

TABLE ROCK

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The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary

History came full circle in October when the Governor's Conference on Historic Preservation was held again in the Rogue Valley. The first statewide conference on historic preservation was held in 1976 in Jacksonville with the Southern Oregon Historical Society as host. This year the Society was local co-sponsor along with the Historic Preservation League of Oregon (HPLO) of the 12th annual meeting.

The Society is proud to have been a part of both conferences. But, more importantly, this conference was a perfect opportunity to showcase history and historic preservation activities in Southern Oregon in general and Jackson County in particular.

Preservationists and historians from all over Oregon had an opportunity to attend three "tracks" or groupings of sessions: 1) Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in Oregon; 2) Historic Preservation and the Building Code; and 3) The Transition Era 1895-1920: Social History & Current Rehabilitation Techniques. The three-day conference culminated with a visit to the Society's Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.

Jackson County and Southern Oregon can be justifiably proud of efforts to preserve, promote and interpret the region's history and the cultural resources that remain. The Society is indeed honored to be part of the opportunity to show this region's commitment to its heritage as a significant factor in the social and economic quality of life we all enjoy today.

This year has been significant in other ways. March witnessed the opening of "Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley"—the first major new exhibit in more than a decade for the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History. Another change in the region's major museum took place in October. With a special membership preview night, the Society opened the new first-floor exhibit, "HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue." This exhibit is unique for two reasons. First, it features a special look at a chapter in the region's history—the ceramics industry on the Rogue River. Second, the Society has produced a new, companion publication featuring the Hannah family as well as superb illustrations of the Hannah ware on display in the exhibit.

The gallery guide/exhibit catalog is available in the Society's gift shop at a substantial discount to members.



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Mary Louisa's rich account of an arduous journey from Missouri to Oregon reveals the trials and rewards her family faced during their 1865 migration.

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The students of Washington School embark on an exploration of their school's history, and in the process learn about themselves and their community.

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The holidays are upon us, and local residents recall their more memorable Christmas experiences.

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Calendar of Events (inside back cover)



cover: An unidentified youngster is pensively prepared for the winter season. SOHS #9854



back cover: Resembling angels, Snow Autenruth, Mamie Linn, Anna Orth, and Emma Judge posed for a photograph in 1891. SOHS #12162



Seven Months on the Oregon Trail

The Diary of Mary Louisa Black

Introduction by Margarite Black

The day-to-day life of a family on the way to Oregon in a wagon train in 1865 is vividly depicted in a small diary kept by Mary Louisa Black. She wrote in a small leather-bound notebook in which she had been keeping farm accounts, recipes and other notes. She was the wife of John Maupin Black and they lived on a farm near the town of Mexico in Audrain County, Missouri.

When the Civil War brought troubled times to Missouri, many families sold out and "went west." One of these was Mary Louisa Black's uncle, Josiah Hannah. He had emigrated to Jackson County, Oregon with his family in

1862, and settled on the Upper Rogue River. He sent word to the Blacks, offering to help them obtain land, and build a home nearby if they would come to Oregon.

They accepted the offer, sold their farm and possessions and prepared to make the journey. They had three small children, Sally age 5, Myrtilla (called "Tilla") age 3, and baby Clifton six months old.

On the way to join the main wagon train, tragedy struck them. Little Sally was stricken with food poisoning and died suddenly on May 1, 1865. This is not mentioned in the diary. Five days later they left Shelbina, Missouri headed for St. Joseph and Council Bluffs.

There were one hundred and nine wagons in the train, captained by James T. Kirk. They had two teams of horses and two wagons. A young man headed for the gold fields of California drove one wagon and when he left them, Mary Louisa drove it the rest of the way.

There is a gap in the diary between Sept. 29 and Oct. 22 when they were headed south from the Willamette Valley. Both Mary Louisa and John were sick and not able to travel any further. It has been handed down in the family that word was sent to the Hannahs, and Josiah and his son set out with team and wagon to rescue them.

As far as is known, no further diary was kept after they arrived at Uncle Josiah Hannah's in late December. They moved into their own cabin in January 1866. The next winter, 1867, the baby Clifton died of diphtheria, and was buried at the edge of a field below the house. In 1869, a son Lee was born, and in 1879 a daughter Martha. These two, with Tilla, grew up, married and lived well into their 70s. The girls had no children.

These excerpts are presented with Mary Louisa Black's original spelling and grammar.

June 20, 1865¹

We camped last night near a spring but not much grass. We traveled about 8 miles before breakfast, came to grass & water and some wood by carrying some distance.

June 21

Crossed the Platt by fording at Fremonts Orchard.

June 22

Traveled most of the time today through grass knee high.

June 23

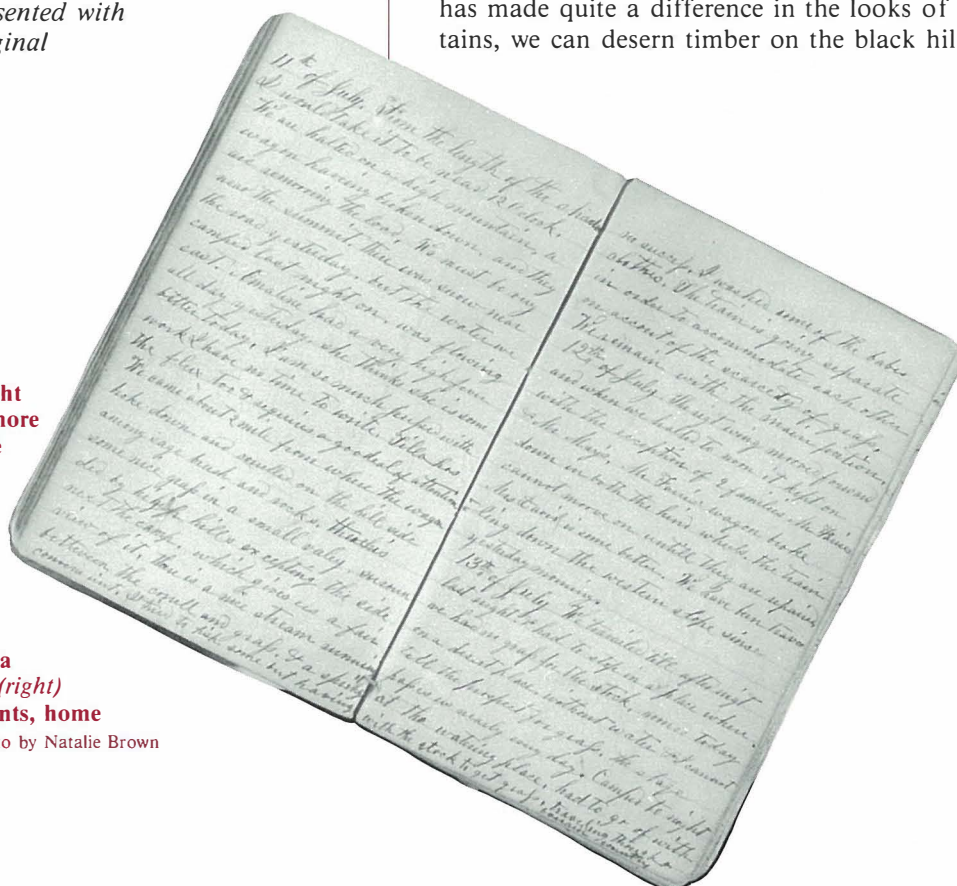
Last night the cattle were stamping from 10 o'clock till day. We encamped together—Saw some wigwams. Kirk circled to fight.²

June 24

We passed the ferry this morning, they were crossing 2 wagons at a time and charging \$7 for a four-horse team & besides having to work the roaps themselves. Numbers were going above to ford. Noon on the Cashlapoo (Calche La p'oudre) in a nice shady place near a ranch, the cows mowed their grass for them. John browned coffee.³ Correlled separate, no stampede. Plenty of prairie dogs along road.

June 25

Sunday morning we camped last night near the Cashlapoo. About ½ mile from the main company. I hear some talk of staying here till noon, & have preaching. The grass is short. They said yesterday where we stopped to noon that there was a ranch about every 4 mile most of them deserted. We have plenty of wood so fare on this stream Willow & Cottonwood. The ranches occupy the best grass. I hear the order to gear up. One weeks time has made quite a difference in the looks of the mountains, we can desern timber on the black hills⁴



Although the pictured freight team (opposite) is from a more recent era, the vast distance and challenges of extreme weather and geography would have been similar to those encountered by the Black expedition. SOHS #3461 Mary Louisa Black recorded the adventure's trials and rewards in a small, leather-bound diary (right) containing also farm accounts, home remedies and scripture. Photo by Natalie Brown

June 26

The Arapahoos, about 20 came into camp yesterday evening, exhibiting all the characteristics of natives excepting they had long hair filled with ornaments, that is 3 of the number. I suppose 2 to be chiefs & one of their squaws.

Nooned 26th at the foot of the Black Hills. We passed Kirks train stoped to rest & water. They have passed us about half an halted. They are passing on I think from their whooping they are crossing the Cashlapoo which seams to merge from the Black Hills to the left. Evening camp. We traveled up the canyann till camping time. Passed a sawmill and several nice cabins. I saw 3 hens quietly picking in front of one of the cabins, first I have seen since we left Salt creek. The canyon is about ¼ of a mile wide, the grass is grazed almost too close. I climbed one of the second rate hills & had a fine view of the camp and the vally we are going up, but could see nothing of Kirks encampment.

June 27

Morning I rested well last night. They are in a rush to get started. No alarms during the night.

We nooned near the top of the hills. Some of the teams belonging to Coopers train stampeed, running against the hindmost wagon of our train, smashing one wheel. They took back a wheel and brought up the wagon & divided the load. We came up some very steep long rocky hills. Day fell on a large rock three times.

June 28

About 10 o'clock A.M. Every one is busy. John is having his horses shod, while a great many are helping to repair the broken wagon. I was quite sick this morning with diareah.⁵ I took a full dose of Laudanum this morning and some quinine about 8 & I feel some better & have just finished cutting out a pair of drawers for myself. The women have finished their washing. We camped near the junction of the Two-- mountain roads. Dodson was about 2 mile ahead when we camped. We passed the place Kirk camped about 11 A.M.

The left wing leads this afternoon. A horseman came forward just now to halt the train, another stampee. Some of the mule teamsters would not lock coming down a long hill they ran by some ox teams causing them to stampee, thats the first report. Wat mounted the black mule and has accompanied the man to the rear, a cold mountain wind is facing us.

The stampee commenced before they came to the hill & they ran down running agint the hind wheel of a hack occupying a place near the front of the right wing. I was occasioned by a mattress falling from the hind hounds of a wagon. It was an abandoned one laying by the road-side and the man picked it up.

June 29

We camped in the mountains again. I am still sick this morning, had a rundown just at daylight, some mint, resembling Pepermint & tasted like penoroyl, John gathered the first evening we encamped in the mountains, was a great relief to my stomach. The hills on this side are grey colored rocks with pines scattered over them, the

stage passed this mo. [morning] Nooned on the road side, made a fire under a large pine to boil some tea. Soon after we halted, a soldier came riding up for the Dr. of our train to go back to the next station, to take an arrow out of a mans back. He lives at the station and has been hunting for them for a number of years. It was done rite in the rear of our train by some Arappahoos who shook hands with him, pretending friendly, and when he turned to leave they they shot him. The arrow passed through his lung—the Dr. says, the same that visited our camp Sunday eve are the authors of the mischief, near as we can learn. The hunter knew them.

June 30

Noon. We have traveled over a tolerable level road today. Stoped about 10 o'clock on account of finding good grass & water. Silas Davis lost an ox last night, he has never been well since we crossed the Patt.⁶

Evening encampment. We have just crossed the Larame [Laramie] river on a bridge, for 50 cts a wagon. Not much grass in sight. The mosquitoes are so bad on the stock, our horses took the river just below the camp, the young sorrel could not swim, but they all got across and clambered up an almost perpendicular bank on the other side. Mr. Helbys mule, tied head & food attempted to follow, and was drowned.

It was done rite in the rear of our train by some Arappahoos who shook hands with him, pretending friendly, and when he turned to leave they they shot him.

July 1

I was very sick all day, at the stomach, took a dose of Calomel & Laundanum at noon. John is sick too.

July 2

I feel nearly clear of sick stomach this morning & my bowels are more quiet than they have been. I ate some brown rice boiled for my supper & rested tolerable well during the night. I have used Paregoric & Tannin freely (some spirit to strengththen my stomach. Calomel was the first thing that settled my stomach. We have been travailing over some of the roughest rokeyest road I ever saw.

We nooned near a ranch, which had been vammoosed this morning, for we met them. They reportred 100 Indians seen in this vicinity & that they had killed 2 emigrants.

There was a large bank of snow in a ravine to the left of the road in sight of our noon camp nearly all of the train got some. Duit Davis gave us some & Wat bought some to the wagon.

We are encamped tonight, on a nice mountain stream at a respectful distance from Kirk, Cooper & Dodson. Indians is the chat. John has gone to the other camp—Tolerable grass.

July 3

Noon Kirks train corelled together once more. Just passed the remains of a burned ranch, lately done, passed a calf laying near the road with the legs cut off, showing

**Mrs. McClure gave birth two twins,
one lived until 12 o'clock, the other
but a few minutes.**

the Indians had taken a hasty feed from it. The stage⁷ corelled with us. It is about 25 mile to Ft. Halack. It is near the place we are corelled that a large train has had a fight lately with Indians. A shield with a fresh scalp tied to it was found near the place, and a chiefs head dress and some of the trinkets they wear round their neck. Some of Coppers train found them. The shield consist of raw hide taken from the face of a buffalo streched over a hoop about the size of the top of a large woden bucket. There is considerable excitment in camp, we met 2 stages with heavy guard this morning moving every thing from the stations.

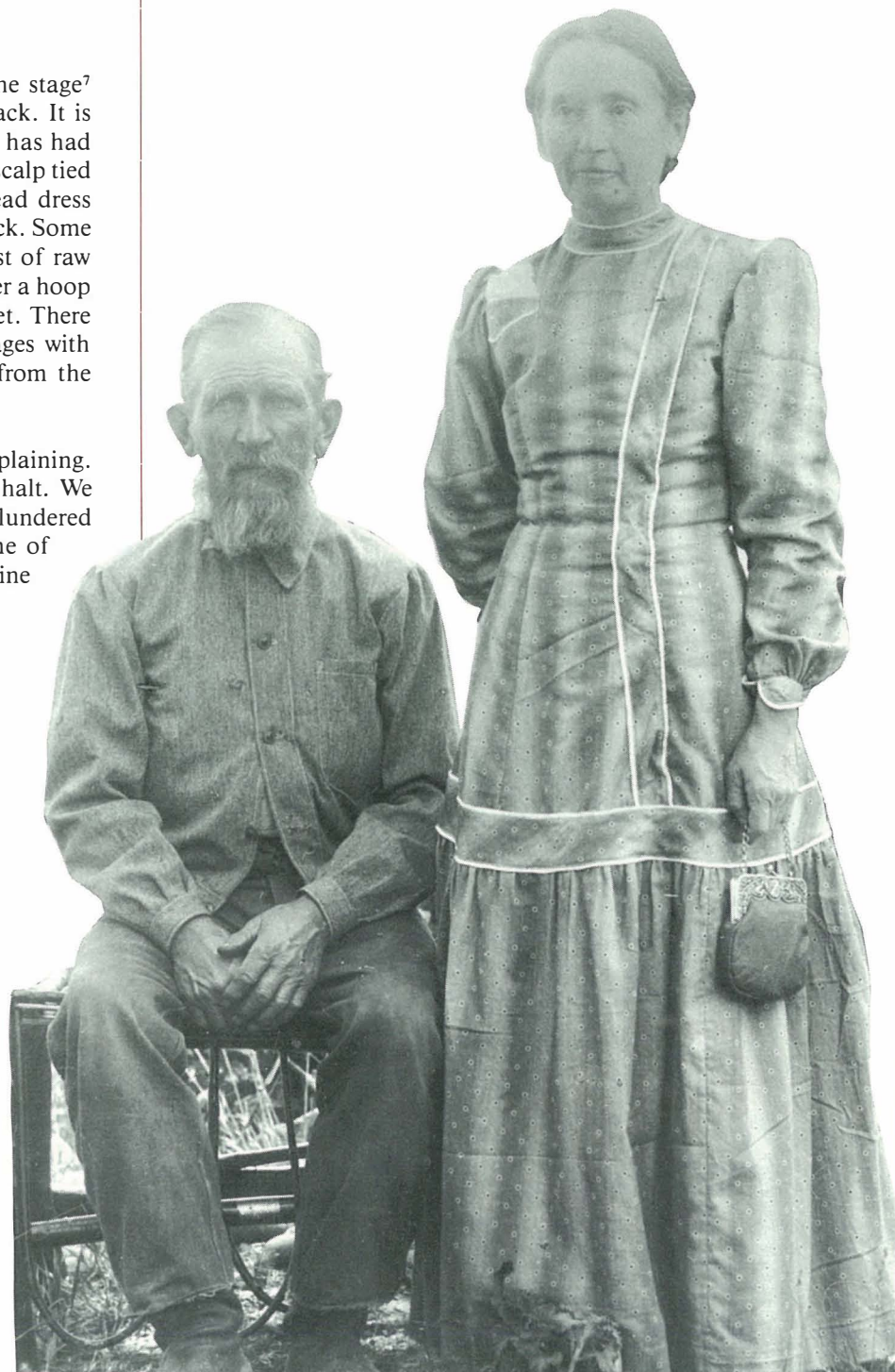
July 4

No alarms during the night. John is still complaining. All hands endeavoring to get an early start. A halt. We passed the remains of a wagon that had been plundered and burned, part of one wheel was left & some of the cooking vessels And a good many small pine boxes, comeing on a short distance was some clotes and feathers scattered over the ground appeantly the contense of a feather bed. We have been halting for about an hour. We are in the rear of all the trains, and those that have come back say there is a very bad hill to go down—We are over the bad place—

July 5

We camped last night within 3 mile of Hallack, where we are now halted in the place, aranging as I thought to

pay tole. But I think I was mistaken, all the ranches are deserted excepting those at the tole bridges, where they always keep a guard to collect. Sure enough we had to pay 50 cts for crossing 3 little pole bridges.⁸ The travelers give the soldiers here a bad name, a great many of them have Indian wives. The stage that corelled with us night before last, lost their team last night. The station near which we have camped say the Indians tried to run off their stock today, they think they are in a large body in the mountains near here. It is the opinion of som that they are trying to move south. It is reported at the Ft. that the Indians killed one of the Sheren boys & scalped him, he is burried at the Ft. Those that sent in the P.O. say there was an ox team load of eastern mail at Hallack.



