary the body of the dead convict Merrill. Harry Tracy was buried in the Salem prison yard beside David Merrill.

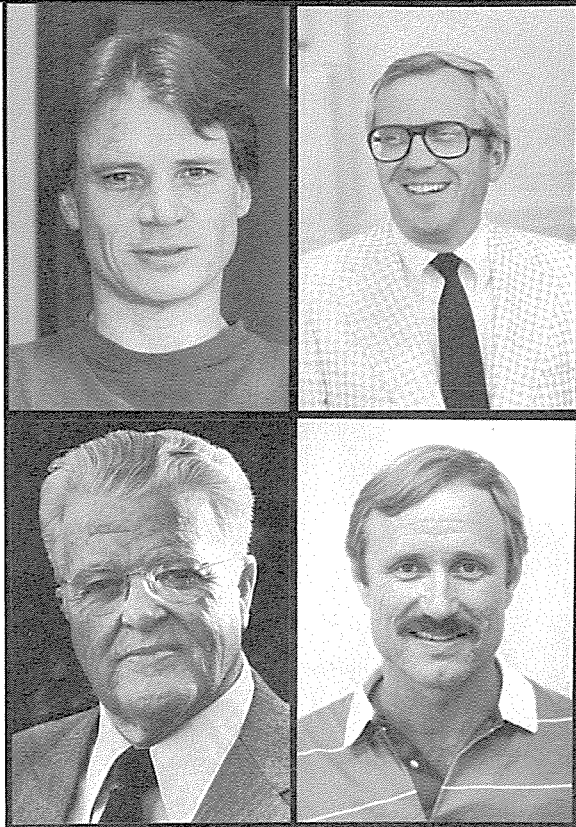


NOTES

1. The (Jacksonville) *Democratic Times*, June 12, 1902.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, June 13, 1902
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, June 20, 1902.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*, June 25, 1902.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ashland Tidings*, July 3, 1902.
14. *Democratic Times*, July 24, 1902. "Current Comment."
15. *Ashland Tidings*, August 4, 1902.
16. This story, which is almost certainly pure fiction, appears to have been written with the intention of turning Harry Tracy into a folk hero similar to Paul Bunyan. As such, it falls short of its aim. It was signed by Opie Reed.
17. *Democratic Times*, August 8, 1902.



Society News



*Clockwise from upper left: Barry Kraft, Dr. Joseph Cox,
Barry Hewlett, Vaughn Bornet*

Bicentennial Lecture Series

The Constitution Bicentennial will be celebrated during the month of October through a Brown Bag Lunch Lecture Series co-sponsored by the Southern Oregon Historical Society and the Ashland Public Library. The *noon* lectures will be held at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, corner of Mountain Avenue and Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland. Beverages will be provided. The scheduled lectures are:

- October 2 "Rights of an Individual vs. Needs of the Community." Barry Kraft, Shakespearean Festival Association.
- 9 "The Anti-Federalists." Dr. Joseph Cox, SOSC President.
- 23 "The Constitution and the American Spirit." Vaughn Bornet, Professor Emeritus of Social Sciences, SOSC.
- 30 "Cross-Cultural Perspective on the Constitution." Barry Hewlett, Professor of Anthropology, SOSC.

Long Range Planning Begins

Under the chairmanship of Dr. James Sours, the Society's Long Range Planning Committee has established three Task Forces to undertake the preparation of a five-year long range plan. Task Force #1 covers "Mission & Finance"; Task Force #2 will tackle "Physical Properties" and Task Force #3 will cover "Programs & Exhibits."

Requests for input were sent to Society members and county and local historical organizations, and a public meeting was held August 20th so the general public could have an opportunity to state their concerns. All of the input received will be taken into consideration by the Task Forces and the Long Range Planning Committee who hope to have the final draft approved by the Board of Trustees at the November Board meeting.

Railroad Exhibit/Reception

On August 15 staff and volunteers at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum hosted a reception at the opening of the "Ashland Railroad Centennial" exhibit. Running until January 1988, the exhibit celebrates the completion near Ashland of the circuit of railway around the United States. Historic photographs from the collection of Terry Skibby, president of the Ashland Heritage Committee are on exhibit along with displays depicting the professional and personal lives of railroad workers, the contribution of the Chinese railroad workers to Ashland culture, and the devastating impact on Ashland when Southern Pacific rerouted its passenger and freight service through Klamath Falls.

The Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum is open 1-5 P.M., Tuesday through Saturday.

Board Meeting Location Changed

The Society's Board of Trustees will hold its regular monthly Board meetings in the conference room of the Jackson Education Service District, 101 N. Grape Street, Medford. The meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month and begin at 7:30 P.M.

Stephen Beckham in Ashland

October 16, 1987

10:00 a.m. "Lifeways of the Takelma"
Taylor 108 - SOSC Campus

3:00 p.m. guest of honor - Ashland Public
Library 75th Anniversary
Celebration

7:30 p.m. "Gold and Glory: The Com-
plex Between Settlers, Miners
and Indians in the Rogue
Valley"
Science 118 - SOSC Campus

Reception following at the
Chappell-Swedenburg House
Museum with chamber music
by the Generic String Quartet

All events are free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the Southern Oregon Historical
Society, the Southern Oregon
Anthropological Society, and the SOSC Lec-
tures and Performing Arts Committee.

STEPHEN DOW BECKHAM:
Hiking Into History
by Nan Hannon

Distinguished western historian Stephen Dow Beckham remembers that when he was eleven or twelve, "I stood in the warm sun at a tumble-down post office called Illahe, Oregon. Seated there in a chair, looking as old as his ninety years revealed him to be, was George W. Meservey (1862-1963), the son of a Chetco Indian woman and Elisha Meservey, a miner, pioneer, adventurer and volunteer in the Rogue wars nearly one hundred years before. Old Mr. Meservey, speaking slowly yet distinctly, recalled the stories of the former days, days that were fresh to him as the swirling water in the nearby Rogue River. As I stood there, listening, absorbing, and looking up at the timbered hills above the Big Bend of the Rogue, I determined to find some day the full history of that land and its long-vanished people."

On October 16, southern Oregon residents will have the opportunity to hear Beckham recount that history, when he gives three presentations in Ashland, co-sponsored by the Southern Oregon Historical Society, the Southern Oregon



Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham

Anthropological Society, and the SOSC Lectures and Performing Arts Committee.

As a historian, Beckham has continued to explore as an adult the world which he explored as a boy. He has remembered his childhood questions about the land where he was raised, and in the process of answering those questions, of deepening his own understanding of his own world, he has made a major contribution to an understanding of the prehistory and history of Western America.

At 45, Stephen Beckham has already had a remarkably productive career. A professor of history at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, where he has taught since 1977, Beckham is the author of dozens of articles, books, and monographs on the history and anthropology of the West Coast. His books include *Requiem for a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen*, *Tall Tales from Rogue River*, *The Yarns of Hathaway Jones*, *The Indians of Western Oregon*, *This Land Was Theirs* and *Land of the Umpqua: A History of Douglas County, Oregon*.

A founder and former Board member of the

Historic Preservation League of Oregon, in 1986 Beckham was named HPLO'S "Preservationist of the Year." He has served on both the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation and on the Board of Advisers of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He has written dozens of National Register nominations, including those for the Bonneville Dam, the Old Oregon Trail, and the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road.

Since 1973 he has written 64 consultant studies for agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, Coast Guard, the BLM, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He has also served as a consultant for a number of Indian tribes, including the Chinook, Cow Creek, Cowlitz, Tolowa, and Shasta. He has served as expert witness in seven federal court cases involving Indian land claims and fishing rights.

How does Beckham account for his productivity?

He explains that, "A friend once said to me: 'Steve, your "being" is doing.' I suppose he was right. Doing things has made life exciting and interesting." He adds that "Having an insatiable curiosity and a willingness to work hard have played a large part, too."

The values of curiosity and hard work were nurtured in Beckham by his schoolteacher parents, Dow and Anna Beckham. Stephen was their first child, born in 1941. After the birth of two more sons, David and Mark, Dow Beckham, who had been a "high-climber" in the Camas Valley in the 1920s, returned to logging, since a teacher's salary was insufficient to support the family. The Beckhams also raised cranberries, and the Beckham children missed several days of school every October to help harvest the berries.

