
THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1987





Edgar Buchanan and brother
#11322

Mr. Mike Van Scoy was most helpful in supplying us with some of the Brown family background and lending us the family picture which appears on pages 12 and 13. During the interview he recalled his early acquaintance with another Eagle Point citizen, Edgar Buchanan, who, along with his other theatrical credits, appeared in the television series, *Petticoat Junction*.

"He used to hide in the ditch when my brother and I had to cross to get the milk," said Van Scoy. "He often dressed in funny clothes and jumped out to scare us . . . He was always full of tricks. The last time he visited us, he came to the store, asked for me and announced himself as a representative of the Internal Revenue Department. He didn't fool me. I knew him immediately. The Buchanan family lived at Eagle Point, Butte Falls and Ashland during the early 1900s."

Cover

We have used the pastoral scene because it was taken in the Eagle Point area, and in this issue we have featured Eagle Point history. This gives us an opportunity as well to dedicate this issue to a beloved native of Eagle Point, Nevah Clifford, who is an enthusiastic society member and a good friend.

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Orson Avery Stearns
#503

Reminiscences of Pioneer Days

AND EARLY SETTLERS OF PHOENIX
AND VICINITY

by

Orson Avery Stearns

We first heard of Orson Avery Stearns (1843-1926) in an article, "The Discovery and Rediscovery of Crater Lake," which appeared in the newsletter of July 1984. In that story, which took place in 1864, Orson had just reached his twenty-first birthday and had enlisted in the First Oregon Infantry. Sent to Fort Klamath for his

initial training, he soon became the fair-haired boy of his commanding officer, Captain Sprague.

The captain took him on an expedition to supervise a road building crew, and while they were in that camp, they learned of the existence of a lake of incredible blue, hidden away at the very top of a mountain. Captain Sprague decided

to investigate, and he and Orson began their exploration accompanied by several citizens of Jacksonville. Eventually the group stumbled upon the lake. Orson was the first to climb down to the water's edge and Captain Sprague announced that the young man should therefore be given the privilege of naming the lake.

"It is the most majestic body of water I ever saw," announced Captain Sprague to Orson. "What do you think of Lake Majesty as a name for it?" Orson agreed and so Crater Lake became Lake Majesty -- briefly.

Orson Avery Stearns was a boy of ten when his parents crossed the plains in 1853 to take a donation land claim on Wagner Creek, south of Phoenix. The Stearns were a sturdy pioneer family with several children, including Theresa who later became the reluctant wife of Judge Paine Page Prim. Orson had a yearning to attend college but nothing came of these dreams. He joined the army instead and wrote his memoirs as an outlet for his creative ability. The original of his handwritten manuscript is owned by the University of Oregon and is in their "Oregon Collection." A typewritten copy is now available in the SOHS library and copies have been given to the Jackson County library. Orson's spelling and punctuation have not been changed. In this version many paragraphs have been omitted because of limited space.

The first chapter is devoted to early events in the Phoenix area which Orson remembered from the days of his boyhood. He relates some tales of deprivation faced by the early settlers which have not appeared in other manuscripts.

CHAPTER 1

Rogue River Valley was first settled in 1851. Or rather that year witnessed the first pioneer settlement. The first dwelling house was erected on Bear Creek about midway between what is now Central Point and Medford, by A.A. Skinner, who was the earliest Indian Agent appointed to take charge of the Rogue River Indians. This house (a log cabin of fair size) was occupied in the fall of 1853 when first seen by the writer, by Judges Skinner and Rice. Skinner did not long remain a resident but went to the Willamette Valley and located at or near where the City of Eugene now stands, and Skinner's Butte is a landmark to his memory as it was undoubtedly named after him. Several other houses, scattered thruout the valley were built that same year, among which was that of Samuel Clover on the site of Phoenix, just across the road

and a little South of the present house, known for many years as the block house...I believe the families of the two Colver brothers remained in the Willamette valley until 1853, as up to that year there was a very sparse settlement and the facilities for procuring provisions was so limited and priced so prohibitive that it would have been almost impossible to maintain a family.

...My father traded Jacob Wagner a two horse wagon worth \$200 for 100 hills of potatoes and dug them himself. Flour was selling at \$33 per hundred, and the sacks would stand alone after the flour was emptied out, the flour having been packed across the Coast mountains from Scottsburg during the rainy season, uncovered until wet in from ½ to 2 inches in depth which hardened into a stiff dough and moulded. All kinds of groceries were scarce and very high. The sugar we could get came in fifty pound mats, it was more like sand as it was an ashy grey color and full of all kinds of filth. It was made in China, with the usual contempt for cleanliness that was characteristic of the Coolie. My mother understood how to refine the sugar after which it resembled nice clean yellow maple sugar, but was reduced in weight fully one fourth in the process. For coffee, parched corn, peas, and sometimes carrots or parsnips were used. Some people used browned bread crumbs, making what was termed crust coffee.

The merchants those days carried but little clothing except miners supplies and people had to resort to picking up castaway clothing from the streets of Jacksonville, where it was the custom of the miners and gamblers to throw their old or soiled clothing after purchasing new, and a large part of these castaway garments were simply soiled, and, after washing nearly good as new. As no childrens clothing or foot wear were obtainable, nor material for the making of them, the mothers of families were forced to make the clothing for their own and childrens wear.

My father made lasts for the foot wear of all the family except for himself and my mother made the shoes for the family, the uppers from castaway boots picked up in the streets of Jacksonville in front of the stores, the soles made from harness or saddle leathers picked up here and there. All flour sacks were carefully washed and used to make underwear, pillow cases, sheets, etc.

On account of the high price and poor quality of the flour, potatoes and squashes were added to make it go farther, and often the adulterant was a perceptible improvement to the quality of the bread. A few wild plums were to be had along

the streams, and elderberries quite plentiful. They were largely used both as sauces, pies and dried for winter use, while some made a very fine wine of them for use in case of sickness.

There is a diversity of opinion as to the building of the first sawmill. I have always been of the impression that the sawmill on Wagner Creek built by Granville Naylor and Lockewood Little and a Dr.----- was the first, and that of Milton Little at Gassburg second, but some claim that the sawmill built by the Emery brothers at Ashland was first. However all three of these mills were erected very early and were running in 1854. Neither of them could saw much more in a day than two good whipsawyers. They used to claim they could either of them saw from 500 to 1000 feet in twenty four hours, but they were always behind their orders. The early settlers had to split or hew out puncheons for their doors, floors, and other parts requiring lumber in their houses construction. Most of the early houses were built of round logs with the bark on; some were hewn on the inside a very few hewn on both sides. All were chinked by putting in split pieces from shingle or shake bolts, and plastered over with mud. Chimneys and fireplaces built of rough stone with split slats and dried for chimneys. Windows were very rare except for a hole cut thru the logs and covered by cloth, usually an empty flour sack.

Many of the first cabins had earthen floors, some rough slabs from the mills, with the sawed side up and the edges trimmed to fit by an axe.

In the next chapter Orson introduces some of his teachers in the Phoenix area, beginning with Mary Hoffman who may have aroused his desire for learning. He lists the names of his classmates, children of other families as important to the development of southern Oregon as the Stearns. Several of the episodes reveal his keen sense of humor.

CHAPTER 2

The first school house was built by the settlers living near what is now Talent. It was of rough logs, with cloth covered windows on two sides. Its floor was of slabs, benches of slabs, with legs of round sticks inserted in auger holes, no backs. The desks were simply rough plank tables. It was erected on the bank of Bear Creek about one fourth of a mile from the farm of Jacob Wagner (now Talent). There being no school districts yet established, it was started as a subscription school and the name of Eden given to the school. The first teacher was Miss Mary Hoffman, and her school consisted of the children of the surrounding

country for several miles in every direction, many of the pupils being older than the teacher. The school books consisted of books brought across the plains, from near a dozen different states, and were as varied as were the pupils. Scarcely any two families had the same series of school books, and the organizing of classes was a very difficult matter. Reading, writing and arithmetic were about all the branches taught.

Believe I can give a pretty correct roll of the scholars who ranged in age from seven to twenty three years of age. They were Welborn Beeson, Joseph, Samuel, John and Robert Robison; Oscar, Orson and Newell Stearns, Theresa Stearns; Thomas, Martha, and James Reames; Martha, Abi, Donna, Hiram and Solon Colver; Elizabeth and Nancy Anderson; Calvin Wagner; Mary, Nancy and Joseph Scott; Mary, Robert, Daniel, John and William Grey; Lewellyn Colver, and I am not sure but there were two or three others. Lew Colver was then about seven years old and rode to school on a little white pony. The teacher was a very good disciplinarian, and, though very pleasant and sociable outside school hours was quite strict in enforcement of discipline, almost entirely by moral suasion. At intermissions she joked and laughed with the other girls as though one of them. I remember one instance where she had received a love letter written entirely in [Chinook] jargon, which she and the other girls were immensely tickled over but which she was very careful not to let the other girls see the signature to.