Myrtilla Black crossed the plains as a child with parents Mary Louisa and John Black. In 1909 she married Chris Bergman, pictured at right in what may be their wedding photograph.

Photo courtesy of Marguerite Black

After candle light. Today has been a busy day. Mrs. McClure gave birth two twins, one lived until 12 o'clock, the other but a few minutes. They were buried at the ranch.

July 6

We came to the ferry across North Platt over a very rough mountain road. Had to go out 4 mile to get grass for the cattle.

July 8

I washed this fore noon. Kirks train ferryed this fore noon we will endeavor to cross this evening. The boys left us the 6th. Silas and family occupy their place. We have had a busy day. The right wing of our corell is nearly over. The soldiers at this place showed us about 30 steel pointed arrows that had been shot at them yesterday, while guarding ther horses to graze. One did serious damage to one of their horse. They hardly think he will recover.

About 4 o'clock P.M. All the wagons are across but 4. They crossed 2 wagons at a time & swam the cattle & horses. John has come, reports all right. We will travel to grass tonight.

July 9

P.M. We are encamped in a barrain mountain country, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to grass, no water fit to drink. a great deal of dissatisfaction through camp. some want to go on.

July 10

Nooned near a ranch plenty of wood and water but short grass.

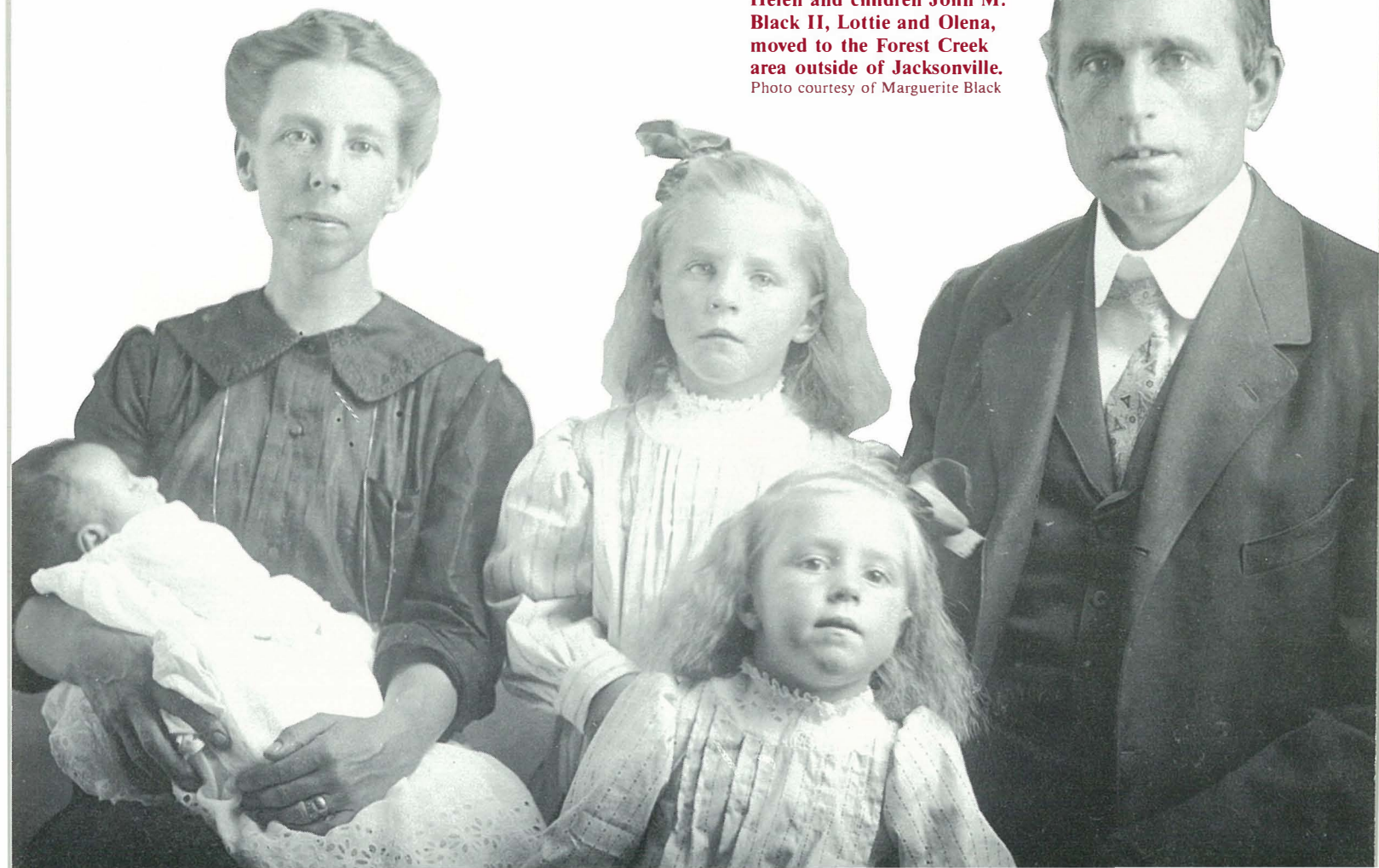
July 11

From the length of the shadows I would take it to be near 12 oclock. We are halted on a high mountain. a wagon having broken down and they are removing the load. We must be very near the summit. There was snow near the road yesterday. But the water we camped last night on, was flowing east. Emaline had a very high fever all day yesterday, she thinks she is some better today. I am so much pressed with work I have no time to write. Tilla has the flux too & requires a goodeal of attention. We came about 2 mile from where the wagon broke down and correlled on the hill side among sage brush and rocks. There is some nice grass in a small vally surrounded by high hills excepting the side next the camp, which gives us a fair view of it. There is a nice stream running between the correl and grass & a spring convenient. I tried to fish some but having no success. I washed some of the babes clothes. The train is going seperate in order to accomodate each other on account of the scarcity of grass. We remain with the main portion.

July 12

The right wing moved forward and when we halted to noon it kep on with the exception of 2 familes, Mr. Farises & Mr. May's, Mr. Farises wagon broke down in both the hind wheels. The train cannot move until they are repaired. Mrs. Davis is some better.

Mary Louisa's son Lee Black, pictured in 1911 with wife Helen and children John M. Black II, Lottie and Olena, moved to the Forest Creek area outside of Jacksonville.
Photo courtesy of Marguerite Black



July 14

Our road today has been very rough & dusty, no grass near.⁹ Got some by going about a mile & a half from the road. But we hauled water for cooking, no wood but sage brush, but that is as good as chips. We had some rain at noon which made our travail this evening more pleasant.

July 15¹⁰

Today our road has not been quite so hilly and the day has been cloudy occasionally thundering. The earth & streams show there has been rain quite recently. The hill have assumed a striped appearance. Some say we are now within 100 miles of Bridger. The train keeps grass hunters ahead. Which they have succeeded in finding so far within 2 miles from the road. We camp near the road and detail hands to take the stock & keep them all night.

July 16

Sunday. I rose this morning with the sun as John went out last night with the horses. I gathered sage brush & made out my yeast biscuit & put them on to cook & Emaline finished the balance. It is now ready. Silas is on the sick list this morning.

July 17

We are geared up ready to start. Went about 4 mile to grass and not very good at that. Encamped near a branch, tolerable good water. We are now traveling down Bitter Creek.¹¹ We moved on till about 11 o'clock. We came near the creek & camped near Rock Station. The houses have been built of rock for some time. I am not well at all, I think it is the water that physics me.

July 18

They took the stock out to hunt grass but failed to get any for the cattle, which they brought back and corelled. John & Silas found grass for the horses, but it was very hard to get at, the most of the horsemen came with the cattle, made me feel quite uneasy, Tilla felled with the ear ache nearly all night, which was vry cold and windy and drizzling.

July 21

I have been too sick to write any for 2 days. I have the flux now, but I don't feel as badly as when I was first taken. We hve been travailing through a rough barrain country, can get cedar and pine wood to burn, no good water yet, but we will soon get to snow water. Where we are encamped there is a range of level topped hills off to the left along Bitter Creek, to the right is a rocky range with some scatering dwarf cedars and pines & some tolerable grass.

Last night we have to feed our horses grain we had been saving for an emergency, they corelled the cattle and we had to tie some of the horses to our wagon, and they tore the curtain badly and kept me awake nearly all night.

July 22

We are at Green River, we have got dinner and drove down to the landing and watering the horses. We will soon commence crossing, the right wing leads today, and our wagon is 4th.

It is about 3 o'clock P.M. Nearly all the train is across, have crossed since 12 o'clock, 1 wagon at a time. There

is a train on this side and it does appear that they must be making wages today, \$1.50 pr wagon with 4 head of stock. A large freight train crossed this A.M. Reeds wagons of Mexico are with them & one of the Gilberts of Long-branch, We have corelled facing a strong cool wind. I am some better today, but was very sick last night. Green river will do to drink, John reports another train coming in sight on the other side, he is hitching up.

July 23

Sunday. They found good grazing for the horses but most too short for cattle, about 1½ miles from camp. I

**We passed the remains of a wagon
that had been plundered and burned,
part of one wheel was left & some of
the cooking vessels.**

got out yesterday evening and helped about supper, still had flux at night and up once through the night, took a dose of salts this morning & some Jamaca ginger which I think has been of benifit, or getting to better water.

I cooked some peaches & fried some pies for John to take out with him. We have stayed all day at this place. They had to go down some steep places to get to grass, and some very narrow mountain road. Just room for the horses to go single file, we are drinking Green river water, which looks green—.

July 24

Noon, we have passed the station which was said to be 14 miles from where we camped yesterday. We are near the creek, I wish we could get out of the mountains, I would judge from my feelings it is about 1 o'clock. I feel little able to cook. Geared up and made a short drive, came to good grass, about ¼ from the road, we are corelled once more in a grassy place, plenty of mountain currants. I have never used them.

July 25

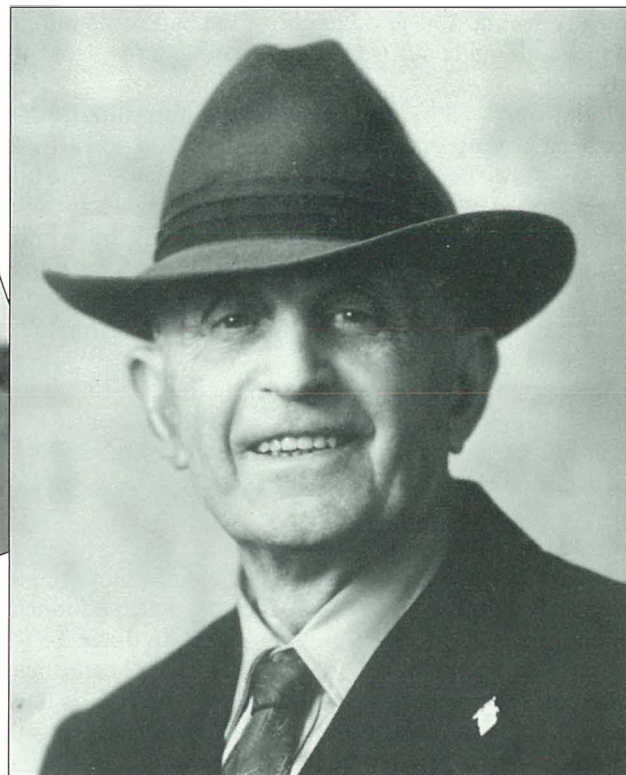
Encamped for the night on Black's fork of the Green river, about 30 mile from Bridger, the road we have been traveling has lead us across Hams fork 3 times, we hav come in sight of the snow mountain again, but our road today has been very good, we nooned on Hams fork just at the ford on good grass. I am getting able to do a good part of the cooking. John & Silas killed 1 rabbit & 3 sage chicken, they ate well.

July 26

We found out this morning that we had left the Bridger road last evening so Uncle Billy Davis deside he would leave the train before he would miss going by Salt Lake which he did & Silas still remains with us, much against his mothers wish. We are traveling the direct Oregon rout.



Mary Louisa Black gave birth to two children after settling in Shady Cove. Martha (left) and Lee Black were photographed in the 1940s. Photos courtesy of Marguerite Black.



July 27

This morning John had to get breakfast. Emaline is still sick & I had a return of flux last evening. Took a dose of salts and intend to diet from this time out. I have been eating fresh meat, we had good grass & water by traveling till sun down, camped again on Black's fork. Nooned near Blacks fork. Silas has gone to the hills for cedar to cook with, which is near a mile distant to the left, some talk of sending to the Ft. for letters. The Leut. & John Faris geared the buggy and started for the Ft. They all washed this afternoon. I was not able.

July 29

We have just crossed a very bad ford on a small creek, a tributary of the Green river & while halting for the rest of the train to get over (as our wing leads today). Two Indians came riding down the hill to the right. There must be more of them from the amount of dust we saw in that direction this morning, we just decided it to be another train, but expect it was a gang of Indians. The two are painted red.

July 30

We are geared up ready to start, but have had to detain on account of the cattle having strayed up the branch. Sold our old feather bed for a sack of flower. Nooned near a spring plenty of grass. Silas's babe is rite sick I have all the cooking to do & glad that I am able to cook too. This afternoon our road resembled a walk through a flower garden.

July 31

Old Mr. Evens a consumptive, going to the mountains for his health, died last night and was buried about 9 o'clock this morning, we will stay here till we eat dinner. The babe is not much better.

August 1

We halted all day yesterday on account of old Mrs. Turpin being too sick to be moved, we are travailing in Wasach or Bear mountains over a very rough hilly road. I am writing during a halt in the train caused in the rear, as we are forward this morning and Mrs. Turpin is near the rear of the other wing, I fear she is worse, is the cause of the stop.

August 2

Last night ice froze 1/8 of an inch in thickness. The Snake Indians came in to barter fish & antelope hides for bread, coffee.

August 3

Mrs. Turpin is very feeble. We are halting till noon on her account. I see they fixing the carriage. I expect we will move out after dinner. John bought a Elk hide off an Indian for a small camp kettle.

After 12 o'clock. I have just woke from a short nap after dinner. John made a hair line yesterday and caught some fine fish, the largest was about 15 inch long speckled and had very small scales and the meat had a yellowish red cast.

August 4

We are geared up ready to start, the left wing leads today in order to get Mrs. Turpin out of the dust. We paid \$2 tole today came a new road down the river bottom, came to a vilage, got some onions lettice & butter, we are near the line between Idaho & Utah, irigated from the mountains off to the right, they are Mormons.

August 6

Sunday morning I feel quite well this morning with the exception of a soariness in my face caused by some decayed teeth I have. John got breakfast this morning as I cannot stand the cold mountain air before sun up, the nights are pinching cold. Nooning at Soda springs. I have to brown coffee so I must get at it. I have browned and ground my coffee. The Indians were around begging and picking up the scraps, we have detained too long at this place. We came a few mile and encamped near the river as they say here we have a long drive before we get to water again. The next water we strike is of the Columbia.

Last night we had to feed our horses grain we had been saving for an emergency.

August 7

Nooning on a nice stream in a valey in the mountains, so the statement about the waters of the Columbia was not so.

August 8

Morning. We came to this place in good time last evening, a regular camping place, a stream with willow and grass. Lewis buried an infant here yesterday, still born. They moved out this morning while we were at breakfast. There is several sick in our train. I saw the full moon rise from behind the mountain last evening.

August 9

Noon after dinner, being the first leasure I have had when the wagon was still, we have come over a rough road today, in one place just room for the road between high mountains, some think we have come over the summit. This has been the dustys road we have had, this evening, not much grass neither.

August 11

All of them raised their wagon beds but us,¹² we raised our load, we have to ford a stream and it is full. We travailed till after night. We passed good camping places but too early to camp.

August 12

We are laying by to-day in consequence of our tiresome travail yestarday. I sided up my wagon, swaped a large tin of peaches for as many beans and cooked half of them for dinner, and washed some in the evening.

August 13

Sunday Mrs. Turpin complained terably last night. I sat up from 10 till about 1 o'clock but she got no ease. We are detaining again on her account. There is several sick in the train. We are using spring water. John killed 4 chick, I cooked them for dinner gave 2 to the sick. It is about ½ mile to the river, which is suposed to be the head waters of the Columbia.