Beckham fondly describes his parents as "interested in and curious about everything. We were forever going on expeditions. They took us everywhere in Southern Oregon." When Beckham was fifteen, they helped him to spend ten weeks in Europe as an Eagle Scout at the World Boy Scout Jamboree.

"Our parents schooled us in life's values and encouraged our varied interests. My father often paraphrased Archimedes, who once remarked: 'Give me a lever long enough and a place to stand and I can turn the world.' The implication of that to us boys was that ambition and vision were crucial ingredients in life."

David Beckham obtained both an MBA and a law degree, and is an attorney in Albany. Mark Beckham is a consulting engineer and computer specialist.

Stephen Beckham received degrees in history and biology. from the University of Oregon in 1964. He then went to UCLA to do graduate work. His adviser was John Caughey, who had been anthropologist A.L. Kroeber's teaching assistant. The Kroebers had a deep influence on Caughey, and their legacy was passed on to Beckham who was the 39th of Caughey's 40 doctoral students.

When Beckham first sat down with Caughey, he told him that he wanted to write his master's thesis on the Rogue River Indian Wars, the topic that had fascinated him from childhood. Caughey told him that the first step was to compile a bibliography. Beckham came back a week later with a list of two hundred sources. He confessed to Caughey then that he had come to UCLA with the first chapter of his thesis already written.

That thesis was published in 1971 by the University of Oklahoma Press, as part of their



"Squaw Mary" of Jacksonville with her two daughters. Beckham writes that Jacksonville prospered where Indian women had once swung their baskets and crouched on their hands and knees to gather acorns. There stood brick buildings, churches and clapboard homes and where those women had once lived were charred planks and open pits--the scars of warfare and destruction.

authoritative Civilization of the American Indian Series, as *Requiem for a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen*.

Beckham comments on the fulfillment of his childhood desire to understand the conflict between the Indians and the settlers: "I wanted to read about the Indian Wars, but even to my young ears, the accounts sounded wrong. The Indians were portrayed as absolute savages, with no integrity to their lifeway. I had Indian friends in the Agness-Illahe area. They were gentle people, and very kind to me. They took me to their old village sites. They told me about processing acorns. They were proud of the well-made projectile points that could still be found in the sand.

"As I grew older, I became convinced that if a lifeway is sufficient to sustain people for centuries, it must have had an integrity. My goal was to craft a book that approached the Indians as civilized people. I wanted to write about the Indians as men, women and children, not as bucks and squaws and pagans."

In 1969, Beckham received his doctorate in history and anthropology from UCLA, and began his teaching and writing career.

Today Beckham and his wife Patti, a music teacher, live in Lake Oswego with their children Andrew Dow and Ann-Marie. Their large, antique-filled home is in an area with a rural feeling, and Beckham's spacious, sunny study overlooks a well-tended garden. Apple and pear trees are heavy with fruit, corn is tall in the vegetable patch, and bright dahlias bloom on their heavy stems.

Inside, contemporary Northwest Coast art and Native American artifacts are proudly displayed. Many of the objects - a beaded Pomo basket, Northwest Coast feast bowl, mortars and pestles, acorn baskets - are gifts from the makers, or from collectors who have been long-time friends of the Beckhams and their families. A large desk and computer take up one corner of the room, and Beckham is quick to praise his computer.

"The word-processor has expedited my work tremendously. More important, the computer has enabled me to do sophisticated statistical analysis of historical data. This is the methodology of the 80s. History can now be approached with solid statistical data."

In writing *Land of the Umpqua*, the beautifully illustrated history of Douglas County, Beckham used the computer to evaluate data from the 1860, 1880 and 1900 censuses on gender ratios, ethnicity, profession and wealth distribution. It yielded a documentable picture of

Land of the Umpqua

A HISTORY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON

Stephen Dow Beckham



Sharon Lumsden of the Gift Shop reports: "This is a very handsome, brand new coffeetable book. Members may buy it for \$21.20."

the population.

Across from the computer is a large oval table, where Beckham spreads out manuscripts he is discussing. But the focal point of the study is the thousands of book neatly arranged on the white bookshelves along one wall.