...The Rev. John Grey was the next teacher, and a more thoroughly disliked pedagogue it never was my misfortune to attend. He always rode to school on an old bay mare, with his children five in number trailing along behind or driven in front of him. On reaching the school house he would dismount, unsaddle and giving his steed into the charge of one of his boys with instructions to take her down to the creek and stake her out where there was good grass, would take his saddle and sheepskin blanket and spread on his stool and there he would remain nearly the entire day, making all pupils and classes come up to his throne to recite their lessons; and woe to the laggard in recitation or who failed in any to please him for he generally kept a heavy ruler by his side which he frequently used. He was particularly severe with his son John, who was a twin of Williams. John was in looks the image of his father being dark and with very black hair and eyes, with a furtive look like a hunted animal. He could never recite his lessons thru fear of his father who would scowl at him fiercely

when he came up to recite and upon the slightest mistake would hit him on the side of his head with the book he happened to have in hand, knocking him to one side, then hitting him on the other side and frequently continuing the performance until tired out. No wonder John Grey grew up to be a profligate and ner do well. He died in the Klamath poor farm several years ago.

Henry Church was the third teacher in Eden school house. He was a tuberculous person and of a variable disposition. Quite capable but his unfortunate disposition prevented him from having that esteem and confidence of his pupils that is necessary for success in teaching. A Mr. Reddick was the fourth teacher. He was a bachelor who had located a homestead just south east of the Rockafellow place on Bear Creek. He did not amount to much as a teacher.

A Mr. McCauley was the fifth and last teacher who held the position of tutor to the Edenites. He was a fairly good man and tolerable fair teacher who simply took up the vocation to fill up a jobless space in life, and with no special desire to excel in the profession.

The school house in Gassburg was built sometime in the late fifties, it stood about the same place now occupied by the Phoenix church. It was a lumber building, box and batten construction I think with fairly good home made furniture...The first school taught there, to the best of my recollection, was by Orange Jacobs, and he taught several successive terms. Many of the pupils who attended the Eden School, attended the Gassburg School besides many others living farther down the valley.

Charles Hoxie, Ad, Rose, Nettie Gore, Sarah Jane Arandal and a younger sister whose name I cannot recall, William Burns, Wm and Lucinda Williams, Doc & William Griffin, John, James, Nancy & (another younger sister) Justus; George & Alec Gridley; Lucinda and Ben Davenport; Lucinda Low; Wm Belle and a younger sister of the Hamlins. Several others whose names I cannot now recall were among Jacobs' pupils at one or more terms.

...One incident that might have had a tragical ending occurred during the second term. The Griffins and Justus pupils lived on the West several miles and frequently came and went away from school together. One morning upon reaching the school house a little before school time we were astonished to see the elder Justus pacing before the school house with a cocked revolver in his hand while Doc Griffin and a number of the other pupils from the same neighborhood stood by

listening to the old mans tirade against Griffin, in which he repeatedly threatened to blow Griffin's head off for kissing or attempting to kiss Nancy Justus while on the way home from school the previous day. O. Jacobs soon arrived and prevailed upon the old man to defer his warlike intentions to some other time and place. Never heard of any sequel to the affair, tho many of the boys agreed that any fellow who would kiss Nancy Justus deserved to be shot, for she was as homely and ungainly a creature as I ever saw, and as ugly in disposition as in looks. She afterwards married the two Ball brothers; not at the same time, but in rather rapid succession, both of them dying very suddenly and mysteriously after a short matrimonial experience.

After Jacobs quit teaching and went to practicing law, a Professor John Rogers opened up school in the Colver Hall. He was a graduate and professor in Yale College, who left the East at the discovery of gold and had been drifting over the coast for a number of years, and I presume had about reached the bottom of his purse.

His school was an immediate success, his method of teaching new and unique. He seemed to have a mastery of every science and had method of his own to classify and teach them. He encouraged studying out loud in school and elsewhere, claiming that pupils who were as absorbed in their studies as they should be, would not be disturbed by the recitals of others. He encouraged mass rehearsals and had all the little scholars talking and quoting latin phrases. Whenever there were visitors--and there were many of them--he would ask some of his younger scholars the latin names of various animals and other objects and would smile and rub his hands gleefully upon their giving the correct answers in chorus. Your Mother, my sister, and one or two other girls were his prize repeaters and he had them drilled to perfection as performers. He encouraged his pupils to take up many advanced studies for which they had no preparatory knowledge, and he frequently changed from one study too another so that his pupils had a smattering knowledge of many subjects rather than a thorough knowledge of few.

...He was quite religious, opening school with prayer when he insisted on bowed heads and closed eyes, his own being always open and watching vigantly for any infraction of the rules by his pupils. His devotional exercises were taken standing and once in a while his voice would cease while his firm and rapid strides carried him to some part of the room when one would hear some noise as of a person being lifted up and

violently reseated when the steps returned and the invocation was resumed in the place left off without a perceptible change of voice and concluded in usual manner.

At times he would be very nervous and hard to please as tho under a strain, at other times full of smiles and good nature. He taught one full years term and part of another, when his pupils had gradually dwindled aw until he had so few that he dismissed school entirely. Soon after his school ended the cause of his nervousness and irritability was discovered in the garrett just above the platform where his desk stood, to which a small trap-door gave him easy access. There were found several empty whiskey bottles, it was also learned that in his accustomed early morning rambles, he was wont to visit the store of McMannus, who always kept a barrel of whiskey on tap and who gave the professor his morning invigorater under the pledge of silence.

After the discovery of the bottles and the departure of the professor, McMannus told a joke he had on the professor. He had emptied one barrel of his liquor and removing it had placed in its place a barrel of very strong vinegar. He was out in his wood shed to get a load of wood to fill up his stove one day, leaving the professor standing by his fire, when, coming suddenly into the back door he saw the professor in the act of emptying a full glass of the supposidly whiskey down his throat. The choking and gaging that followed was terrible to see and hear but could not restrain Mc from a fit of laughter almost paralyzing as the dose of vinegar to the professor. The latter it seems had been in the habit of helping himself to the liquor so temptingly displayed, and had heard Mc coming and hastily drew and swallowed the liquid for fear of being caught in the act not knowing of the change in barrels. Mc said the prof. looked like a dog caught sucking eggs.

...In the next chapter I will take up the early history of the villiage and relate the incident that gave the name of Gassburg to the place, as I was a personal observer of that incident.

In chapter three Orson describes the building of Sam Colver's block house, which, even in an unfinished state, was used as a fort during the battles with the Indians in 1855. The folk who collected around the evening campfire were a merry, light-hearted group in spite of the fear of imminent attack, and Orson, who was there, relates the reason Phoenix was originally called Gassburg.

CHAPTER 3

At the time of the beginning of the growth of the hamlet (as it might be termed) of Gassburg, say about the period from 1855 to 1860, the settlement of the region from Ashland down to what is now Central Point, was almost exclusively confined to donation claimants, mainly batchelors, usually in pairs, with occasionally a family, most of these donation claims were taken up in 1851 to 52. A few, including the claims of Samuel and Hiram Colver, were taken up in 1851 to 52...Then there was the claim of D.P. Britton, who was a young batchelor for two or three years, but who finally went to the Willamette Valley and ran away with another man's wife down there, and lived thereafter on his farm and raised, together with a family already started, quite a family whose descendants, many of them (all girls) still reside in the Valley ... The two Oatman Brothers took a half a section each, as they were both men with families. Harrison B. and Harvey were their names, but they did not remain on their farms many years, as farming was too strenuous work for them and they early moved to Gassburg, where Harrison started the second store there, and Harvey built a hotel which he ran in connection with a saloon and billiard hall. A stable across the road was for many years the stage barn for the Oregon and California Stage Company, and Oatman was host for the traveling public.*

...The grist mill was commenced in 1854 by S.M. Waite before the outbreak of the Indian war of 1855, and I think the sawmill of Milton Lindlay was built about the same time. All that portion of Samuel Colvers farm West of the main road was then open pine timber with a scattering of oak and laurel trees. It was nice large saw timber and close by the mill. A few years sufficed to cut down all the saw timber and the once white (wide) open forest soon became a forest of young pine and other trees, with a mass of rotting tree tops and limbs, the refuse of the wasteful method of logging when only the straight limbless bodies of the trees were used. I remember well that from 1858 to 1861, the young growth was only tall enough to partialy conceal the mass of waste tree trunks and limbs left by the loggers, and the very last term of school that I attended in the old school house that stood at or near the

*Olive Oatman, a relation to the Oatman families in Phoenix, was kidnapped by the Yavapai (Apaches) Indians and held captive for five years. Upon her release she came to southern Oregon where she lived for a time with the Taylor family. The Oatmans of Phoenix were responsible for her being in this area, but no one has recorded why she did not stay with one of these two brothers in Gassburg. Her story appears in the newsletter, February 1982.



Orson Stearns appears a little more mature in this photograph. #11324

present church, there used to be a contest among the boys to see who could run and jump over the highest young pines.

About the time of the outbreak of the Indian war or just before, Sam Colver and John Davenport commenced to build the block house. They intended it to serve as a hotel and a store for general merchandise when completed, as also to serve as a rendezvous for settlers during indian troubles. It was sometime during the early Autumn of 1855, that the indians having met one quite serious defeat on Rogue River had scattered out and were attacking outlying scattered settlements that notices were sent out for all scattered settlers to concentrate at best available points for protection, as nearly all ablebodied young men were in the various militia organizations pursuing the campaign against the indians, leaving only men with families to hold the entire settlement against possible surprise and attack. Most all families within a radius of six miles gathered at the site of the block house then under construction, making quite a villiage of tents and wagons. Many of the men engaged in the work on the block house as Lindlays Mill was busy sawing out the 4 x 4 timbers.