August 14

We passed the falls that have been in hearing of our camp for 2 days, soon this morning, some thought is fall near 40 feet, all the streams have falls, we nooned near another cascade in the river, but quite small. I could not see the principle one till after we passed by, it looked like snow, it was so white. We travailed till night before we came to the river bottom. There is the only place where there is any grass, it was very near easten out here. The road has lain over steep mountains mostly all evening.

August 16

Started by day light with out breakfast. Travailed till after 10 before we came to water. I was rite sick during the night with diareah, it looked I would give quite out before I could get something to eat. The sun shone so hot. Our road has been very steep and rocky, and very dusty almost insufferable. We nooned about 3 hours in order to give the cattle time to graze.

August 17

I have had the diahrea for two days. This morning is the first time I have felt able to write since I wrote the last. I feel clear of misery, but am very weak. We are encamped near the river.

August 19

We encamp within a few mile of a ranch on a place that has lately been mown. It rained last night and the sun is shining as bright as I have always been used to seeing it do after a storm, and I hear some tiny notes of birds among the willows on the branch. It lightnined and thundered about like it does in Missouri.

August 20

Started early came to a ranch about 10 and stoped long enough to water the teams. They say 17 miles to grass. We came to the ferry about noon, got our dinner and was soon crossing the Snake River in a row boat. We had to come down a very steep side mountain road. The wagon I was in came very near running off, I had to get out and walk about a quarter down hill, we had good grass for the stock.

August 21

The right wing came over last evening. The Wind was against the progress of the boat. This morning is still and they are making rapid progress. The wagons & horses are over and they are swimming the cattle. There is a river coming out of the right bank, forming several falls before it reaches the bottom. It makes quite a noise. The bluffs are almost perpendicular, there hight is beyond my estimation, 10 o'clock A.M. The order is to get dinner and start. A few cattle are on the other side. They could not swim the river. They are going to bring them on the boat.

The cattle crowded up on the boat and sunk it, and came near drowning some of the men. They had their boots and clothing on.

August 22

The train is trying to get in motion, her moving now resembles a stern wheel boat at a low stage of the Mo. R. going up stream —

Noon camp. The hill we had to come up to get out of the river bottom was about the worst we have had. The bottom was sandy. The middle portion side mountain, and the top pure rocks in steps about 2 foot high and on a turn — watered at a spring and had a little grass too. The road is deep sand heavy pulling. Travailed till about 10 o'clock before we came to water. They say there is grass near but it is too dark to hunt it so the horses are tied to the wagon. Morning light did not find much grass for the stock. The word is another long drive to supplies of grass and water.

August 23

We stoped at noon long enough to rest the stock & let them pick from the scanty fare afforded. We came to grass & water, nice place to camp. Dean is stopping a short distance above & Eaton went up there to rest his sick family. His oldest child is not expected to live. Himself and wife both sick —

August 24

Considerable trouble with the stock, they scattered considerable. Old Sorel went to the other correll. Puss lost herself in the willows.

McMurrain McClure & us came on about 5 mile to the next station in the night.

August 26

Came to water at about 5 mile. We watered the teams and drove till noon. Had some dry bunch grass 10 miles to good grass & water twelve o'clock is eccessively hot. Evenings & mornings cool. We drove till after night last night.

We came to good grass and water. Several acres of slew grass. Looked nice but the stock would not eat it. There is plenty of rye. Old sorrel is very poor in flesh and spirits.

August 27

We got up early this morn got to a ranch where there is indifferent water & some grass. We fed the last shelled oats to old Sorrel. A heavy rain fell last night and it was very hot. I did not rest well. We camped tonight rite close to a small stream coming down from the mount north of us. Tolerable grass, Lewis & Cravan camped near.

August 27

We watered the teams at a ranch said to be 10 miles from where we camped last night. Whites came on in the night, camped just behind us. I am trying to write home, but I have so little time, I make slow progress. I have bread cooked for dinner. I will employ all the leasure that gives me. We are encamped in a place that has been mowen long enough for the grass to start, which makes it good grazing.

August 28

Started early this morning after having good grass & spring water, but the long drives are bringing down our stock. Nooning after a five mile drive, at a place where they had raised some vegetables by irrigation. I bought 2 lbs of potatoes for 30 cts and cooked them for dinner. They were small & I think had been dug for some time.

Chris and Myrtilla Black Bergman (below) built a solid home on the original Black homestead where they cared for Mary Louisa until her death in 1911. The dwelling burned around 1939. Photo courtesy of Marguerite Black



They looked wilted, some of them. Got good grazing by going 1 mile up the mountains.

August 30

Wed. Came over some very rocky dusty hilly roads stopped and hired pasture at 25 cts pr. head within short distance of Boise City. Sold the shot gun for 1¼ oz. of gold dust valued at \$20. sold Old Sorrel for \$25.

August 31

We passed through Boise yesterday, considerable place, bought sack of oats there. Then met a man hauling in a load and traded the elk hid for another sack, \$11. Came about 5 mile. fed on oats. Camped at a ranch. We came on with some mule teams from Mo. going to Oregon. McClure wanted to fall in with White again. McMurray is not going as far as we are. I am writing during a halt to fill water kegs.

September 1

We camped last night where we stoped at noon. The wind blew so hard we could not go on. Today is cold. We have come down a very steep hill. the most of the road has been hilly, very hilly. The Mc. come on in the evening very houghy about our going ahead. We are traveling down Paitt River [*Payette*], nooned on a branch, grass looked green and nice but was salty. Durham is the name of the old gentleman we are traveling with, sone in law, Brown & family, 2 married sons and families & Mrs. Bell his sons wifes mother. Moving, going to Oregon, very clever folks. Just about camping time a heavy storm set in and we were compelled to halt, and it soon commenced pouring down the hail in balls a size larger than buck shot, the horses showed every sign of their intentions to beat a hasty retreat and the men had to unharness during the thickest of the shower.

September 2

This morning is cold and drizzling rain. We made a poor nooning, came on to the Paitt and crossed it. Then drove till late and camped in the Snake bottom & crazed the stock on an island in the river.

September 3

We had a good road this fore noon encamped on a small stream called Weazen [*Weiser*], drove constant this afternoon, reached the camping place about sundown, ranches all along.

September 4

There is a large pack train encamped at this place. About 10 o'clock. We have crossed the Snake again & waiting for the balance of the wagons to come over. They make quick trips and drive two wagons with 4 horses on at a time. We brought all over at one load, except our led mare, Puss. Tilla is very sick with diahrea & the road today has been rough. We are now in Oregon.

We encamped on Burnt river, passed some packers that had lost some of their stock. Old Mr. Durham is very uneasy. John went out with the stock to stay all night.

September 5

Tilla was very sick in the night, I gave her a dose of worm medicine when it operated she vomited and was very sick.

September 6

Late in the evening. We halted today on account of Dr. Durhams little sons being very sick. I have been washing all day. I never saw nicer water for the purpose, the bed of the creek are composed of large rock which stand up out of the water and one can walk in on them and dip up the water without roiling it. John started early this morning to make brakes to both his wagons, he has finished the one on this wagon.

September 7, 8

Today and yesterday have both been cold. We halted today about 3 o'clock on account of the cold wind, it is as cold weather as we have the first of Nov in Mo. it rained last night and we have come facing a cold west wind today & yesterday.

The cattle crowded up on the boat and sunk it, and came near drowning some of the men.

September 9

So cold this morning I can hardly write, heavy frost and ice. We meet large pack trains. Met 11 yesterday. We are in Powder river valey, camped in hearing of a quartz mill.

September 10

We passed by Ringo yesterday evening came 8 mile to this camp. It is raining this morning. We are in the valey skirted by snow crested pine covered mountains. We are nooning on the summit of the Blue mounts. We have been coming up all the fore noon. The horses are very tired, drizzling all the time too, we travailed till late through a cold rain, stopped close to a deserted store house I cooked supper in it. Tilla is very sick.

September 12

They are stopping to trade for some beef. The roads have been fine since we left the Daily ranch at the foot of the Mt. some men at the Quartz mill gave John a find hound that some emigrants had left at the house just before we came to this. A fox hunter had a mate for him and offered John a sock of flour, 50 lbs. for him, worth here \$6.50 John sold it to Mr. Durham for \$5.00 intends taking it in horse feed, it looks almost like a miracle.

September 13, 14, 15

Morning we laid bye here yesterday at the junction of Daily and Grand Ronde Road, on account of Liza Durhams being too sick to travail. Jackson, Ringo, and some of our friends of Kirks Train, we had not seen since we left, are camped with us. Thompson passed by yesterday morning. The name of the creek is Birch Creek.¹³ Tilla has been very sick for several days, which has gave me such a press of work, I have not had time to write.

I give you below a bit of medicines for your trip across the plains. Such as are in powder form you must get the druggist to give you a sample of the dose to enable you to administer it.

Get two ounces made up.

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon — for the infant give

5 grains every 15 minutes)

..... ½ ounce

Cholera Morbus—give oil and Laudanum with mustard over the whole bowels.

During a halt at a ranch, I avail myself of an opportunity to write. It looks more like living than anything I have seen, plenty of grain stacks, pigs in a pen, near where we are stopped, and fatning hogs and hens singing around and plenty of little chicks, all black with white toping. We have had some steep hill to climb this morning. Emaline is complaining.

Sunday morning. We are going to make a short drive this forenoon & rest the balance of the day at a large spring, those say, that are acquainted with the road.

A heavy storm set in and we were compelled to halt, and it soon commenced pouring down the hail in balls a size larger than buck shot.

Monday noon. I finished a letter home yesterday which occupied all the leisure I could get. WE came to the spring about 1 o'clock & stayed till this morning. John was quite sick when we stopped. Took opium & slept all evening. Emaline and 2 of her children on the sick list. I have my hands full, with sickness and stubbornness, I am almost at a loss to know what to do. But resolved to do my duty.

This morning Silas says Bell is sick. I doctor myself and children & feel concerned about Bell, but he has neither asked for medicine nor my advise. I could not have ever known it if not for my own observations. There is a good physician in the train, that is enough—we are encamped close to a willow branch I do not know the name, Graham is just below us, Ringo above, to judge from the down hill we came in on.

We are stopped to noon, Silas called the doctor this morning for Bell & said he must stop at the John Day River till he could come up to see her, so we came on as our team is weak and needs to be on grass. The mules and roan can stand it better than our other poor mares, since we left them, it has been up hill all the way. They will be apt to be late getting in. The doctor has an ox team. They passed just as we were getting ready to bring in the horses.

We took the Mt. road this morning. 2 of Mr. Durhams sons and families, the Ford and Graham of our train went to the landing to ship. Cooper, Ringo, old Mr. Durhams family, Brown, Rosenberger & our selves are encamped convenient to the first water we came to. That is about ten miles that we came today. Emaline is very complain-

ing & Bell is very low & they gave Cora a dose of blue mass today.

September 23

Evening camp. We arrived at the camping place about 2 o'clock. Bell is low, Emaline not able to tend her. I took her in my wagon and tended her till we got here. Her recovery is very doubtful.

September 24, 25, 26

Silas' family have been so sick and Tilla sick too. I have not had any time to write. Bell is better, I carried her yesterday in my wagon & tended her & Tilla, she is so low she can not raise her head. Emaline is down & will not take a bit of attention from my hands. I make her diet for her & get Mrs. Brown to take it to her, she is some better I think. All the train have tried to prevail on Silas to stop with his sick family but he still insists on crossing the Mt. we tarried yesterday till about 3 o'clock. We could get good pasture at 10 cts pr head by making a short drive, and we were paying 25 cts. I washed and baked light bread. The woman near where we were camped brought some delicacies to the sick. We had desperate roads. Crossed Deshoots [*Deschutes*] river on a tole bridge, \$2.00.

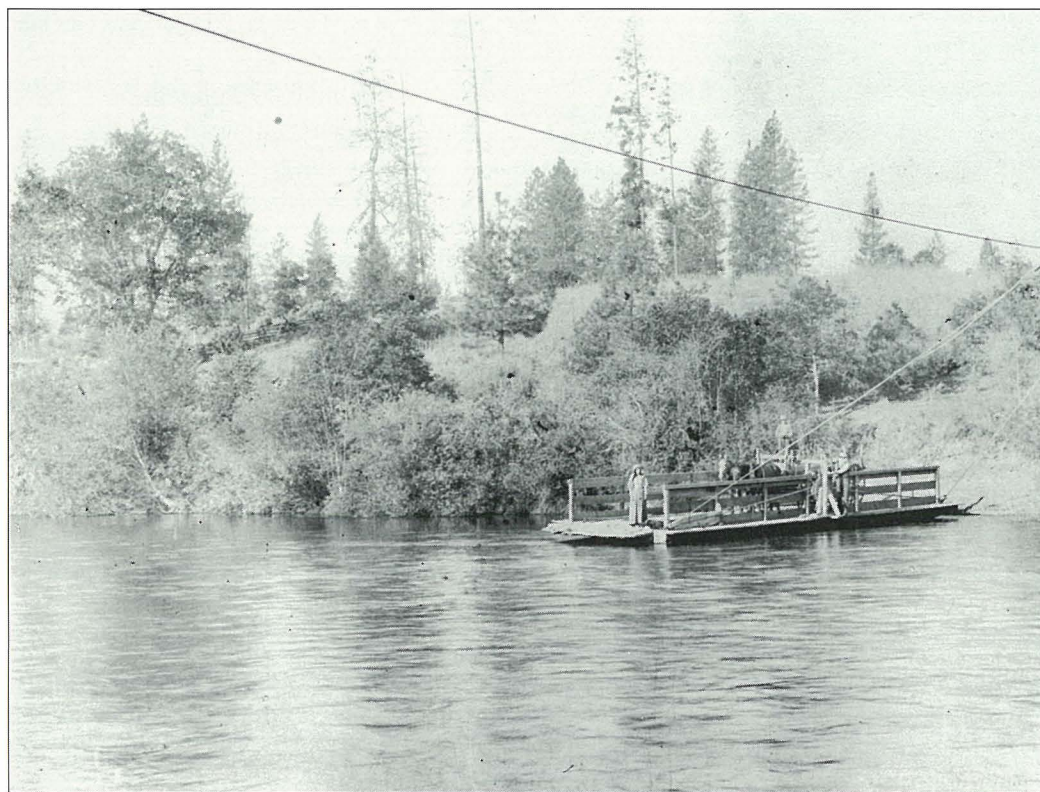
September 27

Morning. We made the drive by sun down camped within the Enclosure and they could just unharness the teams and let them go on fine grass and nice running water near us. Mrs. Durhams little girls have taken up with the children & Tilla is enjoying herself finely. We came to a very steep side Mt. road & all the teams had made a start up but our old wagon, when they went back to help Silas up, he told them he believed he would go back and stop

as Emaline was worse, so they had to stop there until Mr. Black & Will Rosenberger took him back. We gave them \$10.00 leaving us but \$6. While they were taking him back to house (where they left him as comfortable as could be expected), those that were left tried to get the wagons up, with the assistance of some men traveling in a light 2 horse vehicle. The third drive, our wagon got nearly to the top of a short steep turn in the road and stopped, the wagon commenced running back, I called to the inexperienced foreigner to hold the wheel but he kept beating the horses till they became unmanagable, and the wagon turned off the road, he then tried to hold it by grabbing the fore wheel, the man that was driving behind jumped down from his seat hollering for those within to get out, and just got to the hind wheel in time to save the wagon. I made all the haste I could to get the children out. It then took all hands to get the wagon back on the road.

September 29

In the Mt. detained to mend the hind axle of Mr. Browns wagon, which has just broken down. The sun is shining brightly when we came to the camping place late yesterday evening, we found Mr. Brown & Rosenberger there long enough to have good fires. Rosenberger had made his fire against a very tall pine which stood near his wagon. About 10 o'clock, Will raised the alarm that the tree was wind shaken and rapidly burning down. They all went to work and packed the wagons up hill on sidel-ing ground and then cut the tree down to make all things safe which fell square across the road which had to be cut off and drawn to one side by oxen this morning which detained us considerable.



John Maupin Black operated the first county-owned free ferry across the Rogue River from 1891-94 for a salary of \$25 per month. The ferry was located just north of present-day Shady Cove. Photo courtesy of Marguerite Black

October 22

At Mr. Knights where we stopped because I was not able to travail. I am now able to walk about & all the rest are sick. Sent for the doctor for Mr. Black as he was worse than ever last night.

November 3

Left Knights, landed at Uncle Josiah Hannah's 17th.¹⁴

December 1

Isaac arrived at Uncle Jo's.

December 2

It snowed last night in the valley. This morning is rapidly melting.

December 10

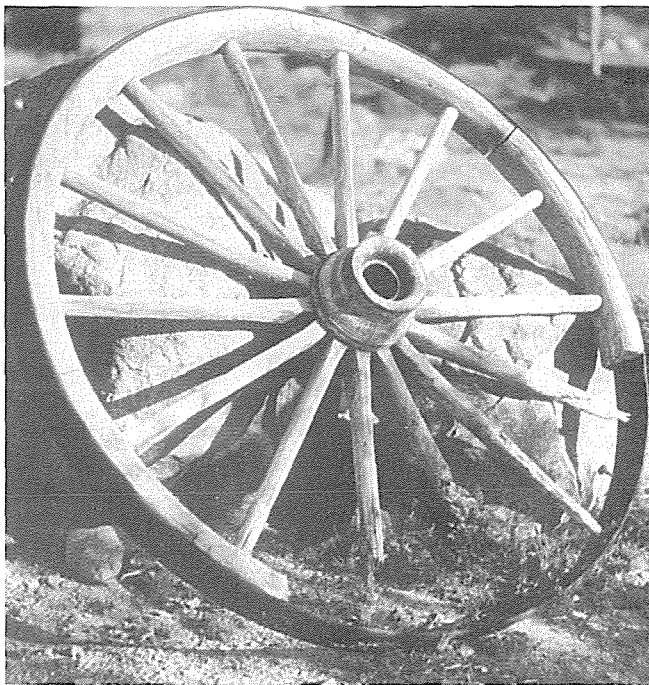
Raining, Rogues river out of its banks. Still at Uncle Jo's.