A large section of books on southern Oregon includes almost everything one can think of that has been published about this area. Many of the volumes are rare; many are inscribed by the authors. Beckham points out a Jacksonville sheriff's journal from the 1860s, an Ashland photograph album from around 1910, an autographed copy of Ashley Russell's "Siskiyou Trail."

Beckham sits at the oval table to discuss his work, but every few minutes he springs up and goes to the bookshelves or his files to retrieve a manuscript or a journal or a map that illustrates the point he's making. He admits that he's passionate about his work, and he feels strongly that a historian should write with "both the head and the heart. This is tricky, because a historian is supposed to be objective."

He smiles when he adds that "You don't just research history in the library. You interview informants and you visit sites. You put your boots on and you hike into history."

The Ashland Public Library: The Women Who Established It

by Leslie Egger-Gould

Although the Ashland Library and Reading Room Association was organized in 1879, it wasn't until 1891 that the movement to establish a library gained momentum. It took another 21 years until a permanent building was constructed. Ashland's struggle to establish a public library and live up to the community's reputation of having a "high moral tone, social advancement, and culture" was led by a group of determined women.

In September of 1891 the Epworth League of the Methodist Church called a special meeting and proposed plans for a library. A committee was appointed to develop a list of suitable books and a second committee was appointed to sell subscriptions for one dollar. Fifty memberships were sold, making the Ashland Library Association one of eight public subscription libraries in Oregon at that time.

In November Mrs. Sarah Ganiard was chosen president and Miss Hattie Thornton became the first librarian. Mrs. E.V. Carter was appointed to the board, beginning her 36-year career of service to the library effort. E.K. Anderson offered a room for the new library and it was decided that it would be open on Saturdays from 2 to 6 P.M.

More money was needed to support the library and over the years the women sponsored many fund raisers, including concerts, book socials, ice cream parties, plays and lectures. In February of 1892 a Business Carnival was held which raised \$138.75. The carnival opened with an overture from an orchestra of Ashland people, followed by a "variety show" production. The highlight of the evening was the parade of women dressed in costumes and carrying banners representing most of the businesses in town. The *Ashland Daily Tidings* reported that the carnival was a "complete success."

During the next decade the library's collection grew, the hours were expanded and the search for a permanent home became a near-tradition. The library's first home was needed by Mr. Anderson, so the collection was moved to a second reading room in town--but for just a short time. The next move was to a room on the corner of

Main and Hargadine; but the ten-dollar-per-month-rent proved to be too expensive. Soon the women moved the volumes of books to the Commercial Club's reading room; but it proved to be too noisy. Finally the collection was moved to a room in city hall; it was quiet and rent free.

By 1898 all of the board members were women and a local women's group, the Woman's Civic Improvement Club, had become one of the library's most avid supporters, donating both books and money. By 1903 the board had collected 1,850 volumes and by 1909 the number had reached 3,000. That spring the subscription fee was dropped and in one month the membership rose from 150 to 450 people. The seven board members and volunteers opened the library two times each week and the name was changed to the Ashland Free Public Library.

Many people felt the time had come for a city-supported library. The city council was approached about applying for a Carnegie library but two of the councilmen objected to the idea, not wanting to "worship at the Carnegie shrine."

For 17 years the women had persisted, with no help from the city, in developing a library.



Leslie Egger-Gould has been a public relations assistant for Judson Baptist College in The Dalles and Curator of the Chappell-Swedenburg House in Ashland. Discovering a sharp interest in Ashland's history, she wrote this story originally for the Medford Mail Tribune. The photograph is by Douglas Smith.

They remained undaunted and more determined than ever. In April of 1909 a meeting was held in the Chautauqua tabernacle. Mrs. Mulit introduced the topic of the evening: a city library. She recounted the disadvantages the women had labored under, stressing their 17-year struggle and insisting that the time had arrived to, "enlarge its [the library's] scope and extend its usefulness, regardless of paving, boosting, and other municipal obligations." She then introduced the main speaker, Miss Cordelia Marvin, secretary of the Oregon Library Commission. Miss Marvin praised the women who had kept the library alive for 17 years. She urged the citizens of Ashland to unite, expand the collection and to construct a building for the library. Later in an interview with the *Tidings* she said, "The people of Ashland have for 17 years been profiting by the work of the women who have devoted themselves to the Ashland Library..." She went on to say that the library--which reflected great credit on Ashland--had never received the support it deserved. She added that, "No city in the state, outside of Portland, has a better collection of books. Of course fiction predominates, but it is generally good fiction..."