...In the evenings, after the days work was over There was usually a huge campfire burning in a central location and all the young people and many of the old timers used to gather around the

fire sing songs, dance and tell stories until bed time. Among all this concourse, while there were quite a number of young men and batchelors, there was only one young, marriagable woman. Her name was Kate Clayton, who was employed by Mrs. Waite to help her cook for the men employed on the mill. She was a girl about twenty and one of the most fluent talkers I ever met. As every young girl fourteen years of age was then considered a young lady and usually had a dozen or more admirers, Miss Kate, from her position as almost sole attraction of that assembly always had every available male congregated in her immediate neighborhood. From her ability to carry on an animated conversation to a half dozen or more admirers at once, as well as her prompt and witty repartee, she had been given the soubrequet of "Gassy Kate." The term gassy or gassy, being a recent slang for talk or talkative, or, as the dictionary would define it, "Light frivolous conversation."

One evening soon after our arrival in camp, the usual campfire company was gathered around the fire, Kate, as usual in the position of presiding goddess, while gathered around her in wrapped admiration were her usual numerous admirers. Among them Hobart Taylor, Dave Geiger, Jaimmie Hays, ---Black (given name forgotten), who had a very decided lisp. One of the men during a lull in the talk, casting his eyes around the multtue of gathereing tents remarked, "I say! this is getting to be quite a town, we ought to give it a name. "I think tho too," said Black, "and I move we call it Gathville after Gathy Kate!" "Oh, no! said Hobert Taylor, "that sounds too small and insignificant. "I move we call it Gassburg, that sounds more important." "Second the motion for Gassburg" came from a dozen or more at once. And Gassburg it became from thence forward for over twenty years.

Soon after the Indian war was over, in 1855, or 56 when a mail route was established in a small office across the road from the grist mill, with S.M. Waite postmaster and he took his fire insurance plate "Phoenix" as the name for the post office, but that did not serve as the name of the town for over a generation or more, and I have a very distinct recollection of all the above from actual personal knowledge.

The villiage recieved no permanent increase as the result of the indian scare, but soon after the war was over the discovery of gold in the 49 and Davenport diggings, gave it a start.

More of Orson Stearns' reminiscences will appear in a later issue.

The story of the Brown family is also the story of George Brown and Sons, the general merchandise store in Eagle Point.

The business, operated by members of the Brown family, served the citizens of Brownsboro and Eagle Point for many years and became a landmark. As it changed hands through the years since 1873, it developed a history of its own. But we know that history has a tendency to become forgotten as

we move further away from it.

Although several local historians have written the story, and their works are on file, we offer it again. Many important dates have not been recorded and the names of members of the later generations are not immediately available.

The names of the first generation (in Oregon) are in heavy type.



First Brown's Store in Eagle Point. #7459

The Browns of Eagle Point The Family; The Store

by Raymond Lewis

Early in the 1840s Richard and Cecilia Mary (Thompson) Brown, natives of Yorkshire, England, decided to immigrate to America. Unfortunately there are no letters or family legends filed away concerning these two people who deliberately exchanged their home and those who loved them for an unpredictable future among strangers. There must have been discussions with their neighbors and considerable soul searching. But the exact motivation is not on record. Eventually Richard Brown and Cecilia Mary and their brood of ten children made the voyage across the Atlantic.

Local historians disagree as to the date of their arrival. In an article in the *Eagle Point*

Independent (the week of May 17-23, 1978) Aldine Charley wrote that Richard's son, Henry Brown, who was first born in 1829, was 15 when he arrived in America. That makes the year 1844. Mrs. Krambeal, in the *History of Eagle Point*, declared: "The Browns had come to the United States in 1842."

Mrs. Eva Hamilton (*Mail Tribune*, March 1969) asserts that George Brown, "born in 1833, came to America when he was eight years old." This indicates the year was 1841. These ladies are dedicated historians and no doubt they had interviewed family members to ascertain the year. The time, however, has significance only in the fact that Richard Brown died in 1843, "leaving

his family destitute.” It is a fact that he lived long enough to acquire a donation land grant near the city of Racine, Wisconsin, but the uncertain date indicates he may have been critically ill when he left his home in England and had clung desperately to the thread of his life, thinking he would recover his strength in the new world. On the other hand he was a comparatively young man with small children, and his untimely death may have been the result of an accident. In any case the children had to assume responsibilities at an early age. They were Henry, Robert, George, William, Richard, Annie, Elizabeth, Frank, Royal, and Merritt. *(Do not confuse this first generation with those in the second generation with the same names.)*

A widow with a spate of children has to be adroit to keep her family fed and clothed. It’s a mercy when the eldest can go out and earn something to keep the soup pot simmering. Fatherless children sometimes have to grow up overnight. A donation land claim may support a family of farmers and feed them, but often there’s a need for cold cash to supply other necessities. Sometimes not all the sons have a yearning for the soil, and the mother must accept the departure of the older boys even though she would wish to keep them at home.

One son of the Brown family, George, 11, went to Chicago to learn the carpentering trade but the others remained on the land claim and endeavored to find prosperity in farming. In 1852, after six years of barely keeping afloat, they felt pretty certain they could make a better living in the West where a number of their neighbors and acquaintances had gone.

Before the entire family pulled up their roots and headed westward, Henry, the oldest, and his brother Robert decided to make an exploratory trip and check for themselves the truth of gold for the taking and land for the asking. In 1852 they booked passage on a “Sail Ship” which brought them around Cape Horn and up the coastline of South America to the Oregon Coast.

In Oregon the brothers separated.

HENRY

Henry went directly to the Sterling Creek area several miles from Jacksonville. His first venture was a great success. He methodically dug a ditch to bring water to the rich veins on the arid hillsides. He has been given credit for the first ditch to be constructed in the Sterling area. Even after he had made his strike and moved away, his ditches remained in use and



Henry Brown #287

were used for years by miners who followed him.

When Congress passed the Donation Land Claim for the Oregon Territory, Henry, who had a great love for the land and for horses, began a search for a “dream” claim. He found one a little over a mile from the present site of Brownsboro, a town named after him. He was the first white settler to make a home on Little Butte Creek. By buying other land from homesteaders he increased his holdings to 2800 acres between what is now Brownsboro and Lake Creek.

In 1860, after he acquired his land claim and built his house and barns, he returned to Racine to fetch his mother. His brothers, Richard, George and William, were so excited by his tales of his successes and the reports of the beauty and livability of southern Oregon, they decided to join him on his return trip. Before Henry left for Racine, his brother George had acquired a wife, Mary Jane Tinker, and a little daughter, Emily.

During his short stay in Wisconsin, Henry married Martha Mary Beamsley. Mary’s father was John Beamsley who, with his family, had come to America in 1843 and had settled at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

When Henry, with his new wife and his mother, brothers, and sister Annie--sister Elizabeth chose to remain in Wisconsin--joined a wagon train for Oregon, he brought with him twelve Morgan mares and two stallions, the beginning of one of the first herds of this breed of horses in southern Oregon.

On their land claim Henry and Martha spent the summers tending their ranch and their horses. With the coming of the winter rains, they moved to Sterling Creek and worked their gold claim. Occasionally they bought neighboring ranches until they had acquired about six miles along Little Butte Creek--part of the land on both sides of the creek. Their horses were in great demand and many of them were sold to stage lines.

Henry's mother, Cecilia Mary, lived with Henry and Martha for the rest of her life. Henry had an envious reputation as a stockman and rancher. He made great friends with the Indians, a unique accomplishment in southern Oregon at that time. He was adept at speaking their language, adopted many of their customs and employed many of them to help him develop his land. "Some of the stone fences they built are still there."¹

Henry had a son, George Beamsley Brown, who was born in 1879 at Brownsboro. This son lived on the Brown farm for his entire lifetime. He married Mabel Rebecca Bell, and they had five daughters.

ROBERT

After parting from his older brother Henry, Robert made a brief stay in Portland and then moved on to Astoria where he built the first wharf in that coastal city. According to a family journal -- no longer in existence -- he came to Jacksonville in 1856 where he mined for a year. Less successful than his brother, he eventually tried his luck around the Frazier River and the Caribou county. He washed out colors and small nuggets, but a rich lode eluded him and he finally gave up prospecting to become manager of a mining firm. This position also was temporary and in a few months he returned to Jackson County where, in 1873, he founded the original Brown's Store at Brownsboro. By this time Brownsboro had become a thriving town. Mrs. Charley wrote that "Ollie Bell had a store and post office in Brownsboro...Across the road was Eb Osborne's blacksmith shop [Eb was also a gunsmith] and above his shop was a dance hall, also used for community gatherings and shows such as 'lantern slides'." The little town also boasted a baseball diamond, a couple of other stores and a saloon or two.

Much of the business that transpired in Robert's store was operated on a credit basis, and excellent records have been kept in family files. But the town of Eagle Point began to prosper and soon

1. Aldine Charley, "Brown Settles Brownsboro," *Eagle Point Independent*, May 17-23, 1978, p. 11.

surpassed Brownsboro in population and business activity. Robert decided his business had a better chance of flourishing in a more populated area so he built a new store in Eagle Point. In 1877 he opened Brown's General Merchandise.

Mrs. Joyce Bailey, daughter of Bill von der Hellen, an early hardware merchant in Eagle Point, remembers the store during her early years:

George Brown and Sons built a big, two story building about a couple of blocks south from the tavern. They had a general store with groceries on one side. Frank, Bill and Royal sold the groceries. I remember the big, old pot-bellied stove, the big coffee grinder, cheese in circles with a big slicing knife, two black tom-cats, Tom and Jerry. When you paid your grocery bill at the end of the month, there was always a big sack of candy for the kids.