January 10, 1866

Moved home to a little cabin about one and half miles above Uncle Jo's. Close to the river.

January 19

Heavy snow fell last night & it has been raining all day. I laid up my work to get about dinner and had a nice time getting a bucket of water.



John M. and Mary Louisa Black lived out their lives on their farm near present-day Shady Cove. He died in 1907 and she in 1911. They are buried in the Central Point cemetery.

On the inside of the back cover of the note book is the following bible verse:

PSALM CXXVI

"5. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

ENDNOTES

1. The first eleven entries begin May 5, 1865 and are terse listings of campsites or notings of the weather. These early entries are written in another hand, possibly by Mary Louisa's husband, John Maupin Black.

2. Wagon trains, strung out single file over long distances during the day, would be parked in a square at night. Such a formation, when guarded by armed men and women, was protection from assault by Indians.

3. Coffee was a staple along the trail. It was bought green, and browned and ground when needed.

4. The early Oregon Trail passed through low mountain ranges on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains. These black hills extended from South Dakota through Wyoming and as far south as Colorado. Today the name Black Hills refers to low mountains chiefly in South Dakota.

5. Travelers found the water supply along the trail to be unpredictable in quality and location. Much of the standing water was alkaline and unfit to use, forcing the thirsty emigrants to drink out of mud puddles or buffalo wallows. Diarrhea was a common complaint.

6. Emigrants found the Platte River crossing challenging. The wide river bottom was sandy, and any wagon which stopped was sure to bog down and have to be muscled out. The next major water obstacle, the Laramie River, could flow in torrents during parts of the year. When too swift to ford, wagon beds were frequently connected and ferried across.

7. In 1860, the railroad extended west to St. Joseph, Missouri. Mail and express directed to the Pacific Coast was sent by overland stagecoach over the Oregon Trail. Stage stations were located at convenient distances for changes of drivers or horses.

8. The heavy emigration along the Oregon Trail was gold for owners of toll ferries or bridges constructed at key crossings. Fares were based on the number of people, livestock and wagons, forcing travelers to carry enough money or face crossing natural obstacles at more dangerous points.

9. The early spring wagon trains took advantage of the new grass. Later trains, however, were discouraged to find little or none, and were forced to carry grain to feed the livestock.

10. Mary Louisa Black was born this day in 1837 but makes no mention of it in her diary.

11. Bitter Creek, Wyoming, was located approximately 110 miles from the Platte River.

12. It was common practice to raise the wagon beds several inches above the bolsters while fording higher streams.

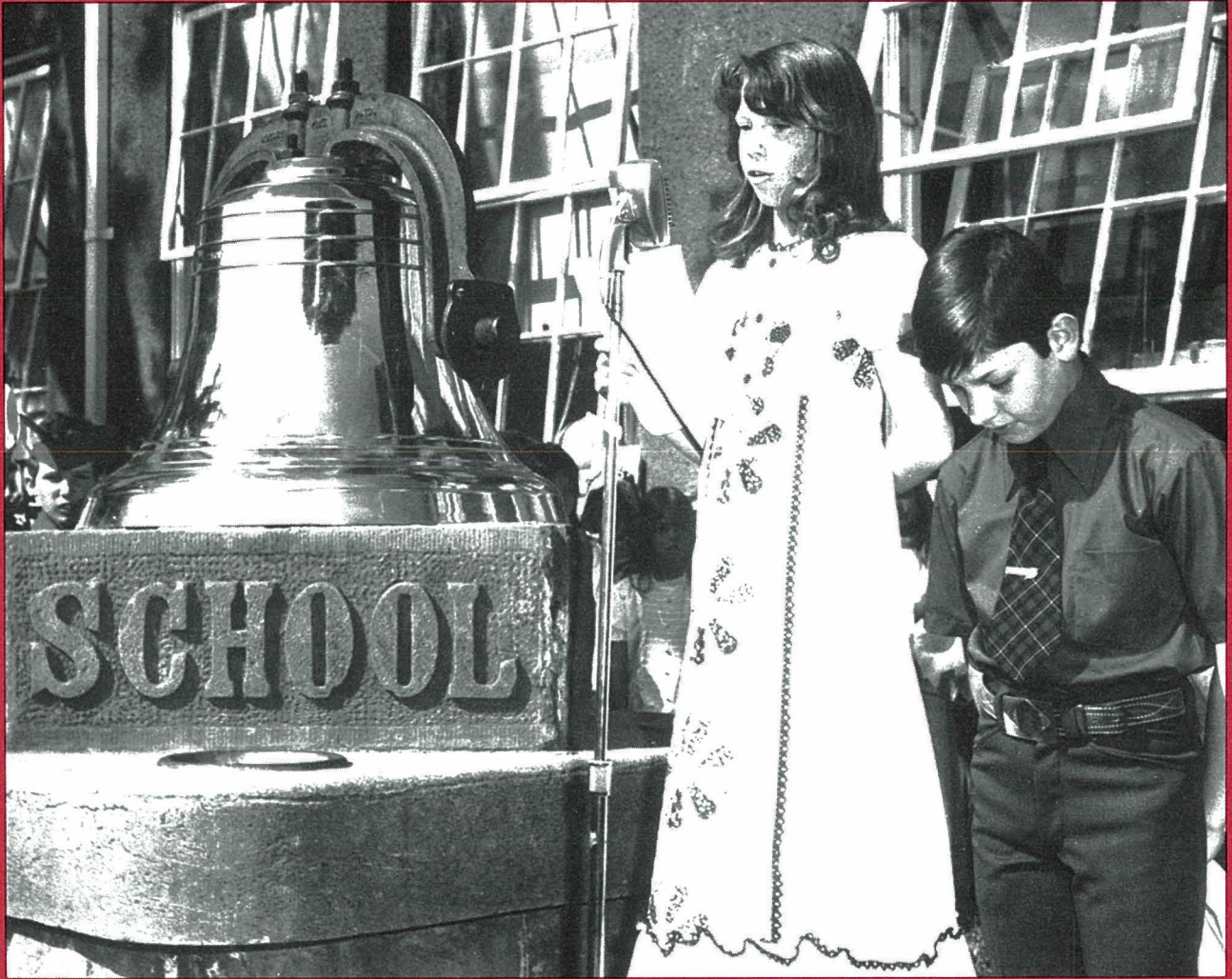
13. The Oregon Trail passed Birch Creek and again joined the Snake River near Farewell Bend. Farewell Bend was so named because it was the last view the emigrants had of the Snake River, along which they had traveled so many weary miles. (From *A History of the Oregon Trail, Santa Fe Trail and Other Trails*, by J. R. Greg. Portland: Binford's & Mott Publishers, 1955.)

14. Josiah Hannah and his family arrived in Oregon in 1862 and established a farm and pottery business near present-day Shady Cove. See "Pioneer Pottery: Wares for Southern Oregon Homesteaders," *Table Rock Sentinel*, Sept./Oct. 1988, pp. 10-17.



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Marguerite Black, wife of John Black, the grandson of Mary Louisa Black, is a retired school teacher from the Applegate and Central Point districts. They are both long time family historians. Says Mrs. Black, "He does the research and I do the writing."



Cast in 1896, the original Washington School bell shone brightly during a 1976 Bicentennial program SOHS #12159

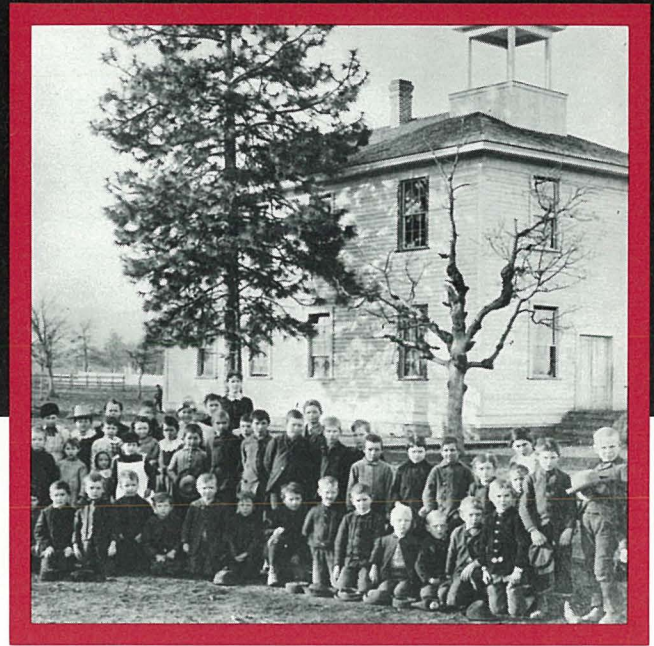
Students + Past = Future

by Dawna Curler

Medford's Washington School students are proud. They are proud that their old school building has been brightened with a new coat of paint and the addition of a long awaited media center. They also are proud of their school's unique past, a history as old as Medford itself.

The media center, which opened in September, was the last project funded by district building bonds approved by voters in 1980. It is a spacious, well-furnished room where students can assemble for programs, use library resources, and explore their school's history through a unique exhibit.

Medford's first public school (right) was relocated in 1891 to the corner of 10th and Oakdale where it serves today as an office building. The original Washington School (below) was built after fires leveled earlier wooden structures. Students sat two to a desk in this 1907 classroom (far right). SOHS #551, 8662, 12021



As the construction project got underway, additional funds were dedicated to paint the building's exterior. Students raised more than \$150 in pennies to pay for cleaning the large copper letters that spell out "Washington School" across the building's facade, and the school custodian polished up a brass bell that sits on the front lawn as a monument to an earlier Washington School building.

With so much attention focused on the fifty-seven-year-old structure, students and staff are developing a strong appreciation of the building's historic character.

"I enjoy working in the older building," says school principal Stephanie Johnson. "I think of past generations and am reminded that we are part of the cycle, helping to design and develop history ourselves."

Johnson says she loves the school's architectural detailing which isn't found in the more modern schools: details such as floor to ceiling windows, walk-in closets lining interior classroom walls; and hardwood floors. Johnson's



enthusiasm for the school's history is contagious, inspiring a new focus in the curriculum.

Starting with old school records and memorabilia found in one of the walk-in closets, students are discovering their educational roots. Advanced class members started their own oral history program by tape-recording visits with former Washington School students. Through these taped interviews, old newspaper articles, and other resources from the Southern Oregon Historical Society, students

learned of the direct link between their school and the first public school in Medford.

School District 49 was established in 1884, just months after the Oregon and California Railroad founded Medford. That summer, the district built a two-story, wood-frame schoolhouse at the corner of West Main and South Oakdale, the site of today's Jackson County Courthouse. But early Medford's population grew rapidly and in just a few years the building could no longer meet enrollment needs. To free the site for a larger structure, the old school was relocated to the corner of South Oakdale and 10th Street where it became a private residence.

A larger wood-frame building replaced the first school on its original site in 1891, only to burn at the hands of an arsonist in 1895. That same year, fire burned students out of two other temporary quarters as they awaited completion of their new, more fire-resistant brick schoolhouse. The brick building, the third to be built on the original schoolhouse site, was completed in 1896. It continued to be the only school in District 49 until 1906 and served under the name of Washington School until its demolition in 1931.¹

Jerry Latham went to Washington School in the 1920s. During his interview with a young Washington scholar, he described details of the old brick school:

"We all had to line up by classes out on the sidewalk on Oakdale and then we would march into the school from there . . . they had long halls where you left your coat and things before you went into your classroom . . . the floors were oiled and certainly a definite fire hazard, but they were adequate . . . first grade was in the building outside of the school, this little square building in the playgrounds . . . At first they didn't have any indoor playgrounds or auditorium at all and then about '25 they built an outside building that was open to the air. It had win-



dows facing around it, but there wasn't anything in it, just chicken wire screen around it . . . the floor was granite—it wasn't paved—and so we played basketball in there.”²

Newspaper stories from June 1931 tell of school desks and other furniture stored in the two outside buildings, the “play shed” and the “annex” while workers tore down the old Washington School and built the new.³

School board officials sold the land under Washington School to the City of Medford. The city in turn transferred title to Jackson County as the site of the new county courthouse. The price tag was a neat \$23,000⁴ and went hand in hand with a \$265,000 school bond election paving the way to build a new high school, convert the old high school into a junior high, add four rooms to Roosevelt elementary and construct a new Washington School on Peach Street. Community support for the bond issue was overwhelming. It passed 904 to 128.⁵

The depression hit this area hard. Although local citizens discussed the need for better educational facilities, the bottom line was that the building project would provide local jobs! “This is the opportune time to build as all building materials are lower than they have been for years,” John C. Mann, of Mann’s Department Store, told a *Mail Tribune* reporter in December 1931.

“Labor is plentiful and it will help to solve our unemployment situation. Crowded conditions, low building

costs and unemployment make the issue imperative,” said attorney George Roberts. “We expect to use only local labor, in so far as possible, only local materials,” promised school superintendent E. H. Hedrick. “It is also the school board’s plan to allow local bidders and contractors a margin of five percent in the letting of bids and contracts.”⁶

Popular Medford architect Frank Clark, designed both the new Washington School and the high school on Oakdale (now South Medford High).⁷ After some debate, the school board selected concrete over brick as the preferred building material for the new schools. Concrete was 20 to 30 percent less expensive and called for local supplies and unskilled labor. If brick had been used, materials and bricklayers would have to come from outside the area.⁸

Construction of the new Washington School began early in 1931. That summer, demolition crews ripped down the old institution where generations of Medford’s children had laughed and played and studied. Materials from the old school were recycled. Thousands of bricks were cleaned. Some went into the new rooms at Roosevelt School; others were stored for future school improvements. Stones from the foundation formed the support base for the old Washington School bell, now proudly displayed in front of the new school.⁹

For awhile, the bell’s fate was uncertain. It could not be rung at the new school because the noise would wake the neighborhood babies. During demolition, a local

Uncomfortable second graders confront the camera for their 1925 class portrait on the steps of the old Washington School.
SOHS #10148



newspaper wrote: "The sight of the big bell that stood in the Washington School tower for 36 years past, lying in the school yard among the lumber and brick debris piles resulting from the razing of the building is a pathetic one to passersby, many of whom passed happy years of their youth in attending the school."

The article went on to quote a former pupil who had been brooding over the discarded bell: "Mr. Colman suddenly exclaimed, 'I will give \$50 for that bell.' 'What would you do with it?' 'Why I might upturn it on my lawn and plant flowers in it. Anything to preserve it to prosperity—'er, I mean posterity. I would willingly give \$25 for it.'"

Society and School Work Together

Excitement filled the room as children, parents, faculty, and dignitaries gathered September 15 to dedicate Washington School's new media center. Speeches were made, a cake was cut and old friends were reunited. Although the focus that evening was on the building itself, a small exhibit of historic photographs and objects related to the school's history received a fair share of attention.

The exhibit resulted from a joint project between Washington School and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. During the past year a number of people from both institutions worked together to help students study their school heritage. Besides providing historical information, the Society shared instructions for conducting oral history interviews and caring for historic objects and documents. With the exception of a few photographs reproduced from the Society's collection, the images and objects displayed belong to the school.

Society staff constructed a special exhibit case and designed and installed the exhibit. A key element of the project is a bulletin board alongside the exhibit case. Students will create their own historical displays on this board using other photographs and documents that have been encapsulated with special archival conservation material.

Ten minutes of silence passed, when he again came out of his despondency and said: 'Yes siree, I'll save that bell, even if it costs me \$15.'¹⁰ Mr. Colman paid nothing for the bell. Instead, Frank Clark incorporated it into a design for a drinking fountain for the new school that opened September 8, 1931.¹¹

After more than half a century, the new school is now considered old, but it aged gracefully, keeping alive a tradition of school spirit and community. Year after year the halls fill with bright-eyed youngsters looking toward the future. But as they reach forward with hope and anticipation, they may also look back with pride.



ENDNOTES

1. Robert Stedman, *A Short History of Medford School System From 1883 Through 1925*, Thesis, University of Oregon, 1953.
- Jennie Mae Snedecor, *The History of Medford*, (Manuscript 979.5, Southern Oregon Historical Society Library).
- Both sources give an overview of the Medford school system's development. Lincoln Elementary School was built on North Bartlett in 1906. The first high school was also built on North Bartlett in 1909. Roosevelt and Jackson Elementary Schools were added in 1911.
2. Washington School oral history tapes.
3. *Medford Mail Tribune*, June 18, 1931, 8:3.
4. Ordinance #2710, City of Medford, June 16, 1931.
5. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 17, 1930, 1:3.
6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 15, 1930 and Dec. 17, 1930, 1:2.
7. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1930, 1:7.
8. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 9, 1930, 2:6.
9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, June 18, 1931, 8:3.
10. News clipping from Thomas Scrapbook, Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection.
11. News clipping from Thomas Scrapbook, Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection and *Medford Mail Tribune*, August 30, 1931, 8:1.