Miss Marvin's speech moved the citizens of Ashland. Four days later E. V. Carter presented the library's case to the city council. Money was appropriated to support

the library and an application for a Carnegie library was submitted. The council also submitted a formal thank you to the Library Association and the Woman's Civic Improvement Club.

In July of 1909 Andrew Carnegie granted Ashland \$15,000 for a free public library, making it one of more than 1,800 Carnegie library buildings. Frank C. Clark was commissioned to design the building and construction began in October 25, 1912. The women of Ashland had succeeded.

According to Ashland Librarian Bob Wilson, the library, along with all of Ashland, will celebrate the building's 75th anniversary in October. Wilson went on to say, "While the library was primarily developed by the women of Ashland's past, the support of the women in Ashland today has insured the continuation of basic library services in our community."

Thanks to the women, the Ashland Public Library exists...and survives.

At 7:30 P.M. on Tuesday, October 20, Nan Hannon, Coordinator of the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum will present a slide show and talk on Ashland's cultural life. The program will be held at the Ashland Public Library and is part of the 75th anniversary celebration being held during the month of October.

MEDFORD'S FIRST RAILROAD OFFICE ROBBERY

The first robbery in Medford was sort of a fizzle although, at the onset, it certainly appeared that the robber, who had made away with \$680 in gold and silver coins, was a dangerous thug and one to be handled gingerly. The first announcement of the heist in the brand new city appeared in the *Oregon Sentinel* on November 15, 1884, and the paper gives complete coverage of the premier event:

NOVEMBER 15, 1884

BOLD ROBBERY: Last Sunday evening about 6:30 P.M. some unknown party with a mask over his face entered the railroad office at Medford and with cocked revolver in hand demanded of agent Cunningham the contents of the safe. The request was complied with, as Mr. C. says he did not know what else to do, when the robber departed with about \$680 in gold and silver coin. A reward of \$300 is offered for the capture of the thief and officers are on the watch for suspected

parties. It was a bold piece of work to say the least and was no doubt done by someone acquainted around the premises and surroundings.

DECEMBER 6, 1884, CONFESSED HIS GUILT

Suspicion has rested on Mr. Cunningham ever since [the robbery] but not until last Sunday, when F.P. Hogan approached him and accused him of the crime did he give way. After being informed that proof could be found to convict him, he made a full confession stating that he had done the work alone and then led the detective to a point about 50 yards from this station where he dug up the remainder of the money stolen and delivered it to Mr. Hogan. The amount was something over \$100 short which Cunningham claims to have spent since the robbery. The young man was brought to Jacksonville at once and, waiving an

examination, he was locked in jail with bonds placed at \$800.

On Wednesday of this week Cunningham's father arrived from Halsey, Oregon, and by depositing the required security secured his son's release. Mr. Cunningham stood high in the estimation of all who knew him and everyone

was surprised when they heard of his confession. He has a sufficient amount due him from the railroad company as salary to make up the deficiency and by straightening up the account we doubt if a vigorous prosecution will be made by the company.

All's well that ends well.