On the drygoods side of the store, they carried everything from ladies' corsets to bib overalls for the men. Frank's wife Amy and Bill's wife Mattie ran that part of the store. In the afternoon it was the gathering place for the ladies of the town, but they didn't serve cocktails.²

For over a decade Robert successfully operated his store, but eventually his health became a problem, and after a couple of years of trying to cope with ill health, he decided to dispose of it. In 1885 he sold it to his brother George, who ran it successfully for another twelve years.

GEORGE

George was born near York, England, in 1833. He was eight years old when his family settled in Wisconsin in 1841, and there he grew to manhood. He married Mary Jane Tinker, daughter of the Honorable James Tinker, who moved to America when Mary Jane was three years old. Tinker was an orator who spoke for temperance; in the United States he toured the principal cities. He represented his district in the Wisconsin Legislature. George and Mary Jane had a daughter Emily before they made the trip across the plains, arriving in Jacksonville in 1860. George had great plans to become a carpenter and had become skilled in that line, but he was offered work in a Jacksonville meat market, and so became a butcher. This occupation he alternated with mining, acquiring a productive claim in Rich Gulch where he mined for years.

By 1885, when George and Mary Jane purchased the store from Robert, they had eleven children, five sons and six daughters. The boys

2. *Siksiyou Sites & Sagas*, yearbook of the Siksiyou Pioneer Sites Foundation, 1967, p. 8.



This photo of a Brown family reunion was taken in the early 1900s at Eagle Point. In their (then) youngest grandchild, Gertrude Carlton (Mrs. Harvey Woods of Ashland), descendants and inlaws present numbered 32. In the back row, left to right, are: Ted Holmes, Lottie Rippey, Carl Taylor, Mattie Brown, Will Brown, W.E. (Ned) Holmes, Second row: Harold Guerin, Tom Carlton, Bessie Carlton, Charlotte (Lottie) Van Scoy and Royal Brown. Front row as they were in childhood, are: Mary Holmes Moffatt, Al Scoy, Mildred Carlton Provost, Ruth Holmes, Hazel Brown Pflum, William Lyle (Mike) Lentz. The photograph appeared in the Medford Mail Tribune. #11069



Center of the gathering with
Mr. and Mrs. George Brown.
Merritt Brown, George
Holmes, S.B. Holmes,
Sarah Guerin, Cora O'Brien,
O'Brien Boyle, Harold Van
Schoy and Leila Carlton

were Royal C., Frank, George Jr., William H., and Merritt. The girls were Emily, Sarah, Cecilia, Cora, Lottie, and Bessie.

In conjunction with the store was a flagstone, frost-proof and fire-proof warehouse. This warehouse still stands in Eagle Point directly across the street from the grist mill.

George is given credit for starting the first schoolhouse in Eagle Point. He donated materials and money and helped construct the building. A man who contributes eleven children to a student body shouldn't hesitate to give substantial support to education and George did his part. It is told that he made the decision to locate the outhouse for the school out in back of the schoolyard. A contingent of interested citizens came to the conclusion that since the schoolhouse was located near the creek where the willows and the underbrush thrived, the pupils could very well do without a "necessary" and make use of the bushes. George held out and eventually the outhouse stood in the protection of the willow trees in practical splendor.

In 1897 George took his son Frank as his partner in the store, and another son William joined the establishment in 1900. Ten years later George's oldest son, Royal, also became a member of the firm. When Merritt joined his brothers, the store became known as George Brown and Sons. A new brick structure of two stories was built in 1911. The general store occupied the first floor, and the second floor housed offices and was used for many recreational activities as well as for public meetings. Mrs. Eva Hamilton, in a story for the *Tribune* of March 23, 1969, wrote:

In winter the community room above the store was frequently used for meetings, parties and civic affairs. Public as well as family gatherings and programs were held there. There was a kitchen at one end so dinners and suppers could be served with ease. The store was the hub of the Brown family wheel. George also had a 500 acre farm which he managed in addition to his store. For six years he served as chairman of the Jackson County Republican Central Committee, was also a Commissioner and participated in civic functions of the town. He was one of the most talented musicians in southern Oregon. He is reported to have played the bass viol beautifully. His bow is in the Jacksonville Museum.

All eleven of George's children,, except for George, Jr., who died tragically in a hunting accident when he was 16, remained in Eagle Point until they were adults. Daughters Emily, Sarah and Cecilia moved from the town after

they married.

These children, as familiar figures in Eagle Point's history, merit a brief mention in the Brown story:

Emily Amelia, Born in 1859 in Wisconsin, crossed the plains with her parents when she was a tot of two. "She learned to walk, holding to the wagon tongue," said her sister Lottie in an interview for the *Tribune*.³ Emily married William M. Holmes in 1889. Their children were George, Joseph, William Edward, Mary (Mrs. John P. Moffat) and Ruth.

Royal Grant, born 1863, married Mary Ann Taylor, a widow with five children. Royal and Mary Ann had a daughter, Hazel. After several years working for the U.S. Postal Department in Portland, Royal and his family returned to Eagle Point in 1911, and Royal joined his brothers in the family store.

Cecilia, who was born in 1866, married Shadrach Bond Holmes. She lived in southern Oregon all her life and died in 1942.

Cora, born in 1870, first married Dr. W.B. Officer and later married George T. O'Brien, a Medford brickmason. Among his accomplishments was laying bricks for the Elks Building in Medford. The O'Briens moved to southern California. After he died, Cora returned to Eagle Point.

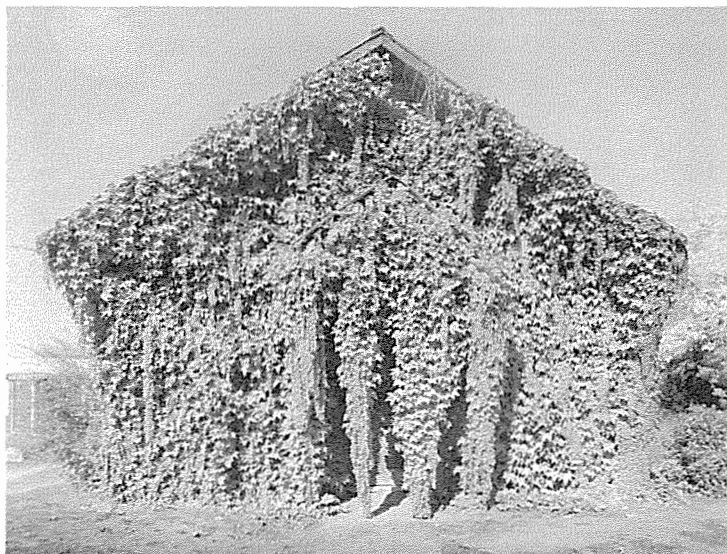
William H., born in 1873, married Mattie Valentine Taylor. He had an interest in the store and was also a director of the bank. He served a term as mayor of Eagle Point. At his death in 1952, Mattie continued the operation of the store with the help of her nephew, W.L. Van Scoy, until it was sold in 1954. Mattie died in 1969.

Frank married Amy Safford in 1896. He

3. Eva Hamilton, *Medford Mail Tribune*, March 23, 1969, Sec., C, p.1.



The second Brown Store in Eagle Point. #5404



Brown's warehouse is hidden under the ivy. #5007

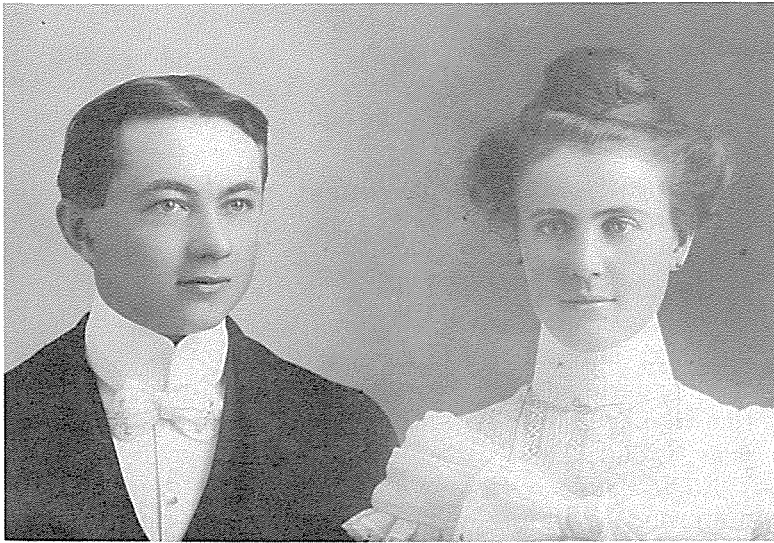
entered the business with his father and was instrumental in the organization of the First State Bank in Eagle Point. He was bank president for almost 40 years, and his wife, Amy, was librarian at the Eagle Point library for 25 years. Frank died in 1948; Amy died in 1961, the victim of a fire.

Merritt, born 1880, married Nelle Morris. She died in 1929; Merritt, died in 1964.

Bessie married Harry Carlton. Their children were Mildred, Leila, Gertrude and Jane. All of these daughters married and lived in Ashland.

Sarah became Mrs. James T. Guerin of Portland.