Dawna Curler, the Society's curator of interpretation, and staff members Jime Matoush, Vern Christian and Carolyn Sharrock organized the Washington School exhibit.

Book Review

Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore

by Paul Pintarich

Run the name "Applegate" by a native Oregonian and most often one infamous historical image will appear, that of a hungry, battered wagon train cussin' its way through what was known as "that damned Applegate cutoff."

The Applegate Trail, as Shannon Applegate prefers to call it, was a tortuous but well-intended southern route blazed by Applegate's ancestors in 1846. It left the Oregon Trail at the Snake River, in what is now Idaho, and cut through portions of Utah, Nevada and California before creeping up into the western valleys from the south.

The Applegate brothers, Charley, Lindsay and Jesse, brought the first wagon train from Missouri to Oregon in 1843. To them, it was a much safer route than the last leg of the Oregon Trail, a harrowing run down the Columbia, then a wild waterway turbulent with boat-chomping rapids.

Lindsay and Jesse each lost a young son on that treacherous run, losses that haunted them and remain in the family's memory to this day. That long and rich memory has been gathered by Shannon Applegate into *Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore*.

Tolstoy wrote in *Anna Karenina* that, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

There was a bit of both in the large and restless Applegate clan, a thriving and energetic bunch that slipped away from the "crowded" Willamette Valley to establish its dynasty farther south, in the Yoncalla Valley near present-day Roseburg.

As chronicled by the author, a descendant of Charley and Melinda, and daughter of Col. Rex Applegate, the family's multifarious members reflected laughter and sadness, brilliance and eccentricity.

Charley built a huge, two-story frame home—one side for men and the other for women, but with one fireplace; "only the smoke was allowed to mingle," the author explains—in the valley, a national historic site still owned by the family. From there, the Applegates spread throughout the region.

Applegates went to the gold fields; they operated a toll road over the Siskiyou; they were typesetters, teachers and Indian agents.

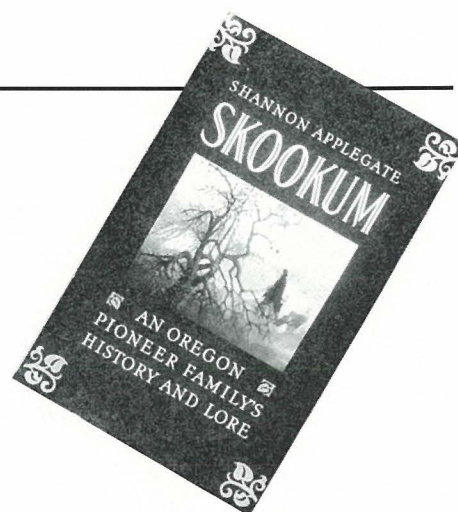
Skookum (the Indian word for spirit, power and strength) is a history of Oregon through the tales of one of its first families.

Shannon Applegate, who concludes the book with her own story, explains, "This is a book about being a family, a westerner and an Oregonian that reaches deeply into the region. The women of the family, all of whom were well-educated, 'kept the time,' the archives and they were certainly a bunch of characters. There are some 25,000 Applegates listed in a national index, all are interrelated, so as you read, think of all the characters you are going to meet named Applegate."

Born in Maryland, where she studied art, the forty-four-year-old author moved to Oregon after living around the country and in Canada. She has six children, ages seven through twenty-one. Up until three years ago, when she was married for a second time, she did tough duty as a single parent, living on welfare for a while in Eugene.

Trained as an artist, which brought her into competition with her first husband (who taught painting), Applegate was writing poetry and short stories when she met her great-aunt Eva at a reunion in 1968. It was that meeting that sparked Applegate's interest in writing the family history.

She began writing portions of a



narrative that would become chapters. While giving a reading at Purdue University, she was heard by Don Bodey, who would become fiction editor of *The Northwest Review* at the University of Oregon.

Bodey published her stories and in 1977 Applegate received an award from the Coordinated Council of Literary Magazines and a call from her agent Ellen Levine. Busy with children and a job as director of the Bandon Historical Society Museum, Applegate didn't answer Levine's call for three years. Finally in 1980, she began writing, moving into the old family home where she was cradled by family history, and confronted by real family ghosts.

Applegate wrote it all down in a wonderful, original style, working alongside a cousin, Susan, whose paintings illustrate the book and its cover.

Applegate is married to Daniel Robertson, who is director of the Douglas County Museum of History and Natural History in Roseburg. The couple was married in the family home and exchanged their vows in Chinook Jargon, the *lingua franca* of the region's Indians, white explorers, trappers and early settlers.

The author is currently at work on a historical novel set in Bandon during World War I.

"Woody Allen said once that eighty percent of life is just showing up. I feel like that. I used to get up in the morning at five and write. I had a tamale business at night. I was on welfare."

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"Dancing All Night"

And Other Tales of Christmas

by DeAnne Mansveld

The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season begins months before the holiday itself arrives. The "commercial" Christmas bombardment strikes soon after Labor Day. Caroles ring repetitiously through the air, the notes striking different chords in different people. Some feel irritation, aggravation and dread; others are filled with merriment, joy and anticipation. Thoughts turn to trees, decorations, lights, meals, parties; preparations that must be made before the Christmas Eve deadline. Memories flood in of Christmases past, making traditions and customs an essential part of this holiday season.

Although Christmas trees have been a part of holiday festivities in this region for the past century, the local lot brimming with freshly cut trees for sale is a relatively new convenience. However, many people today still make an annual trek into the forest to cut their own tree, as was necessary so many years ago. Chuck Sweet, now residing in Medford, fondly recalled a family tradition in 1928 in his essay entitled "Memories:"

Take for instance that experience I looked forward to from year to year while living on the farm — the choosing and cutting of the Christmas tree. Along about three or four days before the 25th of December, usually the day following a heavy snowfall, the horses were hitched to the sleigh with its constantly tinkling bells, and we would tum-

ble aboard, laughing and shouting. The cold was never noticed on this day, no matter how low the red line in the thermometer on the barn door, for we had partaken of an early warm breakfast, and we were bundled to the ears in our heavy winter clothes, but, even without these aforementioned aids, the excitement would probably have been enough to keep at least the younger members of the party sufficiently warm.¹

Margaret Frakes, another Rogue Valley resident, remembers a different type of tree harvesting when she was a girl growing up in a part of the country where evergreens were scarce.² There, resourceful residents often used to "make" a Christmas tree, dressing the little fruit trees with boughs cut from live evergreens.

In some homes, having a decorated tree at Christmas was rare. "How thrilled were we with childless glee," wrote former Central Point educator, Mae B. Richardson, "When we saw our first Christmas tree."³ The tree was a part of the community of Table Rock's 1893 celebration. To Richardson, the tree transformed the "small board schoolhouse" into a "beautiful palace fit for a queen." After Bible verses were read and prayers were said:

The curtain went back with a pull and there was the tree laden with beautiful sacks of mosquito netting filled with nuts and plain candy, many tin candles all aglow, strings of tinsel, popcorn and toys. . .

Candles were used to brighten trees before electric lights became possible and popular. Frakes remembers that her family used half-shells of English walnuts as candle holders on their trees. As beautiful as they were, though, candles were not without grave risk. Former Medford resident Aileen Johnson recalled that her family met with near disaster during the Christmas of 1911:

That probably was the last year they ever burned candles on the tree. A tree looks just beautiful with candles flickering all over it but it's very dangerous. For some reason Pappa lit the candles and I don't know why he went back to bed. But when he came out and looked it had caught the dining room curtains on fire. The tree was always in the dining room. And we had quite a time getting that fire out. Burned up Pappa's new shirt.⁵

Illuminating a tree is easier today than it was in the past. Tree-trimmers may choose a rainbow of colors that will blink, flash, twinkle or just shine brightly through the night.

Lights radiating from the limbs of outdoor Christmas trees have been popular for many years too, but not without chagrin. *The Ashland Tidings* recounted a frustrating tale on December 11, 1934:

Every morning almost without exception, since the installation of the Christmas trees in the street intersections of the downtown district, electric lights on the trees have been missing.

Men working in the city electrical department have found many of the sockets empty of their bright green and red globes. Only five were left on the tree at Third and Main a few mornings ago.

Police are of the belief that small boys are responsible, dashing into the street after the night patrolman has turned a corner.

Usually the day following a heavy snowfall, the horses were hitched to the sleigh with its constantly tinkling bells, and we would tumble aboard, laughing and shouting.

The variety and audacity of tree garnishments has also changed over the years. Decorators may select from ornaments of every shape, size and color, even ones that contain moving scenes. Sprays duplicate snow and tinsel imitates icicles.

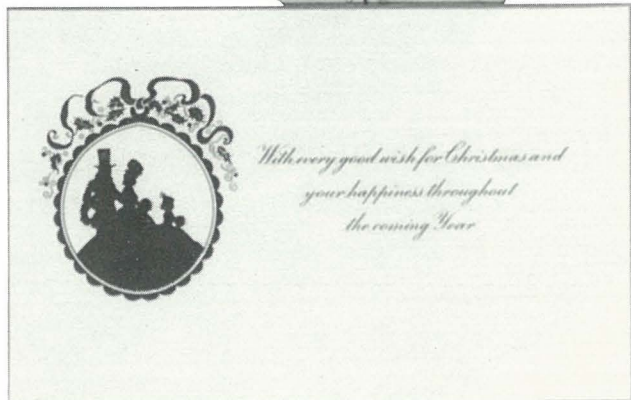
As early as September, Christmas decorations appear in local stores and by October's end, they compete for space on crowded shelves with Halloween decorations. Helen Wilcox, a resident of the Rogue Valley Manor, remarked that "people never even used to talk of Christmas before Thanksgiving."⁶

For many, Christmas brings visions of decorated trees (below), and sugar plum faeries (left).
SOHS #6091, 12161





Mailed Christmas greetings have been a tradition in this country throughout this century. These holiday postcards date from 1907.



Johnson recalled how her family's tree was always "decorated with strings of popcorn interspaced with laurel berries—also with strings of paper rings made of different colors of paper, which Juanita and I had spent weeks making." Mary Louise Pride, a Medford resident, told of decorations her mother made by wrapping homemade candies in paper and attaching them to the tree with string.⁸ Decorations, though homemade, were not unimaginative. Pride also recalled one special treat that her mother made by breaking open English walnuts, placing pennies or dimes (a very special treat) inside, gluing the nuts back together using egg whites and hanging them on the tree.⁹

Christmas wouldn't be the same without hanging bundles of mistletoe around the house. Ed Redford, a Medford resident, recounted this boyhood adventure:

One Christmas custom at our house which I remember with particular fondness was going out to gather mistletoe.

My dad would load my brother and me into our pony cart, and we would drive out through the snow (this was in Indiana) to some of the great stands of black walnut trees, where the mistletoe grew prolifically. Since the mistletoe usually grew well above our reach, and since black walnut trees were not the easiest to climb, Pop usually brought his shotgun. A couple of shots would bring down all we wanted for ourselves and for neighbors.

I can remember, as I got to 7 or 8, wanting to use the gun myself but being torn with the fear of its kick. (I did usually take my .22 along, but seldom could I bring down even a sprig with it.)¹⁰

For many, turkey dinner is a mainstay of the Christmas celebration, although some such meals have been fraught with disappointment. The *Medford Mail Tribune* recorded a distressing event that befell L. E. Hoover during the Christmas season of 1911. Mr. Hoover awoke one morning a few days before Christmas only to find that someone had absconded with three of the four turkeys that were to be a part of his Christmas feast. He lamented that "the one that was left was the smallest, poorest and altogether the most undesirable of the lot, and . . . absolutely inadequate for a proper Christmas feed."¹¹

Mr. Hoover was left with at least one turkey, but Minnie Bybee, the daughter of William and Elizabeth Bybee, made note of the holiday. She went without turkey dinner altogether. At the age of 19 when she was a student at St. Mary's Academy in Portland, Bybee recorded the events of Christmas 1890 in her diary:

Little Journal. "Christmas day," but oh how different from other Christmas days no turkey dinner as we have at home. wandered around got up at a late hour went to the convent for some of my things the girls were in chapel, saw their Christmas presents took tea with them from the little ones dishes. Came home and read until late.¹²



A skeptical Santa (reportedly Clarence Lane) patiently listens to the Christmas wishes of eager youngsters. SOHS #12172

While Minnie Bybee yearned for turkey dinner, the Rev. Moses Williams must have enjoyed his dinner feast on Christmas 1889. His journal entry for the day noted that he “caught 4 quail in the trap.”¹³

Another clergyman, the Rev. Martin Peterson, noted in his diary, dated Christmas 1877, “. . . that the Apostle did not require us to observe any holidays and that the only day set apart for religious public service was the first day of the week.”¹⁴

Other valley residents celebrated the holidays with jubilant festivities. “We danced all night till break of light went home with the girls in the morning,” wrote Welborn Beeson, son of pioneer John Beeson, in his diary describing a party he attended with his mother on Christmas Day 1855.¹⁵

Holiday celebrations usually focused on observing past traditions and customs. But occasionally the circumstances of the times dictated the form of celebration.

Eleanor Williams, a resident of the Rogue Valley Manor, recalls a Christmas she spent working in a Panamanian orphanage fifty years ago.¹⁶ One of the children was very ill and desperately needed medicine. But the U. S. fleet was in port and, as Williams explained, “usually one didn’t go out when the fleet was in if you were a young woman.” She continued, “I was not concerned with the American Navy; I was concerned with Carmencita’s medicine.”

Williams took the orphanage bus to get medicine for the young child. When she returned to the bus, she found

it full of sailors. They were “fascinated that I spoke English,” recalled Williams. After returning to the ship, the sailors invited the children aboard for a holiday celebration that she described:

Santa arrived by seaplane, all dressed up in proper costume and came out with a “ho-ho-ho” and a big bag of presents. Each sailor and their adopted (for the moment) child got a present. It was a lovely, lovely event . . . an emotional kind of thing. The boys away from home were weeping and the children screaming.¹⁷

Mr. Hoover awoke one morning a few days before Christmas only to find that someone had absconded with three of the four turkeys that were to be a part of his Christmas feast.

Another manor resident, Kathryn Spencer, remembers Christmas in 1945 when she was with the American Red Cross in Belgium near the site of the Battle of the Bulge.¹⁸ She said it was “quite exciting being there at that particular time.” Their hospital was only ten miles away from

the battle zone and, according to Spencer, by Christmas Eve the danger was so eminent it was decided the Red Cross would have to be evacuated to Liege.

The evacuees were taken to a hospital that was not prepared for their arrival, but the staff was able to serve ice cream and cake to the group. Spencer said they were told to be "very, very quiet" and not to interfere with hospital operations. They sat around a table and very, very quietly sang caroles. "Though all were teary eyed, it was really a delightful experience," she said.

Over the years, all but the most special presents are easily forgotten. What remains of Christmas in the mind and heart are the unique memories of individual holiday experiences.

Recently, younger residents of the valley pondered the holiday season and traditions that are special for them. For example, Mrs. Paula Joham's kindergarten class at Elk-Trail Elementary School made a list of favorite Christmas activities that included playing in the snow, going for a walk, having a special dinner, opening and giving presents and having a Christmas party.

May all share the wishes of the youngster who most looked forward to "being with family and being happy" on this special day.



ENDNOTES

1. Charles Sweet, "Memories," The Poly High, publication of Polytechnic High School, Los Angeles, California, 1928-1929, p. 9.
2. Personal interview with Margaret Frakes, Nov. 1, 1988.

3. Mae B. Richardson, "Table Rock's First Christmas Tree—Dec. 24, 1893," *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 27, 1973, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library collection.

4. Ibid.

5. Oral history interview recorded by L. Scott Clay with Aileen Marie Crawford Johnson in 1981, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

6. Personal interview with Helen Wilcox, Nov. 1, 1988.

7. Aileen Johnson oral history.

8. Personal interview with Mary Louise Pride, Nov. 1, 1988.

9. Ibid.

10. Written statement from Ed Redford, Nov. 1988.

11. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 28, 1911.

12. Personal diaries of Minnie Ida Bybee, Dec. 25, 1890, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

13. Personal diaries of Moses Williams, Dec. 25, 1889, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

14. Personal diaries of Martin Peterson, Dec. 25, 1877, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

15. Personal diaries of Welborn Beeson, Dec. 25, 1855, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

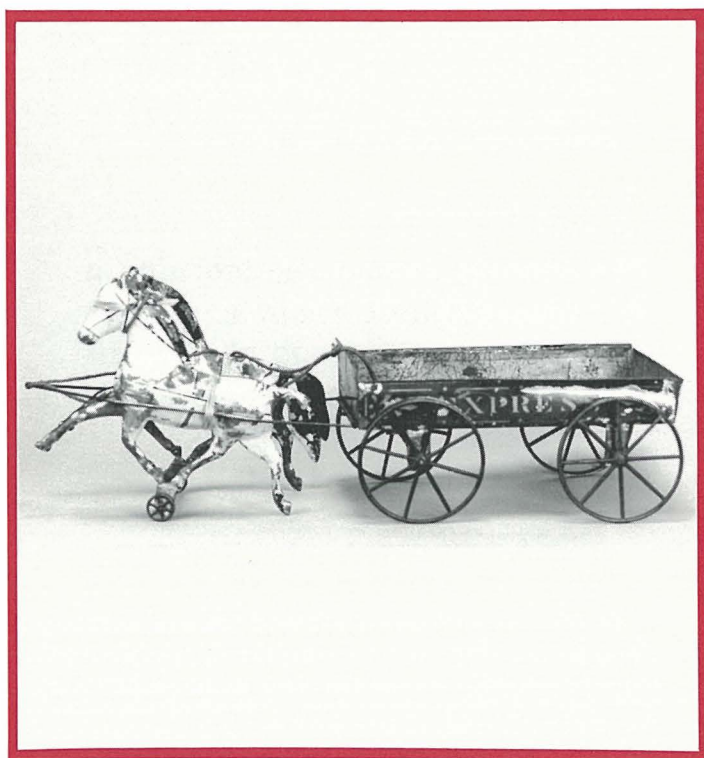
16. Personal interview with Eleanor Williams, Nov. 1, 1988.