Lincoln School Teachers - 1928

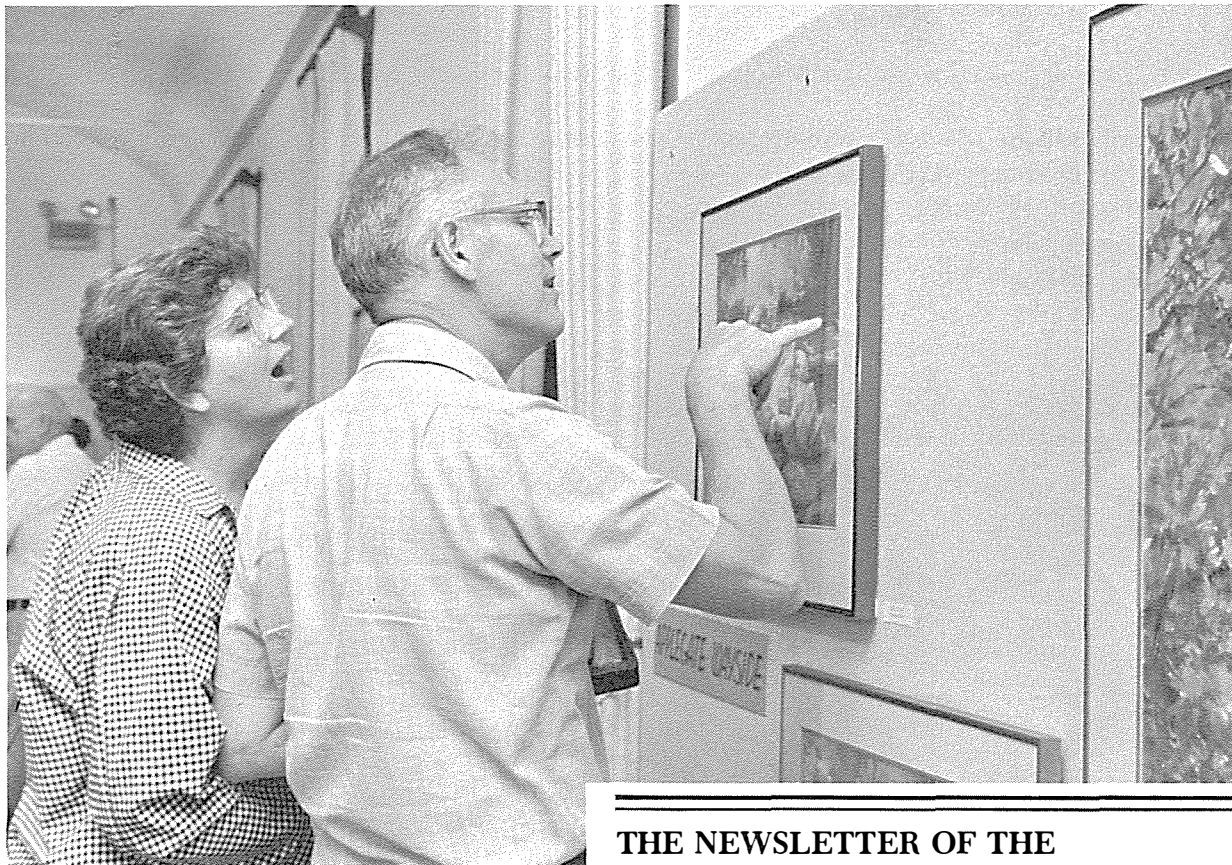


The photograph of the Lincoln School teachers was taken almost sixty years ago. The picture of these dedicated young ladies, taken on the first day of school, should put everyone in a proper back-to-school mood.

In those days teachers should have had no reluctance to face their classes. 1928 was a depression year, and few kids could afford to develop any bad habits. A nickel bottle of orange soda-pop was just about the only foolish extravagance one could manage. As a matter of fact, if the kids in Medford had had to put a nickel in a subway turnstile to get to school, not many of them would have been educated.

On the other hand, during the depression there was no scarcity of educators seeking jobs. As a matter of fact, many school districts refused to hire married women. They concluded that since a husband could support his wife, she should stay home and she wouldn't then have to take a job away from some accredited maiden lady. The ladies in the picture, having been hired by District 49, are financially secure for the next nine months at least.

They are Miss Webber, Letha Gray, Ruth Shangle, Elinor Hamilton, Ora Cox, unidentified, (Mrs.) Gussie Kershaw, Ora Tucker, Miss Turner and Mrs. Scott. #8009



Art lovers admire the water color paintings of the Artists Travelling Workshop exhibited August 15-30 in Jacksonville at the U.S. Hotel.



Vicky Castor, Job Council Assistant, teaches Summer Buettall the art of weaving on a loom during the "Yarn to Cloth" workshop held August 15 at the Woodville Museum, Rogue River.

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