Charlotte, known as "Aunt Lot," was born in 1877. She married Paul E. Van Scoy. His father, W.T. Van Scoy, was president of the Ashland Normal School. Paul worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad as station master and telegraph operator, and this job took the couple to Montague, Roseburg and Tenopah, Nevada, where Paul died at the age of 27. He suffered a ruptured appendix and in that remote area was unable to get proper medical attention. "Lottie" returned to Eagle Point with her two sons, Harold Russell and William Lyle. She became telephone operator at the Eagle Point Telephone Exchange and held that position for eleven years. Of course everyone in town knew her. Summoning the doctor became one of her most important responsibilities. After the switchboard closed for the day, she remained on call in case of emergencies. After her retirement she devoted her energies to volunteer service in the American Red Cross, the Jackson County Tuberculosis and Public Health Association, the Grange and the Veterans Domiciliary at White City. In 1955 she was presented a certificate of appreciation for 100 hours of volunteer work for the veterans. In 1956



*Paul E. Van Scoy and Charlotte Brown.
This is probably a wedding picture. #11068*

she was chosen "queen" of the Eagle Point old-time political rally. During the last eleven years of her life she lived in Medford with her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. William Van Scoy. She died in March 1969.

ROYAL

In 1910, shortly before his death in November, George sold his interest in George Brown and Sons Cash Store to his eldest son, Royal. In 1882 Royal had left Jacksonville and gone to Yreka where he became editor of the *Yreka Union*. He worked also on the *Journal* and the *Tribune* in Yreka. After traveling for a year with a theatrical company, he returned to Jackson County and assumed his interest in the store.

FRANK

Like his brother George, Frank was also a Jackson County Commissioner. He operated a wagon freight line which extended from Eagle Point to Central Point.

RICHARD

Richard who became a brick mason, remained a bachelor. While helping in the construction of the Patrick Ryan brick building in Jacksonville, he was critically injured and for the rest of his life suffered from the results of the accident. He lived with Henry and Martha for the rest of his life.

ANNA EARNSHAW

Anna Earnshaw and her husband joined the others in crossing the plains, but Anna was ill and lived only a few days after reaching Jacksonville.

MERRITT

We have little information about Merritt, the youngest son. He moved to Illinois for several years. After his return to Oregon, he worked on one of the Brown family's two ranches. He had a mail route from Eagle Point to Trail and Persist. In her biography Mrs. Eva Hamilton quoted Mr. W.W. Van Scoy:

George took great pride in his horses. When Buffalo Bill came to the valley with the circus, probably Ringling Brothers, Frank bought a team from him. They were beautiful horses. One was named Buffalo Bill. Merritt used those horses with a wagon to haul freight from Central Point.

WILLIAM M.

William was born on March 6, 1838. He was a man of 23 -- or so -- when he arrived in the West with his family. He appeared to have no great interest in prospecting and gravitated to British Columbia and settled in Revelstoke, B.C., where he operated a hotel. For ten years he served as a member of the provisional parliament.

The firm, keeping its original name, was moved from its first site on Royal Avenue to a two story brick building on Main Street in 1911. In 1945, after returning from the service, George's nephew Lyle Van Scoy joined the firm. He was Lottie's son.

By 1952 the original partners were all deceased but management of the store was continued by Mattie Brown (William's wife) and young Mike Van Scoy. They were the last members of the family to be in charge of operations.

In 1954 Willard Cave and C.R. Elbert bought the grocery and meat market and leased a section of the first floor. They called their store Brown's Market, retaining the name for practical reasons. The other half of the lower floor was still operated by Mike Van Scoy who handled dry goods; he also operated the state liquor store and served as a pay station for electric and telephone companies. The Caves sold the business and building in 1973.

Since that time, the store has gone through changes, seldom making noticeable improvements. During the years it has been a barber shop, a flower shop, and other miscellaneous businesses. It has lost its significance as a central meeting place for the city. But a few folks who pass that way will remember the George Brown and Sons Cash Store, and recall the brother, who asked, as he stood at the cash register and rang up the purchases, "Will that be oil, ma'am?"

1927

THE EAGLE POINT STORY

When the following story appeared in the *Medford Mail Tribune* the city of Eagle Point was flying high. Depression meant no more than a little touch of the blues and recession meant a little loss of the hair. And chicken every Sunday wasn't all that unusual. Although few folks could afford to throw money away on luxuries such as movies, eating out and buying a brand new car every spring, most business men prospered, most farmers thrived and many people had a tidy little sum in the bank. Radio provided entertainment and a united grange offered protection from any shipping costs that threatened to get out of hand. If life wasn't exactly rosy everywhere, it was at least under control in southern Oregon.

W.C. Binckley, who wrote an Eagle Point and Brownsboro column for the local newspapers submitted a neat description of that area as it appeared to him in 1927. The article will be of interest to people who recognize names and places.

Eagle Point is a town of about 200 population, located on Little Butte Creek, 12 miles north of Medford. It received its name when the post office was established in 1862 on the farm of John Matthews, the first landowner at that time. To the east of the town a point of the hill was a favorite resting place for eagles in the early days. The hill was called Eagle Point and when a name was needed for a post office, Mr. Matthews selected the name for it and the town that subsequently grew up around the post office has always borne the name.

Today Eagle Point is the trade center for a large agricultural dairying and livestock country, extending northwest and east for many miles in Jackson County. Most of the land under cultivation is irrigated by two systems, the first being the Little Butte Irrigation Company, composed of land owners, whose ditches serve more than 800 acres of bottomlands, at actual cost of maintenance. Max GeBauer is president; Harry Ward, secretary-treasurer; Geo. Daley and J.H. Cooley, directors. This company has been organized since the early 80s and all construction costs paid years ago so that those under the ditches today have only operating costs to pay --from 50 cents an acre to \$2.00, the latter sum made necessary by litigation when the company had to fight for their rights in the courts.

...The total value of the Eagle Point Irrigation project is conservatively figured at \$1,049,334. J.L. Spencer is secretary and manager, with an office at Eagle Point. O.C. Boggs is president and Frank Brown and J.H. French are directors. Last year physical improvements were made to the value of \$22,733. The increase of livestock raised

in the district last year is valued at \$17,016. New and seeded amounted to 405 acres, and 77 acres were cleared in the district last year. Twenty new families have located in the district the past year. Mr. Spencer expresses the opinion that the one best bet, on account of the continuous flow of water guaranteeing an abundance of pasturage in the driest season, March 23 till winter rain last year, is dairying.

Eagle Point's school is district number 9. A new high school building was completed last year at a cost of \$15,000. It has four school rooms and two office rooms. The old grade school stands nearby. Five teachers are employed, two in the high school and three in the grades under charge of Professor C.E. Davies, principal. The school officers are: Mrs. Nellie Brown, chairman; Mrs. Grove and Mrs. J.M. Spencer. The school attendance has been increasing rapidly.

The Eagle Point Grange is the fourth largest in the state, enjoying a membership of nearly 200 farmers and their wives. It has been organized a little more than two years and is exceedingly active in an educational way, studying legislative and economic problems of the farmer and tax payer. I.R. Kline is master; A.Mittelstaedt, overseer; Mrs Gertrude Haak, lecturer; Henry Owens, steward; Roy Smith, assistant steward; Charles Cummings, chaplain; Charles Givans, secretary; George Stowell, treasurer; Mrs. Rosa Smith, lady assistant steward; Mrs. Ida Kent, Ceres; Mrs. Grace Cowden, Flora; Mrs. Henry Ward, Pomona; Mrs. Gertrude Haak, publicity manager and also deputy state organizer for Jackson County. The grange also serves a social aid in bringing the farmers together once a month in a social gathering. The organization is strong financially and is planning the erection of a large and well appointed grange hall to cost several thousand dollars. Work on this project is progressing satisfactorily and a considerable fund has been accumulated for the purpose. Building will be commenced this fall...The dances given at Jackson Hot Springs by the grange are attended by people from all parts of the valley, and the money realized is put into the building fund.

Eagle Point has three houses of worship: A Catholic church served by Father W.J. Naghar of Medford; the Presbyterian church, of which Rev. O.T. Morgan is pastor, and the Full Gospel Mission, built and in charge of Mrs. Arglee

Green.

A large dance hall on Main street belongs to Luke Kincaid. Dances are usually given weekly, except in mid-summer.

The Jackson County branch public library is in the charge of Mrs. J.F. Brown. It is open Monday and Friday afternoons, and Wednesday evening from 7:30 to 9 o'clock. Seventeen periodicals are subscribed for, but no newspapers are taken. About 300 volumes are on hand, and exchanged once a month, so patrons have access to the entire supply in the county library.

The postoffice is in the charge of W.C. Clements, who has been postmaster since 1914. The former postmaster, S.B. Holmes, is his assistant. Mr. Clements is putting up a new building for postoffice purposes. The old building will be used as an exchange for the Butte Falls and Eagle Point Telephone company, also in charge of Mr. Clements.

Four star routes run in and out of Eagle Point, to-wit: (1) Butte Falls-Derby; (2) Prospect-Trail; (3) Lake Creek-Brownsboro; (4) Climax. The Medford-Prospect stage line passes through. A freight stage is operated between Eagle Point and Medford, and a through line from Medford to Butte Falls. The Medford Logging railroad passes through town and two trains daily are operated.

A free city auto park is maintained on the river bank, below the old covered bridge.

One of the active agencies for betterment is the Eagle Point Ladies' Civic Improvement club; Mrs. H.E. Campbell, president; Mrs. A.C. Mittelstaedt, vice president; Mrs. W.H. Brown, secretary and treasurer. The organization was started before the World War, suspended during that struggle but resumed after the armistice. It has now a membership of 30. The ladies look after the park, and social affairs and civic improvements.