17. Ibid.

18. Personal interview with Kathryn Spencer, Nov. 1, 1988.

Deann Mansveld is a student at Southern Oregon State College studying communications. She also is a volunteer for the Society and is anxiously awaiting the arrival of Christmas.

From the Collections



Toys have played a large part in the charm of Christmas celebrations. Gathered under pine boughs bending low with ornaments, toys often stir in us memories of standing before a decorated tree, eyes wide with wonder and hearts filled with the excitement that only the yuletide season can bring.

This "express" wagon and horses were part of a recent donation from Jesse Margaret Dodge of Ashland. Miss Dodge recalled putting a toy Santa in the driver's seat at Christmas time and filling the back with fresh pine boughs, cones, and other decorations.

Her brother, Will E. Dodge, originally owned the toy. Born in 1883, Will played with it when he was a small child in Ashland. The wagon and horses show signs of considerable use.

Toys of this era were usually cast iron or tin. Cast iron was heavy and rust-resistant, but brittle and tended to fracture easily. The wagon and horses pictured here are made of tin (actually thin sheet metal coated with a thin rust barrier of tin). Tin was more suitable for mass production.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring an item bimonthly in this column will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collections.

Calendar of Events

Through 1990

Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroad in the Rogue Valley The Society's major exhibit at the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History traces the coming and going of the railroad, how it changed people's lives and the valley economy, its local role in the nation's battles overseas, and the introduction of the railroad worker as an important part of the valley's communities.

Through March 1989

Home Entertainment: 1852-1988 An exhibit that looks at the variety of pastime activities that families and individuals have pursued during their leisure hours at home. Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum.



Through 1990

New Exhibit: HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue features the wares and techniques of the 19th-century pottery (once located near present-day Shady Cove) and focuses on pioneer methods of food preservation and preparation. Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.

November 19

Shannon Applegate will autograph and do a reading from her recent publication, *Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore*, from 1-3 p.m. at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ash-

land. A product of 18 years of research and writing, *Skookum* traces the history of the Applegate family in southern Oregon. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

November 22

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting at the Phoenix Elementary School, 215 N. Rose, Phoenix. Members and the general public are invited.

November 24

All Southern Oregon Historical Society museums will be closed for the observance of Thanksgiving.

December 3

We Knead Bread is a workshop to introduce children ages 8-12 to the American tradition of bread baking. Participants will investigate methods of wheat harvesting and milling, and try their hand at mixing, kneading, rising and shaping their own loaf to bake at home. Pre-registration is required by 5 p.m. November 25, and is limited to eight. Call (503) 488-1341 for additional details. From 1-4 p.m. at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ashland. Fee: \$2.50 for Society members, \$3.50 for non-members.

All offices and departments of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, except the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum's telephone number is (503) 488-1341.

Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Fri., 1-5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Children's Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues.-Sat., 1-5 p.m.

Administration Offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.



December 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, and 20-23

From 1-5 each day, **Nana Claus** will visit the Children's Museum to hear the secret holiday wishes of youngsters. Her grandmotherly appearance, Christmas spirit, and gingerbread cookies help younger children, who may be a little leery of ole Saint Nick, feel comfortable in sharing those special requests. Children also may make ornaments for display on the Children's Museum Christmas tree.

December 3-4, 10-11, and 17-18

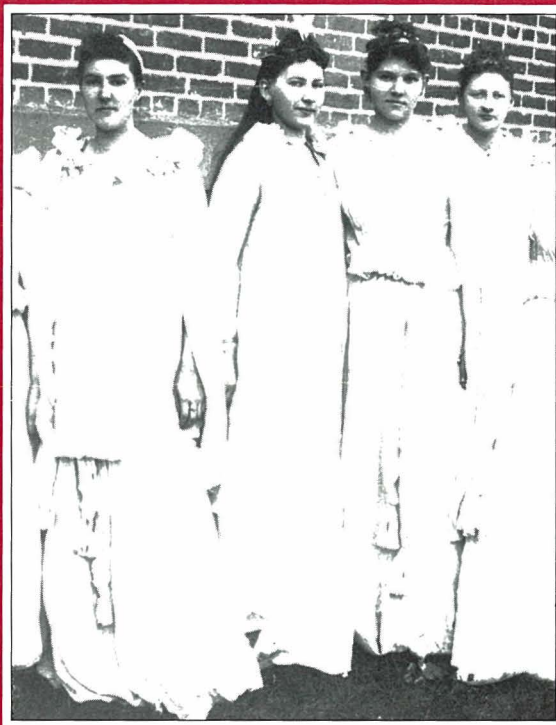
The sights and aromas of an old-fashioned Christmas return to Jacksonville as the Beekman House opens its doors to visitors as part of the Jacksonville Chamber's **Christmas 1888**. The home will be decked in appropriate late 19th-century holiday style. Costumed interpreters will welcome callers between 12-4 p.m. while cooks bake cookies in the woodstove oven for guests to sample. Donations accepted.

December 24 and 31

The Southern Oregon Historical Society **Research Library** will be closed. All Society museums, however, will be open their regular Saturday hours.

December 25 and January 1

All Southern Oregon Historical Society museums will be closed to allow staff members and volunteers to observe Christmas and New Year's Day with their families.



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

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The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

ing & Bell is very low & they gave Cora a dose of blue mass today.

September 23

Evening camp. We arrived at the camping place about 2 o'clock. Bell is low, Emaline not able to tend her. I took her in my wagon and tended her till we got here. Her recovery is very doubtful.

September 24, 25, 26

Silas' family have been so sick and Tilla sick too. I have not had any time to write. Bell is better, I carried her yesterday in my wagon & tended her & Tilla, she is so low she can not raise her head. Emaline is down & will not take a bit of attention from my hands. I make her diet for her & get Mrs. Brown to take it to her, she is some better I think. All the train have tried to prevail on Silas to stop with his sick family but he still insists on crossing the Mt. we tarried yesterday till about 3 o'clock. We could get good pasture at 10 cts pr head by making a short drive, and we were paying 25 cts. I washed and baked light bread. The woman near where we were camped brought some delicacies to the sick. We had desperate roads. Crossed Deshoots [*Deschutes*] river on a tole bridge, \$2.00.

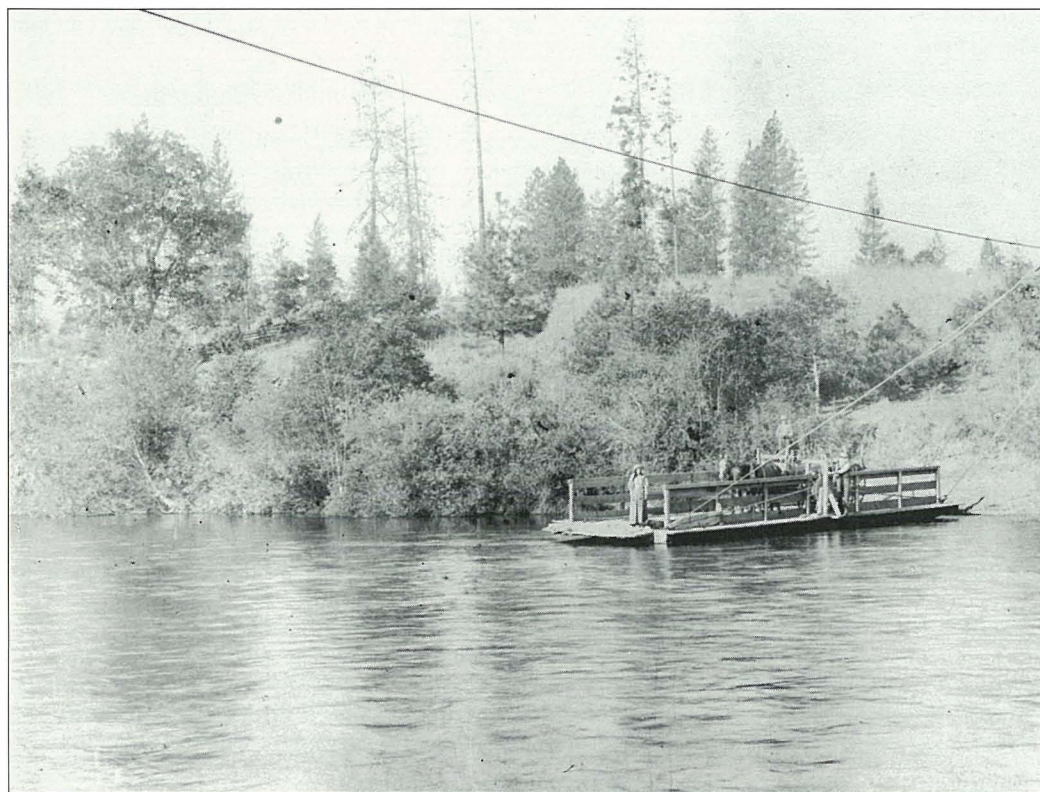
September 27

Morning. We made the drive by sun down camped within the Enclosure and they could just unharness the teams and let them go on fine grass and nice running water near us. Mrs. Durhams little girls have taken up with the children & Tilla is enjoying herself finely. We came to a very steep side Mt. road & all the teams had made a start up but our old wagon, when they went back to help Silas up, he told them he believed he would go back and stop

as Emaline was worse, so they had to stop there until Mr. Black & Will Rosenberger took him back. We gave them \$10.00 leaving us but \$6. While they were taking him back to house (where they left him as comfortable as could be expected), those that were left tried to get the wagons up, with the assistance of some men traveling in a light 2 horse vehicle. The third drive, our wagon got nearly to the top of a short steep turn in the road and stopped, the wagon commenced running back, I called to the inexperienced foreigner to hold the wheel but he kept beating the horses till they became unmanagable, and the wagon turned off the road, he then tried to hold it by grabbing the fore wheel, the man that was driving behind jumped down from his seat hollering for those within to get out, and just got to the hind wheel in time to save the wagon. I made all the haste I could to get the children out. It then took all hands to get the wagon back on the road.

September 29

In the Mt. detained to mend the hind axle of Mr. Browns wagon, which has just broken down. The sun is shining brightly when we came to the camping place late yesterday evening, we found Mr. Brown & Rosenberger there long enough to have good fires. Rosenberger had made his fire against a very tall pine which stood near his wagon. About 10 o'clock, Will raised the alarm that the tree was wind shaken and rapidly burning down. They all went to work and packed the wagons up hill on sidel-ing ground and then cut the tree down to make all things safe which fell square across the road which had to be cut off and drawn to one side by oxen this morning which detained us considerable.



John Maupin Black operated the first county-owned free ferry across the Rogue River from 1891-94 for a salary of \$25 per month. The ferry was located just north of present-day Shady Cove. Photo courtesy of Marguerite Black

October 22

At Mr. Knights where we stopped because I was not able to travail. I am now able to walk about & all the rest are sick. Sent for the doctor for Mr. Black as he was worse than ever last night.

November 3

Left Knights, landed at Uncle Josiah Hannah's 17th.¹⁴

December 1

Isaac arrived at Uncle Jo's.

December 2

It snowed last night in the valley. This morning is rapidly melting.

December 10

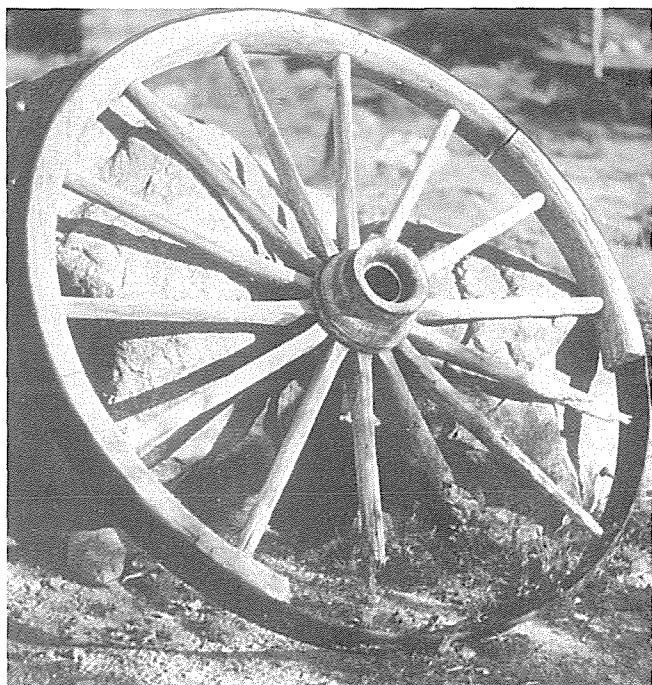
Raining, Rogues river out of its banks. Still at Uncle Jo's.

January 10, 1866

Moved home to a little cabin about one and half miles above Uncle Jo's. Close to the river.

January 19

Heavy snow fell last night & it has been raining all day. I laid up my work to get about dinner and had a nice time getting a bucket of water.



John M. and Mary Louisa Black lived out their lives on their farm near present-day Shady Cove. He died in 1907 and she in 1911. They are buried in the Central Point cemetery.

On the inside of the back cover of the note book is the following bible verse:

PSALM CXXVI

"5. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

ENDNOTES

1. The first eleven entries begin May 5, 1865 and are terse listings of campsites or notings of the weather. These early entries are written in another hand, possibly by Mary Louisa's husband, John Maupin Black.

2. Wagon trains, strung out single file over long distances during the day, would be parked in a square at night. Such a formation, when guarded by armed men and women, was protection from assault by Indians.

3. Coffee was a staple along the trail. It was bought green, and browned and ground when needed.

4. The early Oregon Trail passed through low mountain ranges on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains. These black hills extended from South Dakota through Wyoming and as far south as Colorado. Today the name Black Hills refers to low mountains chiefly in South Dakota.

5. Travelers found the water supply along the trail to be unpredictable in quality and location. Much of the standing water was alkaline and unfit to use, forcing the thirsty emigrants to drink out of mud puddles or buffalo wallows. Diarrhea was a common complaint.

6. Emigrants found the Platte River crossing challenging. The wide river bottom was sandy, and any wagon which stopped was sure to bog down and have to be muscled out. The next major water obstacle, the Laramie River, could flow in torrents during parts of the year. When too swift to ford, wagon beds were frequently connected and ferried across.

7. In 1860, the railroad extended west to St. Joseph, Missouri. Mail and express directed to the Pacific Coast was sent by overland stagecoach over the Oregon Trail. Stage stations were located at convenient distances for changes of drivers or horses.

8. The heavy emigration along the Oregon Trail was gold for owners of toll ferries or bridges constructed at key crossings. Fares were based on the number of people, livestock and wagons, forcing travelers to carry enough money or face crossing natural obstacles at more dangerous points.

9. The early spring wagon trains took advantage of the new grass. Later trains, however, were discouraged to find little or none, and were forced to carry grain to feed the livestock.