The leading establishment and oldest store in the town is the firm of George Brown & Sons, though at present conducted by the three sons of George Brown, J. Frank, William H. and Royal J. The business was first started by Robert Brown, an uncle of the present owners, at Brownsboro, and in 1875 moved to Eagle Point. In 1883 George Brown bought his brother's interest and took into partnership his son, J.F. Brown, in 1890. In 1900 another son, W.H., entered the firm, and in 1907, the last son, R.J., bought out his father's interest. It has ever since been conducted by the three brothers. They carry a complete stock of general merchandise, dry goods, shoes, clothing, groceries, fresh meats, etc. They have just installed a Frigidaire cooling system in

their grocery.

The Eagle Point Hardware is conducted by Roy Ashpole, ably assisted by his wife. Full lines of hardware, harness, auto accessories and patent medicines are carried. They have been in business since 1912.

The First State Bank of Eagle Point was chartered in 1911, with a capital of \$15,000. J. Frank Brown is president and H.E. Campbell is vice president and cashier. Frances Campbell and S.H. Butler are assistant cashiers. The bank has claimed the patronage of this part of Jackson county and by a careful and conservative policy has accumulated resources of over \$100,000, with deposits of about \$85,000.

E.C. Faber conducts a grocery and men's furnishing goods store. He started the store last January, one of a chain he maintains at Central Point, Butte Falls, as well as this place. He is assisted by H.S. Chirgwin, who manages the local store. They specialize in home-grown garden produce and fruits.

A.J. Florey conducts the Bungalow Confectionery, soft drink parlor and pool room.

George H. Wehman and Lyle Van Scoy own a confectionery and soft drink parlor on Main Street. They have been in business three years.

Frank Lewis conducts a confectionery, pool and billiard hall on Riverside Drive, near the bridge. He also owns a ranch near town.

W.L. Childreth is the village blacksmith and horseshoer. He has spent 22 years on the job in Eagle Point.

Holmes Garage at the corner of Main and Riverside Drive is operated by George Holmes. He does trucking and runs the garage, service station, repairing and sells accessories as a side line.

W.S. Chappell, an old miner, native of Cornwall, England, runs a shoe shop, but can mend harness, string electric wiring, do your plumbing and tell you interesting stories of England, Pennsylvania, Alaska, California or Oregon.

The lumber yards are owned and operated by W.C. Clements, and carry the usual stock of building material.

H.E. Campbell is mayor of the town and John Smith is the town marshall, but there is neither a doctor, lawyer, dentist or undertaker in town.

At the intersection of the Crater Lake Highway and the Eagle Point road, one-fourth mile from town, is located the Oasis Service Station and refreshment stand conducted by Ernest Dahack. F.J. Sinclair has taken over the garage, repair shop and accessories. One of the finest collections of agates in this section may be seen at the Oasis

station.

Just across the road on the east side of the highway, stands the Eagle Point Service Station, in its bright green dress, operated by Mr. and Mrs. J.I. Grove. Refreshments, lunches, cold drinks, gas and oil are sold.

Mr. and Mrs. O.C. Wilson live in the edge of Eagle Point on a ten-acre tract, where they conduct a dairy and Mr. Wilson runs a milk-route in Medford. At present they milk 15 cows. A nice 7-room home with a wide veranda, a big barn, garage and chicken house are the improvements on their town place.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pearce live in town on 6 acres and operate a small dairy, milking 5 cows. He sells milk in town and cream to the Medford creamery.

Mr. and Mrs. R.A. Weidman conduct a dairy farm of 60 acres, 30 on each side of the highway, but at present are milking but 6 cows.

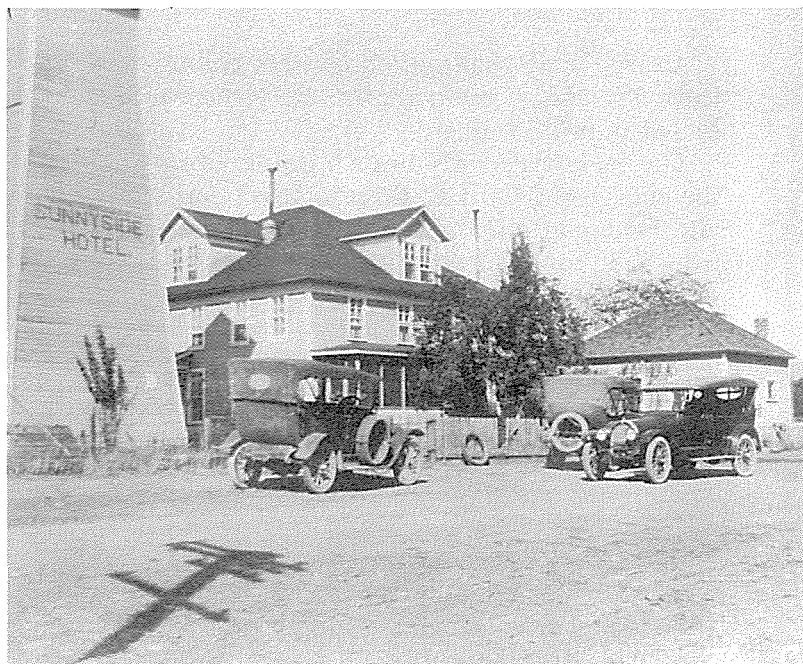
Mr. and Mrs. Ray Harnish have a dairy farm of 30 acres, back of the Oasis Service Station, with 28 acres under cultivation, in oats, vetch and clover. Ten cows and 11 sheep are kept. A nice home and big barn are on the place. They have lived there five years.

Mr. and Mrs. T.T. Taylor bought an acre on the highway, near the Oasis station and built a new house last fall. Mrs. Taylor's brother, O.R. Adamson, lives with them.

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Throckmorton own a new home on the hillside. It is one of the best designed and appointed homes I have recently inspected. Built-in features are employed, a large living and dining room, two bedrooms, bath with built-in tub, screened sleeping porch, a kitchen with every convenience, with a cozy breakfast nook, and a grand view of the entire valley and mountains, electric lights and a gravity water system direct from a splendid spring.

...Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Smith have a fine place of 34 acres on the hillside near Throckmortons, with a very pretty cottage with climbing vines and roses, a pretty lawn and a 5-acre orchard of pears adjoining. They conduct dairying on a small scale and have 500 baby chicks and about 250 laying hens. Mr. Smith says their irrigation system is the best in the whole country.

Mr. and Mrs. E.B. Huson own 11 acres beside the highway, 4 of which are in a pear orchard, the fruit from which paid more last year than the price paid for the land. They came here a year ago last December from Nebraska, bought the land, built a house and barn. They keep two cows and own a team. Mr. Huson says they like this country the best of any they ever lived in.



The Sunnyside Hotel at Eagle Point. #11325

The Sunnyside hotel has been conducted by Mrs. Sarah E. Howlett since 1911, when it was established by Mr. and Mrs. Howlett, who continued to operate it together until three years ago, when Mr. Howlett passed away. He was a correspondent for the *Mail Tribune* for many years and his unique style and droll expressions won for "Eagle Point Eaglets" a state-wide fame. Since his death Mrs. Howlett, though well advanced in years, has carried on and the Sunnyside enjoys an enviable reputation as a holstery, for its superior cuisine and peaceful quietude -- a mighty good place to eat and sleep. It stands in the northeast part of town on the banks of Little Butte Creek, and the gurgling waters flowing over the rapids of that pretty stream lull one to peaceful slumber. Mrs. Howlett gives her personal attention to each guest and presides over the culinary department as well. She is assisted in her duties by neighbors during the rush hours. Her daughter Hattie lives at the hotel with her mother. The hotel is a two-story frame building and contains 17 guest rooms. A fine garden adjoining supplies all kinds of fresh vegetables. The Sunnyside is famous over a large territory of southern Oregon.

F.A. Whaley has a fine garden right in town, with every variety of vegetables thriving. He claims you can grow anything in this soil and get large yields.

The Eagle Point farmers have taken prizes for the past three consecutive years at the county fair, for farm products. Every time they competed at a fair they never failed to take premiums.



Mr. Eagle Point

27 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE

by Anna Zander

(Sent to the society by Lucille Merrifield)

Mr. Eagle Point is a name worn proudly by Sam Coy, a member of one of the town's pioneer families. He was dubbed with the title after serving for 27 years, between 1932 and 1959. During his years with the city, Sam held every job from pick-and-shovel man to Municipal Judge. The only job he never tried was Mayor. At one time in 1951 he was city recorder, treasurer, Municipal Judge, water-master and water-biller.

It was 1887 when the newlyweds, Tom and Sarah Coy, left their home state of Ohio and migrated to southern Oregon. They first settled in Wolf Creek where Tom engaged in logging. Another move brought them to Eagle Point. Tom took a job at the flour mill and was soon being trained to be a miller. For six months out of the year the mill operated 24 hours a day. When he became proficient in the trade of milling, Tom took over the night shift.

There were seven children, six boys and a girl, born to Sarah and Tom. Sam was born in

December, 1889, and remembers his mother telling of the terrible storm that hit Eagle Point that winter. My mother said the snow was close to five feet deep on the desert where we lived. She and Dad came into town to check on my grandparents, who lived on the other side of the creek. When they got to the old covered bridge, they were unable to cross because the snow had stacked up on the cover and caved in. That is the same year the creek froze over so deep that people sawed blocks of ice out and stored them in sawdust and used them to make ice cream the next summer.

Sam began to work out at the age of 9. He was paid fifty cents a day and room and board for picking up potatoes for Nick Young. As a teenager he worked at a local orchard. There was a packing house at the orchard where the apples were packed for shipping to New York.

In 1912 Sam and Ethel were married. They moved to a ranch in the Climax area. Sam ran

between 800 and 900 sheep on the ranch. He raised them for the wool and hired a man with a shearing machine to clip them. The raw wool was sold to a dealer in Medford. Along with ranching Sam carried the mail from the post office at Climax to Eagle Point. The Coys sold their ranch and moved to Eagle Point when their four children wanted to enter high school.

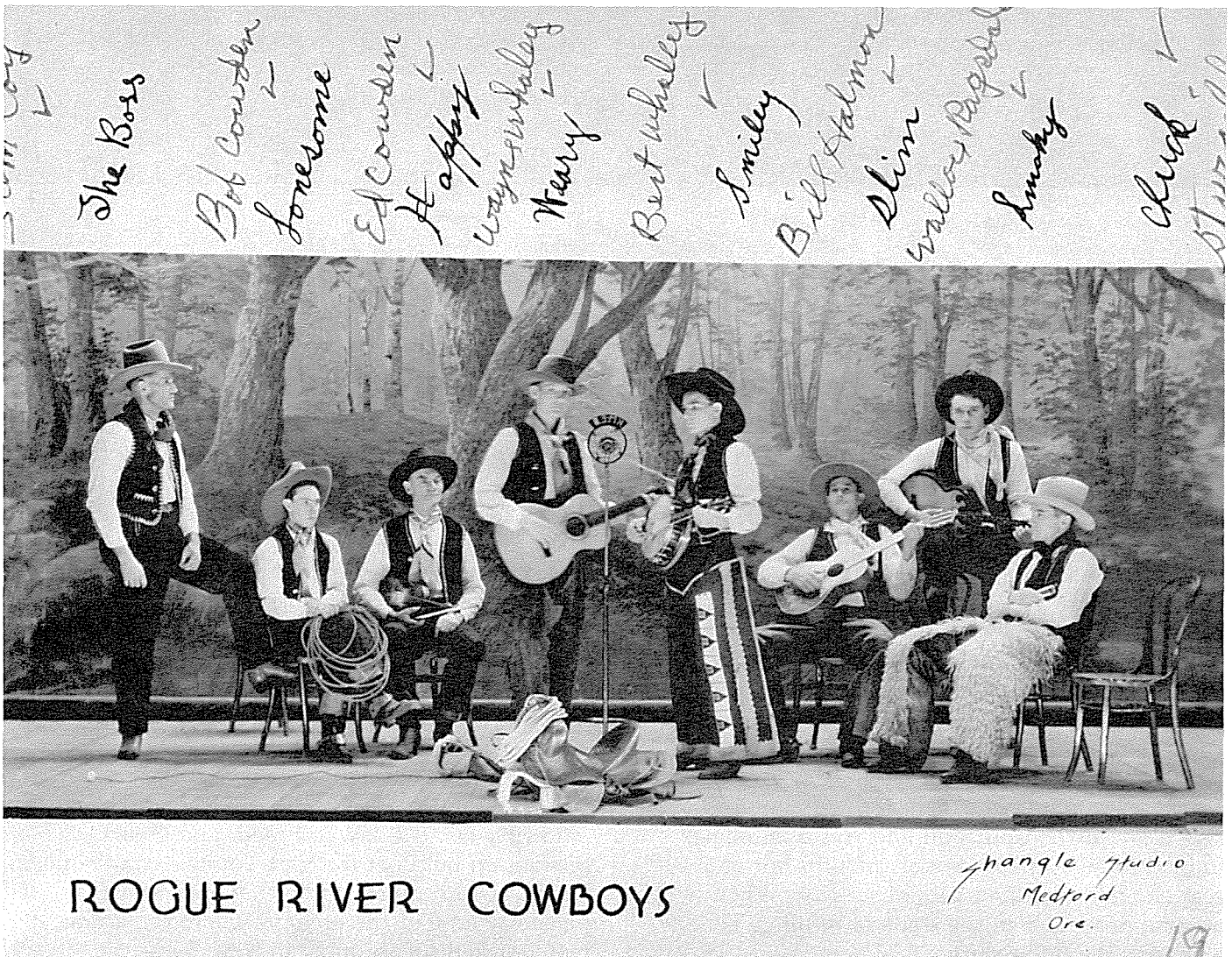
Several occupations were practiced by Sam after the move to Eagle Point, but the one that brought him the most fame was driving milk truck for the Ladino cheese factory. He organized a group called the Rogue Valley Cowboys who entertained over KMED radio and advertised the Eagle Point-made Ladino cheese. Besides Sam, who was called "the Boss," there were seven members with the group. Bob Cowden was called Lonesome, Ed Cowden was called Happy, Wayne Whaley was called Weary, Bert Whaley was called Smiley, Bill Holman was called Slim,

Wallace Ragsdale was called Smokey and Chuck Sturgill was called Chuck.

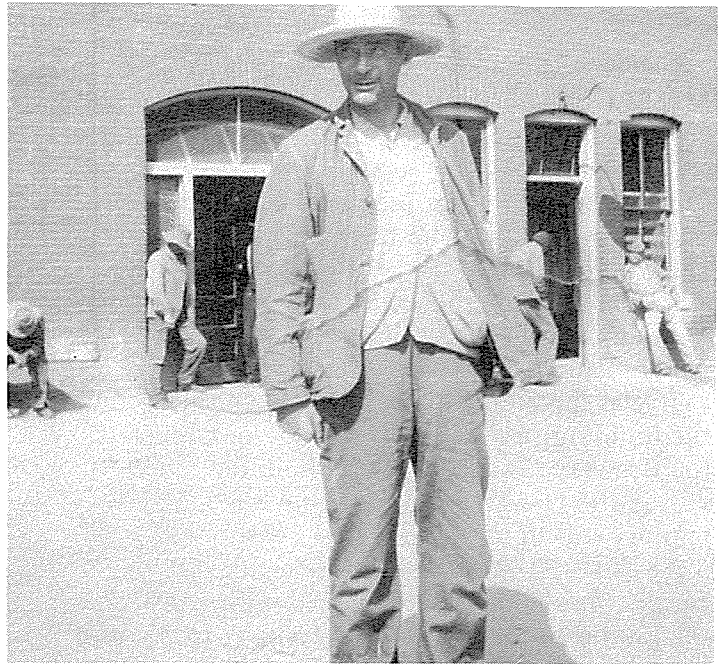
The group became very popular in the valley and were in constant demand. They played many times on the stage at the Craterian Theater. "I didn't play an instrument. I was just the Boss," Sam said.

Sam related several tales of his days as the town Marshall. "There were some ornery kids in town, especially around Halloween time," he said. "They pulled stuff like painting the entryway at school, and one year they even set the bridge on fire. I went to school one time and took a boy out of class that had run away from me the night before. The old jail was in back of the library, where the Swiss Cafe now stands, and it wasn't very big. If a prisoner had to stay overnight, someone had to stay with him."

Eagle Point was a good place to live. The old days were full of a lot of good times.



#9225



*Charlie at Warm Springs Mental Hospital
July 9, 1909, Montana*

CRAZY CHARLIE TWO THUMB

People called him crazy Charlie. Now whether Charlie was really crazy is debatable, he certainly was smart enough to play the daylights out of an old violin and make it hum. But he definitely was a little odd. He liked to scare people and would jump out at cars traveling the night roads home to Eagle Point and Shady Cove or come up to a young girl, arms outstretched in boogie man style and say, "You're scared, aren't you, huh, scared, huh?" He was known to pull a cat's tail and collect snakes in a jar, but other than throwing rocks at logging trucks he wasn't all bad.

On one of his jaunts to visit his father Ki in Montana, both of them, plus a bunch of the good old boys, decided to live it up. It was one of those dreadful cold Montana winter nights and most of the partying was one inside an old sod cabin, but occasionally during a small rumble a misunderstood cowboy would get tossed out in the snow.

Now Charlie being a small lad wasn't quite as tough as the rest of the cowboys and the more they drank the meaner they talked. And Charlie along with the rest got louder and louder. Then he tried one of his crazy capers and out the door he flew by the seat of his pants, bottoms up and face down.

It's not told whether Charlie fell in the old rain barrel or was tossed in, but in this rain barrel and out in the snow he ended up.

The boys in their merriment ignored poor old Charlie's mumblings and soon forgot all about

him. They partied till the whiskey was gone and the jokes were old, then passed out and fell into their warm beds. But Charlie's bed was not warm, not warm at all. It was wet, cold and icy.

The night was very still, the temperature dropped and everyone slept. Charlie even took a nod or two while still folded up inside the rain barrel hanging onto the metal rim. And that's where they found him in the morning. He was all hunched over and his hands were frozen shut clinging to the top of the barrel rim.

A bucket of lukewarm water thrown lightly freed him, but his fingers wouldn't straighten out and his hands looked pure white as if the blood had been sucked right out of them. Well, this looked like serious business, so with bloodshot eyes, upset stomachs, and hangovers, the good old guys put Charlie in a buckboard wagon and headed hell-bent to the country doctor.

One by one Charlie's fingers fell off, little, middle, index, and ring, all gone forever. All that was left were his two thumbs. It was for sure Charlie's violin days were over.

Charlie never seemed to pay no mind to losing his fingers and he never blamed anyone. He just went on about his life in the same old way. Now they called him Crazy Charlie Two-Thumb. And to his pure delight, when he'd raise those fingerless hands and grotesque pincher-looking thumbs high overhead, he finally could scare the hell out of somebody.