10. Mary Louisa Black was born this day in 1837 but makes no mention of it in her diary.

11. Bitter Creek, Wyoming, was located approximately 110 miles from the Platte River.

12. It was common practice to raise the wagon beds several inches above the bolsters while fording higher streams.

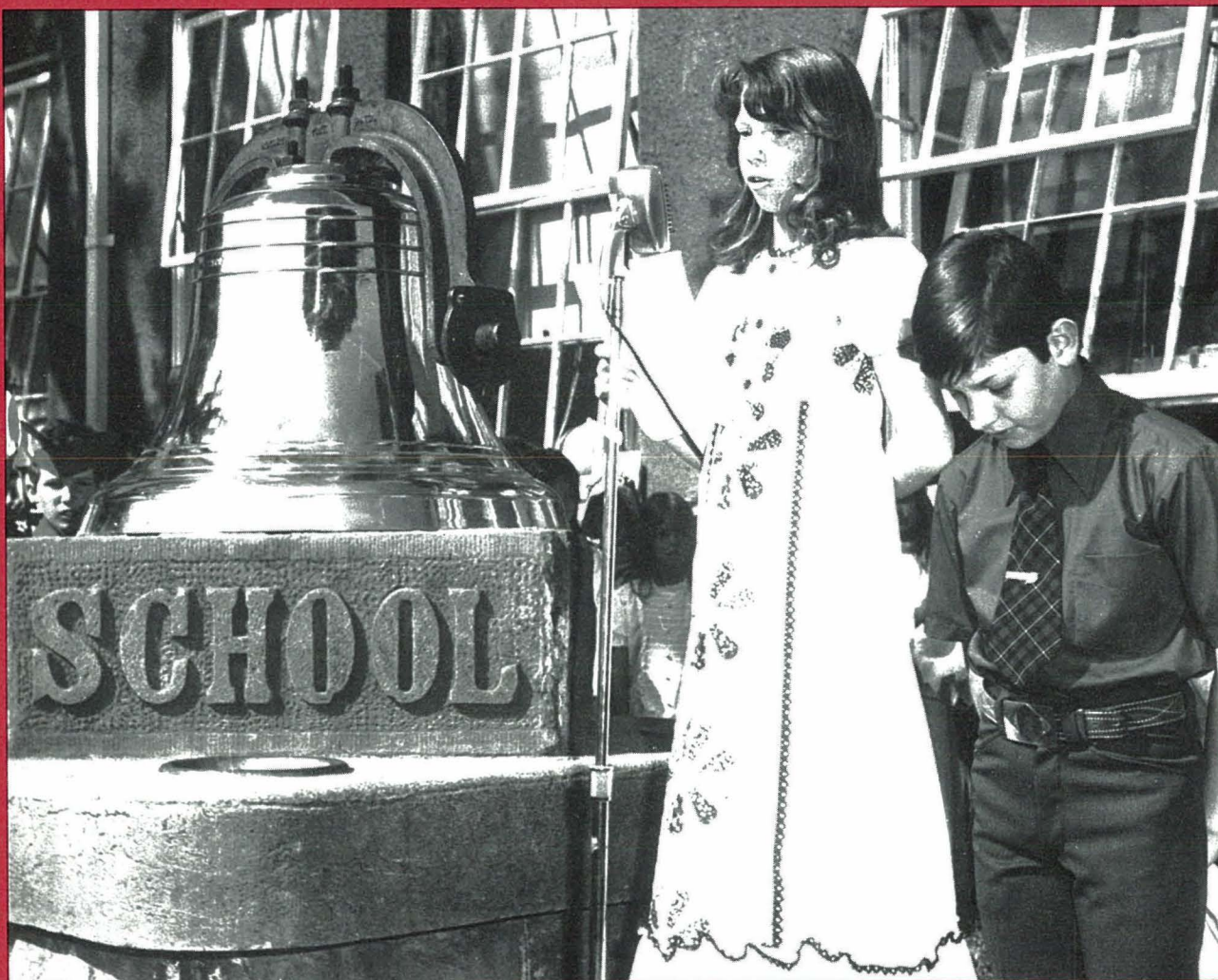
13. The Oregon Trail passed Birch Creek and again joined the Snake River near Farewell Bend. Farewell Bend was so named because it was the last view the emigrants had of the Snake River, along which they had traveled so many weary miles. (From *A History of the Oregon Trail, Santa Fe Trail and Other Trails*, by J. R. Greg. Portland: Binford & Mott Publishers, 1955.)

14. Josiah Hannah and his family arrived in Oregon in 1862 and established a farm and pottery business near present-day Shady Cove. See "Pioneer Pottery: Wares for Southern Oregon Homesteaders," *Table Rock Sentinel*, Sept./Oct. 1988, pp. 10-17.



All rights to diary material reserved to John and Marguerite Black, ©1988.

Marguerite Black, wife of John Black, the grandson of Mary Louisa Black, is a retired school teacher from the Applegate and Central Point districts. They are both long time family historians. Says Mrs. Black, "He does the research and I do the writing."



Cast in 1896, the original Washington School bell shone brightly during a 1976 Bicentennial program SOHS #12159

Students + Past = Future

by Dawna Curler

Medford's Washington School students are proud. They are proud that their old school building has been brightened with a new coat of paint and the addition of a long awaited media center. They also are proud of their school's unique past, a history as old as Medford itself.

The media center, which opened in September, was the last project funded by district building bonds approved by voters in 1980. It is a spacious, well-furnished room where students can assemble for programs, use library resources, and explore their school's history through a unique exhibit.

Medford's first public school (right) was relocated in 1891 to the corner of 10th and Oakdale where it serves today as an office building. The original Washington School (below) was built after fires leveled earlier wooden structures. Students sat two to a desk in this 1907 classroom (far right).
SOHS #551, 8662, 12021



As the construction project got underway, additional funds were dedicated to paint the building's exterior. Students raised more than \$150 in pennies to pay for cleaning the large copper letters that spell out "Washington School" across the building's facade, and the school custodian polished up a brass bell that sits on the front lawn as a monument to an earlier Washington School building.

With so much attention focused on the fifty-seven-year-old structure, students and staff are developing a strong appreciation of the building's historic character.

"I enjoy working in the older building," says school principal Stephanie Johnson. "I think of past generations and am reminded that we are part of the cycle, helping to design and develop history ourselves."

Johnson says she loves the school's architectural detailing which isn't found in the more modern schools: details such as floor to ceiling windows, walk-in closets lining interior classroom walls; and hardwood floors. Johnson's



enthusiasm for the school's history is contagious, inspiring a new focus in the curriculum.

Starting with old school records and memorabilia found in one of the walk-in closets, students are discovering their educational roots. Advanced class members started their own oral history program by tape-recording visits with former Washington School students. Through these taped interviews, old newspaper articles, and other resources from the Southern Oregon Historical Society, students

learned of the direct link between their school and the first public school in Medford.

School District 49 was established in 1884, just months after the Oregon and California Railroad founded Medford. That summer, the district built a two-story, wood-frame schoolhouse at the corner of West Main and South Oakdale, the site of today's Jackson County Courthouse. But early Medford's population grew rapidly and in just a few years the building could no longer meet enrollment needs. To free the site for a larger structure, the old school was relocated to the corner of South Oakdale and 10th Street where it became a private residence.

A larger wood-frame building replaced the first school on its original site in 1891, only to burn at the hands of an arsonist in 1895. That same year, fire burned students out of two other temporary quarters as they awaited completion of their new, more fire-resistant brick schoolhouse. The brick building, the third to be built on the original schoolhouse site, was completed in 1896. It continued to be the only school in District 49 until 1906 and served under the name of Washington School until its demolition in 1931.¹

Jerry Latham went to Washington School in the 1920s. During his interview with a young Washington scholar, he described details of the old brick school:

"We all had to line up by classes out on the sidewalk on Oakdale and then we would march into the school from there . . . they had long halls where you left your coat and things before you went into your classroom . . . the floors were oiled and certainly a definite fire hazard, but they were adequate . . . first grade was in the building outside of the school, this little square building in the playgrounds . . . At first they didn't have any indoor playgrounds or auditorium at all and then about '25 they built an outside building that was open to the air. It had win-



dows facing around it, but there wasn't anything in it, just chicken wire screen around it . . . the floor was granite—it wasn't paved—and so we played basketball in there.”²

Newspaper stories from June 1931 tell of school desks and other furniture stored in the two outside buildings, the “play shed” and the “annex” while workers tore down the old Washington School and built the new.³

School board officials sold the land under Washington School to the City of Medford. The city in turn transferred title to Jackson County as the site of the new county courthouse. The price tag was a neat \$23,000⁴ and went hand in hand with a \$265,000 school bond election paving the way to build a new high school, convert the old high school into a junior high, add four rooms to Roosevelt elementary and construct a new Washington School on Peach Street. Community support for the bond issue was overwhelming. It passed 904 to 128.⁵

The depression hit this area hard. Although local citizens discussed the need for better educational facilities, the bottom line was that the building project would provide local jobs! “This is the opportune time to build as all building materials are lower than they have been for years,” John C. Mann, of Mann’s Department Store, told a *Mail Tribune* reporter in December 1931.

“Labor is plentiful and it will help to solve our unemployment situation. Crowded conditions, low building

costs and unemployment make the issue imperative,” said attorney George Roberts. “We expect to use only local labor, in so far as possible, only local materials,” promised school superintendent E. H. Hedrick. “It is also the school board’s plan to allow local bidders and contractors a margin of five percent in the letting of bids and contracts.”⁶

Popular Medford architect Frank Clark, designed both the new Washington School and the high school on Oakdale (now South Medford High).⁷ After some debate, the school board selected concrete over brick as the preferred building material for the new schools. Concrete was 20 to 30 percent less expensive and called for local supplies and unskilled labor. If brick had been used, materials and bricklayers would have to come from outside the area.⁸

Construction of the new Washington School began early in 1931. That summer, demolition crews ripped down the old institution where generations of Medford’s children had laughed and played and studied. Materials from the old school were recycled. Thousands of bricks were cleaned. Some went into the new rooms at Roosevelt School; others were stored for future school improvements. Stones from the foundation formed the support base for the old Washington School bell, now proudly displayed in front of the new school.⁹

For awhile, the bell’s fate was uncertain. It could not be rung at the new school because the noise would wake the neighborhood babies. During demolition, a local

Uncomfortable second graders confront the camera for their 1925 class portrait on the steps of the old Washington School.
SOHS #10148



newspaper wrote: "The sight of the big bell that stood in the Washington School tower for 36 years past, lying in the school yard among the lumber and brick debris piles resulting from the razing of the building is a pathetic one to passersby, many of whom passed happy years of their youth in attending the school."

The article went on to quote a former pupil who had been brooding over the discarded bell: "Mr. Colman suddenly exclaimed, 'I will give \$50 for that bell.' 'What would you do with it?' 'Why I might upturn it on my lawn and plant flowers in it. Anything to preserve it to prosperity—'er, I mean posterity. I would willingly give \$25 for it.'"

Society and School Work Together

Excitement filled the room as children, parents, faculty, and dignitaries gathered September 15 to dedicate Washington School's new media center. Speeches were made, a cake was cut and old friends were reunited. Although the focus that evening was on the building itself, a small exhibit of historic photographs and objects related to the school's history received a fair share of attention.

The exhibit resulted from a joint project between Washington School and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. During the past year a number of people from both institutions worked together to help students study their school heritage. Besides providing historical information, the Society shared instructions for conducting oral history interviews and caring for historic objects and documents. With the exception of a few photographs reproduced from the Society's collection, the images and objects displayed belong to the school.

Society staff constructed a special exhibit case and designed and installed the exhibit. A key element of the project is a bulletin board alongside the exhibit case. Students will create their own historical displays on this board using other photographs and documents that have been encapsulated with special archival conservation material.

Ten minutes of silence passed, when he again came out of his despondency and said: 'Yes siree, I'll save that bell, even if it costs me \$15.'¹⁰ Mr. Colman paid nothing for the bell. Instead, Frank Clark incorporated it into a design for a drinking fountain for the new school that opened September 8, 1931.¹¹

After more than half a century, the new school is now considered old, but it aged gracefully, keeping alive a tradition of school spirit and community. Year after year the halls fill with bright-eyed youngsters looking toward the future. But as they reach forward with hope and anticipation, they may also look back with pride.



ENDNOTES

1. Robert Stedman, *A Short History of Medford School System From 1883 Through 1925*, Thesis, University of Oregon, 1953.
- Jennie Mae Snedikor, *The History of Medford*, (Manuscript 979.5, Southern Oregon Historical Society Library).
- Both sources give an overview of the Medford school system's development. Lincoln Elementary School was built on North Bartlett in 1906. The first high school was also built on North Bartlett in 1909. Roosevelt and Jackson Elementary Schools were added in 1911.
2. Washington School oral history tapes.
3. *Medford Mail Tribune*, June 18, 1931, 8:3.
4. Ordinance #2710, City of Medford, June 16, 1931.
5. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 17, 1930, 1:3.
6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 15, 1930 and Dec. 17, 1930, 1:2.
7. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1930, 1:7.
8. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 9, 1930, 2:6.
9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, June 18, 1931, 8:3.
10. News clipping from Thomas Scrapbook, Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection.
11. News clipping from Thomas Scrapbook, Southern Oregon Historical Society Collection and *Medford Mail Tribune*, August 30, 1931, 8:1.

Dawna Curler, the Society's curator of interpretation, and staff members Jime Matoush, Vern Christian and Carolyn Sharrock organized the Washington School exhibit.

Book Review

Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore

by Paul Pintarich

Run the name "Applegate" by a native Oregonian and most often one infamous historical image will appear, that of a hungry, battered wagon train cussin' its way through what was known as "that damned Applegate cutoff."

The Applegate Trail, as Shannon Applegate prefers to call it, was a tortuous but well-intended southern route blazed by Applegate's ancestors in 1846. It left the Oregon Trail at the Snake River, in what is now Idaho, and cut through portions of Utah, Nevada and California before creeping up into the western valleys from the south.

The Applegate brothers, Charley, Lindsay and Jesse, brought the first wagon train from Missouri to Oregon in 1843. To them, it was a much safer route than the last leg of the Oregon Trail, a harrowing run down the Columbia, then a wild waterway turbulent with boat-chomping rapids.

Lindsay and Jesse each lost a young son on that treacherous run, losses that haunted them and remain in the family's memory to this day. That long and rich memory has been gathered by Shannon Applegate into *Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore*.

Tolstoy wrote in *Anna Karenina* that, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

There was a bit of both in the large and restless Applegate clan, a thriving and energetic bunch that slipped away from the "crowded" Willamette Valley to establish its dynasty farther south, in the Yoncalla Valley near present-day Roseburg.

As chronicled by the author, a descendant of Charley and Melinda, and daughter of Col. Rex Applegate, the family's multifarious members reflected laughter and sadness, brilliance and eccentricity.

Charley built a huge, two-story frame home—one side for men and the other for women, but with one fireplace; "only the smoke was allowed to mingle," the author explains—in the valley, a national historic site still owned by the family. From there, the Applegates spread throughout the region.

Applegates went to the gold fields; they operated a toll road over the Siskiyou; they were typesetters, teachers and Indian agents.

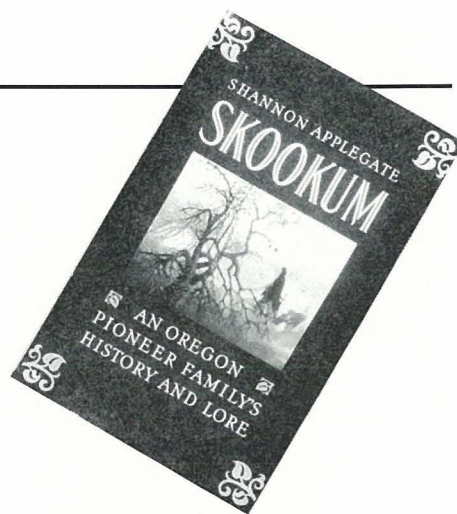
Skookum (the Indian word for spirit, power and strength) is a history of Oregon through the tales of one of its first families.

Shannon Applegate, who concludes the book with her own story, explains, "This is a book about being a family, a westerner and an Oregonian that reaches deeply into the region. The women of the family, all of whom were well-educated, 'kept the time,' the archives and they were certainly a bunch of characters. There are some 25,000 Applegates listed in a national index, all are interrelated, so as you read, think of all the characters you are going to meet named Applegate."

Born in Maryland, where she studied art, the forty-four-year-old author moved to Oregon after living around the country and in Canada. She has six children, ages seven through twenty-one. Up until three years ago, when she was married for a second time, she did tough duty as a single parent, living on welfare for a while in Eugene.

Trained as an artist, which brought her into competition with her first husband (who taught painting), Applegate was writing poetry and short stories when she met her great-aunt Eva at a reunion in 1968. It was that meeting that sparked Applegate's interest in writing the family history.

She began writing portions of a



narrative that would become chapters. While giving a reading at Purdue University, she was heard by Don Bodey, who would become fiction editor of *The Northwest Review* at the University of Oregon.

Bodey published her stories and in 1977 Applegate received an award from the Coordinated Council of Literary Magazines and a call from her agent Ellen Levine. Busy with children and a job as director of the Bandon Historical Society Museum, Applegate didn't answer Levine's call for three years. Finally in 1980, she began writing, moving into the old family home where she was cradled by family history, and confronted by real family ghosts.

Applegate wrote it all down in a wonderful, original style, working alongside a cousin, Susan, whose paintings illustrate the book and its cover.

Applegate is married to Daniel Robertson, who is director of the Douglas County Museum of History and Natural History in Roseburg. The couple was married in the family home and exchanged their vows in Chinook Jargon, the *lingua franca* of the region's Indians, white explorers, trappers and early settlers.

The author is currently at work on a historical novel set in Bandon during World War I.

"Woody Allen said once that eighty percent of life is just showing up. I feel like that. I used to get up in the morning at five and write. I had a tamale business at night. I was on welfare."

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"Dancing All Night"

And Other Tales of Christmas

by DeAnne Mansveld

The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season begins months before the holiday itself arrives. The "commercial" Christmas bombardment strikes soon after Labor Day. Caroles ring repetitiously through the air, the notes striking different chords in different people. Some feel irritation, aggravation and dread; others are filled with merriment, joy and anticipation. Thoughts turn to trees, decorations, lights, meals, parties; preparations that must be made before the Christmas Eve deadline. Memories flood in of Christmases past, making traditions and customs an essential part of this holiday season.

Although Christmas trees have been a part of holiday festivities in this region for the past century, the local lot brimming with freshly cut trees for sale is a relatively new convenience. However, many people today still make an annual trek into the forest to cut their own tree, as was necessary so many years ago. Chuck Sweet, now residing in Medford, fondly recalled a family tradition in 1928 in his essay entitled "Memories:"

Take for instance that experience I looked forward to from year to year while living on the farm — the choosing and cutting of the Christmas tree. Along about three or four days before the 25th of December, usually the day following a heavy snowfall, the horses were hitched to the sleigh with its constantly tinkling bells, and we would tum-

ble aboard, laughing and shouting. The cold was never noticed on this day, no matter how low the red line in the thermometer on the barn door, for we had partaken of an early warm breakfast, and we were bundled to the ears in our heavy winter clothes, but, even without these aforementioned aids, the excitement would probably have been enough to keep at least the younger members of the party sufficiently warm.¹

Margaret Frakes, another Rogue Valley resident, remembers a different type of tree harvesting when she was a girl growing up in a part of the country where evergreens were scarce.² There, resourceful residents often used to "make" a Christmas tree, dressing the little fruit trees with boughs cut from live evergreens.