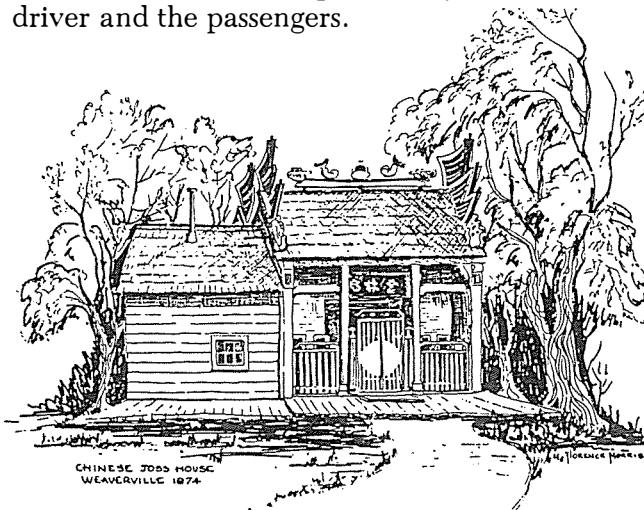
(C) by Barbara Hegne

S.O.S.H. Tour, Eureka Etcetera

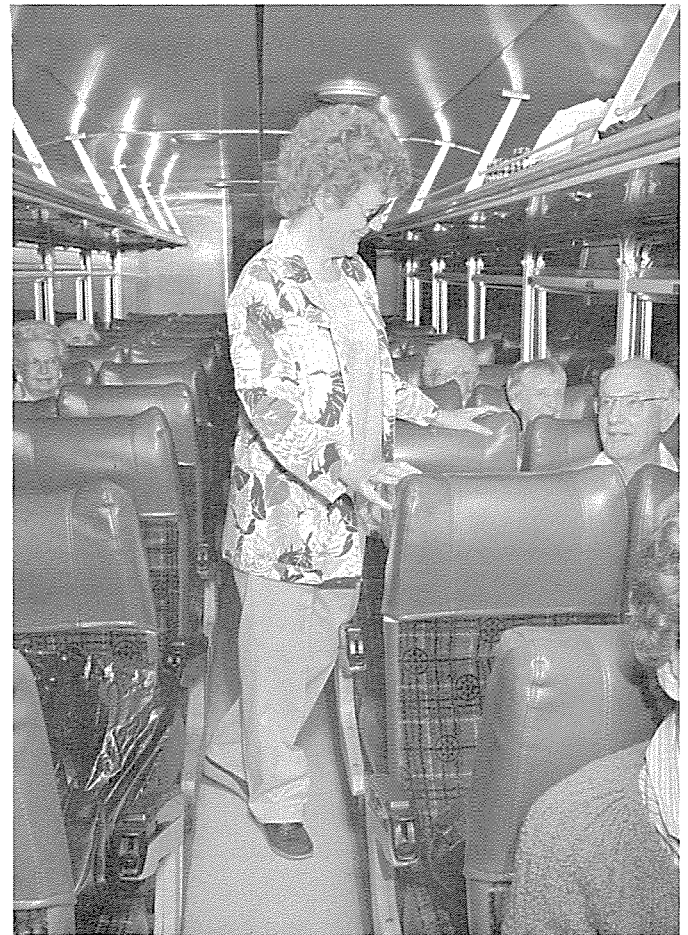
The SOHS sponsored tour No. 4, *Eureka Etcetera*, which required three days, September 24, 25 and 26, was a resounding success. Nineteen enthusiastic people, including the bus driver, departed from Jacksonville at 6:30 a.m. and headed south. The first stops were at Etna and Weaverville, the latter a gold rush town which at one time boasted the largest hydraulic mine in the world. At Etna the group visited the widely known Scott Valley Drugstore, where the tour was directed by Mr. Don Murphy who owns the building. At Weaverville they took lunch at the Brewery, another historic building, and visited the Joss House, one of the few Chinese temples still in use on the west coast.

At Eureka they stayed in the comfortable Eureka Inn. The tour continued with a visit to the lumber mill at Scotia, a company town, and included a shopping excursion in Old Town at Ferndale. This lively business area is in the process of being refurbished and restored in Victorian style. The trip continued with a stop at the Clark Museum with its impressive display of Indian artifacts. In Eureka the group toured the Carter House Inn, not far from the famous Ingomar Club. The inn is a completely new Victorian structure with the details so authentic-appearing they challenge those of restored old houses. The complex includes a Bed and Breakfast house across the street from the Inn. The Eureka stay also included a trip to the boat basin and the memorial to the fishermen lost at sea. Everyone was delighted with lunch at the Samoa Cookhouse.

On the way home, the travelers took a quick look at Trinidad, a fishing village. They were home at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday. Susan Cox, Membership Coordinator, acted as escort for the tour and was most complimentary about the bus driver and the passengers.



by Florence Morris



Sue Cox, tour director, disciplines unruly passenger.



Neat Buys At The Gift Shop

This month Sharon Lumsden of the Museum Sales Shop is pushing Ralph Friedman's books of historic Oregon: *Oregon for the Curious*, *This Side of Oregon*, and *Tracking Down Oregon*. These books are attractively priced and will be great gifts. Also displayed are white lace fans (\$4.50) and handmade clothespin dolls.

Society News

Historic/Scenic Highways Designated

Society Trustee Marjorie O'Harra served on an eight-member citizens advisory committee to assist with the state study of possible historic and scenic highways, bridges and related features. Twenty-five separate areas were designated historic and/or scenic, two of which were the Green Springs Highway, Mileposts 8.45-49.66 and the Siskiyou Highway, Old 99, Mileposts 0.00-6.57.

The following was taken from the *Historic Preservation League of Oregon Newsletter* (Summer, 1987) regarding the Siskiyou Highway: "Initially only an 8 foot wide strip was paved. In 1920 the highway was widened to a 16 foot wide strip of pavement. In 1923, with the completion of the highway the state became the first west of the Mississippi to have a continuously paved road from border to border."

Reminders

The Constitution Bicentennial Brown Bag Lunch Lecture Series continues through the month of October at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum from noon to 1 P.M. Check the September *Sentinel* for complete information.

The Society's Board of Trustees meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. Although the meetings are scheduled for the conference room at the Jackson Education Service District, 101 N. Grape Street, Medford, it is always best to check with the Society in case of a change of location. The public is welcome to attend.

New Board Member Appointed

At the September 22 Board of Trustees' meeting, Mark Wolfe was appointed to fill the position vacated by Dr. William Barnum. Mark is a practicing attorney in Medford and brings legal expertise to our Board. He has been an active volunteer for the Society and has assisted in the research library for the past few years.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum

October 30! Remember that date and check your attic, basement, closet or that large box in

the back of the garage for vintage 1940 clothing. Dust it off and plan to attend "Swedenburg After Dark". At 7:30 P.M. the original radio broadcast of "War of the Worlds" will be presented. Ron Kramer of KSOR will introduce the program speaking on "how the world situation led people to panic". There is no admission charge and refreshments will be provided. Chappell-Swedenburg is located at the corner of Siskiyou Boulevard and Mountain Avenue in Ashland.

Thoughts of Christmas Gifts

It may seem too early to be thinking of Christmas already, but as always, "it's later than we think!" A special gift item would be a membership in the Society which brings the receiver a copy of *The Table Rock Sentinel* every month along with reduced or free admission to Society events, a discount in the Gift Shop and escorted historic site bus tours.

Junior Historian (18 & under)	\$ 8.00
Senior Citizen (65 & over)	12.00
Individual	15.00
Family	20.00
Contributor	30.00
Business	50.00
Donor	\$ 75.00
Sponsor	100.00
Benefactor	250.00
Grantor	500.00
Life	5000.00

The Society Gift Shop has a good selection of books for gift giving. A partial list follows: *Tunnel 13* by Art Chipman would be excellent for anyone interested in railroading, especially if they have visited the railroad exhibit at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum which will be on display through March 1988.

Marjorie O'Harra's books *Southern Oregon: Short Trips Into History* and *The Ashland Story* are well-known and well-liked and *The Jacksonville Story* by Richard Engeman is always popular. Also available, *Lincoln on the Green Springs* by Anne Foley, *The Rogue I Remember* by Wallace Ohrt, *Clarissa - Her Family & Her Home* by Effie and Nita Birdseye and *Requiem for a People* by Stephen Dow Beckham.

Society News

Society Supports Project

The Southern Oregon Historical Society has agreed to enter into a cooperative venture with the City of Jacksonville, Jackson County and the Britt Festivals to develop the large public parking lot located at the corner of Oregon and "D" Streets, Jacksonville, commonly known as the Britt parking lot. At its September Board meeting the trustees voted to contribute \$4,000 toward the project which will include the paving of roadways and the installation of grass and gravel parking

areas to provide approximately 200 parking spaces.

The Society has made the contribution to assist in the development of the community and its resources to receive visitors to the historic town. Also, the Society makes use of the parking lot through the summer months as the central receiving point for all visitors to the historic Willows Farm located two and one-half miles northeast of Jacksonville.

Walking Tour, Business District

A Historic Walk through Downtown Medford was held on Sunday, September 20. Scott Clay of the Jackson County Department of Planning was the leader. He emphasized the social, architectural and community development of Medford from the 1890s to the 1940s. Members of the group were shown urban residents of the 1890s, auto showrooms of the 1920s, and art moderne department stores of the 1940s.

In the picture below, Scott holds his listeners spellbound in downtown Medford.

The picture was taken by Marge Herman.



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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