In some homes, having a decorated tree at Christmas was rare. "How thrilled were we with childless glee," wrote former Central Point educator, Mae B. Richardson, "When we saw our first Christmas tree."³ The tree was a part of the community of Table Rock's 1893 celebration. To Richardson, the tree transformed the "small board schoolhouse" into a "beautiful palace fit for a queen." After Bible verses were read and prayers were said:

The curtain went back with a pull and there was the tree laden with beautiful sacks of mosquito netting filled with nuts and plain candy, many tin candles all aglow, strings of tinsel, popcorn and toys. . .

Candles were used to brighten trees before electric lights became possible and popular. Frakes remembers that her family used half-shells of English walnuts as candle holders on their trees. As beautiful as they were, though, candles were not without grave risk. Former Medford resident Aileen Johnson recalled that her family met with near disaster during the Christmas of 1911:

That probably was the last year they ever burned candles on the tree. A tree looks just beautiful with candles flickering all over it but it's very dangerous. For some reason Pappa lit the candles and I don't know why he went back to bed. But when he came out and looked it had caught the dining room curtains on fire. The tree was always in the dining room. And we had quite a time getting that fire out. Burned up Pappa's new shirt.⁵

Illuminating a tree is easier today than it was in the past. Tree-trimmers may choose a rainbow of colors that will blink, flash, twinkle or just shine brightly through the night.

Lights radiating from the limbs of outdoor Christmas trees have been popular for many years too, but not without chagrin. *The Ashland Tidings* recounted a frustrating tale on December 11, 1934:

Every morning almost without exception, since the installation of the Christmas trees in the street intersections of the downtown district, electric lights on the trees have been missing.

Men working in the city electrical department have found many of the sockets empty of their bright green and red globes. Only five were left on the tree at Third and Main a few mornings ago.

Police are of the belief that small boys are responsible, dashing into the street after the night patrolman has turned a corner.

Usually the day following a heavy snowfall, the horses were hitched to the sleigh with its constantly tinkling bells, and we would tumble aboard, laughing and shouting.

The variety and audacity of tree garnishments has also changed over the years. Decorators may select from ornaments of every shape, size and color, even ones that contain moving scenes. Sprays duplicate snow and tinsel imitates icicles.

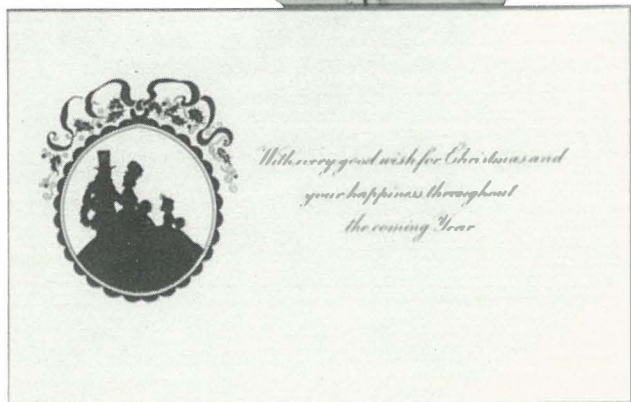
As early as September, Christmas decorations appear in local stores and by October's end, they compete for space on crowded shelves with Halloween decorations. Helen Wilcox, a resident of the Rogue Valley Manor, remarked that "people never even used to talk of Christmas before Thanksgiving."⁶

For many, Christmas brings visions of decorated trees (below), and sugar plum faeries (left).
SOHS #6091, 12161





Mailed Christmas greetings have been a tradition in this country throughout this century. These holiday postcards date from 1907.



Johnson recalled how her family's tree was always "decorated with strings of popcorn interspaced with laurel berries—also with strings of paper rings made of different colors of paper, which Juanita and I had spent weeks making."⁷ Mary Louise Pride, a Medford resident, told of decorations her mother made by wrapping homemade candies in paper and attaching them to the tree with string.⁸ Decorations, though homemade, were not unimaginative. Pride also recalled one special treat that her mother made by breaking open English walnuts, placing pennies or dimes (a very special treat) inside, gluing the nuts back together using egg whites and hanging them on the tree.⁹

Christmas wouldn't be the same without hanging bundles of mistletoe around the house. Ed Redford, a Medford resident, recounted this boyhood adventure:

One Christmas custom at our house which I remember with particular fondness was going out to gather mistletoe.

My dad would load my brother and me into our pony cart, and we would drive out through the snow (this was in Indiana) to some of the great stands of black walnut trees, where the mistletoe grew prolifically. Since the mistletoe usually grew well above our reach, and since black walnut trees were not the easiest to climb, Pop usually brought his shotgun. A couple of shots would bring down all we wanted for ourselves and for neighbors.

I can remember, as I got to 7 or 8, wanting to use the gun myself but being torn with the fear of its kick. (I did usually take my .22 along, but seldom could I bring down even a sprig with it.)¹⁰

For many, turkey dinner is a mainstay of the Christmas celebration, although some such meals have been fraught with disappointment. The *Medford Mail Tribune* recorded a distressing event that befell L. E. Hoover during the Christmas season of 1911. Mr. Hoover awoke one morning a few days before Christmas only to find that someone had absconded with three of the four turkeys that were to be a part of his Christmas feast. He lamented that "the one that was left was the smallest, poorest and altogether the most undesirable of the lot, and . . . absolutely inadequate for a proper Christmas feed."¹¹

Mr. Hoover was left with at least one turkey, but Minnie Bybee, the daughter of William and Elizabeth Bybee, made note of the holiday. She went without turkey dinner altogether. At the age of 19 when she was a student at St. Mary's Academy in Portland, Bybee recorded the events of Christmas 1890 in her diary:

Little Journal. "Christmas day," but oh how different from other Christmas days no turkey dinner as we have at home. wandered around got up at a late hour went to the convent for some of my things the girls were in chapel, saw their Christmas presents took tea with them from the little ones dishes. Came home and read until late.¹²



A skeptical Santa (reportedly Clarence Lane) patiently listens to the Christmas wishes of eager youngsters.
SOHS #12172

While Minnie Bybee yearned for turkey dinner, the Rev. Moses Williams must have enjoyed his dinner feast on Christmas 1889. His journal entry for the day noted that he “caught 4 quail in the trap.”¹³

Another clergyman, the Rev. Martin Peterson, noted in his diary, dated Christmas 1877, “. . . that the Apostle did not require us to observe any holidays and that the only day set apart for religious public service was the first day of the week.”¹⁴

Other valley residents celebrated the holidays with jubilant festivities. “We danced all night till break of light went home with the girls in the morning,” wrote Welborn Beeson, son of pioneer John Beeson, in his diary describing a party he attended with his mother on Christmas Day 1855.¹⁵

Holiday celebrations usually focused on observing past traditions and customs. But occasionally the circumstances of the times dictated the form of celebration.

Eleanor Williams, a resident of the Rogue Valley Manor, recalls a Christmas she spent working in a Panamanian orphanage fifty years ago.¹⁶ One of the children was very ill and desperately needed medicine. But the U. S. fleet was in port and, as Williams explained, “usually one didn’t go out when the fleet was in if you were a young woman.” She continued, “I was not concerned with the American Navy; I was concerned with Carmencita’s medicine.”

Williams took the orphanage bus to get medicine for the young child. When she returned to the bus, she found

it full of sailors. They were “fascinated that I spoke English,” recalled Williams. After returning to the ship, the sailors invited the children aboard for a holiday celebration that she described:

Santa arrived by seaplane, all dressed up in proper costume and came out with a “ho-ho-ho” and a big bag of presents. Each sailor and their adopted (for the moment) child got a present. It was a lovely, lovely event . . . an emotional kind of thing. The boys away from home were weeping and the children screaming.¹⁷

Mr. Hoover awoke one morning a few days before Christmas only to find that someone had absconded with three of the four turkeys that were to be a part of his Christmas feast.

Another manor resident, Kathryn Spencer, remembers Christmas in 1945 when she was with the American Red Cross in Belgium near the site of the Battle of the Bulge.¹⁸ She said it was “quite exciting being there at that particular time.” Their hospital was only ten miles away from

the battle zone and, according to Spencer, by Christmas Eve the danger was so eminent it was decided the Red Cross would have to be evacuated to Liege.

The evacuees were taken to a hospital that was not prepared for their arrival, but the staff was able to serve ice cream and cake to the group. Spencer said they were told to be "very, very quiet" and not to interfere with hospital operations. They sat around a table and very, very quietly sang caroles. "Though all were teary eyed, it was really a delightful experience," she said.

Over the years, all but the most special presents are easily forgotten. What remains of Christmas in the mind and heart are the unique memories of individual holiday experiences.

Recently, younger residents of the valley pondered the holiday season and traditions that are special for them. For example, Mrs. Paula Joham's kindergarten class at Elk-Trail Elementary School made a list of favorite Christmas activities that included playing in the snow, going for a walk, having a special dinner, opening and giving presents and having a Christmas party.

May all share the wishes of the youngster who most looked forward to "being with family and being happy" on this special day.



ENDNOTES

1. Charles Sweet, "Memories," The Poly High, publication of Polytechnic High School, Los Angeles, California, 1928-1929, p. 9.
2. Personal interview with Margaret Frakes, Nov. 1, 1988.

3. Mae B. Richardson, "Table Rock's First Christmas Tree—Dec. 24, 1893," *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 27, 1973, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library collection.

4. Ibid.

5. Oral history interview recorded by L. Scott Clay with Aileen Marie Crawford Johnson in 1981, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

6. Personal interview with Helen Wilcox, Nov. 1, 1988.

7. Aileen Johnson oral history.

8. Personal interview with Mary Louise Pride, Nov. 1, 1988.

9. Ibid.

10. Written statement from Ed Redford, Nov. 1988.

11. *Medford Mail Tribune*, Dec. 28, 1911.

12. Personal diaries of Minnie Ida Bybee, Dec. 25, 1890, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

13. Personal diaries of Moses Williams, Dec. 25, 1889, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

14. Personal diaries of Martin Peterson, Dec. 25, 1877, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

15. Personal diaries of Welborn Beeson, Dec. 25, 1855, in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library.

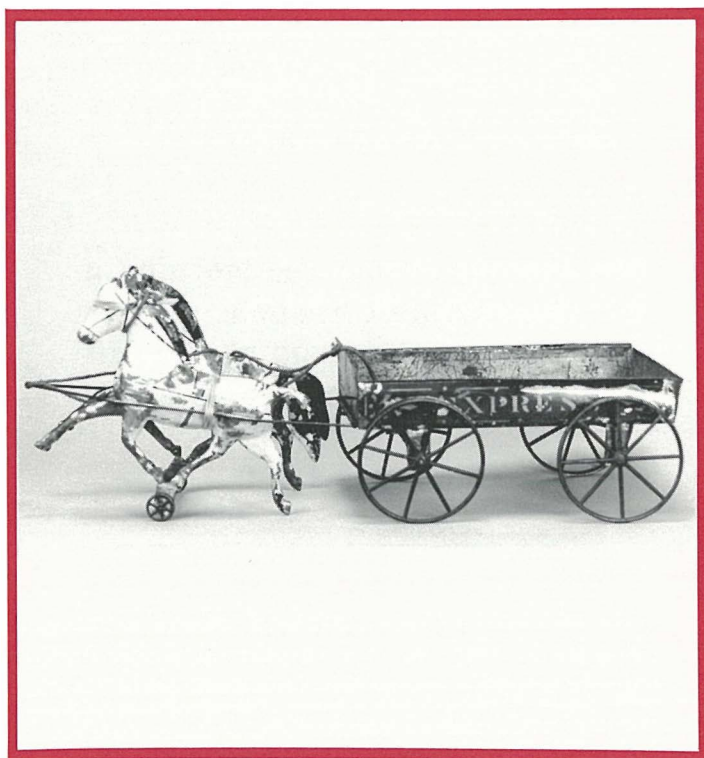
16. Personal interview with Eleanor Williams, Nov. 1, 1988.

17. Ibid.

18. Personal interview with Kathryn Spencer, Nov. 1, 1988.

Deann Mansveld is a student at Southern Oregon State College studying communications. She also is a volunteer for the Society and is anxiously awaiting the arrival of Christmas.

From the Collections



Toys have played a large part in the charm of Christmas celebrations. Gathered under pine boughs bending low with ornaments, toys often stir in us memories of standing before a decorated tree, eyes wide with wonder and hearts filled with the excitement that only the yuletide season can bring.

This "express" wagon and horses were part of a recent donation from Jesse Margaret Dodge of Ashland. Miss Dodge recalled putting a toy Santa in the driver's seat at Christmas time and filling the back with fresh pine boughs, cones, and other decorations.

Her brother, Will E. Dodge, originally owned the toy. Born in 1883, Will played with it when he was a small child in Ashland. The wagon and horses show signs of considerable use.

Toys of this era were usually cast iron or tin. Cast iron was heavy and rust-resistant, but brittle and tended to fracture easily. The wagon and horses pictured here are made of tin (actually thin sheet metal coated with a thin rust barrier of tin). Tin was more suitable for mass production.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring an item bimonthly in this column will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collections.

Calendar of Events

Through 1990

Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroad in the Rogue Valley The Society's major exhibit at the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History traces the coming and going of the railroad, how it changed people's lives and the valley economy, its local role in the nation's battles overseas, and the introduction of the railroad worker as an important part of the valley's communities.

Through March 1989

Home Entertainment: 1852-1988 An exhibit that looks at the variety of pastime activities that families and individuals have pursued during their leisure hours at home. Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum.



Through 1990

New Exhibit: HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue features the wares and techniques of the 19th-century pottery (once located near present-day Shady Cove) and focuses on pioneer methods of food preservation and preparation. Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.

November 19

Shannon Applegate will autograph and do a reading from her recent publication, *Skookum: An Oregon Pioneer Family's History and Lore*, from 1-3 p.m. at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ash-

land. A product of 18 years of research and writing, *Skookum* traces the history of the Applegate family in southern Oregon. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

November 22

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting at the Phoenix Elementary School, 215 N. Rose, Phoenix. Members and the general public are invited.

November 24

All Southern Oregon Historical Society museums will be closed for the observance of Thanksgiving.

December 3

We Knead Bread is a workshop to introduce children ages 8-12 to the American tradition of bread baking. Participants will investigate methods of wheat harvesting and milling, and try their hand at mixing, kneading, rising and shaping their own loaf to bake at home. Pre-registration is required by 5 p.m. November 25, and is limited to eight. Call (503) 488-1341 for additional details. From 1-4 p.m. at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ashland. Fee: \$2.50 for Society members, \$3.50 for non-members.

All offices and departments of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, except the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum's telephone number is (503) 488-1341.

Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Fri., 1-5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Children's Museum, P.O. Box 480, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues.-Sat., 1-5 p.m.

Administration Offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.



December 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, and 20-23

From 1-5 each day, **Nana Claus** will visit the Children's Museum to hear the secret holiday wishes of youngsters. Her grandmotherly appearance, Christmas spirit, and gingerbread cookies help younger children, who may be a little leery of ole Saint Nick, feel comfortable in sharing those special requests. Children also may make ornaments for display on the Children's Museum Christmas tree.

December 3-4, 10-11, and 17-18

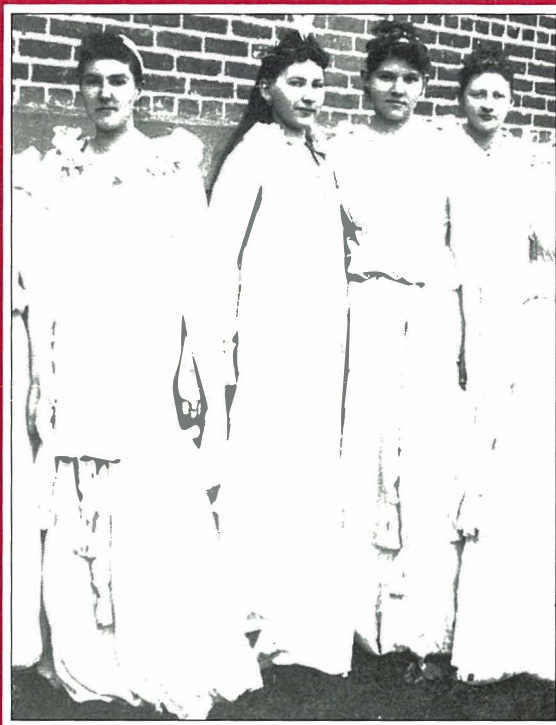
The sights and aromas of an old-fashioned Christmas return to Jacksonville as the Beekman House opens its doors to visitors as part of the Jacksonville Chamber's **Christmas 1888**. The home will be decked in appropriate late 19th-century holiday style. Costumed interpreters will welcome callers between 12-4 p.m. while cooks bake cookies in the woodstove oven for guests to sample. Donations accepted.

December 24 and 31

The Southern Oregon Historical Society **Research Library** will be closed. All Society museums, however, will be open their regular Saturday hours.

December 25 and January 1

All Southern Oregon Historical Society museums will be closed to allow staff members and volunteers to observe Christmas and New Year's Day with their families.



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

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